

**Finding Their Voice:
The Indian Press and Nikita Khrushchev's 1955
Visit to India**

by

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Abstract

This thesis considers Nikita Khrushchev's 1955 visit to India. It demonstrates a correlation between India's foreign policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence and domestic concerns about the plight of the majority of its citizens, as Indian elites apprehensive about potential social unrest sought to navigate a course for the nation that would allay such anxieties. It highlights how Khrushchev's trip to India heightened such anxieties among Indian elites, as his rhetoric on development, colonialism, and the West engendered the appeal of socialism among India's poor. This thesis argues that Indian elites reacted to the Soviet visit so as to alleviate their domestic concerns about potential social unrest (and the consequent loss of their privileged position) triggered by the widespread poverty afflicting the country, and to further their foreign agenda, as they responded to the oratory of their guests so as to advance their own aims.

Keywords: Cold War; India; Nikita Khrushchev; state visit; Soviet Union; Third World

For my wife, my partner in life and my best friend

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Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Acronyms.....	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Historiography.....	7
1.2. Methodology.....	9
1.3. Primary Sources.....	12
Chapter 2. Welcome To India, But Watch Your Step.....	14
2.1. Commentary in the Indian Press Prior to the Visit.....	16
2.2. The Arrival of Khrushchev and Bulganin.....	22
Chapter 3. Know Your Enemy, and Your Friend.....	31
3.1. Political and Economic Rhetoric.....	34
3.2. Cultural Rhetoric.....	38
3.3. Nikita Khrushchev Takes Centre Stage.....	44
3.4. Reaction to Nikita Khrushchev.....	48
Chapter 4. Your Anti-Colonialism, Our Anti-Colonialism.....	51
4.1. Nuclear Weapons.....	53
4.2. Anti-colonialism.....	59
4.3. The Dulles-Cunha Statement.....	64
Chapter 5. Conclusion.....	70
References.....	73
Published Sources.....	73
Archival Sources.....	76

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Welcome To India.....	14
Figure 2.	Gandhi Caps And Garlands.....	39
Figure 3.	Marshal Bulganin Responds.....	40
Figure 4.	Gift To Mr. Bulganin.....	42

List of Acronyms

MEDO	Middle East Defence Organization
METO	Middle East Treaty Organization
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
USSR	Union of Socialist Soviet Republics

Chapter 1.

Introduction

When India awoke to "life and freedom" after the withdrawal of the British Raj in 1947, the new state entered into an international order dominated by the Cold War struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹ The so-called "First World" (the United States and its allies) and "Second World" (the Soviet Union and its allies) both sought to demonstrate the superiority of their respective ideologies, capitalism and socialism, as they engaged in contests in the political, economic, scientific, and cultural arenas. Many of the states that did not explicitly take sides in this bi-polar conflict were relegated to the so-called "Third World," a group of largely newly decolonized and developing countries in Asia and Africa that had gained their independence in the years following the end of the Second World War and were aligned with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union.

India held little importance for the two superpowers in the immediate aftermath of its independence. In 1949, the United States National Security Agency concluded that "an alliance with 300 million Indians living near the 'margins of subsistence' would encumber rather than bolster U.S. defenses" and that it was crucial "not to give the new nation any firm assurances, and to 'scrupulously avoid responsibility for raising Asiatic living standards.'"² United States President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972) said he "could imagine India, but he couldn't imagine why 'anyone thought it was important,'" as he "pictured a country 'jammed with poor people and cows wandering around streets, witch

¹ "Jawaharlal Nehru, Speech On the Granting Of Indian Independence," Fordham University, accessed 25 July 2015, <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1947nehru1.html>.

² Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 134.

doctors, and people sitting on hot coals and bathing in the Ganges."³ Soviet leader Joseph Stalin (1878-1953) also had little regard for India, as his successor, Nikita Khrushchev⁴ (1894-1971), recalled that "[i]n conversations between Politburo members and Stalin, the question of our relations with India was often brought up, but Stalin paid no special attention to India."⁵

Ten years after the National Security Agency assessment, however, then United States Senator John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) offered an alternative view of India's strategic importance, as he argued that the "sheer scale of India's deprivation[...]made it the decisive ideological battleground and 'a world power with a world audience' in its own right."⁶ While recalling Stalin's lack of interest in India, Khrushchev declared that it was "a disregard that was undeserved. A country like that ought to have attracted attention. He underestimated its importance and evidently didn't understand the events taking place there."⁷ How did India transform from a country that was unimportant to the two superpowers to one that was the "decisive ideological battleground?" After the victory of Mao Zedong's Communist Party in the Chinese Civil War in 1950, the stalemate of the Korean War from 1950 to 1953 that left intact the Soviet-backed state of North Korea, and the establishment of the socialist state of North Vietnam in 1954, South Asia was seen in a new light. From the American point of view, India constituted not only a conventional line of defence (e.g., bases, airfields, and ports), but an ideological one as well, with its parliamentary democracy and free-market system standing in contrast to the socialist/communist states of East Asia. India was not, however, aligned with the capitalist democracies of the West led by the United States, and the left-of-centre economic policies (e.g., central planning, large-scale regulation of business, protectionism) pursued by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) and

³ Ibid.

⁴ Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964 and Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or Premier) of the Soviet Union from 1958 to 1964.

⁵ Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, Sergei Nikitich Khrushchev, editor, and George Shriver, translator, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev, Volume 3: Statesman, 1953-1964*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 723.

⁶ Cullather, *The Hungry World*, 134.

⁷ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 723-724.

his Indian National Congress government made it a potential partner for the Soviet Union. Beginning in the mid-1950s, leaders of the two superpowers came to realize that India presented a particularly fertile ground on which to sow their respective ideologies, as they waged a campaign to win the "hearts of minds" of millions of people living in the non-aligned states of the world.

Khrushchev presented himself (and by extension the Soviet Union) as a leader who would defend the sovereignty of Third World states against the encroaching threat of imperialism and capitalism from the West. He vehemently denounced colonialism by European powers as the cause of the widespread destitution inflicting developing states, and cautioned that, although these states had gained nominal independence, their sovereignty was threatened by economic exploitation that would keep them subservient to the West. Khrushchev offered Soviet friendship in the form of developmental aid to Third World states as a safeguard against such danger. As Odd Arne Westad has observed:

By helping to expand the domains of freedom and social justice, both powers saw themselves as assisting natural trends in world history[...]Both powers saw a specific mission in and for the Third World that only their own state could carry and which without their involvement would flounder in local hands.⁸

Khrushchev's courtship of India began with an invitation for Nehru to make an official state visit to the Soviet Union. In June of 1955, the Indian Prime Minister was greeted by large and enthusiastic crowds during a two week tour of the USSR that included stops in Leningrad, Georgia, the Ukraine, and Soviet Central Asia. Khrushchev recalled that "it seemed that India had chosen the capitalist path of development. There was nothing to indicate socialist construction in that country. And we felt repelled by that."⁹ He stated that "[w]e wanted him to see how, guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, we had put that theory into practice, and what results we had achieved in building

⁸ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 4-5.

⁹ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 724.

socialism."¹⁰ But the USSR's achievements under socialism were only part of the vision that the Soviets sought to convey to Nehru. As Khrushchev revealed:

[W]e contrasted the achievements made by the People's [Republic of] China to the path [that India was taking]. That is, for all of Asia, including India, China should serve as the example, because in a short time it had achieved so much. We wanted India to[...]raise the living standards of its people, but not by the methods and policies that Nehru was proclaiming, because such goals were not achievable that way, and the people of India would be doomed for many years to an impoverished existence.¹¹

He further noted, however: "Outwardly our official talks with Nehru went smoothly. He praised Soviet achievements, but not once did he say anything to the effect that our experience might to some extent be transferable to Indian conditions."¹²

It was under such circumstances that Khrushchev and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or Premier) of the Soviet Union, Nikolai Bulganin (1895-1975), accepted an invitation to make a reciprocal visit to India later that same year.¹³ Since the death of Stalin two years prior, many outside observers were still unclear as to who was his real successor. While Georgii Malenkov and Lavrentii Beria initially appeared as leading candidates to take power, Khrushchev and Bulganin eventually overshadowed them.¹⁴ Although Khrushchev's position as head of the Communist Party imparted greater authority and control than Bulganin's position as head of the government, both offices were at the summit of their respective structures, and Stalin had held them both. During Stalin's time as leader, power was so personalized that titles did not matter. In the years after his death, the very nature of the ruling structure had to be redefined. This

¹⁰ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 726.

¹¹ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 727.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Georgii Maksimilianovich Malenkov (1902-1988) succeeded Joseph Stalin as Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or Premier) of the Soviet Union in 1953. He was replaced by Nikolai Alexandrovich Bulganin in 1955 and was eventually expelled from the Presidium (the central governing body) and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and lived the rest of life in exile in Kazakhstan. Lavrentii Pavlovich Beria (1899-1953) was head of the Soviet police (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, or NKVD) under Stalin and oversaw the USSR's atomic bomb project. He was arrested and executed after Nikita Khrushchev succeeded Stalin as First Secretary of the Communist Party in 1953.

took time. Given these circumstances, outside observers could well be forgiven their confusion as to who was the actual leader of the Soviet Union, or indeed if there was really only one. In this regard, it is notable that the near five weeks that Khrushchev spent touring South Asia with Bulganin afforded him an opportunity to demonstrate, in a subtle but effective way, his status as the unquestioned preeminent politician of the Soviet Union.¹⁵

Khrushchev's effort to court India necessitated the formulation of a new image management and propaganda apparatus for the USSR. As Khrushchev recalled about the Soviet predicament ahead of the trip:

After Stalin's death it was as though we had been left on a desert island. We had no experience in diplomatic relations with the capitalist countries aside from Molotov. Only Molotov had been initiated into the mysteries of contacts with representatives of the capitalist countries[...]We wanted to see with our own eyes and feel with our own hands, in order to decide more correctly the nature of our contacts with the capitalist world[...]we wanted to establish closer contacts, taking into account not only theory but the reality that had actually taken shape[...]we had to have contacts and we had to make some arrangements with the capitalist world, to develop economic and diplomatic relations. But how?¹⁶

The Soviet state visit to India hence functioned as an opportunity for the USSR to introduce, gauge, and adapt new diplomatic strategies. Foreign affairs had been the almost exclusive domain of Viacheslav Molotov¹⁷ while Stalin was in power. After eventually emerging as Stalin's successor, Khrushchev was able to appropriate Molotov's long held position as the Soviet ambassador to the international community, and radically changed the fashion of Soviet diplomacy in a manner that displeased the

¹⁵ For a comparison of Khrushchev and Bulganin's tendencies as leaders, see George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1982), 50-58.

¹⁶ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 725..

¹⁷ Viacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov (1890-1986) was Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars (or Premier) of the Soviet Union from 1930 to 1941 and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1939 to 1949 and from 1953-1956. He was expelled from the Presidium after he took part in an failed coup d'état against Nikita Khrushchev in 1957 and was later also expelled from the Communist Party.

elder statesman.¹⁸ This "new foreign policy," or "adventurism" as Molotov dismissed it as, was premised on gaining the favour of local populations by expressing empathy with their hopes, fears, and experiences in a manner that was charismatic and often included humour¹⁹. It would be employed during the subsequent struggle for the "hearts and minds" of the Third World that was largely instigated as a result of the Soviet initiative in South Asia, and also during encounters with the West, such as when Khrushchev and Bulganin visited Britain in 1956 and when Khrushchev visited the United States in 1959.²⁰

As important as Khrushchev's and Bulganin's 1955 visit to India was for the Soviets, it had just as much significance for their hosts. Khrushchev's lengthy visit shone the international spotlight on India and, as this thesis demonstrates, functioned as an important occasion for Indian elites to formulate and refine the domestic and foreign policy of their newly independent state. Indian foreign policy in the years since 1947 had largely been predicated on the twin pillars of "non-alignment" and "peaceful co-existence." India was a leading member of the group of Third World states who refused to join alliances with either the United States or the Soviet Union and was involved in the organization of the Bandung Conference that took in place in Indonesia in April of 1955, at which non-aligned states came together to pledge economic co-operation and to denounce colonial (or neo-colonialism) in all its forms.²¹ The domestic agenda of Nehru's Congress government focused on the planning and implementation of development schemes aimed at modernizing the country in order to raise the living standard of the millions of its citizens who were living in poverty. This thesis reveals a correlation between India's foreign policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence and domestic concerns about the plight of the majority of its citizens, as Indian elites apprehensive about potential social unrest sought to navigate a course for the nation that would allay

¹⁸ William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W.W. & Company, 2003), 354.

¹⁹ Vlad M. Zubok. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War From Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 101-105.

²⁰ Khrushchev and Bulganin actually sought (and were denied) an invitation to the United States prior to their trip to India. See: Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era*, 353.

²¹ Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, editors, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I: Origins* ((Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 260-261, 479-482.

such anxieties. It highlights how Khrushchev's trip to India heightened such anxieties among Indian elites, as his rhetoric on development, colonialism, and the West engendered the appeal of socialism among India's poor. This thesis argues that Indian elites reacted to the Soviet visit so as to alleviate their domestic concerns about potential social unrest (and the consequent loss of their privileged position) triggered by the widespread poverty afflicting the country, and to further their foreign agenda, as they responded to the oratory of their guests so as to advance their own aims.

1.1. Historiography

There is much recent scholarship on the United States' efforts to court Third World states from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s that considers those efforts in an ideological context rather than simply from a *realpolitik* perspective.²² These studies detail how American policymakers formulated "hearts and minds" diplomacy as they advanced capitalism as the system that could alleviate the suffering of millions of people living in non-aligned states. While there has been ample consideration of American efforts to court Third World states in recent literature on the Cold War, similar Soviet endeavours have received less attention. David Engerman has written multiple articles about Soviet policy (particularly with respect to economic planning and development)

²² Mark T Berger, *The Battle for Asia: From Decolonization to Globalization* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004); Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); David C. Engerman et al, editors, *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2012); Charles Kimber Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001); Robert B. Rakove, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nonaligned World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

towards India during the Khrushchev era.²³ While they provide context for this thesis, Engerman's works are primarily concerned with the Soviet point of view and the particulars of planning and development. In contrast, the focus of this thesis is on the interchange of rhetoric between Indian elites and Soviet leaders. George W. Breslaur's study of Khrushchev's leadership of the USSR offers methodological guidance as he critically analyzes Khrushchev's speeches. Although South Asia is beyond the scope of Westad's work on Cold War interventions in non-aligned states, it is an example of research that integrates Soviet and Third World (and American) perspectives to reveal a multi-polar rather than a bi-polar conflict.²⁴ Robert J. McMahon's collection of essays suggests starting points for a more multifaceted study of the Cold War in the Third World, which, according to Westad, "should be studied[...]as part of the broader patterns of international and transnational history in the twentieth century."²⁵

Peterson Carlson and Anne Gorsuch have both studied Soviet trips abroad as a medium for image management and propaganda.²⁶ Carlson examines Khrushchev's 1959 trip across the United States while Gorsuch considers Soviet tourism to Eastern and Western Europe during the Khrushchev era. These works provide insights into the means by which the USSR attempted to convey ideological messages abroad. In particular, they analyze rhetorical and cultural facets of Soviet image management and

²³ David C. Engerman, "The Anti-Politics of Inequality: Reflections on a Special Issue," *Journal of Global History*, Volume 6, Number 1 (March 2011): 143-151; David C. Engerman and Corinna R. Unger, "Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization," *Diplomatic History*, Volume 33, Number 3 (June 2009): 375-385; David C. Engerman, "Learning from the East: Soviet Experts and India in the Era of Competitive Coexistence," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Volume 33, Number 2 (2013): 227-238; David C. and Corinna R. Unger, "Modernization as a Global Project: American, Soviet, and European Approaches," *German Historical Institute Bulletin*, Number 43 (Fall 2008): 129-134; David C. Engerman, "The Price of Success: Economic Sovietology, Development, and the Costs of Interdisciplinarity," *History of Political Economy*, Volume 42, Number 1 (2010): 234-260; David C. Engerman, "The Second World's Third World," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 12, Number 1 (Winter 2011): 183-211; David C. Engerman, "Social Science in the Cold War," *Isis*, Volume 101, Number 2 (June 2010): 393-400.

²⁴ Westad, *The Global Cold War*:

²⁵ Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War in the Third World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 216.

²⁶ Peter Carlson, *K Blows Top: A Cold War Comic Interlude Starring Nikita Khrushchev, America's Most Unlikely Tourist*, (New York: PublicAffairs, 2009); Gorsuch, Anne E., *All This is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

propaganda that this thesis considers in the context of Khrushchev's trip to India in 1955. Studies by Walter Hixon, Kristin Roth-Ey, and Josephine Woll, although largely silent on the Third World, also provide insights into the Soviet Union's use of media to propagate socialism.²⁷ Melani McAlister includes the Cold War in her work on culture and media in the Middle East, but confines her study to American interests.²⁸

While surveys of Indian history since 1947 and studies with a particular focus (e.g., political, economic, military) have considered Indo-Soviet relations during the Khrushchev era, this thesis is distinctive as it concentrates on a singular state visit.²⁹ Khrushchev's trip to India in 1955 was the first opportunity for the newly independent state to receive a foreign guest of such magnitude. No American president, British prime minister, or Soviet leader had ever visited the subcontinent (United States Vice President Richard Nixon visited for five days in 1953). Khrushchev's trip is thus a decisive moment in the history of the Cold War, as it ushered in an era of superpower diplomacy in the Third World as American leaders responded to the Soviet example of "hearts and minds" diplomacy with their own initiatives. This thesis seeks to make a contribution to Cold War scholarship through an analysis of Khrushchev's seminal trip in a transnational context.

