

This article was downloaded by: [82.23.162.189]

On: 11 March 2014, At: 04:08

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Diplomacy & Statecraft

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fdps20>

“India's Rasputin”?: V. K. Krishna Menon and Anglo-American Misperceptions of Indian Foreign Policymaking, 1947-1964

Paul M. McGarr

Published online: 09 Jun 2011.

To cite this article: Paul M. McGarr (2011) “India's Rasputin”?: V. K. Krishna Menon and Anglo-American Misperceptions of Indian Foreign Policymaking, 1947-1964, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 22:2, 239-260, DOI: [10.1080/09592296.2011.576536](https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2011.576536)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2011.576536>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the “Content”) contained in the publications on our platform. Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Versions of published Taylor & Francis and Routledge Open articles and Taylor & Francis and Routledge Open Select articles posted to institutional or subject repositories or any other third-party website are without warranty from Taylor & Francis of any kind, either expressed or implied, including, but not limited to, warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, or non-infringement. Any opinions and views expressed in this article are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor & Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Taylor & Francis and Routledge Open articles are normally published under a Creative Commons Attribution License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>. However,

authors may opt to publish under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/> Taylor & Francis and Routledge Open Select articles are currently published under a license to publish, which is based upon the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial No-Derivatives License, but allows for text and data mining of work. Authors also have the option of publishing an Open Select article under the Creative Commons Attribution License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>.

It is essential that you check the license status of any given Open and Open Select article to confirm conditions of access and use.

“India’s Rasputin”?: V. K. Krishna Menon and Anglo–American Misperceptions of Indian Foreign Policymaking, 1947–1964

PAUL M. MCGARR

From 1947 until his political demise in late 1962, Vengalil Krishnan Krishna Menon stood at the forefront of India’s international relations. One of Indian Premier Jawaharlal Nehru’s closest political confidantes, Menon served variously as India’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, leader of its delegation to the United Nations, self-styled mediator in the Korea, Indo–China, and Suez crises of the 1950s and, from 1957, his country’s Defence Minister. Vilified in the West as “India’s Rasputin,” Menon’s left-wing credentials, anti-colonial rhetoric, and willingness to engage with the Communist bloc were seen by Anglo–American diplomats as a threat to Western interests in South Asia. Drawing upon recently released British and American archival records, this article argues that Western misperceptions of Menon, and his role in the Indian foreign policy-making process, undermined Anglo–American relations with India for much of the early Cold War.

While it is true that Krishna has helped us on occasion. . . . I nevertheless rate him for my own part as a thoroughly dangerous man, indeed as Nehru’s evil genius—a born conspirator and intriguer, making mischief wherever he goes, utterly unscrupulous, determined to mark his mark in the world, and now gradually undermining, whether deliberately or not . . . the whole conduct of India’s foreign relations.

Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, October 1954¹

In November 1959, India’s prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, turned 70. The first and, at that time, only leader that India had known since the British departure from South Asia in August 1947, Nehru’s seventieth birthday stimulated domestic and international debate on India’s prospects in a post-Nehruvian world. The question of political succession in India, or “after

Nehru, who?" had occupied New Delhi society and the world press from the mid-1950s.² By the turn of the decade, however, as India's ailing prime minister tired and Sino-Indian relations soured, international policy-makers became increasingly concerned with whom, or perhaps more pertinently, what forces, would shape the future of the world's largest democracy.³ In November 1961, following Nehru's ill-fated visit to the United States, the American secretary of state, Dean Rusk, observed that the Indian leader appeared "greatly aged . . . [and was] in effect being run by others."⁴ In subsequent off-the-record briefings with American journalists, Rusk reiterated Washington's impression that "Nehru is old and ill . . . he is *in* office but he doesn't *fill* it."⁵ The British government felt much the same. Earlier in 1961, British officials had voiced misgivings that Nehru appeared either unable, or unwilling, to prevent malevolent forces inside his administration from exercising an undue influence over government policy. In particular, the British perceived that Nehru's hitherto iron grip over Indian diplomacy had slipped. The foreign policy of India, one senior British official bemoaned in May 1961, had become, "the foreign policy of Mr. Nehru as modified by the interventions of Mr. Krishna Menon."⁶

During the Nehru era between 1947 and 1964, Vengalil Krishnan Krishna Menon established a reputation as the most controversial and divisive figure in Indian politics. His political education had begun in the early 1920s as a student at Madras Law College. Then, the British theosophist and political activist, Annie Besant, had introduced him to the Indian Home Rule movement. By the end of the decade, with Besant's financial support, Menon's commitment to Indian nationalism had been honed at the London School of Economics under the tutelage of the political scientist and prominent socialist, Harold Laski. It was in London in the early 1930s that Menon first met Nehru. Menon went on to form a close personal and political bond with the future Indian leader, earning plaudits from Nehru for his service as secretary of the India League, the principal organisation promoting Indian nationalism in pre-war Britain.⁷

Once India had gained independence in August 1947, Menon experienced a meteoric rise to political power under Nehru's patronage. In 1947, Nehru appointed him to the prestigious post of Indian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. After completing his tour in London in 1952, Menon travelled to New York, where he assumed leadership of India's delegation to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. Acting as a self-appointed international mediator during the Korea, Indochina, Suez, and Taiwan Straits crises, Menon achieved global renown as a diplomatic trouble-shooter, or as the then British foreign secretary, Harold Macmillan, put it, "Nehru's Harry Hopkins."⁸ In February 1956, dismissing misgivings voiced by several of his senior ministers, Nehru rewarded Menon's efforts by shoehorning him into the Indian Cabinet as minister without portfolio. Elected to the *Lok Sabha*, the lower house of India's parliament, for

the constituency of North Bombay the following year, Menon was again promoted in April 1957, leapfrogging more established Cabinet colleagues to become India's defence minister. Along the way, Menon's intellectual arrogance, duplicity, and cynical abuse of his relationship with Nehru antagonised a sizable cross-section of Indian political opinion, both inside and outside the ruling Congress Party. Moreover, Menon's militant socialism, fervent anti-colonialism, and willingness to engage with Soviet and Chinese Communists alienated Anglo-American policy-makers and drew stinging criticism from the Western press.

With some notable, although now dated exceptions, studies of Menon's political career have been dominated by largely hagiographic works from Indian scholars.⁹ Equally, broader accounts of India's relationship with the West during the two decades after 1947 tend to overlook, or obscure, the significance of Menon's role in shaping Anglo-American perceptions of Indian diplomacy.¹⁰ Recently released British and American archival records have shed new light on the official Western view of Menon and his impact on Indian foreign policymaking in the Nehru era. The available documentary record suggests that Anglo-American officials misinterpreted the nature and extent of Menon's influence over Indian foreign policy between 1947 and 1962. Moreover, this miscalculation proved as culpable as Menon's own bellicose rhetoric in undermining British and American relations with India for much of the early Cold War.

