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INDIA AND NON-ALIGNMENT

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INDIA AND NON-ALIGNMENT*

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister was the idol of the Indian masses. Second to Mahatma Gandhi, his was the most important contribution in the Indian independence struggle. Nehru was therefore the most revered leader in India after Gandhiji. But Nehru was more than a mere Indian leader. He was a statesman of international stature. And despite his shortcomings, history will record him as one of the most important leaders of the "Third World".

Perhaps Nehru's singular contribution in the arena of international affairs is his articulation of the principles and policy of non-alignment. As a corollary to this, there are those who have argued that by advocating and practising non-alignment Nehru made a great "contribution to the cause of international understanding and harmony"¹. Whether or not non-alignment has contributed to world understanding may be a debatable question.

*The author of this paper has served as his country's High Commissioner in India from 1965 to 1968. He has also been actively associated with the Non-Aligned Movement activities, having attended almost all Conferences, Preparatory meetings, etc. of the Non-Aligned States from 1964. In the preparation of this study therefore, the writer's personal experiences will at times be used as primary sources.

1. Char, K.T. Narasimha, PROFILE OF NEHRU, The Book Centre Private Ltd., Bombay, p. 6.

But what is beyond contest is the fact that Nehru established this policy for India and was the pioneer for both the emergence of the policy in the global context as well as for its development as a movement encompassing adherents from the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. With Presidents Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser of Egypt and to some extent Nkrumah of Ghana, Nehru shares the honour of being a "father" of the non-aligned movement. Ad

Addressing his first Press Conference after assuming power in the interim Government, Nehru declared, "In the sphere of foreign affairs, India will follow an independent policy keeping away from the power politics of groups aligned one against another." At the same time, conceiving such a policy in terms of friendship and cooperation with all nations and in particular the Superpowers, Nehru told the Constituent Assembly on December 4, 1947, "We propose to keep on the closest terms of friendship with other countries unless they themselves create difficulties. We shall be friends with America. We intend cooperating with the United States of America and we intend cooperating fully with the Soviet Union." Furthermore, the Indian Prime Minister perceived non-alignment in dynamic terms. In this regard, he told the Consti-

2. Aiyar, S. P., Srinivasan, eds., Studies in Indian Democracy, Allied Publishers Private Limited, Bombay, 1965, p. 545.

3. Norman, Dorothy, NEHRU THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS, Volume II, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965, p. 356.

tuent Assembly in Delhi on March 8, 1948,, "I do not think that any thing could be more injurious to us from any point of view - certainly from an idealistic and high moral point of view, but equally so from the point of view of opportunism and national interest in the narrowest sense of the word - than for us to give up the policies that we have pursued, namely, those of standing up to certain ideals in regard to... oppressed nations /instead of aligning/ with this great power or that and becoming its camp follower in the hope that some crumbs might fall from /the/ table."⁴ Both Nehru and other Indian Government leaders have argued that India's independent foreign policy with non-alignment as its hallmark is merely a continuation of the policies of the Indian National Congress articulated and pursued during the country's struggle for national independence. Thus in his foreword to the Background of India's Foreign Policy, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, then General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC), asserted that India's foreign policy was "essentially a continuation of the policy⁵ pursued by the Indian National Congress over the last fifty years."

The above statements by Nehru and Shastri, /who succeeded him when Panditji died in May, 1964/ clearly reflect the official version of India's option for non-alignment. But why non-alignment?

India became an independent nation on August 15, 1947 after a struggle for freedom lasting over a quarter of a century under

4. Ibid. p. 383.

5. Aiyar and Srinivasan, op. cit. p. 544.

the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. India's emergence as a sovereign independent State coincided with the beginning of the era of the cold war which had started earlier that year although its signs began to emerge around April, 1946. According to Patwant Singh, "To India, free at last from the traumatic experience of a long spell of darkness, non-alignment seemed the only hope for survival."⁶ While Professor Varma of the University of Rajasthan wrote, "The bipolarization of the world, the emerging cold war, the fierce ideological crusades, the arms race and the relative weakness of India made the choice of non-alignment inevitable for her."⁷ Nehru himself referred to the reasons behind India's option to pursue a non-aligned policy in his address at Columbia University on the occasion of his conferment of the degree of Doctor of Laws on October 17, 1949:

"I am asked frequently why India does not align herself with a particular nation or group of nations and told that because we have refrained from doing so, we are sitting on the fence. The question and the comment are easily understood, because in times of crisis it is not unnatural for those who are involved in it deeply to regard calmly objectivity in others as irrational, short-sighted, negative, unreal or even unmanly. But I should like to make it clear that the policy is not a negative and neutral policy. It is positive and a vital policy that flows from our struggle for freedom and from the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Peace is not only an absolute necessity for us in India in order to progress and develop but it is also of paramount importance to the world. How can that be preserved? Not by surrendering to aggression, not by compromising with evil or injustice but also not by talking and preparing for war! Aggression has to be met for it endangers peace. At the same time, the lesson of the last two wars has to be remembered and it seems to be astonishing that,

6. Singh, Patwant, INDIA AND THE FUTURE OF ASIA, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1966, p. 110.

7. Varma, S.P., STRUGGLE FOR THE HIMALAYAS, A Study in Sino-Indian Relations, University Publishers, Delhi, 1965(?), p. 218.

in spite of that lesson, we go the same way. The very process of marshalling the world into two hostile camps precipitates the conflict which it has sought to avoid. It produces a sense of terrible fear and that fear darkens the minds of men and leads them into wrong courses..."⁸

In his book, Profile of Nehru, Narasimha Char attempts an elaboration of the basis for India's non-alignment. According to him, "the basis of Non-Alignment was Jawaharlal Nehru's staunch belief in non-violence fused in an ineffable manner with the principles of Panchsheel."⁹ The so-called Panchsheel principles or otherwise referred to as the five principles of peaceful co-existence, comprised of five elements. These are, respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of another; non-aggression; non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence.

Char argues that as a true disciple of Gandhi, Nehru believed that the principle of non-violence should not only guide relations between individuals in a nation-state but should also form the basis of relations between nations..¹⁰

National interest, as perceived by the policy makers, is always the most important factor in determining the foreign policy of a country. The conception and conduct of India's foreign policy

8. Nehru, Jawaharlal K., SPEECHES (1949-1953), Publications Division, Government of India, New Delhi, 1954, p. 398.

9. Char, op cit. pp. 65-66.

10. Ibid, pp. 66-69 and 79. This study will later examine how the belief in non-violence and the Principles of Panchsheel were put into action bearing in mind the four wars that India fought with Pakistan - the last one leading to Pakistan's dismemberment. For the time being however, it is relevant to point out that while articulating non-violence, Nehru had himself categorically asserted: "I am not a pacifist. I do recognize that under certain circumstances one has to fight... Even Mr. Gandhi who was a great pacifist, always said that it is better to fight than be afraid." See, Mende, Tibor, CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. NEHRU, Secker & Warburg, London, 1956, p. 79.

does not belie this important variable. Thus India's non-alignment or neutralism as it is otherwise called, is viewed in terms of India's national interest and pursued with maximum flexibility. To quote Nehru, "We may talk about international goodwill and mean what we say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis, a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country."¹¹ Later on, he was to elaborate on this as well as inject the element of flexibility. In his speech on March 8, 1948, Nehru told the Constituent Assembly, "...Purely from the point of opportunism, if you like, a straight forward honest policy, an independent policy is the best. What the policy should be at a particular moment, it is very difficult for me or for this House to say, because things change rapidly from day to day. It may be that we have to choose what might be a lesser evil in certain circumstances - we must always choose the lesser evil."¹²

International and national reaction to India's non-alignment has been varied and extreme. It has been praised by some, condemned by others. In some cases it has been ridiculed! Patwant Singh rightly pointed out that, "the one aspect of India's foreign policy which has most people baffled, Americans particularly, has been the policy of non-alignment."¹³

11. Nehru's Address to the Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, on December 4, 1947. Norman, op. cit. p. 355.