1.2. Methodology

Khrushchev's trip to South Asia lasted over four weeks, three of which were spent in India. The length of his trip was extraordinary both in the context of 1955 and the present day. Khrushchev landed in New Delhi on November 18th. After spending two

²⁷ Walter L. Hixon, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Josephine Woll, *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000).

²⁸ Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

²⁹ Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India Since Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss, *Reinventing India: Liberalization, Hindu Nationalism and Popular Democracy* (Malden: Polity Press, 2000); Francine Frankel, *India's Political Economy, 1947-2004: The Gradual Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Ramachandra Guha, *India after Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy* (New York: Ecco, 2007); Arthur S. Lall, *The Emergence of Modern India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

days in the nation's capital, he travelled north to the city of Agra to visit the Taj Mahal before returning to New Delhi for two days, during which time he and Bulganin addressed the Indian Parliament (November 21st). Khrushchev then traveled north again, to the city of Nangal in Punjab, where he was shown the progress that had been made on the construction of the dam being built there, and had some of the dam's features explained to him by an American engineer. After that, he journeyed south to Bombay (present-day Mumbai), where he stayed for two days (November 23rd and 24th) before moving on to the nearby city of Poona (present-day Pune). He then went further south for visits to Bangalore and Madras (present-day Chennai) before travelling up the east coast to arrive in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata) on November 30th. Khrushchev and Bulganin next made an excursion to Burma (December 1st to December 7th) during which time they visited the cities of Rangoon (present-day Yangon), Mandalay, and Taunggyi. Upon their return to India, Khrushchev travelled south of New Delhi to the city of Jaipur before making his way to Kashmir, located in the northwest region of the subcontinent. After spending two days in the disputed territory (December 9th and 10th), he returned to Punjab where he spoke to peasants in the village of Bhatgaon before finally returning to New Delhi (December 12th) and departing the country on December 14th. Khrushchev and Bulganin were greeted by civic receptions and dinners held in their honour as they made their way across India. As a matter of course at such functions, the host(s) would speak first and then be followed by a response from the Soviet guests.

This thesis is arranged thematically rather than chronologically. Given such an arrangement, some portions of the trip are referred to more than once, but in different contexts. I have chosen this approach to reveal patterns in the rhetoric on such recurrent topics as non-alignment, peaceful co-existence, aid and development, and anti-colonialism.

Chapter two considers commentary in the Indian national press on Khrushchev and Bulganin's impending visit in the days leading up to their arrival in India. It will then turn its attention to the grand welcome that the Soviet leaders received after arriving before cleavages began to emerge between Indian and Soviet policies and ideologies, culminating with Khrushchev and Bulganin's address to the Indian Parliament. Chapter

three will analyze Indian elite perspectives on the appeal of socialism to the masses and Soviet efforts to court the most disadvantaged segments of Indian society. It also explores the emergence of Khrushchev as the leading voice for the USSR during the middle part of the trip, and considers Indian national press reaction to his evolution as an adept practitioner of image management and propaganda. Chapter four examines four distinct points that had pride of place in the public discourse during Khrushchev's trip: nuclear weapons, anti-colonialism, Goa, and Kashmir. In doing so, it demonstrates how Indian elites perspicaciously responded to Soviet rhetoric in order to advance their own domestic and foreign objectives.

This thesis uses the term "the West" to refer to the United States and its allies in Europe (and Canada) that had democratic governments and capitalist economies. Although Portugal was a member of NATO and the authoritarian regime of Francisco Franco in Spain had friendly relations with the administration of United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower, they do not accord to the term "the West" as used by Khrushchev to refer to states with capitalist economies. This thesis refers to Portugal as distinct from the "the West" as it considers the dispute between India and Portugal over Goa.

This thesis uses the term "the masses" to refer to the majority of people in India who lived in poverty at the time of Khrushchev's trip. Although it may have connotations of bias, this term is used simply as shorthand to refer to a group of people and their condition. The term "ordinary Indians" is used intermittently to convey the same meaning.

This thesis uses the term "the elites" to refer to government officials, industrialists, figures in the national press, and other members of the Indian political class who held a privileged position in Indian society and presumably wished to preserve that position. While all members of the political class did not conform to this definition (and it can be consequently argued that no singular political class existed), "the elites" is a broad and flexible term. Requisite distinctions between "conservative" and "liberal" elites are also noted.

The terms "Cold War" and "Third World" are constructs that serve(d) specific

political, economic, and cultural aims. Following Westad's lead, I use the term "Cold War" to refer to "the period in which the global conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated international affairs, roughly between 1945 and 1991."³⁰ I use the term "Third World" to mean "the former colonial or semicolonial countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that were subject to European (or rather pan-European, including American and Russian) economic or political domination."³¹

1.3. Primary Sources

This thesis uses Indian national newspapers to document the course of Khrushchev's trip and to offer perspectives on how Indian elites reacted to it. News articles supply essential details about the places where Khrushchev travelled to while in India, the dates of his visit to those places, and who he interacted with while there. They also provide transcriptions of speeches and other comments he and Indian leaders made while he toured the country. Although the oratory is often abridged at the discretion of the editor, it serves the purpose of this thesis to gain insights into Indian and Soviet outlooks on leading matters of concern for both countries. The manner in which it is edited (the decision to publish certain portions and to excise others) offers awareness about how particular newspapers and critics reacted to specific speeches and comments.

The national newspapers this thesis draws on are *The Times of India* and *The Tribune*. Of course, these newspapers offer a mere glimpse -- a small slice along a broad spectrum of viewpoints -- but the viewpoints they present are important. Rather than engaging in a broad survey of India's varied and lively press, a focus on these two newspapers, both broadly influential, enables a more precise analysis of the perspectives that they reflect. On the whole, the *Times* foregrounds commentary that is highly critical of the Soviet Union and favourable to the West, while the *Tribune* offers editorial content that is more sympathetic to the USSR. Both papers reveal the perspectives, preoccupations, and anxieties of Indian elites. Given their prominent

³⁰ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 3.

³¹ Ibid.

positions in the Indian political establishment, the *Times* and the *Tribune* provide a window that other papers cannot. Thus, this is a study of India's elites rather than its subalterns. The voices of the subalterns would require a different methodology. The voices of Third World elites -- never mind the subalterns -- are obscured in the historiography of the Cold War. This is an attempt to start remedying that oversight.

Chapter 2.

Welcome To India, But Watch Your Step

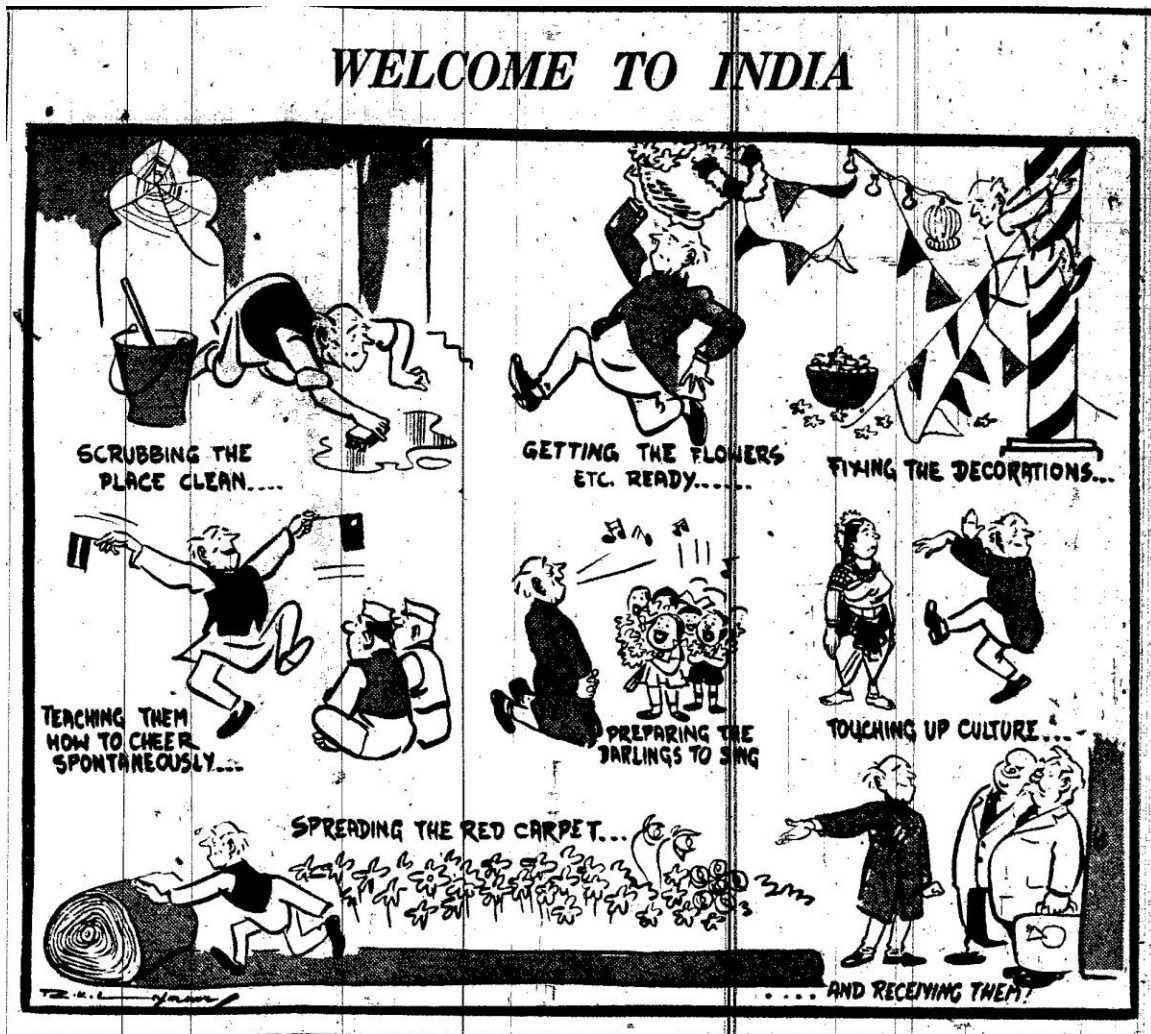


Figure 1. Welcome To India
Source: *The Times of India*, 18 November 1955, 1.

The First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or Premier) of the Soviet Union Nikolai Bulganin landed in the Indian capital of New Delhi at Palam Airport (present-day Indira Gandhi International Airport) on 18 November 1955, where they were greeted by an enthusiastic crowd of over 50,000 people. Over one million Indians lined the streets with the hope of catching a glimpse of the Soviet leaders as their procession made its way to what had once been the centre of British colonial rule in India, the vast and elaborate palace formerly known as the Viceroy's House that now had been transformed into Rashtrapati Bhavan, the official residence of the President of India. The imagery of the scene, as Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru rode alongside the leaders of one of the two most powerful countries in the world as they made their way to pay respect to the head of a free and independent India at the very place that just eight years ago had been both the literal and figurative embodiment of the British Raj, was a defining moment in the short history of the young nation-state.³² It suggested (both to a domestic and a foreign audience) that India was an emerging world power with a status that accorded consideration and consultation from such eminent leaders, that it had made its entrance onto the international stage. But what did this mean? Amongst the array of parades, flags, and speeches during the three weeks that they toured the country, what did the Soviet leaders' visit reveal about India's position as a Third World state situated within the Cold War balance of power of the mid-1950s?³³

³² The President of India is the head of state while the Prime Minister is the head of government.

³³ The rigid cleavage that existed between India (having cordial relations with the Soviet Union) and the United States (providing aid to Pakistan) for much of the Cold War had yet to emerge at the time of Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit. President Dwight D. Eisenhower visited India in 1960 while President John F. Kennedy described it as the "decisive ideological battleground" and sent Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson there as part of his trip to South and Southeast Asia in 1961. Relations deteriorated after Johnson became president and during the administration of Richard M. Nixon, as the perception that India was moving closer to the Soviet Union resulted in increased American political, economic, and military support for Pakistan (which included open support during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971).

2.1. Commentary in the Indian Press Prior to the Visit

The question of what Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit meant for India was considered before the Soviet guests even arrived in the country. The cover of the November 18th edition of *The Times of India* featured a cartoon with the caption "Welcome To India" (Figure 1) that depicted Nehru frantically trying to prepare the country for the arrival of Khrushchev and Bulganin. He is shown cleaning and instructing Indians on how to behave, including a reference to "touching up culture." The drawing suggests that in order to demonstrate (both to the visiting Soviets and to the foreign audience observing the trip) that India had developed into a state that merited hosting such distinguished guests as Khrushchev and Bulganin, Indians needed to "change themselves." The concerns with cleanliness and culture are those associated with trite perceptions of the East by Westerners: dirty, unsanitary, primitive, etc. Such concerns and efforts to manage them were also evident in a *Times* report that observed that, in advance of the arrival of the Soviet leaders, many areas of New Delhi "now have red gravel sidewalks and have been newly painted. Miniature slum-clearance operations are also in evidence."³⁴ The success of these efforts was proudly noted by the newspaper as it extolled the "exemplary discipline" of the crowds at the reception to welcome the Soviet guests.³⁵ In Bombay, meanwhile, it observed that "over a score of painters, electricians and labourers have been ceaselessly at work for the past two days at the airport giving it a 'new look.'" The *Times* conveyed the local government's desire that "the public will accord to [Khrushchev and Bulganin] a dignified and disciplined welcome befitting our great country and our great city," which included a request to refrain from the traditional Indian practice of throwing flowers on guests and to throw petals instead.³⁶ It later applauded the conduct of the people of the city of Poona with the headline: "Poona's Dignified Welcome to Russians - Few Slogans Raised By Disciplined Crowds."³⁷ In addition to noticing that "[h]ardly any slogans were shouted," the

³⁴ "Flags of Welcome Go Up In Delhi," *The Times of India*, 17 November 1955, 1.

³⁵ "Soviet Leaders Impressed By Immense Crowd At Delhi Reception," *The Times of India*, 21 November 1955, 1.

³⁶ "Airport Gets 'New Look,'" *The Times of India*, 23 November 1955, 5.

³⁷ "Poona's Dignified Welcome to Russians," *The Times of India*, 26 November 1955, 1.

newspaper observed that “[f]lags, bunting, festoons and arches were comparatively few.”³⁸

These stories in *The Times* indicate that Indian elites believed that a shift of cultural practices to those of the West was requisite to the nation gaining prestige within the international community, and viewed the visit by Khrushchev and Bulganin as an opportunity to begin to implement such a shift. Traditional Indian customs involving the loud, visual, and boisterous welcome of guests were frowned upon in favour of a more subdued reaction in the hope that it would demonstrate that Indians were sufficiently “civilized” to sit alongside great power states such as the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France. As part of this attempt to present an enlightened India to the international community, the Soviet leaders were taken on a tour of historical sites in New Delhi during their second day in the city. The Raj Ghat (a memorial to Gandhi), the Red Fort (the residence of the Mughal emperor), the Juma Masjid (the largest mosque in India), the Jantar Mantar (a sixteenth-century observatory), and the Qutab Minar (a tenth-century minaret) all celebrated India's claim as a great civilization. To the dismay of *The Times*, however, the crowds that came out to greet Khrushchev and Bulganin often yielded to euphoria. As the paper reported on the scene at the Soviet motorcade in Calcutta: “Many clambered on the bonnet, footboards and bumpers of the limousine to shake hands with the visitors. Two stepneys were wrenched off their sides. The driver had to apply the brakes frequently to prevent accidents. Finally, the overheated engine of the car failed.”³⁹

The ideological consequence of Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip was also pondered by observers in the national press before the Soviet leaders arrived in India. Editorials in *The Times* in the days leading up to their arrival reveal that members of the fourth estate were engaged in a debate about what their visit indicated both in a domestic and a foreign context. In a November 17th tract titled "The Unimportance Of

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ "Calcutta Gives Biggest Yet Welcome To Soviet Leaders," *The Times of India*, 30 November 1955, 1.