Menon's abrasive personality and readiness to listen to and on occasions publicly endorse Soviet and Communist Chinese positions on a range of international questions started to ruffle feathers in Washington in the early 1950s. To American officials his unwelcome meddling in issues, from Korean War prisoner repatriation to the Hungarian and Suez incidents of 1956, invariably served to advance communist interests. State Department officers who dealt with Menon on a regular basis in the 1950s characterised him as "venomous," "violently anti-American," and "an unpleasant mischief-maker," or as one American diplomat observed, "a tough, poisonous bastard."¹¹ A study of Indo-American relations undertaken in the United States in the mid-1950s, underlined Menon's status as a pariah. Interviews with prominent American academics, journalists, businessmen, and government officials revealed the existence of a deep-seated and almost universal antipathy toward him. Respondents labelled Menon "a devil incarnate," "a Machiavelli with a swelled head," and, "a pro-Communist anti-American blackmail agent."¹²

The American media's view of Menon was equally disparaging. Throughout the 1950s, United States newspapers portrayed Menon as "India's Rasputin," "the Hindu Vishinsky," and "India's Communist-cuddling roving ambassador."¹³ American citizens were routinely presented with a picture of Menon as a loathsome character, "sharp-tongued," "devious," "insufferably arrogant," and, "probably the most widely disliked man in

India.”¹⁴ One strikingly suggestive image appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in February 1962. Looking out imperiously at *Time*’s readers, Menon’s face was depicted against backdrop containing a hooded cobra and a snake charmer’s flute. Such crude cultural stereotyping continued in an accompanying article, which dismissed Menon as, “a malevolent-looking, tea-colored bachelor . . . [who] despises the West.”¹⁵ To many Americans, Menon became synonymous with representations of Indian naivety and Cold War hypocrisy. Nehru’s government loudly extolled the virtues of non-alignment and morality in the conduct of international affairs, yet inexplicably it seemed, simultaneously courted the Soviets and ignored UN calls to implement Security Council resolutions on Kashmir. In the opinion of one former American ambassador, with extensive service in South Asia, it was Krishna Menon, above all others, who “epitomized non-alignment and anti-Americanism, at least in the eyes of a lot of Western officials and the American public.”¹⁶

British officials shared many of their American colleagues’ reservations. The British Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) viewed Menon as a “fierce anti-American,” “unscrupulous, egotistical and unreliable.”¹⁷ Following one encounter with the Indian minister in March 1957, the normally unflappable secretary for Commonwealth Relations, Lord Home, was incensed by Menon’s “arrogant and threatening and abusive,” behaviour.¹⁸ British officials who encountered Menon on a regular basis appeared both fascinated and repulsed by his “tortuous mind.” Britain’s high commissioner to India in the early 1950s, Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, marvelled at Menon’s aptitude for “intrigue and manoeuvre; his total incapacity to express himself in any straightforward way; his light regard for the truth; and his inordinate ambition and self-conceit.”¹⁹ Clutterbuck’s successor in New Delhi, Malcolm MacDonald, felt similarly. Commenting in late 1957 on Menon’s return to the United States to lead India’s UN delegation, MacDonald observed acidly, “Of course he ought to be going to New York to see a psycho-analyst, not to attend the Assembly of the United Nations.”²⁰

Personality issues aside, Menon’s interaction with British and American officials was complicated by the commonly held perception that he harboured communist sympathies. As secretary of the India League in the 1930s, Menon had forged an alliance with the Communist Party of Great Britain to promote the cause of Indian independence. To Britain’s domestic security service, MI5, this marked Menon out as politically suspect.²¹ Question marks over the nature of his links to British communists persisted after Menon became India’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and led MI5 to label him a security risk. In response, the British government withheld sensitive information from India on matters such as Imperial defence lest Menon pass it on to the Soviets.²² At one point in 1951, Clement Attlee’s government pressed Nehru to recall Menon from London on security grounds.²³ By 1954, however, in the absence of a smoking gun implicating him in espionage

activities, the CRO and their colleagues at the Foreign Office had largely discounted the possibility that Menon was a communist agent.²⁴

The same could not be said on the other side of Atlantic. The British may have dismissed the notion that Menon was a Soviet stooge but, as they acknowledged, “it was undoubtedly a fact, and a relevant one, that many high-ranking Americans did hold this view.”²⁵ One in particular was President Dwight Eisenhower’s secretary of state, John Foster Dulles. As early as January 1947, whilst serving as a Republican Party advisor to America’s UN delegation, Dulles had caused a stir by publicly implying that Nehru’s interim Indian government was under communist influence. Called to the State Department to explain his indiscretion, a contrite Dulles insisted that he had not meant to suggest that India was a Soviet pawn. Rather, his analysis of Indian politics was based upon observations of India’s UN delegation and, more especially Krishna Menon, whom Dulles described as a “confirmed Marxian” and a disciple of Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov.²⁶

Indeed, although the Truman Administration had shown a limited interest in Menon’s activities in the late 1940s,²⁷ it was under the Eisenhower government in the 1950s that American antipathy toward Menon peaked. Fed details of his links to British communists by MI5,²⁸ and bitterly critical of his unsolicited intercessions into East–West disputes, Eisenhower’s Administration formed a deeply negative impression of Menon. In Dulles’ moralistic vision of a Cold War world, where good battled evil, Menon was branded “a pretty bad fellow” and a “troublemaker.”²⁹ In turn, Menon resented Dulles’ criticism of Indian non-alignment, promotion of an American–Pakistani alliance, and tolerance of Portuguese colonialism.³⁰ With a “formidable incompatibility of temperament” adding spice to their political differences, Dulles and Menon clashed repeatedly in the 1950s.³¹ In July 1955, in the aftermath of the first Taiwan straits crisis, one typically prickly exchange saw Dulles excoriate Menon for acting as a Communist Chinese lackey. In response, Menon made it widely known that he regarded Dulles as the principal obstacle to peace and stability in Asia. Rather than engage meaningfully with the substantive international issues of the day, contemporary observers noted that “a great part” of the diplomatic interplay between Dulles and Menon was invariably “taken up with the process of getting under each others’ skins.”³²

In contrast, Menon’s relations with Eisenhower were, on the surface at least, more convivial.³³ Whilst Eisenhower’s approach to Menon may have been less confrontational than that of Dulles, his opinion of the Indian diplomat was much the same. Menon, Eisenhower recorded in his diary on 14 July 1955, “is a boor because he conceives himself as intellectually superior and rather coyly presents, to cover this, a cloak of excessive humility and modesty. He is a menace because he is a master at twisting words and meaning of others and is governed by an ambition to prove himself the master international manipulator and politician of the age.”³⁴ The American

president echoed such sentiments in discussions with the British. The British prime minister, Anthony Eden, informed his Cabinet the same month that Eisenhower had “made it plain that he had not much use Krishna Menon’s methods.”³⁵

Whilst senior American officials may have found Menon personally distasteful, as Eisenhower intimated, they remained wary of his intelligence and political guile.³⁶ In July 1950, America’s ambassador in New Delhi, Loy Henderson, had cautioned Washington that Menon represented the “most effective foe of [the] US amongst Nehru’s trusted inner circle.”³⁷ In turn, the State Department came to respect Menon’s ability as “a smooth operator,” conceding that he was “dangerously persuasive” and “a brilliant orator of the rabble-rousing type.”³⁸ Noting American reservations about challenging Menon in a UN debate on Korea 1954, the British suspected: “The State Department . . . are scared of Indian intentions and even more afraid of Menon.”³⁹

Likewise, American regard for Menon as a political adversary was compounded by the nature of his relationship to Nehru. One of Nehru’s oldest friends and closest political confidantes, Menon’s socialist credentials, intelligence, and biting wit appealed to the Indian premier.⁴⁰ In turn, Menon proved a formidable champion of issues close to Nehru’s heart, from the merits of non-alignment to the virtue of India’s claim on Kashmir. Whilst conceding that Nehru did not always accept Menon’s counsel, their rapport, Anglo–American officials reasoned, left the Indian leader “very apt to be swayed by him and Krishna’s views have in his eyes a special importance.”⁴¹ On a personal level, Menon’s relationship with Nehru was, if anything, even closer. “Menon,” the British observed in late 1962, “is felt to be one of the Nehru family (in a way that no other Minister is or has been) . . . indeed Nehru behaved towards Menon in a manner so paternal as to suggest that he saw in Menon the son that he had always so much wanted to have.”⁴²

That said, Nehru was conscious of Menon’s considerable faults, not least his unerring ability to infuriate Western and Indian politicians with his barbed tongue and congenital mendacity. After receiving one letter of complaint about Menon’s machinations from his sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Nehru responded:

I have known Krishna now for a long time and have a fairly good appreciation of his abilities, virtues and failings. All these are considerable. I do not know if it is possible by straight approach to lessen these failings. I have tried to do so and shall continue to try. . . . I am not swept away by Krishna. Krishna has often embarrassed me and put me in considerable difficulties. . . .⁴³

Whenever Nehru found it expedient to downplay the importance of his relationship with Menon, notably during periods of acute Indo–American

tension, he did so. In conversation with Escott Reid, Canada's high commissioner to India, Nehru disparaged the notion, which he conceded was prevalent in the West, that Menon enjoyed his "special confidence." "Without saying anything derogatory about Menon," Reid reported, "Pandit Nehru stressed that this impression was quite mistaken." Moreover, Nehru made it clear "that he would have no objection if the Canadians said something to the Americans on these lines."⁴⁴

Nonetheless, loyalty to Menon, coupled with a realisation on Nehru's part that attacks on his closest confidante often represented a veiled assault upon himself, left the Indian leader "particularly sensitive to criticism about Mr. Krishna Menon."⁴⁵ Prior to interviewing Nehru, one American journalist recounted how the prime minister had informed him: "You may ask me about anything except Kashmir or Krishna Menon."⁴⁶ Throughout the 1950s, as Menon drew increasing domestic and international censure for his intercession in issues ranging from the Geneva talks on Indochina to India's dispute with Portugal over Goa, Nehru repeatedly sprung to his protégé's defence. In a speech in Madras in January 1957, shortly after Menon had collapsed theatrically during a UN debate on Kashmir, Nehru chastised "people in this country and some people in other countries whose job in life appears to be to run down Krishna Menon because he is far cleverer than they are, because his record of service for Indian freedom is far longer than theirs, and because he has worn himself out in the service of India."⁴⁷ Nehru's unswerving support was underlined later the same year when he actively campaigned to secure Menon's election to the *Lok Sabha*. "Menon is the only Congress candidate," *The Times* pointedly observed in its coverage of India's 1957 general election, for whom "Nehru had issued a special appeal to voters." On 7 February, speaking at an election rally in Bombay, where Menon was standing for the Congress Party, Nehru brazenly turned Menon's candidacy into a referendum on his government's foreign policy:

We thought it eminently desirable that our international policy should be put to the test in the great city of Bombay itself, so that its intelligent citizens might proclaim to the world where we stand and what we believe in. I trust that the citizens of Bombay will, by giving their enthusiastic support for Mr. Menon, give fitting answer to the challenge that has been thrown to us from various quarters.⁴⁸

Although often fractious, in comparison with their American colleagues, British policy-makers enjoyed a relatively benign relationship with Menon. Having lived in Britain between 1924 and 1953, Menon was looked upon by many Indians as "more British than the British."⁴⁹ Whilst appearing to relish American brickbats, Menon was acutely sensitive to British criticism. After coming across Menon at the UN in New York, in September 1959, Britain's foreign secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, recounted how he had been subjected to

“another long lament about one who worked so hard for Anglo–Indian friendship, had kept India in the Commonwealth and was abused in India for being pro-British, [and] should all the time be so misunderstood by people in England.”⁵⁰ In public, Menon would often round on the British for their anachronistic colonial policies in the Middle East and Africa, and their refusal to abandon nuclear testing. Privately, however, British officials were reassured that even his “bitterest critics” in Nehru’s Cabinet had conceded that behind closed doors Menon insisted “that Indian policy should be as helpful to us [Britain] as Indian circumstances permit.” In his role as India’s defence minister, for example, the British welcomed the fact that Menon had proved “a stout supporter of the policy of India buying arms from us, and not from Russia.”⁵¹

On another level, the British identified a political advantage in appeasing Menon’s considerable vanity. Capable of flashes of “extreme hostility,” notably when attacking Britain for its part in the Suez debacle in 1956, Menon nonetheless remained “very attracted to Britain and the British.” In analysing his attitude to Britain post-Suez Britain, MacDonald compared it to that of a “jilted lover,” who had been “deeply hurt” not only by the imprudent Anglo–French attack on Egypt but, perhaps more importantly, by Britain’s rejection of his bid act as “the Great Conciliator.” Given his often volatile and emotional state of mind, MacDonald urged London to ignore Menon’s public bluster and, wherever practicable, indulge his formidable ego. “In spite of all other appearances,” MacDonald reminded Whitehall, “Krishna is fundamentally pro-British, and his ‘love’ can sometimes be encouraged to prevail over his ‘hate’ by careful handling . . . his excesses of unreasonableness and spite should as far as possible be ignored as qualities personal to himself and largely unrepresentative of the nation which he represents.”⁵²

However, as Menon’s political power grew in the latter half of the 1950s, MacDonald’s call for restraint became increasingly difficult for Anglo–American policy-makers to stomach. In 1954, when it first emerged that Nehru was considering appointing Menon as India’s foreign minister, deputy foreign minister, or home minister, the British had reacted with incredulity. “The appointment of Krishna Menon to any of the three posts,” Frank Roberts, a senior Foreign Official official, reflected, “would fill me personally with horror, alarm and despondency.” Not least, the British reasoned that such an appointment “would certainly be very ill-received in America and for that reason alone could hardly do India any good.”⁵³ Having relied on “the ‘old guard’” within Nehru’s cabinet, such as Maulana Azad, India’s minister for education, to block Menon’s advancement,⁵⁴ the British were disturbed in 1956 after Menon entered Nehru’s Cabinet as minister without portfolio. Moreover, during the following year, Menon’s personal standing within India, which had never been strong, received an unexpected boost. Having spent almost his entire political career abroad, Menon lacked a domestic political base. After melodramatic performances in UN debates

on Kashmir in January and February 1957, however, where he mounted the longest filibuster in Security Council history, Menon's fortunes within India were transformed. Buoyed by the distribution of a Government of India-sponsored film lauding his exploits in New York, newspapers across the sub-continent began to refer to Menon as the "Hero of India."⁵⁵

In April 1957, with Menon by now ensconced in the Indian Defence Ministry, the *New York Times* cautioned its readership that Nehru's "faintly satanic confidante" was now set to exert a growing and malevolent influence over India's foreign policy.⁵⁶ The British preferred to look on the bright side, rationalising that Menon's ministerial responsibilities ought to leave him with less time to meddle in international affairs. As MacDonald noted that September:

[Menon] has become much more than an infernal nuisance; he has long been a menace to good relations between India and the United States, and now he has become a menace to good relations between India and the United Kingdom . . . his continued participation in international affairs is a constant prejudice to friendship between India and the Western Democracies, and we must look forward with keen anticipation to the prospect of his disappearance next year as India's principal representative in various world affairs . . .⁵⁷

In 1958, the British took additional heart from signs that Nehru had distanced himself from Menon. Notably, during that summer's Middle Eastern crisis, which had been precipitated by the demise of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq, Nehru rejected Menon's call to denounce the arrival of Anglo-American forces in Lebanon and Jordan. To Menon's ire, Nehru kept him at arm's length throughout the crisis, relying instead on the counsel of his home minister, Pandit Pant, and officials from India's ministry for external affairs. Observing that such a welcome development was "all to the good," the British remained reluctant to afford it too much significance. "We cannot," MacDonald cautioned the CRO, "count on Krishna Menon's influence [over Nehru] being anything like eliminated." MacDonald's warning appeared prescient later that year when, to British and American disappointment, Nehru reappointed Menon to lead India's delegation at the UN.⁵⁸