12. Ibid. p. 385.

13. Patwant Singh, op. cit. p. 108.

At the national level, many prominent Indians particularly those in the Opposition have castigated the policy as short-sighted and inimical to India's national interests. India's first Governor General, Shri Rajagopalchari - a veteran of the Indian freedom movement - for example, denounced the policy and has called for outright alliance with the Western powers.¹⁴ Questions and serious doubts have also been raised by some elements within the ruling Congress Party itself.

At the international level, the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles described it as "immoral and bankrupt".¹⁵ Nearer home, the policy found its severest critic in Pakistan. General Ayub Khan, the late President of Pakistan described it as hypocritical and as a policy aimed at taking advantage of both sides. According to Ayub Khan, "India's neutralism was at best a posture of sitting on the fence and seeing how best it could take advantage of both sides; at worst it was a kind of sanctimonious hypocrisy and subterfuge."¹⁶ And in a letter dated November 5, 1962 to President John F. Kennedy, the President of Pakistan accused India of "bending over backwards to appease communism" and of hoisting "the white flag of neutralism to appease communism and get other wavering nations to join India in order to be able to create a world nuisance-value for themselves". The Pakistani leader also characterised India's foreign policy as being based on the "abuse of the West,

14. Varma, op. cit. pp. 186-187.

15. Rajani, M.S., INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1964, p. 259.

16. Khan, Mohammad Ayub, FRIENDS NOT MASTERS, A Political Autobiography, Pakistan Branch, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1967, p. 120.

especially the USA in season and out of season."¹⁷

India's conduct of its foreign relations, based as it is on the principles of non-alignment, is one thing. The philosophy and principles of non-alignment is another. The two need not be confused. For, while some of India's critics can, not without justification, criticize India's non-alignment, it would be naive to deny the pervasive nature of the adherents of non-alignment. Writing in 1962, Crabb described Non-alignment as the dominant diplomatic philosophy of the Afro-Asian world.¹⁸ Since then the number of adherents has multiplied at a very quick pace. As Narasimha Char points out, "the emancipation of many small states in Asia and Africa, for long victims of colonial exploitation, greater support for this moral basis behind the 'middle' path in international affairs"¹⁹ was gaining ground. Indeed, there has been both a quantitative and qualitative growth of the non-aligned movement. In this respect, the Fourth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned States held in Algiers in September, 1973 is an eloquent testimony. Not only did the Conference have the highest number of participants; not only did it witness the largest participation of Heads of State

17. Ibid., p. 142.

18. Crabb, Cecil V., THE ELEPHANTS AND THE GRASS, Praeger, New York, 1962, p. 9.

19. Char, op. cit., p. 65. Here it is also relevant to refer to Professor Varma's observations: "While India was a pioneer in laying down the policy of non-alignment, the policy has been accepted by almost all the newly emergent nations of Asia and Africa. The same factors - international situation and internal contradictions - which made India choose the path of non-alignment made it a natural thing for countries having similar circumstances to reckon with." Varma, op. cit., p. 219.

or Government in the history of the world²⁰ but also and perhaps more importantly, the Conference reflected the growth and influence of the movement throughout the world. Of particular significance in this connection was the representation from Latin America. There were seven full-fledged participants namely Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Jamaica, Guyana, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. And there were observers from Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This study does not aim at pronouncing judgement on the merits and demerits of India's non-alignment. It does not even attempt to answer in categorical terms the crucial question on how non-aligned India is. Such an exercise would be too ambitious an undertaking for a study of this limited scope. Rather, the paper will examine briefly India's policies and behaviour as a non-aligned country. A peripheral mention will also be made of its role in the non-aligned movement. To be able to have a proper evaluation of India's role, domestic as well as external factors would be taken into account. Finally, since the topic under consideration is India's non-alignment, it would be pertinent to review some of the literature on non-alignment as well as to examine the origin and evolution of the concept and policy of non-alignment.

*Why?
A critical assessment would have addressed greatly to the quality of the paper*

II

NON-ALIGNMENT: ITS MEANING AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The preponderance of the Third World nations in the Non-aligned

20. Out of the seventy-six nations which took part as full members, 60 were represented at the level of Heads of State or Government. BASIC DOCUMENTS OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT OF NON-ALIGNED STATES, Algiers, Algeria, September, 1973.

movement is neither accidental nor coincidental. It stems from concrete historical circumstances which gave birth to the very concept of non-alignment.

One of the basic common characteristics of its members is that they were almost all former colonies. Indeed, it is beyond dispute that the tide of liberation brought with it the era of non-alignment. Thus non-alignment came into focus following the termination of the Second World War and the emergence of new nations which had broken the chains of colonial bondage.

"The intensive decolonization after the Second World War was not only the background against which the policy of non-alignment evolved, but was in fact the point of departure for the movement,"²¹ writes Leo Mates. And in the words of the late President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkumah: "We [the Non-Aligned nations] came into existence as a protest and a revolt against imperialism and neo-colonialism which are also the basic cause of world tension and²² insecurity."

The need for consolidating and preserving their independence is what motivated the leaders of the newly liberated countries to opt for that policy. In the same context, recognition must be given

21. Leo Mates, Non-Alignment, Theory and Current Policy, Ocean Publications, Inc., Dobbs Ferry, New York, 1972, p. 45.

22. Address by President Kwame Nkumah at the Second Conference of the Heads of State or Government in Cairo in 1964. Nkumah, Kwame, THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES, PANAF BOOKS, Ltd., London, 1973, p. 75.

to the strong and powerful urge of these nations to pursue an independent policy in their international relations which "in the interests of their own survival, they had to try and fashion a new world in which they could develop and overcome their weakness and poverty."²³

Here let the Non-Aligned countries speak for themselves through their Lusaka Declaration of September 1970:

"The policy of non-alignment has emerged from the determination of independent countries to safeguard their national independence and the legitimate rights of their peoples. The growth of non-alignment into a broad international movement cutting across racial, regional and other barriers, is an integral part of significant changes in the structure of the entire international community. It is the result of the world anti-colonial revolution and of the emergence of a large number of newly liberated countries which opting for an independent political orientation and development, have refused to accept the replacement of centuries old forms of subordination by new ones. At the root of these changes lies the ever more clearly expressed aspiration of member-nations for freedom, independence and equality, and their determination to resist all forms of oppression and exploitation."²⁴

One of the pioneers of non-alignment, Yugoslavia's President Marshal Jozip Broz Tito, who played host to the First Conference of the Non-Aligned States, set the theme of what has currently become an equally important preoccupation of the non-aligned states, when he deplored the prevalent tendency on the part of the major powers to arrogate to themselves the right to make decisions involving the destiny of the world, while the small and medium sized states remained idle spectators.²⁵ The Yugoslave leader then de-

23. Mates, op. cit., p. 33.

24. LUSAKA DECLARATION ON PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, DEVELOPMENT, COOPERATION AND DEMOCRATISATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

25. Christman, Henry M., (Ed.) Neither East Nor West: The Basic Documents of Non-Alignment (Sheed & Ward, New York, 1973) - Opening address of President Jozip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, p. 7.

clared:

"...the non-aligned countries can no longer reconcile themselves with the status of observers and voters and that, in their opinion, they have the right to participate in the solving of problems, particularly those which endanger the peace and fate of the world at the present moment. This meeting has been convened, inter alia, for the purpose of asserting that right."²⁶

Thus the demand for the non-aligned countries and indeed of the less powerful countries in general to have a say in the affairs which concern the entire humanity has been a legitimate and unceasing demand of the non-aligned states from the very inception of the concept.