Being a Communist," "Onlooker"⁴⁰ asserted that:

Exposed there to the view of Communists and in the company of Congressmen, local and imported, the Marshal should be worth at least a million votes to the Congress. In one stroke and two metaphors, the Reds will have their guns spiked and their thunder stolen. The unimportance of being a Communist in India is gradually seeping through the minds of our indigenous Marxists whom Mr. Nehru once complimented as being 'the most stupid of all Communist parties in the world.' The Prime Minister's[...]trek to Russia brought no dividends in its wake unless Marshal Bulganin can be described as the secret weapon of the Congress and Mr. Nehru's delayed time bomb. Placed artfully under the welcome platform of India's Communist party, it might help to blow them up at the next general elections.⁴¹

This critic perceived Khrushchev and Bulganin's tour of the country as an opportunity for Nehru to manage the challenge posed to the Congress by the Communist Party of India. The widespread poverty associated with India's underdevelopment as a state suggested the socialism held appeal for many as a remedy for the country's social and economic plagues. In a vision that inspired some and frightened others, the proletarian revolution foretold by Karl Marx would vanquish the inequalities afflicting India and the strife that ensued from them. It would position India on a trajectory of development corresponding to that of the Soviet Union. As a counter to this allure, Nehru's reception of the Soviet guests would communicate to ordinary Indians that it was the Congress, rather than the Communists, who acted for workers' interests and hence gained the endorsement of Khrushchev and Bulganin. The medium to do this was not the national press, which was the domain of the elites, but rather was the enormous receptions that were held for the Soviet leaders in the leading urban centres across the country and were attended by millions of Indians. The visual effect of Nehru standing shoulder to shoulder (and in some instances hand in hand) with Khrushchev and Bulganin would convey to the masses that their present government (and their present system of government) was the vehicle to deliver the rapid development enjoyed by the Soviet Union. As "Onlooker" observed:

⁴⁰ "Onlooker" is the pseudonym used by an editorialist(s) for the *Times of India* who wrote a column titled "Through Indian Eyes."

⁴¹ "Through Indian Eyes - The Unimportance Of Being A Communist," *The Times of India*, 17 November 1955, 6.

In India today therefore Nehru is attempting to prove that an economic and social revolution, built on the utilitarian principle of the greatest good of the greatest number, is possible without violence or class conflict. In India there is to be no intermediate stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat as Marx conceived it. Instead the State, by holding the ring in a mixed economy with public and private sectors, will ensure that there is no exploitation of the workers or of any other class for the benefit of another.⁴²

As the *Times* was owned by industrialist Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain (his heirs now have a majority stake in the Times Group), these perspectives can be construed both as an assessment of Nehru's intentions with respect to Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit and as the publisher's own desire for its effect on Indian society, filtered through his employees.

The commentary by "Onlooker" concerning Nehru's aim for Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit suggests that the trip was also an opportunity for the Congress to distinguish Indian socialism from Soviet socialism. A public discourse on socialism occurred following the arrival of the Soviet guests, as Khrushchev noted that "[o]ur conception of socialism is a little bit different (from yours), but we greet your intentions," while Nehru commented:

Russia has reconstructed her whole economy during the last three decades and today she is considered to be one of the most highly developed countries of the world. The progress she has made in all fields of human activity, particularly in scientific research, in spite of all handicaps, is phenomenal and [deserves] admiration. However, the technique and methods she employed to achieve remarkable results are fundamentally different from the technique and methods this country has been employing. India believes in[...]democracy and she has practically demonstrated that a democratic set-up does not essentially impede development and progress. In fact, democracy has created a new enthusiasm among the people because of which they have been giving their willing help and co-operation in the completion of development schemes[...]By a visit to India's river valley projects and other schemes of development, Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev will see for themselves that a democratic system is no hindrance to quick development, provided the people's enthusiasm and energy are harnessed on right lines.⁴³

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ "Indian Socialism Hailed," *The Tribune*, 26 November 1955, 7; "A Great Welcome," *The Tribune*, November 2, 1955, 2.

Nehru consequently differentiated Indian socialism from Soviet socialism at the same time he represented the Congress as the means to replicate Soviet success in development. He demonstrated the capacity of democratic socialism to Khrushchev and Bulganin with a tour of the Bhakra Dam project in Nangal in northern India, the massive structure he would dub "the new temple of resurgent India[...]the symbol of India's progress" upon its completion.⁴⁴ Construction of the dam had begun in 1948 and he poured the first bucket of concrete into its foundation the day before the Soviet leaders arrived. Nehru's action conveyed his conviction that a democratic system that facilitated collaboration between the public and private sectors could indeed make such large-scale development projects possible.⁴⁵

The merits of democratic socialism were also exhibited as Khrushchev and Bulganin toured the poultry wing of a government farm in Uttar Pradesh in northern India, a milk colony in suburban Bombay, and paddy fields in Poona.⁴⁶ In addition to demonstrating that a democratic system did not hinder development, these examples of achievement by modern India, together with the monuments shown from its cultural and scientific past, seemed to suggest a narrative whereby India, now that it was free of British colonial rule, would reclaim its glorious heritage and build a bridge between the past and the present. An emphasis on creation and construction was evident in national newspapers, with an abundance of advertisements and inserts that conveyed a message similar to that in an advertisement for Dhanraj Mills Ltd. that appeared on the front page of the *Times* on the day Khrushchev and Bulganin arrived in the country: "The progress of a nation is measured in terms of its industrial productivity. The great nation-building plans conceive an India with a vastly expanded economy and industrial potential."⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Christopher V. Hill, *South Asia: An Environmental History* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 183.

⁴⁵ Judith M. Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 135-136, 208-209.

⁴⁶ "Camera Cannot Lie," *The Times of India*, 24 November 1955, 7; "Let Us Compete In Dairy Work, Says Mr. Khrushchev," *The Times of India*, 25 November 1955, 3; "Mr. Khrushchev Discusses Paddy Problems," *The Times of India*, 26 November 1955, 7.

⁴⁷ "Dhanraj Mills Keep up with India Expanding Economy," *The Times of India*, 18 November 1955, 1.

Not all observers who were looking ahead to Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip pronounced it to have the ideological significance accorded to it by "Onlooker." An editorial in the November 18th edition of the *Times* claimed:

The elaborate and enthusiastic preparations with which we receive our distinguished Soviet guests today are without doubt a faithful reflection of the Indian people's sincere desire for friendship with the people of the Soviet Union. It is a desire which recognises no ideological frontiers and signifies a readiness on our part to respond whenever friendship is offered and from whatever quarter. That is the basic and simple truth of the situation created by Mr. Bulganin's historic visit to this country, and any attempt to interpret it as an endorsement of Soviet policies underrates the reality and strength of Asian independence[...]Lavish hospitality is only what is due to the leaders of a people who welcomed Mr. Nehru with unprecedented warmth and affection. Yet it is no churlishness to suspect that this hospitality will not be regarded even by those directly concerned as anything more than what it is, entirely free of any political or ideological implications.⁴⁸

While these comments were quite vehement in disavowing any ideological consequence of India hosting the Soviet leaders, the (unnamed) critic continued and remarked:

There will no doubt be many expressions of goodwill and innumerable variations - before the tour is ended - on the theme of friendship. Such friendship, however, cannot be isolated from the international situation and can become a reality on the basis of world peace. It will not be lost on Asian observers that there is an unfortunate coincidence in the arrival of the Soviet leaders and the failure of the Geneva Conference - unfortunate because nothing that is said about friendship or international peace can have any validity while failures like that of Geneva continue to occur.⁴⁹

Thus, while he denied any ideological importance of Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip for India, he insinuated that it had such importance for the Soviet Union. He argued that Soviet efforts to court non-aligned in Asia states would not be successful because they would be seen by the political establishments in those states as disingenuous in light of the USSR's past record in the international sphere, particularly with respect to the failure of the Big Four powers to reach an agreement regarding German unification and

⁴⁸ "Mission From Moscow," *The Times of India*, 18 November 1955, 8.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

disarmament at the Geneva Summit four months earlier.⁵⁰ In making this argument, he insinuated that India had "nothing to gain" from the visit (its people only sought cordial relations and would provide a warm welcome to the Soviets as they would to any other guests) and that the Soviet Union had "everything to gain" from it (Khrushchev and Bulganin had to prove their sincerity in order to gain the favour of "the Asian people"). This can be interpreted in a conventional manner as an attempt to undermine the Soviet leaders' trip (and thus the product of someone unsympathetic to the USSR), but a more nuanced understanding suggests it was an effort to assert India's policy of non-alignment ahead of their impending visit. Anticipating an onslaught of image management and propaganda from the Soviets and their sympathizers in the coming weeks, the commentator preemptively declared that regardless of what transpired during Khrushchev and Bulganin's stay on the subcontinent, Indian policy would not be affected.

These articles and editorials reveal an array of themes through which the Indian national press contextualized Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip and considered the question of what it meant for India. The remainder of this thesis will examine specific facets of the trip to consider how it was used to formulate and explicate particular aspects of Indian and Soviet policy within the context of the Cold War.

2.2. The Arrival of Khrushchev and Bulganin

A civic reception was held in honour of Khrushchev and Bulganin the day after they arrived in New Delhi (November 19th). A crowd of over one million people once again came out to welcome the Soviet leaders. The *Times* noted with pride that this was a far greater number than the little more than one hundred thousand Soviet citizens who had greeted Nehru in Moscow during his visit to the city earlier in the year, despite the fact that Moscow's population was three times greater than that of New Delhi. Bulganin delivered an address during which he said:

⁵⁰ Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume I*, 383-384.

The Government of India has been doing much for strengthening peace and lessening international tension. The Soviet people, who more than once were forced to defend their motherland with arms in their hands against foreign invaders, and who know particularly well what uncountable sufferings wars bring for the people, greet from the bottom of their hearts the efforts of the Government and the people of India to secure and strengthen peace.⁵¹

India had achieved independence from Britain only eight years prior to the Soviets' visit, and Bulganin attempted to invoke the spectre of its recent colonial past in order to insinuate that the West (i.e., capitalist countries) posed a threat to its newfound freedom. In doing so, he suggested parallels between the Indian and the Soviet historical experiences, noting that India was facing challenges similar to those that the Soviet Union had confronted in November 1917. Indians had won their revolution by casting off imperial rule by the British Empire (as the Russians had overthrown the tyranny of the Russian Empire), but were threatened by "foreign invaders" who sought to subjugate them again (as a coalition of capitalist countries including the United States, Britain, and France had aided the anti-communist Whites in an attempt to defeat the Bolshevik Revolution). If they were not vigilant at this precarious time in their history, the sovereignty that was the realization of decades of struggle was susceptible to being usurped. The Soviet Union, as a state that had successfully passed through this challenging phase of development, was in a position to provide assistance and support.

While the Soviet Union's experience in defending the Bolshevik Revolution from external forces was primarily military in scope, the rhetoric of its offer to assist India in preserving its freedom was not predicated on the suggestion of a national security threat. Khrushchev and Bulganin suggested that leading capitalist countries posed a threat to India's freedom through other means, as Khrushchev declared at a Boy Scouts and Girl Guides rally held in their honour:

If you want to preserve and safeguard your independence, you must lay stress on industrial growth. You are living in a machine age and you must use machine[s] for the development of your agriculture and industry. I am telling you this from our own experience[...]You in India have a very large population. The only way by which you can meet the economic needs of

⁵¹ "M. Bulganin Hails India's Fight For World Peace," *The Times of India*, 20 November 1955, 9.

the vast population is by establishing industries[...]Do not think that by keeping and maintaining big armies only you can preserve your independence. There are several other methods of preserving independence and that is by developing your industries on a strong and solid basis.⁵²

By linking freedom to development of industry and agriculture, Khrushchev was able to portray capitalist states as a threat to Indian sovereignty without resorting to outlandish and disingenuous claims of militaristic ambitions, and was able to represent the USSR as a state that could help India cope with such a threat without making statements about military support that exposed it to charges of aggression and hypocrisy. If India did not rapidly develop its industries and agriculture, it would have to continue to rely upon the outside world for aid and market access. Its commitment to non-alignment would consequently be compromised as it would be expected to orient its policies more favourably towards powerful benefactors as a condition of continued aid and market access. Such a circumstance would be perpetual as it would be consumed by a global capitalist system of "have and have-not states" (i.e., the First World and the Third World) that hindered the ability of emerging states to develop their industries and agriculture in order to assert their sovereignty.

Rapid development of its industries and agriculture, the means advocated by Khrushchev for India to prevent such a scenario from unfolding, required expertise in central planning, something that the Soviet Union, having already passed through a series of rapid and impressive stages of development, possessed in abundance. Both Khrushchev and Bulganin emphasized that Soviet knowledge of development would be made available to India, and that it would be made available unconditionally. At the civic reception in New Delhi, Bulganin referred to the Soviet Union's interest in India as a "sincere and disinterested friendship" and affirmed that "we are prepared to share our experiences in the construction of industrial enterprises, electric power stations, hydro projects and the utilisation of atomic energy for peaceful purposes," while Khrushchev echoed these sentiments at a similar reception in Bangalore on November 27th:

⁵² "Khrushchev Urges India To Develop Her Industries," *The Tribune*, 22 November 1955, 8.

In a major policy statement, he [Khrushchev] declared that Russia did not want to take any advantage of India's poverty. It was willing to help India establish manufacturing plants, factories and institutions. He wished that India should be rich, not only culturally, but also economically. "We want you to develop industrially and achieve a high standard of living for your people," Mr. Khrushchev said. He repeated the Soviet offer of "disinterested and friendly" aid to India to build up its industries and increase agricultural production "even though we differ in our social and political ideas."⁵³

Portraying themselves as "disinterested and friendly" allowed the Soviets to access channels to influence Indian policy (e.g., an increase in the number of visits by Indian engineers and managers to the USSR) without the appearance of interference in the affairs of a sovereign state, an accusation that was an essential component of their professed grievances against the West. At a time when the United States and Britain had entered into multiple military alliances with Asian states, the Soviet Union offered an alternative means of security (development) for a country (India) that refused to join any such alliances.⁵⁴

At a dinner party hosted by Indian President Rajendra Prasad the day following the civic reception for Khrushchev and Bulganin in New Delhi (November 20th), Nehru delivered a speech that revealed a contrast in attitudes towards capitalist states. In speaking about the Soviet visitors, he noted a "difference in approach in dealing with our problems," and further stated:

We welcome the co-operation and friendly assistance of other countries, but we realise that a nation develops by its own labours and by its own strength. It was by relying upon ourselves that we gained independence and it is by doing so that we hope to advance to the new objectives that we have placed before ourselves[...]We have no ambitions against any other country or people. We wish them well and we are anxious that freedom and social and economic progress should come to all countries[...]Not being military-minded, we do not appreciate the use of

⁵³ "Soviet Prepared To Share Experience," *The Tribune*, 20 November 1955, 1; "Bulganin's Speech," *The Tribune*, 20 November 1955, 6; "Aggressors Warned," *The Times of India*, 27 November 1955, 9.

⁵⁴ The United States and Britain formed MEDO along with France and Turkey in 1950. Both states formed SEATO in 1954 along with Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh), the Philippines and Thailand. Britain formed METO in 1955 along with Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Turkey.

military phraseology or military approaches in considering the problems of today. There is talk of cold war and rival camps and groups and military blocks and alliances, all in the name of peace. We are in no camp and in no military alliance. The only camp we should like to be in is the camp of peace and goodwill which should include as many countries as possible and which should be opposed to none.⁵⁵

While Khrushchev and Bulganin suggested that capitalist states endangered India's freedom and prosperity and that vigilance and rapid development along the lines of the Soviet model were required to protect them, Nehru believed that that way to preserve sovereignty was to treat every country the same regardless of its political or economic system. The policy of non-alignment was not only a rejection of factions, but also a means to maintain autonomy. If a state had no enemies, then ostensibly there could be no threat to its sovereignty.⁵⁶ His address also articulated that India (i.e., the Congress) did not deem any existing model of development to be the archetype for its own development. Whereas Soviet leaders advanced the notion of an Indo-Soviet model of development that stood in contrast to the capitalist model, Nehru declared that India's model of development was distinctive from both that of the Soviet Union and the West.⁵⁷ Khrushchev and Bulganin had seemingly interpreted his policy of non-alignment as a policy of alignment against the West. Nehru was not only committed to neutrality in regards to military matters, but also rejected the notion that one economic system was superior to another, as each country was to follow its own path. Such misconceptions about Indian attitudes towards the West were repeated by Khrushchev and Bulganin throughout the remainder of their trip, and they afforded opportunities for Nehru, the Congress, and the country's elites to distinguish and elucidate their own policies.

Nehru's effort to differentiate India's stance towards the West from that of the Soviet Union was also motivated by a desire to position himself as a mediator between the First World and the Second World. In the days following the arrival of Khrushchev and Bulganin, the national press featured editorials that attempted to lay blame for the deterioration of Cold War relations on either one side or the other. In a commentary titled

⁵⁵ "Military Pacts Cannot Build Peace," *The Times of India*, 21 November 1955, 7.

⁵⁶ Guha, *India After Gandhi*, 161-162, 166-168, 172-178, 187-188.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 212-215, 218-220, 222-224, 228-232, 302-303.