Uncomfortably for Anglo-American policy-makers, Menon's rise to political prominence in the second half of the 1950s coincided with a realisation on the part of Eisenhower's administration that India's burgeoning population, untapped economic resources, latent military power, and democratic credentials constituted a valuable Cold War prize. Furthermore, the victory of John F. Kennedy in the American presidential election in November 1960 added fresh impetus to the reorientation in American thinking toward India initiated under Eisenhower. In December 1959, the then-Senator Kennedy had predicted that India's competition with China

for Asian pre-eminence would constitute, “*the* decisive struggle in the cold war in the next ten years.”⁵⁹ With the People’s Republic of China (PRC) outpacing India in steel production, industrial capacity, literacy rates, and domestic consumption, Kennedy came to the Oval Office fearful that a failure to contain Communist Chinese power would leave subsequent generations of Americans facing an apocalyptic future. Looking forward to the 1970s, Kennedy envisioned the PRC, with a population of 700 million, a Stalinist internal regime, and nuclear weapons, posing an unacceptable threat to world peace.⁶⁰ With India the only feasible Asian counterweight to China, Kennedy set about wooing Nehru by lavishing his government with economic aid and professing a new sensitivity toward India’s policy of non-alignment.⁶¹

Less concerned with safeguarding Asia from a Communist Chinese menace that they saw as largely illusory, the British signed on to Kennedy’s bid to enhance Western relations with India as a defensive measure. To the cash-strapped British Conservative government of Harold Macmillan, America’s growing interest in India constituted a threat to the dominant, and highly lucrative, position that Britain had retained in the commercial and defence sectors of the Indian economy since 1947. Although total American investment in India lagged well behind that of the British well into the 1960s, a warning sign had appeared in 1957 when America overtook Britain as the largest net investor of private foreign capital on the sub-continent.⁶² Similar trends were evident in the defence arena, where festering Sino–Indian tensions induced Nehru’s government to entertain sales pitches from American defence contractors previously deemed *personae non grata*. Left unchecked, developing Indo–American commercial and political ties risked prejudicing Britain’s position in India.⁶³ By working with the Kennedy Administration in South Asia, Macmillan’s government reasoned, it could moderate the impact of American regional policy and safeguard valuable British interests.

Aware of Menon’s ability to derail its plan to cultivate closer Indo–American relations, the Kennedy Administration sought to place the United States’ relationship with India’s defence minister on a new and more constructive footing. “Krishna Menon is an odd and difficult character,” Kennedy’s ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith, acknowledged in May 1961. “But some small part of the problem, I think, is that the Republicans treated him with all the warmth and tact of a Brahmin encountering a leprous untouchable at his table.”⁶⁴ Moreover, as a left-leaning, liberal Democrat and fellow political maverick, Galbraith found Menon’s politics relatively unobjectionable and, initially at least, embraced his eccentricity. “Most people dislike him [Menon],” Galbraith recorded after their first meeting. “I found him rather attractive. . . . Provisionally it is my conclusion that those who do not like him have never encountered this particular kind of public figure.”⁶⁵ Tellingly, during Nehru’s first meeting with a senior Kennedy Administration official, Averell Harriman, in New Delhi

in March 1961, Menon featured prominently. Harriman, whom Kennedy had appointed his ambassador-at-large, explicitly called for an end to the enervating public clashes that had characterised Menon's interaction with American diplomats in the 1950s. "I personally enjoyed talking with Mr. Menon as he always said something insulting about us and I enjoyed arguing with him," Harriman joked with Nehru, before adding pointedly that "others did not take his insulting remarks so well."⁶⁶

Kennedy's Administration, however, soon found its relationship with India, and Menon, under strain. Kennedy was disappointed to find Nehru listless and disengaged when they met in Washington in November 1961, and he failed to establish a rapport with the Indian premier.⁶⁷ Menon, too, quickly found himself on the wrong side of the New Frontier, after launching barbed attacks on Kennedy's handling of issues such as the Congo crisis and Kashmir. Although personally irked by Menon's invective, Kennedy's primary concern was that it would poison American attitudes toward India and erode Congressional support for the appropriation of American economic aid to Nehru's government. Economic aid formed the cornerstone of Kennedy's South Asian policy, a fact evident from the foreign assistance budget his Administration prepared for the fiscal year 1962. It earmarked India a remarkable US\$500 million from a global aid budget totalling US\$900 million.⁶⁸ Moreover, as the Eisenhower Administration had previously discovered, persuading Capitol Hill to fund India's economic development was no easy task. When Ellsworth Bunker, America's ambassador to India, had returned to Washington to lobby for Indian aid in June 1957, he was taken aback by "the great resentment" that Menon generated amongst American legislators. In conversation with Dalip Singh Saund, Democratic representative for California's twenty-ninth district and the only member of Congress of Indian descent, Bunker was candidly informed that "there was absolutely no possibility of any legislation involving aid to India going through the House of Representatives so long as Mr. Menon was at the U.N."⁶⁹

Kennedy had raised concerns over the link between Menon's anti-American rhetoric and his Administration's ability to deliver economic aid to India during his November meeting with Nehru. On Nehru's instruction, Menon was subsequently directed to call on the White House in a bid to mend fences. Kennedy's encounter with Menon on 21 November was presented in the American press as an opportunity for the president to make a "personal acquaintance with a particularly important diplomat who has been a recurrent cause of despair to this country."⁷⁰ Kennedy's brief thirty-minute session with Menon turned out to be as unproductive as the president's earlier encounter with Nehru. Moreover, during the twelve months that followed, a series of public disagreements between India and the United States highlighted the fundamentally different attitudes that each held on a raft of international issues. More often than not, however, rather than confront and wherever possible ameliorate their differences with India,

Anglo-American policy-makers found it expedient to identify the nefarious influence of Krishna Menon as at the root of their problems.

Such was the case in December 1961, when the Indian army ended Portugal's four-hundred-and sixty-year presence in the enclaves of Goa, Daman, and Diu, situated along India's Western coast. With the Indian press characterising the Goa "police action" as "Krishna Menon's War," Anglo-American officials speculated whether, in light of Nehru's stated reluctance to use force against the Portuguese, his defence minister had not orchestrated the military operation.⁷¹ Britain's chief of defence staff, Lord Mountbatten, certainly felt so, observing at the time that "I will never believe he [Nehru] cooked [it] up."⁷² With Menon having been sharply criticised in India in 1961 for allowing Chinese infringements of the country's northern border to go unchallenged, and with a large Goan community resident in his north Bombay parliamentary constituency, the American press were quick to point out that Menon had a strong political interest in giving the Portuguese a bloody nose.⁷³

American officials pondered whether by forcing the United States to denounce India's use of force against the Portuguese, Menon had deliberately set out to whip up anti-American feeling⁷⁴—or worse still, foster a climate of jingoism as a precursor to an Indian attack on Pakistan.⁷⁵ Menon retrospectively dismissed such conspiracy theories as fanciful, arguing that he had merely followed Nehru's lead when it came to Goa. From the late 1950s, Nehru had displayed a tendency to vacillate when confronted with thorny political problems. Early in 1959, he had sanctioned a campaign of civil disobedience by Congress Party supporters against the democratically elected Communist government in Kerala and then dithered for months before finally removing the incumbent administration and imposing direct rule from New Delhi.⁷⁶ In late 1961, Nehru faced intense pressure both at home, and from Afro-Asian nationalists abroad, to strike a blow against Portuguese colonialism. In this context, Menon's assertion that Nehru had sanctioned the Goa assault, and then shirked responsibility for the military consequences of his decision, appears plausible. Nehru, "didn't like the vulgarity and the cruelty of it [Goa]," Menon asserted, "but at the same time he wanted the results—the liberation of Indian territory."⁷⁷ The CIA supported Menon's account of the Goa episode, concluding that Nehru had indeed pulled the strings, with Menon served up to the international community as a "whipping boy."⁷⁸