This position which is one of the cardinal principles underlying the policy of non-alignment was valid in the 1950's and 1960's when the non-aligned states "representing the conscience of 'mankind'"²⁷ were striving relentlessly for the reduction of tension and preservation of what then appeared as precarious peace, aware that when the elephants fight it is the grass that suffers.²⁸ It is equally valid and perhaps even more so today, when the changed circumstances in the international arena have resulted in the rapprochement and detente between the former arch antagonists of the Cold War considering the fact that at times the plight of the grass becomes no less devastating when the elephants instead of fighting resort to love-making!²⁹

26. Ibid., p. 7.

27. Ibid., p. 8.

28. This is an African proverb which has been repeatedly used by such leaders as Presidents Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania. Cecil V. Crabb in his book, The Elephants and the Grass: A Study of Non-Alignment (Federic A. Praeger, Publishers, New York, 1965) refers to this proverb. See p. 33.

29. Comments by the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kwan Yu at the Commonwealth Heads of State or Government Conference in Ottawa, August, 1973.

There were many other no less important facets which gave the movement a distinct characteristic ensuring for it a continuous and dynamic philosophy for the vast majority of the nations of the world which refused to be permanently identified either diplomatically, militarily or otherwise with either of the cold war power groupings. For, above all, implicit in the policy or non-alignment is the diplomatic freedom of action with respect to the contending ideological and military blocs.³⁰ Or,^{as} Nehru succinctly put it: "Essentially, 'non-alignment' is freedom of action which is part of independence."³¹

In addition to this categorical assertion of the right of nations to analyse and decide issues on the basis of their merits and independent of the position of one or the other of the cold war bloc contestants, the proponents of non-alignment from Belgrade and indeed even prior to that important epoch making Conference, had a clear set of positive policies. These include the support for and promotion of the struggle of peoples to self-determination which presupposes the elimination of classical colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, the struggle against neo-colonialism, racial equality, safeguarding of national sovereignty, disarmament and international cooperation.

On Neutralism and Neutrality

In a television address broadcast from Washington, D.C. on December 8, 1956, Prime Minister Nehru who was on an official visit

30. Crabb, op. cit., p. 11.

31. Norman (Ed.), op. cit., p. 541.

to the United States told his audience: "Non-alignment does not mean passivity of mind or action, lack of faith or conviction. It does not mean submission to what we consider evil. It is a positive and dynamic approach to such problems which confront us. We believe that each country has the right not only to freedom but also to decide its own policy."³²

Indeed, involvement in international affairs became almost like an "obsession" for the newly liberated states. For a nation's conduct of foreign policy was undoubtedly one of the most effective ways of projecting its sovereign image. This yearning for an active involvement in international affairs constitutes one of the basic premises of the non-aligned states. And this is what from the very outset differentiated states like India or Indonesia from the traditional neutral states like Switzerland. For while the neutral countries followed the principle of strict impartiality, symbolising attitudes of complete indifference and even lack of concern to issues under consideration,³³ this is not what the newly emerging nations aspired for. The new states embracing the policy of non-alignment did not believe in a policy of "non-involvement," "non-engagement," "isolationism" or inactivity in the domain of international relations.³⁴

Lawrence Martin makes this distinction when after explaining that the neutral country of the past "tried to maintain permanent neutrality - rather than merely minding its own business and re-

32. Nehru, Jawaharlal, SPEECHES (1953-1957), Publications Division, Government of India, New Delhi, p. 49.

33. Burton, J.W., Non-Alignment, (James H. Heineman, Inc., N.Y. 1966), p. 22.

34. Crabb, op. cit., p. 8.

maining aloof from the rough-and-tumble of world affairs." He points out that, "Today's neutralists (meaning non-aligned states) are very different. They are far from resigned to their fate." ³⁵ And Nyerere put the matter in more unambiguous terms when he asserted, "For it is not, and never has been a matter of neutrality - of treading a delicate tight-rope between contending forces. Non-alignment is a policy of involvement in world affairs." ³⁶ And he goes on, "Our role (that of the non-aligned countries) arises from the fact that we have very definite international policies of our own, but ones which are separate from, and independent of those of either of the power blocs."

President Sukarno declared at Belgrade in 1961 that non-alignment is not "the sanctimonious attitude of the man who holds himself aloof - 'a plague on both your houses' ... Non-alignment is an active devotion to the lofty cause of independence, abiding peace, social justice and freedom to be free. It is the determination to serve this cause. It runs congruent with the social conscience of man." ³⁷

Summing up the motivations which led newly independent countries to opt for non-alignment, we can clearly highlight the objectives of maintaining 'jealously' their hard-won national independence and as an extension to that, pursuit of a policy of independence in their international relations.

35. Martin, L.W., Neutralism and Non-alignment (Praeger, New York, 1962), p. XI.

36. President Nyerere's address at the opening session of the Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned States in Dar es Salaam on April 13, 1970. Nyerere, Julius K., FREEDOM AND DEVELOPMENT, Oxford University Press, London, 1974, p. 161.

37. Christman, (Ed.), op. cit., p. 15.

Behind the urge for active involvement in the arena of international affairs lay also the recognition of the need for international cooperation. As Nehru put it, "When we talked of independence of India it was not in terms of isolation. We realized, perhaps more than many other countries, that the old concept of national independence was doomed and there must be a new era of world cooperation."³⁸

In understanding the philosophical content of the non-aligned movement, one can find no better way than to recapitulate the aspirations and expectations of the newly emerging nations or for that matter those who were on the verge of attaining nationhood.

Again, Nehru's elucidation comes handy. Writing on "Realism and Geopolitics" he made the following observations which can be considered to summarize the position of the members of the non-aligned community:

"The old divisions and the quest for power politics have little meaning today and do not fit in with our environment, yet they continue. The interests and the activities of states overflow their boundaries and are world-wide. No nation can isolate itself or be indifferent to the political or economic fate of other nations. If there is no cooperation, there is bound to be friction with its inevitable results. Cooperation can only be on the basis of equality and mutual welfare, on a pulling up of backward nations to a common level of well-being and cultural advancement, on an elimination of racialism and domination. No nation, no people are going to tolerate domination and exploitation by another, even though this is given some more pleasant name. Nor will they remain indifferent to their own poverty and misery when other parts of the world are flourishing."³⁹

38. Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, (Asia Publishing House, India, 1964), Chapter 9, The last phase (3), The Congress develops a Foreign Policy, p. 446.