"That Old Tone Again," the *Times* critic known as "Surveyor"⁵⁸ (writing in the shadow of the failure of the Geneva Summit) opined:

The persistent rejection by the communists of a free election and their insistence on a prolonged division of Germany into east and west are hardly calculated to win support for the Soviet Union. This again is a strange deviation from the Soviet norm since a deliberate attempt to win over the sympathies of the German people has been till now a characteristic factor of Soviet policy. Mr. Molotov's bluntness of speech revealed an indifference to public opinion, a hostility towards and suspicion of the western powers that were as sudden as they were unexpected. Whatever the devious purposes Moscow has in mind, these tactics will be a severe strain on our capacity to believe what we hear when Moscow starts speaking in the genuine accents of co-existence.⁵⁹

In contrast, the *Tribune* asserted that:

There is no denying the fact that Russian foreign policy during recent years has been definitely conciliatory and that the perceptible improvement in the international situation is due in no small measure to the efforts of Soviet diplomacy to eliminate causes of international tension. If no progress has been made in the negotiations to achieve agreement on disarmament, European security and German reunification, and if the problems of Korea, Indo-China and Formosa [present-day Taiwan] still defy settlement, the reason is that the Great Powers have not yet been able to overcome mutual fears and suspicions[...]. The Western Powers which claim to represent freedom-loving nations have failed to live up to their liberal traditions.⁶⁰

In reporting on how coarse relations between the West and the Soviet Union had become, the national press also emphasized the need for some person, country, or organization to intervene as a redeemer. The United Nations would seem to have been the obvious choice to fill this role. India had supported the international organization with conviction since joining it as a founding member in 1945 (before gaining independence from Britain). India's leaders envisioned the United Nations as the means to resolve conflict and ensure equality and prosperity around the world. According to some observers, however, it had not operated as such:

⁵⁸ "Surveyor" is the pseudonym used by an editorialist(s) for the *Times of India* who wrote a column titled "The International Scene."

⁵⁹ "The International Scene - That Old Tone Again," *The Times of India*, 21 November 1955, 6.

⁶⁰ "Russian Foreign Policy," *The Tribune*, 24 November 1955, 4.

The United Nations is not functioning as it should. It is necessary that the Charter should be periodically amended to broaden its character and scope so that eventually we may establish a real world federation. The United Nations is dominated by a few big states because the Charter gives them a highly privileged position[...]The Security Council which has the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and order has supranational authority but its authority has become ineffective in consequence of the East-West rivalry and the cold war[...]It seems preposterous that one member should have the right to paralyse the United Nations and block any U.N. action. It is evident, however, that peace in the world can only be preserved if the five permanent members of the Security Council work in close concert[...]One reason why the United Nations has not commanded universal respect is that it is not fully representative of world opinion. The Secretary-General of the United Nations once complained that important international decisions were being taken outside the U.N.O.[...]the United Nations cannot legitimately speak on behalf of the world community so long as a large number of states in Asia and Europe are denied admission to it.⁶¹

The fact that the United Nations gave a disproportionate voice to some states while denying a voice to others, and that all five permanent members of the Security Council (the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the Republic of China) were affiliated with one of the two rival blocs, served in the eyes of some as cause and justification for some other entity to mediate to the Cold War. India's policy of non-alignment allowed Nehru to intercede as an ostensibly impartial arbitrator between the two blocs. This served to increase the country's international influence and to bolster Nehru's aspiration to be seen as a great leader by the world community. Such sentiment was evident in a editorial in the *Tribune* that boasted that "India has exercised remarkable influence upon Soviet foreign policy" and stated that "[i]t is easy to see that Mr. Nehru's influence with Mr. Bulganin will always be used to bring the East and the West together."⁶² For Nehru, hosting Khrushchev and Bulganin while publicly expressing dissent with some of their statements was a means to demonstrate his impartiality and clout as a statesman. This perceived clout was celebrated in national press reports about foreign reaction to Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit (and to Nehru's reception of

⁶¹ "Charter Review," *The Tribune*, 25 November 1955, 4.

⁶² "India and Russia," *The Tribune*, 21 November 1955, 4.

them).⁶³ The effort to elevate Nehru's status in the international sphere was part of an attempt represent India as speaking on behalf of "the Asian people."

A difference in outlook towards the West between Indian elites and the Soviet visitors became more evident when Khrushchev and Bulganin addressed the Indian Parliament on November 21st. The Soviet leaders criticized the West in a more forceful and direct manner than they had done in previous statements since arriving in the country. Bulganin lamented "the unwillingness of certain circles to be governed by the 'Geneva spirit' in their practical activities," and pronounced:

To our profound regret, our efforts to shift the question of disarmament and the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons out of the deadlock have not yet led to positive results. The United States, Britain and France have, in effect, rejected what they themselves proposed at the beginning of the year. We have to note that in the question of disarmament the Western Powers are regressing, retreating from their former positions, with their new proposals throwing the problem of disarmament a good ten years back.⁶⁴

Khrushchev was no less forthright in his criticism, as he declared:

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that some people dislike the spirit of Geneva. Certain circles in some countries still try to carry out the notorious 'position of strength' policy, a policy of threats by atomic weapons, which is a disgrace to modern civilization[...]We submitted proposals for the prohibition of the use and manufacture of atomic and hydrogen weapons and for the governments giving a solemn pledge not to use these weapons. But the Western Powers have so far not yet agreed to these proposals. The forces of reaction do everything to undermine the cause of peace.⁶⁵

In their nearly two hour collective address, the Soviet leaders made it clear that they believed the West to bear the burden for the deterioration of relations between the First

⁶³ "Soviet People Approve Visit," *The Times of India*, 19 November 1955, 9; "Moderate Indian Opinion Alienated," *The Times of India*, 26 November 1955, 7; "American Press Perturbed," *The Tribune*, 25 November 1955, 5; "Soviet 'Penetration' Of Asia," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 5; "U.S. Anger Stirred," *The Tribune*, 14 December 1955, 10.

⁶⁴ Nikolai Alexandrovich Bulganin and Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, *Visit To India* (New Century Publishers: New York, 1956), 16-17.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

World and the Second World and for putting the safety and security of the international community at risk. While Nehru had responded to Khrushchev and Bulganin's earlier insinuations about the West in an indirect and diplomatic manner, their speeches at the Parliament brought stinging rebuke from some observers. In a commentary titled "Significance of the Soviet Visit," "Onlooker" responded to the Soviet performance:

It is good to feel that such niceties weigh with the bureaucratic mind. But the danger surely lies in carrying courtesy and cordiality to a point where they might be merged and mistaken for complete identification with a particular point of view[...]By all means let us return courtesy with courtesy but not to the point of letting the guest edge the host out of his own mansion. When our own Parliament is converted into a pulpit from where foreign guests, however highly placed and honoured, attack countries with whom we have no basic quarrels, it is time to be more than slightly wary.⁶⁶

While these comments unequivocally affirmed that India's political establishment had no enmity towards the West and did not share the views expressed by Khrushchev and Bulganin, the overriding concern of the Indian elites was not the appearance that India endorsed the Soviet outlook, but rather, the possible implications of such an appearance. As previously stated, the widespread poverty that confronted India as a developing state only eight years removed from colonial rule made socialism a possibly attractive option to millions of suffering people. A perceived endorsement of Soviet ideology by Indian elites would only make it a more appealing alternative. Thus, the policy of non-alignment functioned as a means to suppress social unrest. By refusing to endorse the Soviet model of development and insisting on a distinctive Indian model, Indian elites were protecting their own privileged position from a revolution from below. This was reflected in their denunciation of Khrushchev and Bulganin's speech at the Parliament. While doing so may have quelled their concerns about the danger that it posed, the remainder of the Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit would reveal additional schisms between Indian and Soviet viewpoints.

⁶⁶ "Through Indian Eyes - Significance of the Soviet Visit," *The Times of India*, 24 November 1955, 6.

Chapter 3.

Know Your Enemy, and Your Friend

Having examined the arrival of Khrushchev and Bulganin in India and the aftermath of their first few days in the country, I will now turn my attention to Indian and Soviet efforts to promote their respective messages and the strategies they used to do so. This chapter analyzes how Indian elites perceived and responded to the allure that socialism held for the masses, and Soviet attempts to gain favour with ordinary Indians. It also considers the evolution of Khrushchev as the foremost spokesman for the USSR during the middle part of the trip, and examines Indian national press reaction to his emergence as a master of image management and propaganda.

In addition to emphasizing the rhetoric of non-alignment as a means to quell the appeal of socialism to the masses, Indian elites also used the national press to critique and counsel the West on how to respond to the danger that communist ideology posed to the Third World. They voiced the belief that the political establishments of the United States and its allies had a fundamental misunderstanding about the nature of potential support for socialism in non-aligned parts of the world. Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit afforded an opportunity to highlight the basis for this support and to suggest action to counter it. An editorial in the December 9th edition of the *Tribune* urged Western states to be more vigilant in their assessment of the risk posed by communism:

Communism thrives where Communist leaders can assume the leadership of the national forces fighting against colonial rule or where poverty and unemployment are widespread or where the ruling elements in a country cease to enjoy popular support because of their inability to give that country stable, honest and progressive administration. The West can help to check Communist expansion if it can remove the causes which facilitate this expansion. Unfortunately, the West is not prepared to help fight Communism in an intelligent manner. It thinks in terms of armed strength to resist Communism while the real defence against Communist infiltration is of a political and economic nature[...]. In its crusade against

Communism the West is apt to ignore the distinction between international Communism and revolutionary nationalism.⁶⁷

Indian elites believed that to treat the possibility of a communist insurrection on the subcontinent as part of an international communist threat was a flawed approach. The West had expended vast military resources and aid to fight communism in China, Greece, Korea, Indochina, and Eastern Europe. United States President Harry S. Truman's doctrine of containment sought to prevent the spread of communism by supplying military and economic assistance to those states deemed under threat from it.⁶⁸ This effort was correlated to the "domino theory," the idea that if one state in a region "fell" to communism, then other states in the region would do the same.⁶⁹ The People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) were communist states established in East Asia in the decade preceding Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit to India. In the eyes of some Western observers, India would eventually succumb to the "Red Menace" if action was not taken to halt the row of dominos that were falling across East Asia on their way to the subcontinent.

For Indian elites, however, the fear of a socialist revolution was not predicated on a perceived spectre of a Soviet-led international scheme to spread communism around the world, but rather, was rooted in the reality that the nation's leaders could not claim to have delivered "honest and progressive" government to millions of its citizens. The poverty afflicting India's masses, not foreign agitation, was the more urgent and immediate cause of a possible socialist revolution, and Indian elites sought to communicate this truth to the Western powers as a means to secure developmental aid. Communism as an international threat as represented by the domino theory demanded a strong defence, and thus, significant military aid. Communism as an internal threat, however, necessitated a strong state, and thus, aid that would help to develop the state.

⁶⁷ "The Joint Statement," *The Tribune*, 9 December 1955, 4.

⁶⁸ Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I: Origins*, 155-156.

⁶⁹ Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, editors, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II: Crises and Detente*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 288-289.

The *Times* published stories during Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip that attempted to use the argument that a strong state was needed to prevent a socialist revolution as a means to lobby the administration of United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower for increased aid. On November 25th, its front page included an article that observed:

Past Soviet economic aid to India is not large compared to the more than 500 million dollars which the U.S. has provided either in the form of loans or grants to India since it achieved independence. The major Soviet item has been a loan of some 90 million dollars on easy terms to assist in the erection of a 210 million dollar project for a steel plant being erected in India with the assistance of Soviet engineers. But the point frequently made here in discussions of the popular impact of the recent speeches in India by the Soviet leaders is that Soviet aid to India, however small, appears to be on the increase whereas U.S. aid, although larger, appears to be on the decrease.⁷⁰

While acknowledging American aid to India up to that point in time, the article constituted a message directed towards U.S. policymakers that increased aid for development was essential. The reference to the USSR's loan to help India build a steel plant with the assistance of Soviet engineers conveyed the critical point that while Soviet aid was small in comparison to its American counterpart, the nature of the aid was geared towards technological advancement for civilian purposes and was on the rise. Khrushchev and Bulganin travelled around India declaring that its newly won freedom was contingent upon the development of its industries and agriculture. In doing so, the Soviet leaders, wittingly or not, gave Indian commentators and government officials leverage to lobby for more funds from the United States. Pro-capitalist Indian elites used the national press they controlled to urge American officials to counter the Soviet strategy with increased developmental aid (or at least with increased awareness of such existing aid) in order to quell socialist sympathies.

In a statement published in *The Times* on November 30th, then Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson (who had recently toured South and Southeast Asia) lamented that:

⁷⁰ "Washington Watching Soviet Move," *The Times of India*, 25 November 1955, 1.

There is not enough awareness of what the U.S. has done and is trying to do in the field of economic aid in Asia[...]The U.S. has done so much in that part of the world[...]The Soviet Union has done practically nothing in the way of economic aid. But when they do make a gesture, like selling a steel mill to India for which India will pay \$100,000,000, they get far more credit for selling than the U.S. gets for giving.⁷¹

Pearson's comments suggest that the Soviet Union was doing a better job than the United States of promoting its message. While the reality may have been that the United States provided significantly more aid for the Indian people, the rhetoric that Khrushchev and Bulganin espoused was such that would resonate more with the masses (and with left-leaning political figures and members of the press). In contrast to the United States which established military alliances with states surrounding India, Khrushchev and Bulganin spoke of helping India develop its industry and agriculture, initiatives that would help raise the standard of living of its citizens. The plea by India's conservative elites for the West to recognize that the real threat to India's capitalist system was internal revolution rather than international communism could not simply be answered in financial terms, but also contained a critical rhetorical aspect (image management and propaganda).

3.1. Political and Economic Rhetoric

After arriving in New Delhi, Bulganin declared that the Soviet Union was willing to share its "experience in the construction of industrial enterprises, electric power stations, hydro-projects and the utilisation of atomic energy for peaceful purposes" with India.⁷² Three days later in Nangal, Khrushchev maintained that "[w]e would rather stop production of hydrogen bombs and devote our time and energy to increase the output of milk, ploughs, tractors, and textiles. We also wish that the bombs we are making are never exploded."⁷³ In the November 25th issue of the *Times*, a front page story reported that "[t]he Russians are apparently willing to share their technical know-how and not merely loan the services of their experts to undertake certain projects. They are also

⁷¹ "U.S. Aid In Asia Not Publicised," *The Times of India*, 30 November 1955, 8.

⁷² "M. Bulganin Hails India's Fight For World Peace," *The Times of India*, 20 November 1955, 9.

⁷³ "Development of Indian Industry," *The Times of India*, 23 November 1955, 9.

believed to be willing to offer credit for heavy equipment and other items purchased by India."⁷⁴ Khrushchev and Bulganin's language advanced a activist message of aid and progress that contrasted rhetoric from American officials at the time that was often reactionary and centred on the containment and eradication of a "negative" (communism) rather than the advancement of a "positive" (development).

The "positive" message advanced by Khrushchev and Bulganin was a means to present the Soviet Union as a "friend" to India rather than a world power (i.e., a capitalist state) that was ostensibly more concerned about financial benefit rather than the welfare of the Indian people. Both the *Times* and the *Tribune* were resolute in their comments that any aid accepted from the Soviet Union would not be conditional upon any reciprocation by the Indian government, as the former declared that "Soviet assistance will not be accepted unless it is without strings, visible or invisible," while the latter affirmed that "[t]here is no question of accepting foreign aid with political strings attached to it."⁷⁵ As they toured the subcontinent, Khrushchev and Bulganin emphasized that the USSR was willing to provide technical assistance to India without any expectation of any political overtures in return.⁷⁶ The Soviet Union's willingness to aid India in the development of its industries and agriculture was not, they professed, a means to lure it into the communist sphere of influence (the Second World), but rather, was a product of a sincere desire to help a neighbouring state progress along the path of development. While such rhetoric was categorized as disingenuous political scheming by conservative Indian observers, it found a far more receptive audience among common people and a certain faction of the national press.

Khrushchev and Bulganin's affirmation of aid with "no strings attached" was part of a larger effort to present Soviet intentions to India as "disinterested and friendly" that was predicated on a public endorsement of Panchshila, five principles of peaceful co-

⁷⁴ "Indo-Soviet Trade May Increase," *The Times of India*, 25 November 1955, 1.

⁷⁵ "No Strings With Soviet Aid," *The Times Of India*, 25 November 1955, 7; "Foreign Capital," *The Tribune* 15 December 1955, 4.

⁷⁶ "Indo-Soviet Trade May Increase," *The Times of India*, 25 November 1955, 1; "No Compulsion For Soviet Ideas," *The Tribune*, 23 November 1955, 1; "No Strings With Soviet Aid," *The Times of India*, 25 November 1955, 7.

existence to govern relations between states.⁷⁷ In 1954, India and the People's Republic of China signed a treaty with the aim of "promoting trade and cultural intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and of facilitating pilgrimage and travel by the peoples of China and India."⁷⁸ The agreement was based on five principles:

- 1) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
- 2) mutual non-aggression
- 3) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs
- 4) equality and mutual benefit
- 5) peaceful co-existence⁷⁹

Nehru boldly asserted that "[i]f these principles were recognized in the mutual relations of all countries, then indeed there would hardly be any conflict and certainly no war."⁸⁰ Khrushchev and Bulganin's professed support for Panchshila was seen as remarkable because it seemed that a European power (and a "superpower" at that) had openly endorsed foreign policy formulated by a Third World (Asian) state. Panchshila was fundamental to India's non-aligned position in the Cold War balance of power. Soviet support of the former consequently carried the perception of being an endorsement of the latter, as evidenced in a November 24th *Tribune* editorial that proclaimed that the "Soviet Union fully subscribes to the principles of Panch Shila which provide the basis of Mr. Nehru's foreign policy."⁸¹ Another editorial in the newspaper declared that:

[...]acceptance by the Soviet Union of Panchshila is an acknowledgement of the fact that India has exercised a remarkable influence upon Soviet foreign policy. Instead of belittling India's influence and treating Indo-Soviet friendship as a snare for India, the Western Powers should welcome it because if the Communist states trust India they will be more amenable to her advice.⁸²

⁷⁷ "Aggressors Warned," *The Times of India*, 27 November 1955, 9.