Anxious to avoid a schism in Indo-American relations, the Kennedy Administration sought to downplay the Goa annexation. On 18 December 1962, Rusk issued instructions to America's diplomats, including Adlai Stevenson, the ambassador to the UN, to temper public criticism of India's use of force against the Portuguese.⁷⁹ But having been subjected to Menon's diatribes on numerous occasions in New York, Stevenson found it impossible to resist launching into a verbal tirade against "India's act of aggression"

in the Security Council.⁸⁰ Reflecting upon Stevenson's "very stern and, I think, unfortunately emotional speech," a despondent Galbraith attributed it in large part to the UN ambassador's desire "to spill some of his anger at Krishna Menon."⁸¹ Predictably, the Indian government, which had been prepared to accept a token show of American disapproval over Goa, reacted angrily. India's ambassador in Washington, B. K. Nehru, complained to the State Department that by permitting Stevenson to vent his spleen, it had "handled [Goa] in the 'wrong way'" and needlessly offended Indian opinion.⁸²

Tension over Goa had barely subsided in May 1962, when it emerged that India had begun negotiations with Moscow to purchase the latest Soviet supersonic jet fighter, the MIG-21. From an Indian standpoint, the Soviet fighter was attractive on a number of levels. Militarily, Indian ministers were anxious to react to Kennedy's decision in July 1961 to supply Pakistan with American supersonic jets and to the threat posed by deteriorating Sino-Indian relations.⁸³ Equally, the paucity of India's foreign exchange reserves made the relatively cheap Soviet aircraft a bargain in comparison with more expensive Western alternatives.⁸⁴ Once more, however, Menon was cast as the villain of the piece by Anglo-American officials, who had grown accustomed to India sourcing its military hardware from the West. For Duncan Sandys, Britain's secretary of state for Commonwealth Relations, India's decision to purchase Soviet aircraft indicated that within the Indian Cabinet: "[The] more right-wing Ministers, including Mr. Morarji Desai [India's finance minister] have not got the guts to stand up to Mr. Nehru against Mr. Krishna Menon and the pro-Russian faction."⁸⁵

Furthermore, coming at a time when the Kennedy Administration's Foreign Aid Bill was passing through Congress, British and American officials feared that disgruntled legislators on Capitol Hill would punish India for its military flirtation with the Soviets by slashing its allocation of American economic aid.⁸⁶ This, once again, threatened to upset Kennedy's plan to use American financial muscle to drive India's economic performance past that of Communist China. Writing to Kennedy on 11 May 1962, the Missouri senator, Stuart Symington, articulated a viewpoint shared by many of his colleagues in Congress. "Where is the logic," Symington asked, "in providing such multi-billion dollar assistance to a country whose Secretary of Defence constantly attacks us, [and] whose military plans and programs build up the Soviet economy at the expense of our allies and ourselves?"⁸⁷

Many British parliamentarians sympathised with Symington's stance. In discussion with Desai in July 1961, Selwyn Lloyd, then Britain's chancellor of the exchequer, warned that Menon's criticisms of British colonial policy in the UN, coupled with the furore over the MIG purchase, made it difficult for Britain to justify supplying India with significant amounts of aid. In response, Selwyn Lloyd noted: "Desai was exceedingly frank about Mr. Krishna Menon. He said in effect that he was a menace; he wished he could get rid of him

but that Krishna Menon had such an ascendancy over Nehru that it was not possible. He understood our feelings but hoped that we would do our best.⁸⁸ India's government, the British concluded gloomily, appeared bent on pursuing policies inimical to Anglo-American interests "in the face of clear signs of danger to India's relations with the West." Such "brinkmanship," officials at the CRO reasoned predictably, "is certainly the work of Mr. Krishna Menon."⁸⁹

On the back of the "liberation" of Goa and the outrage that many Indians felt at thinly veiled Anglo-American attempts to bully Nehru's government into abandoning India's purchase of Soviet fighters, Menon's political currency in India soared in early 1962. Never one to spurn a public relations opportunity, Menon successfully reinvented himself as a national patriot, the "Liberator of Goa," and "Defender of Kashmir."⁹⁰ In India's general election that year, a hotly contested battle between Menon and Acharya Kripalani, the Praya Socialist Party candidate in North Bombay, ended with Menon being returned to the *Lok Sabha* in a landslide.⁹¹ "The increased domestic prestige and authority of Krishna Menon," the British noted subsequently, ". . . may have quite a considerable effect on Indian external policy in the short run."⁹² What is more, in Whitehall that effect appeared to be progressively, "rabidly anti-American" and "increasingly pro-Russian."⁹³ State Department senior officials began to worry that "Krishna Menon is well aware that he has no future as a pro-Westerner, nor in a pro-Western India, and that it is vital to his fortunes that Indian have a serious break with the U.S."⁹⁴

Menon's perceived shift to the left was all the more alarming to British and American policy-makers in the context of Nehru's failing health. Up until Spring 1962, Nehru had been in robust physical condition for a man in his seventies. That April, however, he contracted a viral infection of the urinary tract and spent much of the month in bed.⁹⁵ Years of overwork, it seemed, had finally caught up with him. To Sir Paul Gore Booth, who had succeeded MacDonald as Britain's High Commissioner in India in 1960, Nehru appeared "noticeably slower in response. Less curious, more prejudiced, and, above all, more tired."⁹⁶ More significantly, the British judged that Nehru's "decisions themselves are . . . less his own than they used to be . . . he is certainly more vulnerable to over-persuasion by men of determination, in particular Krishna Menon, who knows exactly what he wants and works with unscrupulous vigour to achieve it."⁹⁷

And it was not only Nehru's health that generated concern in London and Washington. Menon, who had a long history of physical and psychological infirmity stretching back to the 1930s, was seen by Anglo-American officials as emotionally unstable and dangerously irrational. In 1935, following the death of his father and the collapse of a long-term relationship, Menon had suffered a nervous breakdown and been hospitalised.⁹⁸ During the course of his rehabilitation, Menon became dependent on luminal, a barbiturate-based sedative, the side-effects of which included confusion, loss

of consciousness, and paranoia. A second nervous breakdown followed in 1951.⁹⁹ Menon's histrionic performances at the United Nations in the 1950s added further grist to the mill of opponents who speculated that the Indian minister was intrinsically unsound. In November 1957, Sir Pearson Dixon, Britain's ambassador to the UN, informed London that Menon had stumbled through "a more than usually incoherent" speech to the Security Council whilst "evidently under the influence of artificial stimulants."¹⁰⁰ Question marks continued to remain over Menon's mental health into the 1960s. In September 1961, he underwent minor brain surgery after falling in his New Delhi bathroom and sustaining a blow to his head. "As operations go," the British concluded, "this was not a serious one, but whether as a cause or effect of his fall, Mr. Menon . . . behaves at intervals in public with a strange rudeness or apathy, in either case abnormal and a little alarming."¹⁰¹

By mid-1962, with the ailing Nehru reluctant to anoint publicly a political heir, Anglo-American officials evidenced growing concern that, either by default or design, a door was being left open for Menon to step into his mentor's shoes. Under the headline "Who's Next" in the summer of 1962, *Time* magazine speculated on Nehru's likely successors as prime minister. Contemplating that the Congress Party favoured "straw man" in the top job, *Time* installed India's "bland" home minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, as the frontrunner to become India's next leader. Desai from the conservative wing of the Congress Party and the Socialist leader, Jayaprakash Narayan, were also mentioned as potential premiers-in-waiting. According to *Time*, however, Nehru's preferred successor was Menon.¹⁰² Intriguingly, as the doyen of Congress' left-wing, Menon was also Moscow's choice to replace Nehru. Accordingly, in May 1962, in a singularly ineffective operation, the Soviet presidium, it appears without Menon's knowledge, authorised the KGB residency in New Delhi to initiate a pro-Menon leadership campaign.¹⁰³