39. Ibid., p. 574.

Like India, most of the new states which broke the chains of colonial slavery imbibed the precepts of non-alignment. By the time of the Bandung Summit Conference of the Independent Afro-Asian states in 1955, non-alignment had become an established foreign policy of many Asian and African nations. Indeed, many students of, and actors in, international relations consider that the Non-aligned Movement owes its inspiration to this Conference. This is in spite of the fact that the Conference in Indonesia had such a mixed list of participants ranging from the Peoples Republic of China - to the militarily allied countries like the Philippines, Iran and Turkey.

III

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL REACTION AND EFFECTS TO INDIA'S NON-ALIGNMENT

External Reaction

In his address to the country's legislators in New Delhi on December, 1947, Nehru observed: "We have sought to avoid entanglements by not joining one bloc or the other. The natural result has been neither of these big blocs looks on us with favour." Such was indeed the international reaction to the policy of non-alignment or neutralism at the time that the Indian Prime Minister made this statement. The West which had expected India to be a natural ally in the fight against communism found this position as both immoral and disingenious. The Eastern camp on the other hand

40. For details of both lists of participants and decisions of the Bandung Conference, see "Final Communique of the Asia-African Conference," held at Bandung from 18 - 24 April, 1955: Leo Mates, *op. cit.*, p. 371 - 378.

41. Norman, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

was outrightly suspicious of Nehru as they were indeed of all the Nationalist leaders of the newly emergent nations. There was therefore hostility from both the capitalist and socialist camps.

The Western view of non-alignment has "been compounded chiefly of irritation and pique, mystification and bewilderment, suspicion and mistrust," writes Crabb.⁴² Some leading Americans like George Meany for example, castigated both Nehru and Tito as "aides and allies of Communism."⁴³

This original misunderstanding, misconception and irritation on the part of the Western countries, which was certainly not confined to the United States, needs to be understood in their historical circumstances. For it would be naive to interpret them as merely constituting a lack of comprehension on the part of the formulators of policies in the various Western capitals, of what non-alignment was all about. The problem was more profound. And from their point of view, this "irritation" and indeed anger, seemed justified. For, by asserting their right to be non-aligned, leaders like Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah and Sukarno were in fact telling the West that their countries could no longer be considered as mere extensions of the sphere of influence of the Western World.

As colonies, these countries were part of the metropolises. They had no contact with the Communist bloc and for that matter little contacts with any other groups. Exercising the option to make independent policies whether in the domain of politics, trade or economic

42. Crabb, op. cit., p. X.

43. Patwant Singh, op. cit., p. 109.

cooperation, the new nations were in fact breaking from their former alignment with their erstwhile masters. Certainly this "audacity" to get out from the Western orbit if effectively put into practise, could not but cause pique and consternation.

It is perhaps relevant to point out at this stage that while by and large, the indignation felt by the West has generally subsided over the years, and they now have come to accept non-alignment as a fait accompli to be dealt with objectively in international relations, the elements of suspicion and mistrust still lingers on, at times more clearly pronounced, while at others subtly manifested.

The question that arises is how justified is such suspicion and resentment. Have the non-aligned countries including India really detached themselves from the West? Have they become agents and allies of communism as the cold war warriors had accused them to be? Perhaps the case of India with its extensive connections - military and otherwise - with the Soviet Union and its resultant "soft policy on Soviet misdeeds" is a more complex one. Yet even then, it would be nonsensical to characterize India as agent of Soviet communism. Furthermore, in many respects, India is no different from other proponents of non-alignment in terms of its overall close association or even dependency if you like, on the Western world. India's "identity" with the West ranges from such fields as political institutions, cultural ties (including educational and training), as well as trade and economic ties (and this notwithstanding the voluminous increase of cooperation and trade relations with the socialist countries particularly the USSR).

*Do you
still
accept
India as
being non-
aligned nation
after she
1971 Indo-
Soviet treaty
which is
widely
a concealed
military
base.*

Viewed from this background, it could be argued that the real rationale behind the Western irritation to India's non-alignment and indeed the policy of neutralism in general is that explained by Lennox Mills: "The policy of Russia and China has been to encourage neutralism and play a waiting game. After all, it benefits them; the Governments which practise it are not adding to the strength of the West."⁴⁴

Mill's comments brings us to the reaction of the Eastern bloc to India's neutralism. And the immediate observation which ought to be made is that these comments were made in 1964 when indeed both China and the USSR had reassessed their position on non-alignment. For, the initial reaction of the communist countries was very hostile.

Nehru came under particular attacks and abuses from Peking. In 1949, he was described by the Chinese Communist authorities as a "rebel against the movement for national independence", a "black-guard who undermines the progress of the peoples liberation movement" and a "loyal slave" of imperialism. Later the term "loyal slave" was substituted with the expression "running dog" of imperialism.⁴⁵ Earlier on, in 1948, in a message to Indian Communist Party Leader Ranadive, Mao-Tse-Tung himself reportedly labelled Nehru, (at least by insinuation) as collaborator of imperialism.⁴⁶

44. Mills, Lennox A., SOUTHEAST ASIA, Illusion and Reality in Politics and Economics, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1964, p. 171. (Emphasis Added).

45. Patwant Singh, op. cit., p. 112.

46. Sudhakar Bhat, op. cit., p. 10.

China's suspicion and denunciation of "neutralism" (non-alignment) was clearly reflected in Mao's assertion that neutralism is a camouflage for membership of the imperialist camp and that a third road does not exist.⁴⁷ This attitude was in keeping with the so-called "lean to one side" approach propagated by Mao and at that time. And Liu Shao-chi, who succeeded Mao as Head of State and remained in that position until his dethronement at the very beginning of the Cultural Revolution, described neutralism as "nothing but deception, international or otherwise".⁴⁸ But despite Peking's out-burst against India's Prime Minister, Delhi recognized PRC on October 30, 1949 (the second non-communist country to do so) and Nehru spoke glowingly of the '2000 years of friendship' between the two countries.

Between 1949 and 1959, a number of significant events took place. India's independent and mediatory role during the Korean war demonstrated to the PRC the fallacy of their assumption about India's "neutralism" being camouflage alliance with Western imperialism. When Chinese "volunteers" entered the Korean war, India opposed the labelling of PRC as the aggressors though New Delhi had earlier in the Security Council joined in so labelling the DPRK. Chou En-lai

47. Writing on "New Democracy", Mao Tse-tung stated: "In the International situation of today the 'heroes' in the colonies and semi-colonies must either stand on the side of the imperialist front and become part of the force of world counter-revolution or stand on the side of the anti-imperialist front and become part of the force of world revolution. They must stand either on this side or on the other, there is no third choice". Mao Tse-tung, "On New Democracy" (January 1940). As quoted in Whiting, Allen S., CHINA CROSSES THE YALU, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1968, p. 7.