⁷⁸ "United Nations Treaty Collection," accessed 24 July 2015, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20299/v299.pdf>

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches: March 1953-August 1957* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1958), 253.

⁸¹ "Russian Foreign Policy," *The Tribune*, 24 November 1955, 4.

⁸² "India and Russia," *The Tribune*, 21 November 1955, 4.

The Soviet leaders' ostensible endorsement of Indian foreign policy with respect to Panchshila resonated with the elites of a young nation-state who were eager to see India exert influence on the international stage. Khrushchev and Bulganin were thus able to present the Soviet Union both as a "disinterested friend" and as a "partner state" that respected and had sympathy for India's foreign policy.

The commentary in the *Tribune* reveals that Khrushchev and Bulganin's oratory on Panchshila was effective not just for the purpose of Soviet image management among certain Indian onlookers, but also as indirect criticism of the West. Rhetorical acknowledgement of India's international status (or instigating Indian elites to expect such status) had the additional effect of bringing attention to the fact that no such recognition had seemingly been accorded by the West. If the Soviet Union had made the considerable gesture of endorsing Panchshila, why then had the West not done the same? The answer, in the mind of the *Tribune's* anonymous critic and like-minded observers, was that the West did not recognize India's influence. Khrushchev encouraged this perception during an address at Rashtrapati Bhavan:

The U.S.S.R, the U.S.A, Great Britain, France and China are usually regarded as the great powers of the world. But if this is appraised objectively, then the question involuntarily arises as to why India is not counted as a great power. Evidently this happened because the colonisers wish to humiliate your state and your people. To recognise India as a great power means for them a changing of their positions.⁸³

Such a statement underscored the contrast between the Soviet Union (friend and partner) and the United States and its NATO allies, who entered into military alliances in South and Southeast Asia and the Middle East as the Soviets accused them of politically and economically exploiting these regions while believing themselves to be superior to the indigenous peoples who lived there (neo-colonialism).⁸⁴

⁸³ "Greatness of India & Her People," *The Tribune*, 15 December 1955, 5.

⁸⁴ "Remarks On Colonialism Provoke Mr. Khrushchev," *The Times of India*, 3 December 1955, 1; "Aid To Burma Promised," *The Times of India*, 5 December 1955, 7; "Complete Understanding of India's Constructive Efforts," *The Tribune*, 22 November 1955, 6; "Western Hysterics," *The Tribune*, 26 November 1955, 4; "Greatness of India & Her People," *The Tribune*, 15 December 1955, 5.

The breadth of the efficacy of Khrushchev and Bulganin's rhetorical tactics with respect to the endorsement of Panchshila was starkly made evident in the aforementioned November 24th *Tribune* editorial:

The Soviet Union shares India's views on racial equality and freedom for colonial peoples[...]Even the United States has not been able to speak with vigour against racial persecution and colonial rule. How can the Western Powers convince the peoples of Asia and Africa that they stand for freedom and equality when most of them are reluctant to relinquish power over other people and to recognise all races as equal partners in the world commonwealth?⁸⁵

The accent on race and equality (the notion that the Soviets supported equality while the West rejected it) in this commentary and in Khrushchev's remarks reveals that Soviet outreach was not just political and economic, but also cultural.

3.2. Cultural Rhetoric

Khrushchev and Bulganin publicly demonstrated an embrace of Indian customs and practices and by doing so conveyed that they did not see Russian (Western) culture to be superior to Indian (Eastern) culture and did not view their offices as leaders of the Soviet Union as being beyond the scope of those who were considered to be lesser strata of Indian society. While indulging in local customs and practices and mingling with "ordinary people" are now common strategies for cultivating a public image during state visits, the efforts of the two Soviets leaders to court the national press and win favour with the Indian people were ground-breaking at the time of their trip. Khrushchev and Bulganin's predecessor Joseph Stalin seldom travelled outside of the Soviet Union. U.S. President Eisenhower had travelled out of the country only four times (Mexico, Canada, Britain and Switzerland) since taking office in January of 1953, while his predecessor Truman left the country on only four occasions (all within the Americas and Europe)

⁸⁵ "Russian Foreign Policy," *The Tribune*, 24 November 1955, 4.

during his nearly eight years in office from 1945 to 1953.⁸⁶ It can thus be suggested that Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit to India was quite a pioneering public relations exercise aimed to win the "hearts and minds" of Third World citizens.

Khrushchev and Bulganin sought to convey respect for Indian culture to their audience. The Soviet leaders' use of cultural rhetoric as part of their goodwill overtures was evident on the front page of the November 24th edition of the *Times* that featured them wearing garlands around their necks along with "Gandhi caps" on their heads (Figure 2).⁸⁷

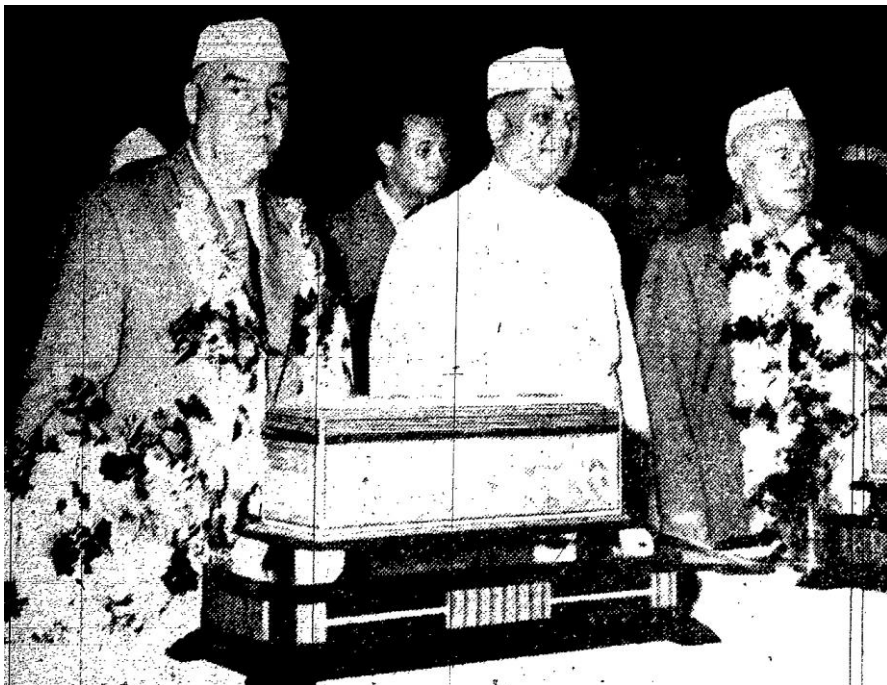


Figure 2. Gandhi Caps And Garlands

Source: *The Times of India*, 24 November 1955, 1.

⁸⁶ "Travels of President Dwight D. Eisenhower," U.S. Department of State, accessed 24 July 2015, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president/eisenhower-dwight-d>; "Travels of President Harry S. Truman," U.S. Department of State, accessed 24 July 2015, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president/truman-harry-s>.

⁸⁷ Garlands are part of ritual and traditional in India. They are placed around a person's neck (or on a statue of a deity) as a blessing. "Gandhi caps" are white hats made of hand-spun cloth that were popularized during the Indian independence movement by Mohandas Gandhi. They were commonly worn by other independence movement leaders and it became traditional for leaders of independent India to wear them (Prime Minister Nehru and President Prasad normally wore them during public appearances).

Such imagery must have resonated with the Indian people for whom these gestures held meaning both in a personal and public (nation-state) context. Being non-textual, it was able to communicate to the illiterate masses unable to read the transcript of a speech in a newspaper. Regardless of whether someone was able to read a newspaper or even purchase one, the image of Khrushchev and Bulganin on the front page was accessible to anybody walking down the street and passing by a child selling copies of the *Times* or finding a copy in the back of a rickshaw or on a bus. The November 22nd issue included a front page picture of Bulganin with his hands raised and pressed together in a *namaste* gesture (Figure 3)⁸⁸.



Figure 3. Marshal Bulganin Responds

Source: *The Times of India*, 22 November 1955, 1.

Both Khrushchev and Bulganin used the greeting often during their tour of India and it was another act that went beyond politics and economics to suggest that the two Soviet leaders identified with Indians as people. This appeal to a common humanity contributed to Soviet rhetoric that the USSR accepted the equality of all peoples around the world while the Western powers failed to do so. No American president or British

⁸⁸ *Namaste* is an Indian (Hindu) greeting that is commonly translated as "I bow to you."

prime minister had travelled to India and immersed himself in its cultural rituals and traditions. The notion of U.S. President Eisenhower or British Prime Minister Anthony Eden donning a "Gandhi cap" or raising and pressing their hands together in a *namaste* gesture towards a Third World leader was not conceivable given the history of diplomatic relations between the First World and newly independent Asian and African states up to that point. The effect of Khrushchev and Bulganin's unparalleled willingness to adopt Indian rites and customs as a means to signal "disinterested friendship" to masses was indicated in a *Times* cover page story that observed that "[v]illagers, workers and petty shopkeepers are charmed by the way he [Khrushchev] and the Soviet Premier fold their hands and say 'namaste.'⁸⁹ The large crowds that gathered to greet the two Soviet leaders as they travelled across the country shouted "Hindi Russi bhai bhai" (Indians and Russians are brothers) as a gesture of reciprocation for the ostensible graciousness of the visitors. Khrushchev used culture to appeal to Indian sensibilities more forthrightly when he "said the literature and the art of the people of India, the high level of culture as shown in the numerous historical monuments and the talent of the Indian people all spoke of the greatness of India and her people."⁹⁰

While Khrushchev and Bulganin made gestures to convey that the Soviet Union accepted Indian culture as legitimate and valuable, some of their words and actions suggested a more Orientalist attitude towards Indian society. In addition to the picture of the two Soviet leaders wearing garlands and "Gandhi caps," the November 24th cover page of the *Times* also featured a story with the headline: "Mr. Bulganin Rides An Elephant - Says Old Dream Is Fulfilled." A similar themed story appeared four days later, bearing the headline: "Garlanded By Jumbo - Soviet Premier Pleased." The *Times* reported that:

Jumbo, the famed elephant from Mysore's stable, today won all hearts at a banquet held in honour of the Soviet leaders when, amidst 3,000 guests, it garlanded Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev with graceful movement of its trunk. Mr. Bulganin, who had realised a 20-year old wish

⁸⁹ "Mr. Khrushchev A 'Hit' With People," *The Times*, 29 November 1955, 1.

⁹⁰ "Greatness of India & Her People," *The Tribune*, 15 December 1955, 5..

by riding an elephant in the Naini Tal Tarai, declared: "This is a pleasure I could have never dreamed of."⁹¹

The front page of the November 26th issue included a photo of Khrushchev and Bulganin with a tiger cub that had been gifted to the latter while visiting the city of Rudrapur (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Gift To Mr. Bulganin

Source: *The Times of India* 26 November 1955, 1.

These publicity acts reveal that the Soviet visitors adopted cultural rhetoric that was at times novel in its departure from conventional European and American notions about "the East" as the "other" (as Khrushchev and Bulganin won favour among the masses by adopting Indian rituals and traditions), and was at other times consistent with Western fantasies about India as an exotic land (fantasies that Indian officials themselves indulged in as part of their parallel effort to court the Soviets).

Both manners of expression can be seen as part of a Soviet effort to court Asian states by rejecting the idea that a figurative line exists between "the East" and "the

⁹¹ "Garlanded By Jumbo," *The Times*, 28 November 1955, 5.

West." The December 8th edition of the *Tribune* included a report about a Radio Moscow commentary on East-West relations:

The success of the Soviet leaders' visit to India and Burma has "once and for all exploded the Kipling myth about the East and West never being able to meet," Moscow radio said. In the West, the radio said, there were some persons who had their own peculiar slant on significant international events and their own yardsticks for appraising. "Such men belong to the category of people described by Chekhov (Russian writer) as living in padded cases, and are unable to understand what is happening in Asia." In the vast territory of Eurasia, three great powers - the Soviet Union, the Chinese Peoples Republic and the Indian Republic - have established among themselves "good friendship and understanding[...]. The friendship between these three countries is one of the essential factors for consolidating peace in Asia, in the whole East, and throughout the world."⁹²

The language (e.g., "three great powers," "in the whole East") used in this commentary reveals that, not only did the Soviet Union maintain that there were no cultural barriers between itself and Asia, but also argued that it was itself an Asian power in its own right (despite the fact that its population was largely located in Europe). Its geographic continuity with Asian states facilitated the assertion that the West (being distant) could not understand the situation in Asia and accordingly should not be involved in the affairs of "the East." The Soviet Union thus portrayed itself as a partner to its fellow Asian powers in contrast to "foreign" powers (i.e., the West). These tactics capitalized on the ambiguity of the terms "the East" and "the West." When maintaining that no cultural barrier existed between "the East" and "the West," the Soviets deemed "the East" to be Asia and "the West" to be the USSR (and perhaps its satellite states in Eastern Europe). When asserting that the Soviet Union was an Asian power, they imagined "the East" as Asia and "the West" as the United States and its NATO allies. Khrushchev and Bulganin were hence able to exploit equivocal language in order to articulate dissimilar concepts.

⁹² "Kipling Myth Exploded," *The Tribune*, 8 December 1955, 6.

3.3. Nikita Khrushchev Takes Centre Stage.

Essential to the effectiveness of Soviet rhetoric to court the Indian masses was the persona of Khrushchev. In contrast to the landed gentry pedigree of British Prime Minister Eden and U.S. President Eisenhower's comfortable middle-class upbringing, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was born and raised in a peasant village near the Russian-Ukrainian border and had only four years of formal schooling. Khrushchev's rise from humble origins to become leader of the USSR was a result of (and triumph for) the Soviet system of advancement by merit that ostensibly was a contrast to the malfeasance associated with Czarist Russia. While Khrushchev's lack of education and pedigree was a source of insecurity, he also used it to his advantage during his travels abroad. By accentuating his lowly family background and scorning educated elites (i.e., the West), Khrushchev was able to win favour with the masses who empathized with (and were inspired by) his personal narrative. His trip to India in 1955 can be seen as a juncture when this tactic reached its full formation.⁹³

Before and in the days after Khrushchev and Bulganin arrived in India, the attention of the national press was primarily directed towards the latter. While both men held legitimate titles as Soviet leader (First Secretary of the Communist Party and Premier, respectively), Indian observers deemed Bulganin to be the principal representative for the USSR. The front page of the November 19th issue of the *Times* detailed the arrival of the Soviet leaders in New Delhi the previous day and included excerpts from Bulganin's speech at the airport while no comments from Khrushchev appeared throughout the paper. An article on a later page reported on the particulars of a civic reception to be held later that day in honour of both Khrushchev and Bulganin, but omitted the former from the headline that proclaimed: "Grand Civic Reception For Mr. Bulganin Today."⁹⁴ The cover of the November 21st edition of the *Times* featured a story in anticipation of the Soviet leaders' visit to the Indian Parliament later that day. While both Bulganin and Khrushchev were expected to deliver speeches, the article (with the headline "Major Soviet Policy Speech Likely Today - Bulganin's Address To

⁹³ Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era*, 18-44.

⁹⁴ "Grand Civic Reception For Bulganin Today," *The Times of India*, 19 November 1955, 9.

Parliament) neglected to mention that Khrushchev would also be speaking.⁹⁵ On the same page was a picture of Bulganin hand-delivering a personal letter from the Soviet head of state,⁹⁶ Kliment Voroshilov, to Indian President Rajendra Prasad, further enhancing the perception of him as the primary envoy for the USSR.⁹⁷ The front page of the *Tribune* on the same day featured a picture of Bulganin meeting with municipal officials at the civic reception in New Delhi while no such image of Khrushchev was included.⁹⁸ The *Times* continued to make Bulganin the focal point of its coverage after the two Soviet leaders made their respective addresses to the Indian Parliament, as its November 22nd cover page included the headline: "West Dissipating 'Geneva Spirit' - Bulganin's Address To Parliament."⁹⁹ In addition to affording eminence to Bulganin's speech, the front page also included a picture of the Soviet Premier with President Prasad at a reception held at Rashtrapati Bhavan two evenings earlier. While the reception was held in honour of both Khrushchev and Bulganin, the caption for the photograph referred to "the reception held in his [Bulganin's] honour and that of other visiting Soviet leaders," thereby relegating Khrushchev to a supporting role.¹⁰⁰ The caption for a picture of Bulganin and Indira Gandhi later in the same issue simply referred to a reception held in honour of Bulganin.¹⁰¹

As Khrushchev and Bulganin toured India during the subsequent weeks, a gradual shift emerged in regard to the coverage of the two Soviet leaders in the national press. Khrushchev increasingly became the focal point of newspaper stories as he was able to use his seemingly unpretentious character and humour (which he sought to associate with his modest upbringing) to endear himself to the masses. The November 26th issue of the *Times* included an example of this approach in its report of his and Bulganin's visit to paddy fields near Poona:

⁹⁵ "Major Soviet Policy Speech Likely Today," *The Times of India*, 21 November 1955, 1.