The British saw Desai as better positioned to succeed Nehru. Despite his personal and political antipathy for Menon, however, should Desai become India's next premier, Desai was deemed likely to seek an accommodation with his political rival. "Menon [would be] . . . too strong [for Desai] to take on immediately," the British felt, "and public loyalty to Nehru would make it difficult for him to contemplate radical changes of government policy or personnel."¹⁰⁴ Menon's status as an outsider in the premiership race was of little comfort to Kennedy's South Asian advisors, such as Robert Komer. "If there's even a one in five chance [of Menon seizing power]," Komer cautioned McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy's national security advisor in July 1962, "we ought to run plenty scared."¹⁰⁵ From New Delhi, Galbraith urged Washington not to over-react when it came to Menon, and to "do everything possible to avoid building Menon up as we have in the past." Denying Menon the oxygen of publicity, the American ambassador argued, was the best way forward. Menon was after all, he noted ruefully, the "Hindu Dulles—alienating people as he goes."¹⁰⁶

The possibility that Menon might seize power through unconstitutional means also entered into the minds of Anglo-American officials.¹⁰⁷ Menon's political rivals in India had repeatedly assured the British that he retained the capacity to launch a *coup d'état*. In February 1962, Madam Pandit, Nehru's sister, informed Sir David Eccles, Britain's minister of Education, that "Krishna Menon had threatened the Prime Minister with a military coup if Mr. Nehru refused to give the order to invade [Goa]." Her brother, she added, had refused to challenge Menon at the time, judging that his protégé's growing power over India's defence establishment made him "capable, in all senses of the word," of following through on his threat. Paul Gore-Booth, dismissed Pandit's allegation as overblown. Menon's political ambition was indeed palpable, the high commissioner acknowledged, but "he must be aware of his own unpopularity . . . with a considerable proportion of the Army, and in political circles, which must make him doubt whether a coup would be successful." In sum, it appeared to the British that Menon was "highly unlikely" to consider attempting "a naked seizure of power," not least because with the outcome so uncertain, "Mr. Menon is too clever to run this kind of risk."¹⁰⁸ Nonetheless, rumours that Menon was busy consolidating his grip over India's armed forces in preparation for "a forcible bid for power" continued to circulate in New Delhi throughout the summer of 1962.¹⁰⁹

Such gossip was quickly overtaken by an unexpected turn of events that autumn. The catalyst for Menon's political downfall arrived on 20 October 1962, when a long-simmering border dispute between India and the PRC erupted into open conflict. Within a week, Indian forces had been routed by the People's Liberation Army, which proceeded to occupy large swathes of northern India. With his country facing an ignominious defeat, a shell-shocked Nehru on 26 October qualified his commitment to non-alignment, and made an unprecedented appeal for international "sympathy and support."¹¹⁰ Determined to leverage India's desperate need for military support to bring about a "closer understanding" between India and the West, American officials were equally inclined "to have decently in mind the pounding we have been taking from Krishna Menon."¹¹¹ On 23 October, Galbraith candidly informed India's foreign secretary, M.J. Desai, that Menon's retention of the defence portfolio represented one of the "more serious problems" standing in the way of American military aid to India.¹¹² Likewise, in Washington, Kennedy pointedly observed to B.K. Nehru that in assisting India: "We [the United States] don't want to in any way . . . have Krishna enter into this . . . he is a disaster. . . . Your judgment is that he will continue, however, as defence minister?"¹¹³ In an effort to discredit Menon, American officials also inveighed upon their British colleagues to plant stories in the British press criticising Menon. The British rejected the American proposal, reasoning that Western attacks on Menon had invariably proved counter-productive in the past

and, in this case, were similarly “more likely to save Menon than send him under.”¹¹⁴

Ultimately, Menon’s fate was sealed not by intrigues hatched in Washington or London but, rather, by Indian popular opinion. Exposed to charges that his mismanagement of the Defence Ministry had left India at the mercy of the perfidious Chinese, Indians were clamouring by the end of October 1962 for Menon’s head in ever increasing numbers.¹¹⁵ His compatriots had taken to silencing Menon, the British noted, by sabotaging his microphone at public meetings.¹¹⁶ After a last ditch bid by Nehru to save his friend’s political career floundered, Menon resigned from the Indian Cabinet on 7 November 1962.¹¹⁷ Sporadic attempts by Menon to revive his career over the following decade stalled, and he remained in the political wilderness until his death in New Delhi in October 1974. At the time, Menon’s political eclipse induced a mixture of relief and delight amongst British and American officials. William J. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pronounced in December 1962 that he was “particularly delighted . . . that Krishna Menon was gone for good . . . his demise would have a salutary effect on Indian policies.”¹¹⁸ Paradoxically, whilst Fulbright and others rejoiced in Menon’s exit from the Indian political scene, some more prescient individuals cautioned against affording it too much significance. References to non-alignment continued to retain “great evocative power” within India, Galbraith reminded Washington, whilst “phrases like military blocs, military alliances, even Pentagon still have a bad sound.”¹¹⁹

In fact, Anglo–American policy-makers were never to reap the political dividend of closer relations between India and the West that they anticipated would follow the severing of Menon’s purportedly Machiavellian hold over Nehru. After a brief honeymoon period between late 1962 and early 1963, when Britain and the United States were lauded in New Delhi for furnishing India with diplomatic and military support against the Chinese, Anglo–American relations with Nehru’s government came under renewed strain. By the mid-1963, an embittered Nehru had begun to bridle against British and American attempts to extract a political *quid pro quo* from his government in return for continued military assistance. Determined to preserve the appearance, if not the substance, of Indian non-alignment, Nehru fought an acrimonious and ultimately successful rearguard action against the Anglo–Americans to secure an air defence pact with India.¹²⁰ Similarly, having long painted Menon as a major barrier to an improvement in Indo–Pakistani relations, Britain and the United States found it no easier to facilitate progress toward a Kashmir settlement in his absence, despite cajoling India and Pakistan into six rounds of bi-lateral talks that year.¹²¹ Indeed, by the end of 1963, frustrated at its inability to impose external solutions on complex regional problems, and with a new president, Lyndon Johnson, in the White House, Lyndon Johnson, whose focus was increasingly drawn

elsewhere in Asia, India slipped down the list of Washington's global priorities. Moreover, after the mid-1960s, in the absence of American support, the British government found its voice on the Indian subcontinent progressively marginalised.

In retrospect, between 1947 and 1962, the British and American governments misjudged Menon's influence over India's foreign affairs. Menon's showmanship, combustible personality, and association with the political left made a deep impression on Anglo-American officials, invariably generating more diplomatic heat than analytical light. Menon's tactical influence over the Indian diplomacy was often confused in the West with his more limited capacity to shape its strategic direction. For all Menon's bluster and self-promotion, his usefulness to Nehru was primarily as an implementer, rather than an originator, of policy. As one prominent observer of Indian politics has emphasised, Nehru monopolised his governments' diplomacy. Other Indian actors, Menon included, were permitted to encroach on to Nehru's political territory only when their views accorded with his own.¹²² It was Nehru, and Nehru alone, who dictated that India would champion the virtues of non-alignment, anti-colonialism, and racial equality. It was Nehru who determined India's policy on a host of questions from the Kashmir dispute to relations with China and the Soviet Union.¹²³ In January 1962, *The Economist* had argued against the prevailing wisdom that characterised Nehru's foreign policy as "a projection of the malign influence of Mr. Krishna Menon." "The idea of Jawaharlal Nehru as the empty vehicle of any other man's policy," it noted, "is a curious one, and only such assumptions make the "Menon" theory of Indian policy tenable."¹²⁴

All too often in the 1950s and early 1960s, British and American policy-makers attributed the tensions that bedevilled their interaction with India to Menon's malevolence. The inconvenient truth, however, was that India, and Britain and the United States, held different and often incompatible perspectives on how to tackle the Cold War challenges that confronted South Asia. More often than not, each Power preferred to demonise the baleful actions of "foreign devils," whether Dulles or Menon, than to face up to such an uncomfortable reality. Looking back on his tumultuous political career toward the end of the 1960s, Menon asserted that he had been neither "a buffoon nor a Rasputin."¹²⁵ The historical record suggests that, on balance, he had a point. Krishna Menon was, if anything, more Western folly than evil Indian genius.