48. Ibid.

visited India in 1954 and the era of panchsheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence) was proclaimed. With it, entered the short but significant period of Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai (India and Chinese are brothers).⁴⁹ There was also the Bandung Conference of April 1955. India's refusal to join the military blocs of US imperialism was hailed by Peking. So was New Delhi's anti-colonialism posture and Nehru's policy of friendship towards China. PRC's friendly attitude towards India also followed her general policy in that period of normalizing relations with the Asian countries. PRC's initial militant foreign policy of ideological puritanism (dogmatism?) turned gradually to a more "realistic, a more flexible and therefore rewarding position in Asia."⁵⁰ Thus, at least temporarily, PRC discarded the policy of treating Nehru, and his other Asian colleagues as "the political garbage in Asia".

Like their Chinese comrades (at that time), the Soviet Union leadership's reaction to India's neutralism was hostile. To Moscow, Gandhi was a lackey of Western imperialism.⁵¹ But Russia's policy towards India changed after Stalin's death in March 1953. The 'positive' credentials displayed by India during the Korean war, its refusal to join the Western military pacts as well as India's "progressive" foreign policy postures made it easier for the Kremlin to befriend non-aligned India!

In 1955, Nehru visited Moscow. This visit was reciprocated by Marshal Bulganin and Nikita Krushchev that year. During the Soviet

49. During this 'honeymoon', Nehru visited China in October 1954 and Chou En-lai again visited Delhi in 1956. One of its early by-products was India's acceptance of Tibet as "The region of China".

50. Dutt, op. cit., p. 148.

51. Patwant Singh, op. cit., p. 112.

leaders' visit, India attained a major political benefit in her relations with the USSR at the expense of a third party. In a joint communique, the Soviet Union recognized the disputed State of Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India. Hithertofore, Moscow had maintained a neutral stance on the Kashmir question and had not opposed the UN resolution on the question of self-determination for the Kashmiris preceded by a plebisite - such a position was incidentally accepted by India herself until 1953. In the meantime in January that year, the Soviet Communist Party paper Pravda, editorially endorsed India's internal policies.⁵²

The "concession" on Kashmir was to mark a new chapter in Indo-Soviet relations - one of whose features can be described as constituting a gentleman's understanding of "give and take". Thus when Soviet troops and tanks moved into Hungary in 1956, New Delhi did not criticize the Soviet Union action. Indeed, India's delegation to the United Nations abstained on a General Assembly Resolution adopted on November 4, 1956 condemning USSR military intervention. On November 9, 1956, India became the only non-communist state to vote with the Soviet Union against the United States inspired five-power draft resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly calling for free elections in Hungary. India's position was criticized by both at home⁵³ and abroad. The West considered it as consti-

52. Varma, op. cit., p. 222.

53. It is reported that in the midst of criticism both inside and outside Parliament that followed this position by the Government, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was to describe the Hungarian Government as "not being a free Government". It was according to Nehru, an "imposed Government". Aiyar and Srinivagan, op. cit., p. 547.

tuting double-standard of morality since India had only weeks before condemned the tripartite aggression committed by France, Britain and Israel against Egypt over the Suez Canal crisis.

One year after the Hungarian crisis, India was to be "rewarded" for its "understanding" when the Soviet Union cast its veto in the Security Council to block a resolution on the question of supervising a referendum in Kashmir. Again in 1968, when the Soviet Union moved its tank in Czechoslovakia to put in line a member of the "Socialist Commonwealth", India's reaction did not displease the Kremlin. A more spectacular "gesture" of appreciation to India was the Soviet Union's active involvement (as exemplified on the diplomatic level through a series of veto blocking any Security Council action) in the dismemberment of Pakistan in December 1971.

Whereas relations with India had taken a turn for the better from 1953 onwards, it was during the twentieth Party Congress that a definite position was taken to cultivate the friendship and solidarity of the non-aligned states in general. In this respect, Krushchev told the Congress that, "the socialist nations and the neutralist nations could constitute a 'zone of peace' to destroy the capitalist system. Because their political interests were opposed to the West, nationalist movements could advance the cause of socialist revolution."⁵⁴

Martin offers an interesting explanation behind this shift of the Soviet position. He maintains that:

54. Krushchev, N.S., Report of the CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION TO THE TWENTIETH PARTY CONGRESS, FEBRUARY 4, 1956, Moscow, 1956.

"The new nations (in this case they include the non-aligned states) have also presented the Soviet Union with difficult problems of adjustment... The Stalinist regime welcomed anti-colonialism as an attack on the rear of the capitalist enemy and an opportunity for communists to infiltrate the colonial areas. But it conceived no special role for the coming national regimes... The rapid rise of independent governments in former colonies, their active concern with Korea, and subsequent moves towards cooperation compelled communists to review their approach to the new nations. There was an increasingly obvious danger that the banner of anti-imperialism might be taken over by a force independent of communism and that the revolutionary enthusiasm of under-developed countries would be articulated around a purely nationalist movement."⁵⁵

Domestic Reaction

The overwhelming authority of the Indian National Congress in the country and more particularly the towering figure of Jawaharlal Nehru with his unquestionable charismatic appeal, gave the Indian Government a field day in its foreign affairs. The first decade of Nehru's power therefore witnessed very little domestic opposition to India's policy on non-alignment. The opposition that existed was more or less confined to the different opposition parties in the country who in any case posed no threat to the Congress ruling elite.

Among the Indian opposition political groupings that have national following are the right wing Jan Sangh and Swatantra Party. On the other side of the spectrum are the Communist Parties. Then there are the other basically right wing organizations like the Praja Socialist Party (PSP), the Samyutka Socialist Party (SSP), who though nationally organized, their support has been rapidly dwindling.

55. Martin, op. cit., p. xix.

The Bharatiya Jan Sangh is a hindu communalist organization which was launched in Delhi on October 22, 1951. The leading positions of the Party were from the very beginning occupied by the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sang (R.S.S.), a fanatic hindu communalist organization. It is alleged that Gopal Godse, the assassin of Mahatma Gandhi belonged to this organization though the RSS itself has sharply denied this.

Jan Sangh is an extremely anti-Muslim Organization and still conceives of "liberating" Pakistan. Essentially, a militantly right wing organization, the Jan Sangh has consistently opposed Nehru's policy on non-alignment and has advocated that India should join the United States in the world alignment of forces.⁵⁶ A message from Guru Golwakar, the RSS Chief by one of the leading figures of the Jan Sangh Shri Atal Bihari Bajpeyi in 1960 during the latter's visit to the United States tell the story of the degree of identification that the Hindu Communalist Organizations had for the United States: "By God's grace USA (is) the leader of the free world. Dharma and Adharma are today engaged in world wide war. In this war, the USA leads the side of Dharma. USA should seek in this support of India's friendship."⁵⁷

Jan Sangh's opposition to non-alignment has been consistent. At its 12th Annual Session held in January 1965, in a document containing "Principles and Policy Statement", the Party described non-alignment as "outmoded and irrelevant".⁵⁸

56. Malaviya, H.D., THE DANGER OF RIGHT REACTION, A Socialist Congressman Publication, New Delhi, 1965, p. 45.

57. Ibid, p. 56.

58. Ibid, pp. 168-170.

The Swantatra Party which like the Jan Sangh, has sizeable nation-wide support is violently anti-communist. With colourful figures like Professor N. G. Ranga and Minoo Masani at its helm and the "fatherly" leadership of Rajagopachari, the Party is, in the words of former Union Government Minister Shri K. D. Malaviya, "the drummer of big business in the right reactionary orchestra". Nehru once described it as the organization which wants to take India back⁵⁹ "to the middle ages of lords, castles and Zamindars".