⁹⁶ The head of state of the Soviet Union was the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. It was a largely ceremonial position with little actual authority.

⁹⁷ "Letter From Soviet President," *The Times of India*, 21 November 1955, 1.

⁹⁸ "Civic Reception To Soviet Leaders In Delhi," *The Tribune*, 21 November 1955, 1.

⁹⁹ "West Dissipating Geneva Spirit," *The Times of India*, 22 November 1955, 1.

¹⁰⁰ "Marshal Bulganin Responds," *The Times of India*, 22 November 1955, 1.

¹⁰¹ "M. Bulganin Greets Mrs. Gandhi," *The Times of India*, 22 November 1955, 9.

Mr. Khrushchev walked into the muddy field, took a sickle and cut a few sheaves of ripening paddy. A peasant joined him. 'Would you accept me as your co-worker?' Mr. Khrushchev asked the farmer who neither understood Russian nor the English of the interpreter and could not reply. The question was eventually translated into Marathi and answered in the affirmative.¹⁰²

Khrushchev's willingness to walk into the muddy field and talk to the peasant conveyed that he (having become First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) did not see himself above such acts. He had been a labourer himself and thereby looked at the peasant as an equal (as suggested by his offer to become his co-worker). Khrushchev later made an overt reference to his personal history when he declared: "I know what it means to work for other people. I am one of you. I worked in mines for France, Britain and Germany and so I know what benefit we get by working for others."¹⁰³ In addition to facilitating personal rapport with those he encountered during his tour around the country, his allusions to his modest upbringing was also a signal of the commitment to equality professed by the Soviet Union as a contrast to the supposed disparity of the West.

The front page of the November 28th edition of the *Times* featured another example of Khrushchev using his reported modesty to appeal to the masses:

Mr. Khrushchev asked a four-year-old boy at an areca-nut farm today what would he like to become when grew up. The boy was too shy to reply. So the Soviet Communist leader told the story of a Russian boy who wanted to be a tram conductor because he would not have to pay any fare for his ride.¹⁰⁴

While Khrushchev's contact with the child offered a public relations opportunity by demonstrating personal rapport, his anecdote was intended to convey a greater meaning to those observing. As previously stated, Khrushchev articulated an imperative for India to develop its industries and agriculture in order to raise the standard of living of its citizens and to preserve its sovereignty. He stressed the need for its rural

¹⁰² "Mr. Khrushchev Discusses Paddy Problems," *The Times of India*, 26 November 1955, 7.

¹⁰³ "Aid To Burma Promised," *The Times of India*, 5 December 1955, 7.

¹⁰⁴ "Mr. Bulganin Has Hair Cut & Rest," *The Times of India*, 28 November 1955, 1.

population (a substantial majority of the total population of the country) to adapt to and adopt technological innovations of the present-day. Khrushchev's story was a personification of these assertions: if India was to follow the path of development as prescribed by the USSR, then a small Indian child on a farm could aspire to and realize a future like his Russian counterpart. The decision to use the occupation of a "tram conductor" is noteworthy as it represented mechanization and the development of industry (railways). Rather than attempt to explicate abstract economic theory that was beyond the grasp of the masses that he sought to reach, Khrushchev narrated a simple story to a small child to communicate how the Soviet model of development could help children all across India. He realized that it was inconsequential whether or not an individual had a detailed understanding of socialism, as the belief that it offered his or her child a greater opportunity for the future was the means by which to advance its appeal.

Khrushchev again used his outwardly unassuming disposition to gain the sympathies of the most disadvantaged (and most populous) citizens of India and advance the appeal of socialism when he and Bulganin visited a village in Punjab. He said "they were glad that they were the guests of the peasants of India" and told his hosts:

In the Soviet Union, it has been proved that when peasants get political power in their own hands they are able to develop mentally, spiritually and physically. Thousands and thousands of peasants in our country have received college education and many of them have become professors, inventors and discovers. Our farmers have chosen the path of collectivisation of agriculture. This gave them the chance to study and improve themselves spiritually and culturally[...]There is only one way for peasants and farmers to have opportunities for study. That is by mechanisation of agricultural production. When you have machines, you get time for reading and writing.¹⁰⁵

Once more, Khrushchev cultivated personal rapport with his audience by speaking directly to the peasants (as equals) in their own surroundings. While he offered them a plan to raise themselves out of their current plight, the benefit that the Soviet Union

¹⁰⁵ "Soviet Leaders Visit Sonapat Area," *The Tribune*, 13 December 1955, 10.

would reap from its execution suggested an impetus greater than just "disinterested friendship." The machines that would allow peasants more time for reading and writing (enabling them to gain a college education and become professionals and political leaders) would be purchased from the USSR or built in Indian factories financed by Soviet loans and constructed with the assistance of Soviet advisors. Collectivization, the other essential component for allowing peasants more time for reading and writing, would be a public relations coup for the Soviet Union and its economic system. While the Soviets' outward commitment to aid with "no strings attached" and "non-interference" did not allow Khrushchev to advocate for collectivization while speaking to Nehru and other political leaders who were ideologically opposed to it, he was able to suggest its value to peasants (the masses) whose paramount concern was to improve their standard of living. Indian elites had a different perspective. They perceived the spread of the appeal of Soviet-style collectivization among the country's most destitute citizens as a threat to their power and the social stability of the country. Khrushchev's populism was a challenge to their hegemony.

3.4. Reaction to Nikita Khrushchev

The national press recognized and acknowledged Khrushchev's success in winning favour with the masses. The cover page of the November 29th issue of the *Times* featured a headline that proclaimed: "Mr. Khrushchev a 'Hit' With People." The accompanying article observed:

They seem to like Mr. Khrushchev's cherubic smile, his bonhomie, and his passion for informal clothes lately manifest in a noticeable partiality for an embroidered Ukrainian shirt[...]Mr. Khrushchev has also achieved considerable personal popularity with the minor technicians and workmen at the factories and projects the delegation visited.¹⁰⁶

While conceding that Khrushchev was an appealing man to many ordinary Indians, the *Times* questioned his authenticity. The same article also commented: "On the public platform, Mr. Khrushchev combines the manners of a demagogue and an agitator; his

¹⁰⁶ "Mr. Khrushchev A 'Hit' With People," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 1.

considerable gift for rhetoric does not suffer much by translation."¹⁰⁷ In a December 8th editorial, "Onlooker" contended that "Mr. Khrushchev is more than the ebullient extrovert he appears to be. He is a vastly clever and a grimly determined man."¹⁰⁸ There was thus a schism between how the Indian masses and pro-capitalist elites responded to Khrushchev. As the *Times* observed: "He seems to have created discernibly different impressions on the masses and the intelligentsia."¹⁰⁹

The realization of Khrushchev's adeptness with respect to Soviet image management was also beginning to evoke a response from onlookers in the United States. The November 25th edition of the *Tribune* printed cautionary excerpts from the *New York Herald Tribune*:

That Russia openly recognises the neutralist states as fertile fields for its diplomacy is a challenge to the free world to meet this threat with statesmanship. There is still a war of ideas underway, a battle against hunger in many parts of the earth, a need for help in developing resources. The United States, facing this challenge, can well afford to re-examine the scale and scope of its foreign economic policy.¹¹⁰

The November 29th issue included extracts from the *New York Times*: "[W]e must look to our own salesmanship -- in our diplomacy, in our trade policies, in our giving and lending, in our technical assistance programmes, in our attitude towards other nations and particularly towards the coloured races."¹¹¹ The November 29th edition of the *Times* alluded to comments by former United States Ambassador to India Chester B. Bowles, who served during both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, that "in the world struggle, the Soviet leaders have seized the initiative and[...]Americans must meet the 'new challenge' on the economic front and not merely on the military front."¹¹² Khrushchev's tactics and triumph in winning the "hearts and minds" of the Indian people

¹⁰⁷ "Mr. Khrushchev A 'Hit' With People," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 1; "Soviet Leader's Speech," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 7.

¹⁰⁸ "Through Indian Eyes - Are There More Than Two Blocs?" *The Times of India*, 1 December 1955, 8.

¹⁰⁹ "Mr. Khrushchev A 'Hit' With People," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 1.

¹¹⁰ "American Press Perturbed," *The Tribune*, 25 November 1955, 5.

¹¹¹ "Nehru -- Last Man To Be Fooled," *The Tribune*, 29 November 1955, 5.

¹¹² "Concern In U.S. At India's Welcome To Russians," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 8.

had resulted in the realization, among some American observers, that the United States had to alter its strategy in the Third World (premised on the formation of military alliances) and adopt a more holistic approach. While Khrushchev was enjoying success in public relations with the masses, succeeding events would result in greater criticism from the national press that would his endanger diplomatic gains.

Chapter 4.

Your Anti-Colonialism, Our Anti-Colonialism

Having considered the respective messages that Indian elites and the Soviets sought to convey and the methods they used to advance them, I will now examine particular issues that were prominent in the public discourse during Khrushchev and Bulganin's trip. This chapter will analyze Indian and Soviet rhetoric with respect to nuclear weapons, anti-colonialism, Goa, and Kashmir. In doing so, it will reveal how Indian elites incisively responded to Soviet rhetoric as a means to advance their own domestic and foreign aims.

Nikita Khrushchev was able to gain the sympathies of Indians with a seemingly unassuming manner that served to develop rapport with the peasants and workers who greeted him and Nikolai Bulganin as they toured the country. While some observers in the national press begrudgingly acknowledged his success in courting ordinary citizens, there was growing concern among the more conservative elites about the effect that continued "hearts and minds" diplomacy could have. In the December 8th issue of the *Times*, "Onlooker" exclaimed: "Blessed are the uses of publicity which Russia appears to have mastered!"¹¹³ He observed that the Soviets "are adroitly attempting to land the Indian whale on their side of the river bank as against the western bank. In the process the third area which constitutes the independent river is being rapidly silted up."¹¹⁴ The conservatives faced a dilemma. Open criticism of Khrushchev's rhetoric on aiding underprivileged peasants and workers to raise their standard of living and offer their children a more promising future was problematic from a public relations perspective (as it would alienate millions of Indians who sought to realize such aims). Consequently, his

¹¹³ "Through Indian Eyes - Are There More Than Two Blocs," *The Times of India*, 1 December 1955, 8.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

critics in the Indian national press and in the West were left with little recourse other than to claim that his overtures to the Indian masses were disingenuous as they were part of a ploy to manipulate the poor and the idealistic with the aim of bringing non-aligned states into the Soviet sphere of influence.

This line of argument attracted rebuke from some Indian observers who asserted that it contributed to continued corrosion of relations between the West and the Soviet Union. While delivering the convocation address at the University of Delhi on November 26th, elder statesman Chakravarti Rajagopalachari¹¹⁵ expressed his disappointment at how the American and British press had reacted to Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit to India: "Frowns were disliked, now smiles are suspected and caricatured. Sphinx faces, the only other alternative, were always disliked. It is tragic the way the West is going."¹¹⁶ The November 24th edition of the *Tribune* featured an editorial that declared: "There is no denying the fact that Russian foreign policy during recent years has been definitely conciliatory and that the perceptible improvement in the international situation is due in no small measure to the efforts of Soviet diplomacy."¹¹⁷ The commentary went on to claim that "[i]f no progress has been made in the negotiations to achieve agreement[...]the reason is that the Great Powers have not yet been able to overcome mutual fears and suspicions."¹¹⁸ An editorial in the December 2nd issue of the newspaper conveyed a more pragmatic response to Western commentators' contention that Khrushchev's overtures to Indians were disingenuous: "The United States may not believe in the *bona fides* of Russia. She may think that the Soviet leaders are not honest in what they say. But she cannot ignore the reality. The Soviet Union is one of the two [most] powerful nations of the world."¹¹⁹ Thus, a constructive relationship with the Soviet Union was critical to a self-professed non-aligned state like India, and Indian observers sympathetic to the USSR were accordingly able to counter assertions that Soviet interest

¹¹⁵ Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1878-1972) was a leader of the Indian independence movement and later served as Governor of West Bengal (1947-1948), Governor-General of India (1948-1950), Minister of Home Affairs (1950-1951), and Chief Minister of Madras (1952-1954).

¹¹⁶ "C.R.' Asks West To Trust Russian Gesture," *The Times of India*, 27 November 1955, 10.

¹¹⁷ "Russian Foreign Policy," *The Tribune*, 24 November 1955, 4.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ "Tests In Nuclear Weapons," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 4.

in India had ulterior motives. They portrayed the claims that overtures of "disinterested friendship" by Khrushchev and Bulganin were disingenuous as counterproductive to the diplomatic efforts necessary to alleviate Cold War tensions and realize peaceful coexistence globally. While they were able to advocate for the Soviet visitors when the latter were confronted by critics in the United States and Britain, comments made by Khrushchev during the ensuing days would challenge their capacity to champion the cause of the Soviet leader as he launched a verbal offensive against states (i.e., the West) that were an ostensible danger to the sovereignty of Third World countries.

4.1. Nuclear Weapons

Regulation of the development of nuclear weapons and disarmament had been a primary concern in the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union ever since the dropping of American atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 had brought about the conclusion of the Second World War by compelling Japan to surrender. The Soviet Union had gathered intelligence on the Manhattan Project (the American led effort to research and develop an atomic bomb during the war) and its own project led to the detonation of an atomic bomb in 1949. Thermonuclear [hydrogen] bombs several hundred times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were successfully tested by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1952 and 1953, respectively. Negotiations between the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and France for an agreement on nuclear disarmament collapsed at the July 1955 Geneva Summit when U.S. President Eisenhower maintained that any deal had to include aerial surveillance of American and Soviet nuclear arsenals to ensure that both superpowers were in compliance with its stipulations.¹²⁰

Khrushchev criticized Eisenhower's condition for an agreement at a civic reception at Bangalore on November 27th:

¹²⁰ Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of The Cold War, Volume I*, 130, 383-384. For an account of the Soviet Union's development of a nuclear bomb, see Valislav M. Zubok and Konstantin Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 138-173.

If we concede the Western demand, Soviet planes will be free to fly over and photograph American territory and vice versa. What will we see? A few hamlets, some factories, perhaps some aerodromes. When we know the number of aerodromes in the United States, we shall try to equalise. Or they may do the same. It would eventually lead to an armaments race.¹²¹

Khrushchev and Bulganin both affirmed the Soviet Union's commitment to disarmament. Khrushchev declared that "[w]e are fighting for a ban on armaments, for a ban on atomic and hydrogen weapons" while speaking at civic address in Calcutta on November 30th, while Bulganin (speaking in the Indian Parliament on November 21st) maintained that "the Soviet Union has always been and remains a supporter of disarmament and of complete prohibition of nuclear weapons."¹²² Both leaders also contended that the lack of progress on their stated aims for disarmament was a consequence of hindrance from the West. Khrushchev followed his avowal of the Soviet Union's commitment to disarmament by claiming that the West "did not want it (ban on atomic weapons) because monopolists are profiting from the arms race. They do not want it because they want to compel us to allocate more money for the armaments so that we may not be able to help other countries of lower economic development."¹²³ Bulganin went on to tell the Indian Parliament (and those who would later read a transcription of his address) that:

To our profound regret, our efforts to shift the question of disarmament and the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons out of the deadlock have not yet led to positive results. The United States, Britain and France have, in effect, rejected what they themselves proposed at the beginning of the year. We have to note that in the question of disarmament the Western Powers are regressing, retreating from their former positions, with their new proposals throwing the problem of disarmament a good ten years back.¹²⁴

Khrushchev and Bulganin's rhetoric on nuclear weapons while in India was tailored to the two essential facets of the foreign policy of Indian Prime Minister

¹²¹ "New Soviet Bomb Is Devastating," *The Times of India*, 27 November 1955, 1.

¹²² "Need To 'Compel' West To Ban A-Weapons," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 5; "Complete Understanding Of India's Constructive Efforts," *The Tribune*, 22 November 1955, 6.

¹²³ "Need To 'Compel' West To Ban A-Weapons," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 5.

¹²⁴ Bulganin and Khrushchev, *Visit To India*, 16.