NOTES

1. Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV [Security Service Archives, National Archives, Kew] 2/2514-3.

2. Michael Brecher, *Succession in India: A Study in Decision-Making*, (London, 1966), p. 6.

3. See, for example, *Time*, "Who's Next?" (24 August 1962); Welles Hangen, *After Nehru, Who?* (London, 1963).

4. Conversation between Home, Rusk, Shuckburgh and Bruce, Paris, 10 December 1961, FO [Foreign Office Archives, National Archives, Kew] 371/159708/1024/61.
5. C. L. Sulzberger, *The Last of the Giants*, (London, 1972), p. 906.
6. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 26 May 1961, DO [Commonwealth Relations Office Archives, National Archives, Kew] 196/74.
7. Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, Volume 1: 1889–1947 (London, 1975), p. 202.
8. “Current Intelligence Weekly Summary,” 16 June 1955, CIA-RDP79-0927A000500110001-6, CIA Records Search Tool [National Archives, Washington DC (hereafter CREST)].
9. Notably, K.C. Arora, *V. K. Krishna Menon: A Biography* (New Delhi, 1998); Janaki Ram, *V.K.K. Menon: A Personal Memoir* (New Delhi, 1997); T.J.S. George, *Krishna Menon: A Biography* (London, 1964). The work of the political scientist, Michael Brecher, is a notable exception. Brecher’s work on Menon, however, whilst path-breaking, dates from the 1960s. See, in particular, his *India and World Politics: Krishna Menon’s View of the World*, (Oxford, 1968); idem., “Elite Images and Foreign Policy Choices: Krishna Menon’s View of the World,” *Pacific Affairs*, 40(Spring–Summer 1967), pp. 60–92.
10. See, for example, Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India and Pakistan* (New York, 1994); Anita Inder Singh, *The Limits of Influence: South Asia and the Anglo-American Relationship, 1947–56* (London, 1993); Dennis Kux, *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies* (Washington, 1993); Dennis Merrill, *Bread and the Ballot: The United States and India’s Economic Development* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1990); Andrew Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947–1964* (Ithaca, NY, 2000).
11. Oral History Interview, Arthur W. Hummel, Jr., 13 July 1989, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project [Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter FAOHP)].
12. Harold R. Issacs, *Scratches On Our Minds: America images of China and India*, (New York, 1958), pp. 313–14.
13. *Time* (18 July 1955); Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru: Tryst with Destiny* (London, 1996), p. 487.
14. *Time* (29 April 1957).
15. *Time* (2 February 1962).
16. Christopher Van Hollen, 23 January 1990, FAOHP.
17. Saville Garner to Crombie 9 February 1954, DO 35/9014; Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV 2/2514/3.
18. Memcon, Lord Home and Menon, 2 March 1957, FO 371/129772/1041/181.
19. Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV 2/2514/3.
20. MacDonal to Lord Home, 18 September 1957, PREM [Prime Minister’s Archive, National Archive, Kew] 11/2361.
21. “Vengalil Krishnan Krishna MENON,” 16 July 1938, KV 2/2509-10; Special Branch report, 29 November 1938. MEPO [Metropolitan Police Archives, National Archive, Kew] 38/107.
22. “Statement made by D.G. of MI5 at JIC meeting,” 1 August 1947, KV/2/2512-20; MI5 report on Menon presented to Mr. Gordon Walker, Secretary of state for Commonwealth Relations, 17 April 1951, KV/2/2512-15/16.
23. Uren minute, 28 June 1951, KV 2/2512-4.
24. Garner to Clutterbuck, 11 October 1954, KV 2/2514-5; Roberts to Garner, 11 October 1954, FO 371/112194/1021/1G.
25. Roberts to Garner, 11 October 1954, FO 371/112194/1021/1G.
26. Kurt Stiegler, “Communism and ‘Colonial Evolution’: John Foster Dulles’ Vision of India and Pakistan,” *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, 12(Winter 1991), pp. 74–75.
27. US Embassy to Curry, 5 August 1947, KV/2/2511-2; MI5 to US Embassy, 15 August 1947, KV/2/2511-2. See also Merrill, *Bread and the Ballot*, p. 94.
28. SLO Washington to DG MI5, 7 December 1954, KV/2/2514-2, f. 343a; DG to SLO Washington, 9 December 1954, KV/2/2514-2, f. 347a.
29. 198th Meeting of the National Security Council, 20 May 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*], 1952–54, Volume XII (Washington, DC, 1984), p. 497; Allen to State Department, 31 March 1954, *FRUS* 1952–1954, Volume XIII (Washington, DC, 1982), pp. 1193–94.
30. Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, Volume 3: 1956–1964 (London, 1984), p. 46.
31. Both were noted for their forceful, direct, and provocative personalities. Nehru is reported to have commented that “Krishna Menon is my Answer to Dulles.” M.O. Mathai, *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age* (New Delhi, 1978), p. 55.

32. "Dulles-Menon Talks," 13 July 1955, CIA-RDP79R00904A000200030007-9, CREST; Extract from *The Economist*, 5 July 1955, FO 371/115054/1041/957.
33. Makins to FO (1572), 7 July 1955, FO 371/115054/1041/960.
34. Eisenhower diary, 14 July 1955, DDE Diary Series [Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library] Box 9 Ann Whitman File.
35. Eden conversation with Eisenhower, 22 July 1955, CAB [Cabinet Office Archives, National Archive, Kew] 129/72.
36. Memcon, Lord Home and Gore-Booth, 22 June 1962, DO 196/127.
37. Henderson to Acheson, 23 July 1950, *FRUS* 1950, Volume VII (Washington, DC, 1976), p. 454.
38. "Delegates to the United Nations General Assembly, Ninth Session, New York," State Department Office of Library and Intelligence Acquisition, 15 September 1954, CIA-RDP80-01446R000100170033-3, CREST.
39. Joy to Crowe, 25 January 1954, DO 35/9014.
40. Gopal, *Nebru*, p. 129.
41. Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV 2/2514/3.
42. Gore-Booth to Saville Garner, 15 December 1962, DO 196/209.
43. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, *The Scope of Happiness: A Personal Memoir*, (London, 1979), p. 278.
44. Tomlinson to Foreign Office, 10 February 1953, FO 371/105482/1071/53.
45. "Indian Double Standard," undated, circa November 1961, DO 196/126.
46. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 14 August 1961, FO 371/164873/1041/8.
47. Wolpert, *Nebru*, p. 468.
48. *The Times*, 8 February 1957.
49. Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV 2/2514-3.
50. Note on Conversation between Selwyn Lloyd and Krishna, 15 September 1959, DO 35/9014.
51. MacDonald to Lord Home, 18 September 1957, PREM 11/2361.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Roberts to Garner, 11 October 1954, FO 371/112194/1021/1G.
54. Clutterbuck to Garner, 21 October 1954, KV 2/2514/3.
55. Bunker to Jefferson, 4 March 1957, RG [Record Group] 59, Box 22, Records Relating to South Asia 1947–1959 [National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, (hereafter NARA)].
56. *New York Times*, 7 April 1957.
57. MacDonald to Lord Home, 18 September 1957, PREM 11/2361.
58. Macdonald to Lord Home, 21 July 1958 and 26 August 1958, PREM 11/2361.
59. *Harper's Magazine* (9 December 1959); John F. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace* (New York, 1961), pp. 260–68.
60. President Kennedy's news conference, 1 August 1963, American Presidency Project, *Public Papers of the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, 1963*: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/>
61. Kennedy quipped to John Kenneth Galbraith, his newly appointed Ambassador to India, "Find out from Nehru how this nonalignment works. I think I would like it." John Kenneth Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times*, (Boston, 1981), p. 407.
62. MacDonald to Sandys, 21 October 1960, DO 196/125.
63. *Ibid.*
64. Galbraith to Kennedy, 10 May 1961, John Kenneth Galbraith, *Letters to Kennedy* (Boston, 1998), p. 74.
65. Entry for 22 April 1961, John Kenneth Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal: A Personal Account of the Kennedy Years*, (Boston, 1969), p. 84.
66. Note of Harriman meeting with Nehru, New Delhi, 23 March 1961, Box 526, Folder 11, [Averell Harriman Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter Harriman Papers)].
67. Phillips Talbot Oral History, 27 July 1965, Oral Histories [John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Massachusetts (hereafter JFKL)].
68. Merrill, *Bread and the Ballot*, p. 175.
69. Bunker to Bartlett, 27 June 1957, and Bunker to Francis Wilcox, 23 December 1957, RG 59, Box 22, Records Relating to South Asia 1947–1959, NARA.
70. *New York Times* (22 November 1961).
71. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 29 December 1961, PREM 11/3837.
72. Mountbatten to Gore-Booth, 20 December 1961, Gorebooth MSS 85 [Paul Gore-Booth Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford].