The Swantatra Party has been the most vocal in denouncing non-alignment. It has advocated military alliances with the USA, Britain and other western bloc nations. It however differs from the Jan Sangh in its attitude towards Pakistan. Instead of talking about "liberating" Pakistan as the Jan Sangh does, the Swantatra had at some point called for a conclusion a military alliance with Pakistan. Such an alliance would have linked India with the alliances which⁶⁰ Pakistan was a member.

A Russian specialist on India, Professor Ulyanovsky made the following observations on the Swantatra Party's position on non-alignment:

"India's present non-alignment policy does not suit Swantatra. The Party calls for joining military-political blocs. It expects that conclusion of a military alliance with Pakistan would draw India into the cold war, tie her to the military commitments assumed by Pakistan and thereby gradually bring India into CENTO and SEATO. Rajagopachari and his supporters assert that India's adherence to non-alignment has turned into an absurdity.

59. Nehru's speech in Madras on October 8, 1960. Ibid, p.50.
60. Ibid, p. 56.

"Swantatra thus wants India to renounce neutrality, to become a bulwark of capitalism in Asia and a base of anti-communism by joining pro-American blocs and accepting extensive U.S. military aid."⁶¹

The attitude of the other right wing opposition parties have not been any friendlier towards non-alignment.⁶² Thus Praja Socialist Party leader N. G. Goray has asserted that, "the old stand of neutrality is factually untenable and clearly out of date".⁶³

The Indian Communist Parties derive their inspiration from either Moscow or Peking though the Indian Communist Party (Right) led by S. A. Dange is more clearly identified with the Kremlin. Prior to the open split of the Indian Communist movement in 1962, the Party's position on India's non-alignment more or less followed the reaction pattern of Moscow and Peking already elaborated in this study.

The Indian Marxist interpretation of India's non-alignment is given in Namboodripod's book, Economics and Politics of India's Socialist Pattern. According to the Communist leader, one time head

61. Ulyanovsky, R. A., THE DOLLAR IN ASIA, U.S. Neo-Colonialist Policy in Action, "Nauka" Publishing House, Moscow, 1965, pp. 274-275.

62. These include Dr. Lohia's Socialist Party; the Praja Socialist Party; the Kerala Muslim League; the Akali Dal of Punjab; the Dravida Munnetra Kazhaghan - DMK, the Separatist Organization for Tamilnad; the Scheduled Castes Federation and the Republican Party; the Gantantra Parishad. Apart from the Socialist Parties however, the remaining organizations are of local and sectional importance. Lumping them up all together, Malaviya wrote that, "...The focal point of all right wing demands was to make India economically and politically dependent on the West, particularly the United States, leading to an irreversible undermining of sovereignty and national democratic institutions and finally the overthrow of Nehru and the Congress Government." Malaviya, op. cit., p. 135.

63. Varma, op. cit., p. 187.

of Communist Cabinet in Kerala, India's non-alignment can be viewed in three different phases:

- (i) Non-alignment practised in the first years of independence during which time the new leaders of Independent India in their international policies "took broadly the same line as was laid down by the United States, the United Kingdom and other imperialist powers". But due to nationalistic sentiment of the Indian Ruling Capitalist class, they refused "to cross all the t's and dot all the i's of the policy of imperialism".⁶⁴
- (ii) The change in the correlation of forces internationally arising from the birth of the Peoples Republic of China and the consolidation of the "socialist Democracies" in Eastern Europe, together with the growth of the Left in Indian internal politics made the Government reorientate its policies. During this second phase, "the same policy of non-alignment which had been formulated in the first post-independence years was given a new, more anti-imperialist content. Sharper and more direct attacks on the colonial system, more open relations of friendship with the Socialist powers, collaboration with the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China in rendering assistance to the anti-colonial national liberation struggles of the Afro-Asian peoples... all these led to the formulation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and the convening of

64. Namboodripad, E.M.S., ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF INDIA'S SOCIALIST PATTERN, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi, 1966, pp. 398-399.

of the Bandung Conference."⁶⁵

- (iii) The post-Sino-Indian conflict era when "although the policy of non-alignment remained, it was given a new, less anti-imperialist orientation."⁶⁶

IV

INDIAN NON-ALIGNMENT - THEORY AND PRACTICE: THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SINO- INDIAN CONFLICT (1962) AND THE BANGLADESH CRISIS (1971)

Sino-Indian Conflict

Namboodripad's last observation referred to above merits further elaboration. The first real challenge to Nehru's policy of non-alignment on the domestic front emerged during the Sino-Indian conflict with the routing of the Indian Army in the Himalayan. That confrontation also had serious international implications which among other things put a severe strain on India's neutralism.

The conflict over the Himalayan in October 1962 was a culmination of three years of serious political clashes as well as minor military incidents on the border. The border dispute came into the open in 1959 with first Nehru's letter to Chou En-lai in March 22 and the Chinese Prime Minister's reply on September 8. Furthermore, the 'rebellion' in Tibet, the Chinese response to it, as well as India's sympathetic reaction to the 'cause' of the Tibetans and their reception of the Dalai-lama damaged "India-China relations

65. Ibid, pp. 400-401.

66. Ibid, p. 404.

beyond measure".⁶⁷ That year witnessed a process of vitriolic recriminations between the two nations. Peking labelled Indian leaders as "expansionist, imperialist agents and reactionaries". Those attacked included Nehru's daughter (and now Prime Minister) Indira Gandhi. Yet, significantly, at that period Peking exercised restraint. Nehru was personally spared pursuant to the so-called "dual tactic of struggle and compromise".

Chou En-lai's one week visit to Delhi in April 1960 and the border negotiations that ensued failed to achieve a settlement. The limited but costly (in terms of future ties between the two States) war erupted in the autumn of 1962.

The mood of frustration and indignation engulfed the Indian sub-continent. The war brought home many traumatic questions and experiences. Apart from the humiliation that India suffered with the collapse of the Indian defences, there was the international reaction which "shocked" many Indians. As Professor Varma put it: "there was a sense of disillusionment with, and irritation over a number of things... Non-aligned powers, whom India had guided in their policies all these years, were left gaping and inactive, and were reluctant even to declare China as an aggressor".⁶⁸

K. K. Shah, General Secretary of the Ruling Congress Party considered that the Chinese "attack" had not only given a "jolt to non-alignment but has shaken the very basis on which non-alignment was based". And Shah was particularly shocked by the policy of

67. Dutt, op. cit., p. 197.

68. Varma, op. cit., p. 186.

non-alignment in which non-aligned states seemed to be persisting even when one of their colleagues was "attacked".⁶⁹ Professor Choudhury's observations are in this connection also relevant: "... this was ^{the} first great shock to the Indian military leaders. To her political leaders the shock was no less. India, which considered herself to be the leader of the non-aligned countries of Asia and Africa, got no support from them in her hour of distress; it was rather the so-called imperialist powers of the West, whom Nehru had denounced so conveniently, who came to his rescue with massive arms aid."⁷⁰

Domestic reaction was undoubtedly violent. Strong sections of Indian Public opinion advocated seeking all out assistance from the West.⁷¹ Disenchantment with non-alignment was clearly manifested both in the opposition groups and even within the Congress Party itself. The argument articulated was to the effect that had India been a member of the Western alliance, China would never have dared to attack her for fear of provoking a major war with the Western powers, which she could definitely not afford.⁷² But the reaction was particularly sharp among the right wing parties who in this case were echoing a broad based national sentiment. They demanded a radical change of India's foreign policy of non-alignment in favour

69. Ibid, p. 228.

70. Choudhury, G. W., PAKISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA 1947-1966, Pall Mall Press, London, 1968, p. 264.