Jawaharlal Nehru and his Indian National Congress government. The stated Soviet aim of disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons was in harmony with Nehru's rhetorical dedication to peaceful co-existence and the settlement of international disputes without resorting to arms. Khrushchev and Bulganin's articulation of the USSR's commitment to disarmament drew praise from some Indian observers who called on the West to reciprocate.¹²⁵ The aforementioned editorial in the December 2nd edition of the *Tribune* surmised:

When the prospects of agreement on disarmament are gloomy, an agreement on stopping further tests in nuclear weapons can at least be reached, particularly when the Soviet Union has made the offer on its own initiative. The rejection or rather non-acceptance of that offer will not be wise."¹²⁶

A shared pledge for disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons was included in the joint Indo-Soviet statement released at the conclusion of Khrushchev and Bulganin's visit:

In order to establish world peace and to eliminate conditions leading to the inconceivable disaster of another world war, there is no course open but that of disarmament. Increasing or even continuing the present scale of armaments is a constant invitation to war and leads to fear and a competition in the production of the latest type of weapons for mass destruction.¹²⁷

While Soviet rhetoric on disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons was in accord with India's commitment to peaceful coexistence and resulted in a public relations triumph, Khrushchev's comments on nuclear weapons with respect to non-alignment, the other essential facet of Indian foreign policy, resulted in rebuke that jeopardized the gains he had made with some onlookers. As previously stated, Nehru denounced "rival camps and groups and military blocks and alliances" while welcoming Khrushchev and Bulganin in New Delhi. India's policy of non-alignment had resulted in its encirclement by military alliances formed by the United States and the United

¹²⁵ "Accept Soviet Plan On Nuclear Weapons," *The Tribune*, 27 November 1955, 5.

¹²⁶ "Tests In Nuclear Weapons," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 4.

¹²⁷ "Text Of Joint Statement," *The Tribune*, 14 December 1955, 6.

Kingdom (MEDO, SEATO, METO). A commentary in the December 12th issue of the *Tribune* conveyed the growing concern about military alliances among Indian elites:

Military alliances are creating great difficulties for neutral states. India is determined not be drawn into alliances or to be involved in any war. But, as Mr. Menon¹²⁸ has pointed out, she is surrounded by nations which are signatories to military pacts and which are building up big armies. India has every reason to resent the formation of alliances like SEATO and the Baghdad Pact [METO] which are dominated by Powers which do not belong to the regions covered by these alliances.¹²⁹

Khrushchev echoed such remarks as he condemned military alliances and declared that "[b]oth of us [the Soviet Union and India] are against military blocs or military alliances."¹³⁰ While his criticism of military alliances was in concurrence with observers in the national press and the Nehru government, his attempt to use growing concern about such pacts to further his denigration of the West suggests a miscalculation. Khrushchev suggested that the existence of military alliances formed by the United States and the United Kingdom around the borders of India was evidence that its sovereignty (and the sovereignty of other non-aligned states) was in danger of being subverted by the West. Such a threat, in his view, necessitated that the Soviet Union retain some of its nuclear arsenal. Speaking at a luncheon hosted by the Governor of Punjab in Nangal on November 22nd, Khrushchev compared India's circumstance in 1955 to that of Russia in 1917, as he spoke of how the "young Soviet state" had to "arm in self-defence." against an alliance of hostile states that included the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.¹³¹ He stated that "a young nation, like the saplings on the highways in India, had to be protected."¹³² Khrushchev heightened the intensity of his language when he cautioned enemies of the Soviet Union to "remember the fate of Hitler" and conveyed an

¹²⁸ Vengalil Krishnan Krishna Menon (commonly referred to as V. K. Krishna Menon) served as India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom (1947-1952), Ambassador to the United Nations (1952 to 1962), and Minister of Defence (1957-1962).

¹²⁹ "Military Alliances," *The Tribune*, 12 December 1955, 4.

¹³⁰ "Co-Fighters For Peace," *The Tribune*, 11 December 1955, 1; "Khrushchev Says Kashmir's Fate Is Decided," *The Times of India*, 11 December 1955, 1; "Imperialistic Powers Exploiting Kashmir Situation," *The Tribune*, 12 December 1955, 5.

¹³¹ "Development Of Indian Industry," *The Times Of India*, 23 November 1955, 9.

¹³² *Ibid.*

adage featuring a Russian prince who had said that "anyone who comes to the country with the sword will perish by it."¹³³

Khrushchev's rhetoric on the retention of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to possible aggression from the West became more controversial when, speaking at a civic reception in Bangalore on November 26th, he revealed that the Soviet Union had successfully tested a new, more powerful, thermonuclear bomb. Khrushchev vowed that the USSR would never instigate a conflict involving nuclear weapons, but declared that its scientists were "experimenting with the problems of achieving maximum results with the minimum of atomic power" and it would "keep its atomic pile so that it might have a sobering effect on those who wanted to unleash war."¹³⁴ He further attempted to justify the Soviet Union's continued retention and development of nuclear weapons when he reasoned: "When you live in Rome, do as the Romans do. And of course, if they [the West] do not want to ban atomic and hydrogen weapons, if they do not want to give their word not to use it, we have to do the same."¹³⁵ Speaking in Rangoon on December 6th after he and Bulganin traversed into Burma before returning to India, Khrushchev maintained a similar line of reasoning: "We cannot disarm unilaterally when Western powers are increasing their armaments. It would have been stupid if we found ourselves powerless before aggressive forces, if we are not able to curb the insane attempts of imperialists to unleash a new war."¹³⁶

Khrushchev's comments on the need to retain and develop nuclear weapons as a counter to potential encroachment by Soviet enemies extracted a stinging rebuke from the Indian national press. Unlike previous occurrences during his trip, however, when observers more sympathetic to the Soviet Union had advocated for him when he endured criticism from more conservative commentators (e.g., his profession of aid with "no strings attached"), there was now a dearth of sympathy for Khrushchev's comments. Khrushchev's rhetorical support for India's policy of non-alignment in a manner that seemed to incite hostility towards the West came into tension with India's policy of

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ "New Soviet Bomb Is Devastating," *The Times of India*, 27 November 1955, 1.

¹³⁵ "Khrushchev's Speech At Bangalore," *The Tribune*, 27 November 1955, 6.

¹³⁶ "Khrushchev Condemns Unlawful Hold By Portugal," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 10.

peaceful co-existence which the Soviet leader had endorsed with his seeming commitment to disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In an editorial in the November 28th edition of the *Times*, "Surveyor" branded Khrushchev a "bazaar salesman" as he reproached the duplicity of the Soviet leader:

When Mr. Khrushchev disclosed that an atomic explosion of an equivalent of a million tons of TNT had been achieved in the Soviet Union he could not have wished that the Soviet tour should be overshadowed by this latest and most impressive evidence of Russian power. Yet that is likely to be the result of, in a sense, juxtaposing one million tons of TNT and the Panchshila. Believing in the principle of a peaceful settlement of international differences the Soviet Union will nevertheless "continue to experiment with and perfect atomic and hydrogen bombs, jet aircraft and armaments of the latest types." Criticising the Western powers for seeking to "negotiate from strength" the Soviet Union nevertheless will retain its "atomic pile so that it might have a sobering effect on those who want to unleash war."¹³⁷

"Surveyor" continued his commentary on the Soviet Union's announcement of its successful test of a new thermonuclear bomb in the December 5th issue of the *Times*, as he asserted that "Moscow should have known that we in India are the last people to rejoice over a bomb that packs together several million tons of T.N.T."¹³⁸ Speaking in New York on November 27th, Indian Ambassador to the United Nations V. K. Krishna Menon stated that the Soviet test was "contrary to the current of peace."¹³⁹ While the hypocrisy evident in Khrushchev's rhetoric on nuclear weapons was sufficient grounds for the censure that he received from the national press, more meaningfully, his comments were at odds with India's philosophy on how to maintain sovereignty as a non-aligned state within the international (Cold War) balance of power. Khrushchev argued that a state's sovereignty could only be preserved if it retained sufficient arms (nuclear weapons) to deter or repel a military incursion. Indian leaders and observers in the press, however, believed that the means for a state to maintain its sovereignty was

¹³⁷ "The International Scene - Tactics From The Bazaar?" *The Times of India*, 28 November 1955, 6.

¹³⁸ "The International Scene - Un-British And Un-American," *The Times of India*, 5 December 1955, 6.

¹³⁹ "Contrary To Peace Current," *The Tribune*, 29 November 1955, 1.

to have all states disarm. This schism between Soviet and Indian attitudes about the utility of nuclear weapons was openly conveyed on December 1st when the Indian delegation at the United Nations in New York proposed a prohibition on all testing of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. The introduction of such a proposal only days after Khrushchev announced the successful test of the Soviet Union's new thermonuclear bomb and had articulated a case as to why continued testing was necessary, and while he and Bulganin were still touring India, was a stark indication that Indian elites had rejected his defense of the Soviet buildup of nuclear weaponry.

4.2. Anti-colonialism

While Khrushchev's effort to raise Indian suspicions about the West and gain favour for the Soviet Union using the rhetoric of nuclear weapons was ineffective, he was not deterred, as he continued his effort using instead the rhetoric of anti-colonialism. The USSR presented itself as a champion of freedom and social justice for peoples around the world who had been subjugated or continued to be subjugated by colonial powers in the West. Its anti-colonial rhetoric was directed not only against past and present European empires, but also against the United States, which, even if it lacked "formal" colonies, was accused of imperialism through economic exploitation (i.e., capitalism) and the aggressive formation of military alliances. As previously stated, Khrushchev and Bulganin referenced the history of Russia (its revolution and civil war) to suggest that that the people of the Soviet Union and India had a shared experience of being confronted by aggressive enemy states (i.e., the West) that sought to expropriate the freedom they had respectively achieved. While Khrushchev and Bulganin had earlier insinuated that Indians needed to be vigilant as their newly gained sovereignty was under threat from imperialists (e.g., during their address to the Indian Parliament), Khrushchev took direct aim at Britain during the latter part of their trip, as he invoked India's colonial past. The ensuing rebuke once again suggested that the Soviet leader had miscalculated the effect of his rhetoric on the Indian audience.

Khrushchev took pains to veil his criticisms of the West during most of the Soviet visit to India. Speaking in Nangal on November 22nd, he exhorted:

The Press and the leaders of some of these countries have warned you: 'Bulganin and Khrushchev are clever people. Deal with them carefully.' According to them, we are trying to dupe you and exploit you. I want to tell these people, if you want to compete in friendliness, why don't you do so?¹⁴⁰

He was similarly cryptic during his remarks in Bangalore on November 26th, when he declared that "I am not going to name any other state but if you just read the bourgeois papers, you will see what slander there is against our country," and in Calcutta on November 30th, when he claimed that "[w]e realise that certain circles of certain states are making such efforts [to sever the relationship between the Soviet Union and India]."¹⁴¹

The veil came off, however, as Khrushchev markedly escalated his criticism of the West while speaking in Rangoon on December 2nd during the detour to Burma. The Soviet leader asserted that "England did not exist as a country until William the Conqueror. Your temples are twice as old as theirs and yet they call you barbarians."¹⁴² He also stated that "[t]here are some very stupid people in America" and accused France of attempting to convince a Soviet architect returning from a tour of the United States to seek asylum while passing through Paris.¹⁴³ Two days later in Taunggyi, Khrushchev responded to the disappointment that his comments had evoked among some observers:

The Communist leader said that some press correspondents were not satisfied with his speeches in India and Burma, and added: "They will never be satisfied when I speak the truth. I said the English were robbing your people, not for raising your civilisation, but to bring their own civilisation to the colonies and to deprive you of your bread. So correspondents did not like it."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ "Khrushchev Challenges West Over India's Friendship," *The Tribune*, 23 November 1955, 1.

¹⁴¹ "Khrushchev's Strong Speech At Bangalore," *The Tribune*, 28 November 1955, 10; "Need For Closer Co-Operation," *The Tribune*, 1 December 1955, 1.

¹⁴² "Remarks On Colonialism Provoke Mr. Khrushchev," *The Times of India*, 3 December 1955, 1.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ "Aid To Burma Promised," *The Times of India*, 5 December 1955, 7.

The Indian national press responded to Khrushchev's anti-colonial rhetoric with forthright admonishment. Similar to the response to his comments on nuclear weapons, commentators who had been sympathetic to Khrushchev during previous occurrences throughout his trip were now silent. In the aforementioned editorial in the December 5th edition of the *Times*, "Surveyor" contended that:

Mr. Khrushchev displayed abysmal ignorance of the Asian mind. If they were ever treated like 'barbarians' the Burmese have no desire to be reminded of it[...]Moscow has yet to learn the first lesson of Bandung, a lesson which the western powers themselves might profitably note. This is that under no circumstances will the independent Asian powers allow themselves to deteriorate into cheap un-principled anti-western agitators. The strangest if most encouraging factor in Asia resurgent is that there is astonishingly little bitterness and hostility towards the west. There will be an unremitting campaign against colonialism but the utmost friendship with the west. This is the simple truth which Moscow has failed to grasp.¹⁴⁵

Five days later, another commentary in the *Times* surmised:

Mr. Nehru has repeatedly emphasised that Asia's anti-colonial campaign is directed against neither the West as a whole nor against any specific power. This is a point which the western democracies[...]and[...]the Soviet Union also have repeatedly failed to grasp, attributing to the anti-colonial Asian powers motives that have nothing to do with[...]human rights.¹⁴⁶

The *Tribune* also took aim at the Soviet rhetoric in a November 24th editorial that observed that "[t]hough she [the USSR] severely condemns colonialism, she has not surrendered the territorial gains made during the way or relinquished her control over East European states."¹⁴⁷

The reaction to Khrushchev's comments on Britain and colonialism by the Indian national press suggests that Khrushchev and Indian elites were using different definitions of anti-colonialism as they articulated their assertions. Nehru and other leaders of the Indian independence movement had used explicit anti-British (anti-

¹⁴⁵ "Un-British And Un-American," *The Times of India*, 5 December 1955, 6.

¹⁴⁶ "Anti-Colonialism," *The Times of India*, 10 December 1955, 6.

¹⁴⁷ "Russian Foreign Policy," *The Tribune*, 24 November 1955, 4.

Western) rhetoric to denounce colonialism when they struggled to gain freedom for the country. While Khrushchev (and other Soviet leaders) still understood anti-colonial attitudes in India to be predicated on the anti-British sentiment of the independence movement, Indian elites had meanwhile shifted their understanding of anti-colonialism from one that was rooted in hostility to colonial powers in the West to one that was associated with the policy of non-alignment. Indian observers and government spokesmen espoused the prerogative of every state to pursue its own path without interference from outside forces (non-alignment), but disengaged such rhetoric from criticism of the West and from the Cold War balance of power, as they articulated an anti-colonial policy that was not anti-Western and did not constitute a decision to side with either of the two superpowers. As previously stated, from the viewpoint of Indian elites, the policy of non-alignment also served to contain potential agitation by the destitute Indian masses who would find potential appeal in socialism. Reshaping the perception of anti-colonialism facilitated this agenda by elucidating the policy of non-alignment.

The ostensible lack of hostility towards Britain and its colonial legacy sensed by Indian elites can be appreciated through the experiences of Nehru. Nehru was educated at the University of Cambridge (1907-1910) and at the Inns of Court School of Law (now known as the City Law School) in London (1910-1912), where his political and economic outlook was shaped by British writers such as John Maynard Keynes and Bertrand Russell. Thus, while he entered into the independence movement upon his return to India in 1912, he was conscious of the constructive facets of British government and institutions.¹⁴⁸ In particular, Nehru was hopeful about the capacity of the British Commonwealth of Nations to facilitate the transition to a post-colonial world. An article in the December 6th issue of the *Times* reported on statements he made about the Commonwealth while addressing the Indian Parliament the day after Khrushchev lambasted Britain for suppressing and plundering its colonies:

The Prime Minister said that there were at present three Asian nations in the Commonwealth and an African nation was coming. He hoped that subsequent steps might bring into this association Singapore and Malaya.

¹⁴⁸ Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*, 7-61.

The whole character of the Commonwealth was changing from the world point of view and the racial point of view.¹⁴⁹

Speaking about his remarks the following day, Nehru observed:

Speaking yesterday in our Parliament[...]I mentioned that this link [the Commonwealth] was desirable from various points of view, including that of world peace and cooperation between independent nations[...]I described the dynamic and growing character of the Commonwealth and said that we hoped to welcome the Gold Coast as a full member of the Commonwealth in the near future. It will be a significant event to have a full African nation having equality of status in the Commonwealth as an independent country."¹⁵⁰

The national press echoed Nehru's estimation of the utility of the Commonwealth, as commentary by "Onlooker" in the November 24th edition of the *Times* articulated:

India's position in the Commonwealth gives her a status of peculiar vantage from which both Britain and India derive advantages and which in a sense lends an authoritative stamp to our policy of independence. The British Parliament might be the inclusive club in the world but the British Commonwealth is more exclusive and eclectic and distinctive in so far as Mr. Nehru might allow Mr. Strydom's shoulder to his. It is a peculiar fact which has always intrigued Onlooker that Indian public figures such as Mr. Krishna Menon and Mr. Panikkar whom many in the West mistakenly dub as anti-Western are among the most fervent upholders of the Commonwealth tie.¹⁵¹

Counter to the instincts of Khrushchev, Nehru and other Indian leaders, as well as commentators in the national press, did not perceive the Commonwealth as a means for Britain to keep intact an imperial hierarchy and continue to impose its will on its former colonies. To the contrary, they saw it as an opportunity to help eradicate the discrepancies of colonialism.¹⁵² In this vision, as more and more states in Asia and Africa gained their independence and joined the organization, the composition of the Commonwealth would change as countries from all over the world would sit alongside each other as equals. Although Khrushchev's effort to incite hostility towards the West

¹⁴⁹ "Mr. Nehru Condemns Baghdad Pact As Deplorable," *The Times of India*, 6 December 1955, 11.