73. *Time* (29 December 1961); Gore-Booth to Sandys, 29 December 1961, PREM 11/3837.
74. CIA Report, "Comments by Krishna Menon on Indian Foreign Policy," 9 January 1962, National Security File, Box 106A, JFKL.
75. Gore-Booth to Hampshire, 14 January 1962, DO 196/126.
76. Robin Jeffrey, "Jawaharlal Nehru and the Smoking Gun: Who Pulled the Trigger on Kerala's Communist Government in 1959?," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 29(1991), pp. 81–83. See also Michael Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, (London, 1969), pp. 2, 244.
77. Brecher, *India and World Politics*, pp. 130–31.
78. CIA Report, "Afterthoughts," 16 January 1962, Box 106A, National Security File, JFKL.
79. Rusk to Stevenson, 18 December 1962, RG 59 Box 45, Lot File 79 D192, NARA.
80. *Times* (20 December 1961).
81. Entry for 20 December 1961, Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal*, p. 286.
82. Talbot meeting with B.K. Nehru, 29 January 1962, RG 59 Box 1, Lot File 65 D415, NARA.
83. Delhi to CRO (633), 7 May 1962, PREM 11/3836; Sandys to Macmillan, SOSCRO (26), 17 June 1962, T [Treasury Archives, National Archive, Kew, London] 317/362.
84. Galbraith to State Department, 13 May 1962, *FRUS 1961–1963*, Volume XIX, (Washington, DC, 1996), Document #121; Delhi to CRO (758), 28 May 1962, PREM 11/3836; Gore-Booth to Sandys, 8 June 1962, DO 196/127; Nehru to Macmillan, 30 June 1962, T 317/363.
85. Snelling to Saville Garner, 25 June 1962, DO 189/371.
86. Mountbatten to Nehru, 14 June 1962, MB [Mountbatten Papers, Hartley Library, Southampton] 1/J302; Mountbatten to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, 20 June 1962, MB1/J325.
87. Symington to Kennedy, 11 May 1962, India, President's Office File, JFKL.
88. Lloyd to Sandys, 9 July 1962, DO 189/365.
89. Belcher to Sandys, 25 August 1962, DO 196/127.
90. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 7 June 1962 DO 196/75.
91. For a detailed analysis of Menon's electoral triumph, see Norman D. Palmer, "The 1962 Election in North Bombay," *Pacific Affairs*, 36(Summer 1963), pp. 120–37.
92. Gore-Booth to Hampshire, 14 January 1962, DO 196/126.
93. Ronald Belcher to Sandys, 26 June 1962, DO 196/213.
94. Grant to Talbot, 7 December 1962, RG 59 Lot File 70 D265; Sulzberger, *Giants*, p. 906.
95. Gopal, *Nehru*, p. 266.
96. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 7 June 1962 DO 196/75.
97. Belchers to Sandys, 25 August 1962, DO 196/127.
98. Liesching to Nye, 1 January 1952, KV/2/2513-10.
99. Spooner note, 24 January 1951, KV/2/2512-16; Judith M. Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (London, 2003), p. 248.
100. Dixon to FO (1924), 11 November 1957, FO 371/129780/1041/394b.
101. Gore-Booth to Sandys, 7 June 1962, DO 196/75.
102. *Time* (24 August 1962).
103. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the Wider World*, (London, 2006), pp. 314–15.
104. New Delhi to CRO, 3 July 1962, "Implications of Mr. Nehru's Death," DO 133/151.
105. Komer to McGeorge Bundy, 16 July 1962, Box 441, National Security File, JFKL.
106. Galbraith to Kennedy, 6 August 1962, *FRUS, 1961–1963*, Volume XIX (Washington, DC, 1996), Document #164.
107. New Delhi to CRO, 3 July 1962, "Implications of Mr. Nehru's Death," DO 133/151.
108. Gore-Booth to Saville Garner, "Krishna Menon" and "Appendix II: A Military Coup by Krishna Menon," 3 February 1962, DO 196/209.
109. Belcher to Sandys, 25 August 1962, DO 196/127.
110. Gore-Booth to Saville Garner, 26 October 1962, DO 196/75.
111. CRO to Delhi and Karachi, 15 November 1962, FO 371/164929/1063/13 (B); Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York, 1967), pp. 331–32; Chester Bowles, *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life, 1941–1969* (New York, 1971), p. 437; Entry for 23 October 1962, Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal*, pp. 428–31.
112. Entry for 23 October 1962, Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal*, p. 431; Galbraith to Rusk (1647), 21 October 1962, Box 107A, National Security File, JFKL.

113. President Kennedy meeting with B.K. Nehru, 26 October 1962, Meetings Recordings, Tape No. 40, JFKL.
114. Ormsby Gore to FO (2717), 29 October 1962, DO 196/166.
115. *New York Times* (1 November 1962).
116. Gore-Booth to Saville Garner, 7 November 1962, DO 196/75.
117. Sir Paul Gore-Booth, *With Great Truth and Respect* (London, 1974), p. 295; Gopal, *Nehru*, p. 13; Steven Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis*, (Berkeley, CA, 1990), pp. 203–06.
118. Memcon, Harriman and Fulbright, 4 December 1962, Box 109, National Security File, JFKL.
119. Entry for 1 November 1962, Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal*, 454; Galbraith to State Department, 1 November 1962, *FRUS 1961–1963*, Volume XIX, Document #189.
120. G. Parthasarathi, ed., *Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers*, Volume 5: 1958–1964 (London, 1989), p. 571; 58th meeting of the U.S./Australian/British/Canadian co-ordinating group, 19 December 1963, DO 164/72.
121. Delhi to CRO (2419 Confidential), 19 August 1963, DO 196/154; Rusk to Karachi, 28 August 1963, *FRUS 1961–1963*, Volume XIX (Washington, DC, 1996), Document 326.
122. Neville Maxwell, "Jawaharlal Nehru: Of Pride and Principle," *Foreign Affairs*, 53(1974), p. 633.
123. Brecher, *Nehru*, pp. 219–20.
124. *The Economist* (13 January 1962).
125. Brecher, *India and World Politics*, p. 289.