71. Varma, op. cit., p. 187.

72. Ibid, p. 227. This logic has its limitations. Perhaps, in view of the fact that PRC was then the "bad guy" in Western eyes, it is conceivable that a war with aligned India could have brought the West into a full scale conflagration with China. But it is important to note that alliances by themselves do not guarantee security nor do they prevent a would be "aggressor" from committing its "aggression". The members of SEATO and CENTO sat idly by, while Pakistan was being dismembered.

of closer proximity to the West. The Swantatra, Jan Sangh and Praja Socialist Parties in October 1962 tabled a resolution in Parliament "calling for renunciation of the policy of non-alignment."⁷³ The Resolution failed since Congress Party members opposed it.

During this crisis and its immediate aftermath, Nehru came under particular fire. He was denounced and ridiculed. Furthermore, he was accused of weakening the nation and deceiving the people by adopting non-alignment.

A number of Indian writers took this position. Thus, for example, G. H. Jansen, in his book, Non-Alignment and the Afro-Asian World, alleged that Nehru put India at China's mercy by adopting a policy "of moralism which disregarded the profane realities of politics in order to feed a desire for superhuman holiness which contained too much of vanity".⁷⁴

It is indeed to Nehru's credit that despite domestic pressures and the bitter lessons of the conflict, he opted not to abandon non-alignment. Rather, as Mills pointed out, "Nehru continued to be as wedded to neutralism as ever despite his verbal attacks upon China and his prompt appeals to the United States and Great Britain for military equipment".⁷⁵ Nehru must have carefully pondered the analysis made by such eminent Indian journalists like Chief Editor of the Indian Express, the late Frank Moraes. Writing on what he termed the cruel dilemma that India found itself in the wake of Sino-Indian conflict, Mr. Moraes commented:

73. Malaviya, op. cit., p. 136.

74. "Journal of Modern African Studies", Volume 4, No. 4, December 1966, p. 524.

75. Mills, op. cit., pp. 170-171.

"If we cease to be non-aligned, their (China's) position vis a vis the Russians is strengthened and simultaneously they can put a finger of scorn at us before the Afro-Asian world and exclaim 'there you are!' If we remained non-aligned it cannot embarrass them but could induce public opinion in Western countries now aiding us to slow the tempo of their aid. In either case, the Chinese win." ⁷⁶

Nehru decided on the first option and the West did not slow down their aid. Clearly, the Indian Prime Minister's views could not have been far apart from those of Varma who contended that in fact it was due to non-alignment that India was in a better shape. "Non-alignment" he wrote, "... had nothing to do with China's invasion (Sic) of India. In fact, non-alignment proved to be of definite advantage to India in facing the crisis, in as much as it helped in the localization of the war, the neutralization of the Soviet Union and in facilitating the acceptance of large scale aid from the Western powers." ⁷⁷

There are a number of factors which need examination arising from the experience of the Sino-Indian conflict. To begin with, how justified was India's pique and disappointment at the lack of support from the non-aligned world? Here three elements are discernible...

First, it is wrong to presume that mere belonging to the non-aligned movement entitles a member country an automatic support in the event of conflict between that state and a third party which is

⁷⁶. Varma, op. cit., p.229 quoting the editorial of the Indian Express, New Delhi, December 10, 1962.

⁷⁷. Ibid, p. 233.

called
you
member
of 9 states
countries

a non-member of the club. Non-aligned states are not a bloc in the classical conception of the word. Furthermore, there were a number of Afro-Asian states who were convinced that it was India rather than China which initiated the provocations leading to the outbreak of hostilities.

Second, the non-aligned members of the Afro-Asian community did not stand with folded hands. Indeed, they did take some initiative through the so-called Colombo proposals⁷⁸ and notwithstanding the fate of the initiative, it is generally accepted that the Colombo Conferees were basically more sympathetic to New Delhi's position.

Finally, even assuming that the Non-aligned states were not that sympathetic, what factors are responsible for that? Here the observations of both Professors Varma and Choudhury are apt. According to Varma, non-alignment as practised by India worked mainly in the context of the power blocs. "What India did," he went on, "was to maintain the best of relations with the Western powers and the Soviet bloc, and stop there. She did not seem to attach the same importance to the problem of winning friends and influencing people nearer home, of patching up her quarrels and building up better relations with neighbours... China's policy on the other hand after Bandung was that of cultivating friendly relations with countries of South and South-East Asia winning remarkable successes in border settlements with Burma and Nepal and winning friendship of

78. These were set up following the Conference of six Non-Aligned nations comprising of Ceylon (the host and initiator of the Conference), Cambodia, Burma, Indonesia, United Arab Republic and Ghana. The Conference which began in Colombo on December 10, 1962 evolved a formula for the purpose of bringing India and China to a negotiating table. For details on the Colombo proposals, see Sudhakar Bhat's India and China. (Popular Book Service, New Delhi, 1967), Chapter 14, pp. 189-204.

Pakistan".⁷⁹ And Choudhury writes, "while India has been highly successful in developing closer ties with the two super-powers, her influence and prestige among the Afro-Asian States have been rapidly declining" attributing her decline to India's low profile approach⁸⁰ to Afro-Asian problems like the issue of colonial liberation.

What of the form and content of India's non-alignment in the aftermath of the 1962 confrontation?

Pandit Nehru died on May 27, 1964 with many of his foes and friends alike maintaining that he never recovered from the 1962 crisis. His successor Lal Bahadur Shastri in his first broadcast address to the nation reaffirmed Nehru's foreign policy.⁸¹ But Rajagopalchari, writing in the June 13, 1964 issue of the Swarajya, under the heading "After Nehru - What", expressed his conviction that India will come closer to the Western powers and that "non-alignment will fade away into remembered doctrine leaving nothing⁸² substantially behind".

Though he did not share Rajaji's "optimism" of the fading away of non-alignment, the Communist leader, Namboodripad at least seemed to have accepted the premise that India will move closer to the West. Writing in 1966, he stated, "Despite the consequences of imperialist pressure on our Ruling classes... the foreign policy of the country continues to be based on non-alignment and friendship with all powers as originally laid down by the late Jawaharlal Nehru."

79. Varma, op. cit., pp. 221-222.

80. Choudhury, op. cit., p. 272.

81. Malaviya, op. cit., p. 160.

82. Ibid.

"But," he went on, "the policy of non-alignment and peace has received some hard knocks and its anti-colonialist core has been considerably weakened."⁸³

Yet India today has neither abandoned non-alignment as predicted by the Swantatra leader nor really taken pro-western stances belying the apprehensions of Namboodripad. What has actually happened is the closer collaboration with the super powers and more particularly the Soviet Union leading to some of her critics like Pakistan to accuse her of "double alignment".