¹⁵⁰ "Commonwealth Link Is Beneficial," *The Times of India*, 7 December 1955, 7.

¹⁵¹ "Significance Of The Soviet Visit," *The Times of India*, 24 November 1955, 6.

¹⁵² Brown, *Nehru*, 251-257.

and gain favour for the Soviet Union by invoking the spectre of India's British colonial past had been rebuffed (as had his rhetoric on nuclear weapons), the presence of another imperialist state on the subcontinent would offer him an opportunity to triumph again after his successive public relations blunders.

4.3. The Dulles-Cunha Statement

While Indian elites rebuked Khrushchev and Bulganin for their criticism of the United States, Britain, and France -- "countries with whom we have no basic quarrels" as "Onlooker" declared after the two leaders addressed the Indian Parliament -- they refrained from expressing disapproval and instead affirmed the Soviet guests when they condemned another Western state that was also a member of NATO. Portugal was the first colonial power to land on the subcontinent and was also the last remaining, as it continued to hold on to Goa (and the small enclaves of Daman and Diu) after the withdrawal of the British in 1947 and the French in 1954. Despite efforts by the Nehru government to negotiate a diplomatic resolution whereby the Portuguese holdings would be incorporated into the Indian state, António de Oliveira Salazar's authoritarian regime steadfastly maintained that Goa was an integral Portuguese province.

Bulganin expressed his thoughts on the dispute between India and Portugal over Goa while speaking in Madras on November 28th:

He said India and Russia were at the turning point of history. They were emerging from colonial rule. Colonialism has collapsed and was being relegated to the unreturnable past. But still there existed on the ancient soil of India the Portuguese territory of Goa. It was a matter of shame for civilised people that there were still some European nations which had not yet realised that colonialism was on the way out.¹⁵³

Khrushchev vividly added his voice to the conflict while speaking in Calcutta on November 30th:

¹⁵³ "Outstanding Statesman Of Our Time," *The Times of India*, 29 November 1955, 7.

There are some countries yet which like insects stick to the human body and are sucking its blood, and I have in mind Portugal, the country which does not want to leave Goa, the rightful territory of India, to its destiny. I am convinced that Goa will be liberated from foreign domination and it will enter the great Republic of India as its integral part.¹⁵⁴

Nehru followed Khrushchev's comments with words of caution aimed at the Portuguese leadership and the international community: "Let no one think that the question [of Goa] has been put in cold storage. The issue is a touchstone by which people's ideas and professions for freedom will be tested"¹⁵⁵

While his rhetoric on Portugal's continued hold on Goa helped Khrushchev to reverse some of the public relations setbacks he suffered as a result of his comments on nuclear weapons and the colonial legacy of Britain, subsequent happenings halfway around the world in Washington, D.C. served to exonerate his transgressions and bolster his criticism of the West. On December 3rd, United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and Portuguese Foreign Minister Paulo Cunha (who was in Washington, D.C. for a three day visit) responded to the disparaging statements that Khrushchev and Bulganin made about Western states during their tour of South Asia, as they issued a joint statement about the substance of their talks:

Various statements attributed to the Soviet rulers visiting in Asia, which included references to the policies of the Western Powers in the Far East and allegations concerning the Portuguese provinces in the Far East, were discussed by the two ministers. They considered that such statements do not represent a contribution to the cause of peace. The two Ministers whose countries embrace many peoples of many races deplored all efforts to foment hatred between the East and the West.¹⁵⁶

The statement's ostensible reference to Goa (and the enclaves of Daman and Diu) as "Portuguese provinces," and the consequent implication that the United States had sided with an authoritarian, imperialist state against a democratic state (India), resulted in a flurry of condemnation from Indian observers and officials that conveyed sympathy with the opinions previously articulated by Khrushchev.

¹⁵⁴ "Need To 'Compel' West To Ban A-Weapons," *The Tribune*, 2 December 1955, 5.

¹⁵⁵ "Goa A 'Touchstone' Of People's Ideas," *The Times*, 1 December 1955, page 9.

¹⁵⁶ "Reference To Portuguese 'Provinces,'" *The Times of India*, 4 December 1955, 9.

A story in the December 6th issue of the *Times* reported on the reaction to the Dulles-Cunha statement at the United Nations in New York: "Several Asian and African delegates here expressed surprise and pain at the joint statement which seemed to indicate that the United States was indirectly favouring Portuguese colonialism in Asia and Africa. One delegate commented drily: 'Now we know who are our friends.'"¹⁵⁷ An editorial in the December 6th edition further considered the implications of the statement:

Among the questions discussed were the various statements made by the Soviet leaders on a visit to India regarding the Western policies and the "allegations concerning the Portuguese provinces in the Far East." The Dulles-Cunha statement does not specify those provinces. The Soviet leaders, in one or two speeches in India, referred only to the problem of Goa and made it indisputably clear that Portugal had no moral right to cling to its possessions in India. From the published accounts of their speeches, they do not seem to have referred to any Portuguese colonies elsewhere. The inference drawn is that the Dulles-Cunha discussions centred round the observations made by the Soviet leaders regarding Goa[...]. The Dulles-Cunha talks have created a new situation, having far-reaching consequences. It indicates that the United States is coming out as a great champion of colonialism and colonial powers.¹⁵⁸

In addition to the reaction by foreign onlookers and the national press, United States Ambassador to India John Sherman Cooper was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs on December 5th to convey "to him the very grave view that the Government of India takes of the joint statement issued by Mr. Dulles and the Portuguese Foreign Minister," while Nehru (speaking in the Indian Parliament on the same day) asserted that the statement had "far-reaching consequences" and "gravely exercised" the nation.¹⁵⁹

Dulles attempted to illuminate the statement three days after it was issued (December 6th). He stated that it was "directed primarily against the use of hatred and prejudice in connection with the dispute over Goa" and that the phrase "Portuguese provinces" had been used because Goa (and the enclaves of Daman and Diu) were

¹⁵⁷ "Statement May Severely Strain Indo-U.S. Ties," *The Times of India*, 6 December 1955, 8.

¹⁵⁸ "Dulles-Cunha Statement," *The Tribune*, 6 December 1955, 4.

¹⁵⁹ "Grave View Taken Of Goa Statement," *The Times of India*, 6 December 1955, 1.

regarded as such according to the Portuguese constitution.¹⁶⁰ His effort to appease indignant observers proved futile, as the national press continued to admonish the statement in a manner that once again was sympathetic to Soviet rhetoric on the West. The front page of the December 8th issue of the *Times* featured commentary that pronounced:

If Mr. Dulles quotes the Portuguese constitution to defend his description of Goa (and Macao) as a Portuguese provinces, he will discover that the constitution of the People's Republic of China describes Formosa as a part of China. But this is something that the U.S. has not cared to accept even in theory.¹⁶¹

In an editorial in the same edition, "Onlooker," who had vociferously condemned Khrushchev and Bulganin's criticism of the West, rebuked Dulles assertion and suggested that it implicitly absolved the Soviet Union from allegations of imperialism:

Does it not occur to Mr. Dulles that by describing Goa as a 'Portuguese province' and denying that it is a colony he blows sky-high two of Washington's most cherished dogma's? If Goa and Macao are provinces so presumably are Latvia and Estonia. If it is not colonialism for a foreign country to hold Goa and Macao then it cannot be imperialism for Russia to dominate Rumania and Czechoslovakia. Is Soviet imperialism then a myth and not the grim reality which Washington has so far portrayed it as being?¹⁶²

Khrushchev seized upon the reaction to the Dulles-Cunha statement by Indian observers and officials. Speaking in Rangoon on December 6th, he asserted:

One can ask for example such questions: why have the American troops occupied the island of Taiwan and other nearby islands of the Chinese People's Republic? Why do they prevent Chinese people from completing reunification of all their lands. Not a single bourgeois journalist would dare to raise his voice against such actions. You would not find in the British

¹⁶⁰ "Dulles Makes U.S. Position Clear," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 1; "Dulles Reiterates Stand," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 6.

¹⁶¹ "U.S. Fears Of Force On Goa Issue Not Correct," *The Times of India*, 8 December 1955, 1.

¹⁶² "Through Indian Eyes - The Misfortune Of Being Mr. Dulles," *The Times of India*, 8 December 1955, 6.

Press writings against roisterings of Portuguese colonisers who unlawfully hold in their hands an integral part of India -- Goa."¹⁶³

While his statements about Britain and colonialism made four days earlier in the same city had resulted in admonishment from the Indian national press, Khrushchev's comments made in the aftermath of the Dulles-Cunha statement failed to generate a similar response. To the contrary, they appeared on the cover of the December 7th edition of the *Tribune* bearing the headline: "Khrushchev Supports India's Stand On Goa."¹⁶⁴ The Soviet leader had attained another public relations triumph after suffering successive setbacks, as a commentary in the December 7th issue of the *Times* observed: "Mr. Dulles has done exactly what Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev contrived he should do. He has blundered into the trap they cleverly laid for him."¹⁶⁵

Bolstered by his success in capitalizing on India's dispute with Portugal over Goa, Khrushchev announced that he and Bulganin would be making a previously unscheduled visit to the disputed territory of Kashmir located in the northwest region of the subcontinent along the Indian, Pakistani, and Chinese border. Speaking in Srinagar on December 9th, Bulganin referred to Kashmir as "the northern part of India."¹⁶⁶ Speaking in the same city the following day, Khrushchev was more forthright, as he pronounced that "[t]he question about Kashmir as one of the states of the Republic of India has been decided by the people of Kashmir" and that "Kashmir is part of India and the people of Kashmir have themselves decided to become part of India."¹⁶⁷ He also criticized Pakistani leaders for what he claimed to be allegiance to foreign powers (i.e., the West):

While in the Republic of India we find an ally in the struggle for peace, for the peaceful solution of unsettled problems, unfortunately we cannot say the same about Pakistan. Pakistan is also a young state but the policy of the ruling circles in this state disturbs us. Facts show that their policy is

¹⁶³ "Khrushchev Supports India's Stand On Goa," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 1; "Khrushchev Condemns Unlawful Hold By Portugal," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 10.

¹⁶⁴ "Khrushchev Supports India's Stand On Goa," *The Tribune*, 7 December 1955, 1.

¹⁶⁵ "Midwinter Madness," *The Times of India*, 7 December 1955, 6.

¹⁶⁶ "Kashmir 'Northern Part Of India,'" *The Tribune* 10 December 1955, 1.

¹⁶⁷ "Russia Considers Kashmir Part Of India," *The Tribune*, 11 December 1955, 1.

not based on the real interests of her people and of her state but is dictated by monopolistic circles of other countries.¹⁶⁸

While both the *Times* and the *Tribune* included prominent (front page) and ample reports on Khrushchev and Bulganin's statements in Kashmir, there was a dearth of editorial content in both newspapers. Unlike the response to Khrushchev's comments on nuclear weapons and British colonialism, when they had reproached the Soviet leader, or the reaction to his statements on Goa and the Dulles-Cunha joint statement, when they had affirmed his condemnation, Indian elites were restrained in conveying their thoughts on the statements he made in respect to Kashmir. While the Soviet rhetoric on Kashmir was in accord with the aims of Indian elites, the Nehru government's commitment to peaceful co-existence inhibited their capacity to sanction such rhetoric. A 1948 United Nations Security Council resolution had dictated that the future of Kashmir would be determined by a plebiscite (it had yet to take place due to intransigence from both Indian and Pakistani leaders). India's affirmation of the USSR's declaration that Kashmir was a part of India would defy the U.N. resolution and consequently forsake the tenets of international co-operation and sovereignty (the prerogative of a state to pursue its own path without interference from outside forces) that were essential to peaceful co-existence. Indian observers and officials hence obliged Khrushchev and Bulganin so as to discursively transmit their views on Kashmir through the pulpit occupied by the two Soviet leaders. In doing so, they again attuned their response to Soviet rhetoric in order to advance their domestic and foreign aims.

¹⁶⁸ "Imperialistic Powers Exploiting Kashmir Situation," *The Tribune*, 12 December 1955, 5.

Chapter 5.

Conclusion

Khrushchev's trip to India signaled the beginning of an era of Cold War diplomacy in the Third World, as the "official state visit" became a medium for the United States and the Soviet Union to advance their respective ideologies as they waged a struggle for the "hearts and minds" of the millions of people living in the non-aligned states of the world. As previously stated, United States President Eisenhower had travelled out of the country only four times (Mexico, Canada, Britain and Switzerland) since taking office in January of 1953, while his predecessor Truman left the country on only four occasions (all within the Americas and Europe) during his nearly eight years in office from 1945 to 1953. Eisenhower's travels abroad intensified considerably in the years following Khrushchev's trip, as he visited twenty-five countries including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Tunisia (all in 1959). Khrushchev continued to journey abroad to court Third World states, as he made a return trip to India and Burma in 1960 while also visiting Indonesia. He also travelled to Yugoslavia in 1963 and to Egypt in 1964.¹⁶⁹

Khrushchev's trip advanced the "official state visit" as a theatre of the Cold War as Third World government officials who he courted while abroad echoed the Soviet strategies they observed and began to actively court the USSR. In the years following his trip to India, Khrushchev received delegations from India, Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka), Nepal, Burma, Afghanistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Iran, and Egypt). While leaders of non-aligned states used these visits to secure aid and to demonstrate their agency (they were not passive actors in the Cold War), the Soviet Union used them as

¹⁶⁹ Travels of President Dwight D. Eisenhower," U.S. Department of State, accessed 24 July 2015, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president/eisenhower-dwight-d;> Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 993-1082.

opportunities for image management and propaganda. Khrushchev expanded the utility of visiting delegations beyond the scope of the Third World, as he received officials from socialist and communist parties from France, Italy, Belgium, Canada, and Brazil. He also applied the diplomatic strategies he formulated while courting non-aligned states to relations with the First World, as he made state visits to Britain in 1956 and the United States in 1959.¹⁷⁰

For Khrushchev himself, his trip to India was an opportunity to demonstrate his status as the undisputed leader of the Soviet Union. While those within the USSR's power structure were aware of his position (as almost certainly were intelligence agencies in the West), his standing was not yet apparent to public observers around the world. The ambiguity of hosting two Soviet leaders gradually faded during the trip to India, as Khrushchev used a jovial and unassuming persona to endear himself to the masses (and also used boisterous rhetoric to reproach those he believed advocated causes that were counter to peace and prosperity). He became the voice of Soviet socialism (e.g., giving interviews to Western newspapers) as he articulated the USSR's ideology and policies and consolidated power, eventually ousting Bulganin and replacing him as Premier in 1958.

Khrushchev's trip was also seminal for India as a newly independent nation. The country was still struggling to define its identity and ideology in the years since gaining independence in 1947, as it vacillated between a free-market system and the left-of-centre economic policies (central planning, large-scale regulation of business, protectionism) pursued by the Indian National Congress. Indian elites who wanted to see the nation follow the path of a capitalist economy used the trip as a means to make their voices heard and assert their interests. Anxieties about social unrest stemming from the plight of India's impoverished masses had been reflected in the Nehru government's policies of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence. Observers in the national press and government officials seized upon Khrushchev's rhetoric on colonialism and the West to adapt and bolster these policies in order to advance their own concerns. This thesis has demonstrated that terms such as non-alignment, peaceful co-existence, and anti-

¹⁷⁰ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 993-1082.

colonialism are not static. They have equivocal meanings that are rooted in the context of place and time.

"What did we know about India? I'm talking here about Bulganin and myself. Very little. We followed what Nehru was doing by reading the papers[...]Our knowledge of India, to tell the truth, was not only superficial but downright primitive."¹⁷¹ Those were Khrushchev's words years later, when, as a retiree, he recalled his extraordinary 1955 tour of India. As we have seen, both Khrushchev and his hosts were going through important changes at the time of his visit. Whereas Khrushchev was still solidifying his position as leader of the Soviet Union, Nehru was searching for the right political course for India. Indian elites were along for the ride, criticizing and praising with an eye to their own interests. Both Soviet and Indian leaders were actively formulating and refining policies. Both were promoting the benefits of their respective ideologies even as they were in the process of refining them. Khrushchev's trip to India was an education for Soviet and Indian politicians and, as my thesis demonstrates, it was no less of an education for Indian elites who were following the course of the trip in the national press. *The Times of India* and *The Tribune* served as crucial venues for expressing their perspectives. An analysis of how these prominent Indian newspapers covered Khrushchev's trip gives us a better understanding of its greater significance.

¹⁷¹ Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, 723.

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