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Brezhnev suffers a part-defeat in India

Leonid Brezhnev, Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party, returned to Moscow from his five day visit to India. Brezhnev followed two aims in this visit. On the one hand, he meant to "warm up" relations between Moscow and New Delhi, which had become cold of late. On the other hand, he wished to sell to Indians the well-known Asian Collective Security Plan, which has been advocated by Soviet diplomats ever since 1969.

In reviewing this visit, it could be said that the Soviet Communist Party leader has suffered a "half defeat."

In general, Brezhnev was successful in his first aim, as during his stay in New Delhi he was able to sign with Mrs. Gandhi an extensive 15 year cooperation agreement, according to which trade volume between the two countries will be doubled by 1980, and thereafter India will consume the Soviet oil and wheat. As against this, India will consider facilities for the Soviet ships in its coastal waters. On the other hand, the primitive Indian industry will obtain basic material from the Soviet Union under easy terms to develop its economy.

But the Indians did not oblige Soviet Union with regard to the second aim. The joint communique released by India and Soviet Union does not make the slightest reference to Brezhnev's plan concerning Asia. The statements made by Brezhnev in the Indian Parliament about Asian Collective Security were left in abeyance.

New Delhi's cold attitude towards Kremlin's ideas stir no wonder. Now it is no longer the time when India had to show haste for signing a mutual defense agreement with a view to crushing the Pakistani armed forces and severing Bangladesh.

India has found a new face since August 1971. Most of the problems emanating from Indo-Pakistan war have been settled. India has got closer to the USA, and at the same time has closer political ties with the Soviet Union. Furthermore, New Delhi leaders are aware that Kremlin's Asian policies are nothing but a war machine against China. India's trespassing this limit will not be tolerated by China, and is meaningless to India itself.

It was not for no reason that upon leaving for Moscow, Mrs. Gandhi's principal advisor emphasized to Brezhnev India's wish to keep neutral between military blocs and to follow the policy of a non-aligned country.

Remembrance of the old maxim that "Nehru Doctrine" is for the Indians will be unpleasant to Brezhnev.

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