Relations with the Soviet Union have been particularly close culminating in the signing of the so-called Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in New Delhi on August 9, 1973. It is however, inaccurate to trace the pro-Soviet bias of India's non-alignment to the Sino-Indian war of 1962. As Noorani points out, "Gradually, after the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China, non-alignment (in India) acquired a pro-Soviet bias, a trend furthered by US arms aid to Pakistan."⁸⁴ And Varma lends credibility to this analysis when he points out: "what is still more remarkable is that the aid India has received from the Soviet Union is larger than what China has received from her and that it has continued to flow in larger quantities after India became the target of Chinese military, political and ideological offensive".⁸⁵

83. Namboodripad, op. cit., p. 406.

84. Noorani, A. G., "Foreign Policy in India Democracy", Aiyar and Srinivasan, Studies in Indian Democracy, p. 546.

85. Varma, op. cit., p. 223.

Russian assistance to India has been as massive as it has been varied encompassing all fields but more particularly the military. Indeed, Russian military aid programme commenced in India from November 1960 with the supplies of AN-12's aircraft. By May 1962, Migs 21 were being sold and an agreement was entered for the setting up of a Mig 21 jet production factory. Currently, India, besides her own local production, is said to be almost exclusively dependent on the Soviet Union for military hardware. This dependency on Soviet weapons and equipment, the tendency to play it soft whenever the Soviets were on "the docks" and above all the Friendship Treaty has raised eyebrows in a number of quarters. It is not just the Pakistanis who are now questioning India's non-alignment.

The Libyans, for example, at the Fourth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned States considered the Indo-Soviet Treaty (like similar treaties signed between Moscow on the one hand and Egypt, Syria and Iraq on the other), as somewhat compromising the non-aligned character of the non-aligned states that signed them as they contained provisions implying a sort of military alliance with one of the Great Powers - in this case the USSR. Thus, article 9 of the Treaty of Friendship between India and the Soviet Union stipulates:

"Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes to refrain from giving any assistance to any third party taking part in an armed conflict with the other party. In the event that any of the parties is attacked or threatened with attack, the High Contracting Parties will immediately start mutual consultations with a view to eliminating this threat and

taking appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security for their countries."⁸⁶

Assuming that the Libyans' contention - and this is a very highly debatable assumption which is strongly and even angrily repudiated by non-aligned signatories of the Treaties - can be sustained, it would be difficult to rationalize Libya's position when account is taken of the fact that she was one of those countries who strongly advocated and successfully campaigned for Malta's membership in the Non-Aligned Movement.⁸⁷ The Anglo-Maltese Military Agreement which provides for a British Base in the Islands (which base is part of the forces of NATO) would seem to clearly violate one of the five criteria laid down at Cairo as qualification for membership of the non-aligned movement.⁸⁸

Yet, all this makes nonsense of the continued exclusion of Pakistan from the non-aligned club. In April 1970, at the Dar es Salaam Preparatory Conference of Foreign Ministers, Jordan and Saudi Arabia had sought to sponsor Pakistan's membership. This failed due paramountly to India's opposition. The Indian delegation

86. SOVIET-INDIAN TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, 1971 "Current History" A World Affairs Monthly, November, 1972 (Philadelphia, USA), p. 219.

87. At the Algiers Conference, Malta was admitted as a full member of the Non-Aligned Conference.

88. The Five Criteria are:

- (i) A country should pursue an independent foreign policy on the basis of peaceful co-existence and non-alignment;
- (ii) It should support the national independence movement (liberation movements) of still dependent peoples;
- (iii) It should not be a member of multi-lateral military alliance concluded in the context of Great power rivalry;
- (iv) It should ideally not provide foreign military bases but if it had conceded such bases then they should not be in the context of Great Power rivalry and
- (v) If a country is a member of a bilateral or regional defence arrangement, this should not be in the context of Great Power rivalry. For further information on Criteria, See Crabb, op. cit., p. 24.

To what extent if any, Libyans' criticisms were shared by any other non-aligned (see)?

then stressed the necessity of strict application of the Cairo Criteria. Should Pakistan now decide to apply for membership, it would be very difficult to block her membership.

The friendship with the super-powers has however not been confined to the Soviet Union. As up to 1962, India has been the largest recipient of US aid. To quote Dr. Ulyanovsky: "Perhaps there is no other country in the world in which the United States has such peculiar composition of capital exports as in India. Between 1948 and 1960, private investments of the American monopolies rose from Rs.112 million to Rs.820 million, that is 7.3 times. Export of State and other official capital in the form of loans, credits, donations and aid totalled Rs.26,950 million by 1963. Export of State capital under the guise of aids is almost 33 times greater than the export of private capital."⁸⁹

It is perhaps of interest to see how Professor Ulyanovsky conceives US assistance to India in relation to that provided by the Soviet Union and her allies. "The non-alignment policy (of India) has fully justified itself, and so has that of developing political and economic relations with the socialist countries. The Indian people have learned that far reaching plans for national economic development have been possible only thanks to large-assistance by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries." And he argues that, "this assistance has compelled the West to render greater aid to India!"⁹⁰

89. Ulyanovsky, op. cit., p.189.

90. Ibid, p. 268.

Bangladesh

Although India had fought three previous wars with Pakistan, once in 1948 and twice in 1965, nothing had done so much damage to the prestige and question India's professed principles of "morality and non-violence" than the 1971 war leading to the creation of the State of Bangladesh.

The spectacle of a non-aligned state using its power and resources to dismember another country - no matter the provocation - was too much for the overwhelming majority of the member states of the United Nations and more particularly of the non-aligned community. The fact that she was able to do this partly as a result of the paralysis of the Security Council which was caused by a series of Soviet vetoes tended to confirm the fears of those who had questioned the Indo-Soviet Treaty signed in August. Indeed, it was the non-aligned states in the Security Council who, frustrated with constant Soviet vetoes geared to block even a mere ceasefire resolution, took the initiative to refer the matter to the assembly under the so-called Uniting for Peace Resolution.

On December 7, the General Assembly considered the question and as a strong rebuff to both India and the Soviet Union overwhelmingly adopted the resolution calling for ceasefire and withdrawal
91
of troops.

Since General Assembly resolutions have merely recommendatory effect, the Soviet Union again caste their veto in the Security
92
Council. A ceasefire resolution was only adopted after the Pakistani

91. The voting was 104 votes in favour, 11 against (the Soviet bloc plus India and Bhutan) with 10 abstaining. A/PV. 2003.

92. This was on draft resolution S/10446/Rev.1 voted on December 13, 1971. S/PV.1613, pp. 118-120.

forces had capitulated.

What were the lessons of Bangladesh? The isolation of India in the United Nations was not because member states were not aware of the root cause of the crisis. The Pakistani military regime's mess-up in East Pakistan and the resultant 'exodus' of refugees to India was a condemnable matter and indeed no one held any brief for the rulers of Pakistan. But a number of fundamental points were involved here - indeed some going to the very basis of the charter and the principles of the non-aligned states. These included:

- (i) Inviolability of territorial integrity and independence of all states - big and small.
- (ii) Non-interference in the internal affairs of states
- (iii) The maintenance of a certain international order rather than the toleration of a situation where the rule of the game is survival of the fittest.

During the debate that transpired in the Assembly, almost fifty speakers took part and they invariably stressed on those principles.⁹³ By her military action in East Pakistan, India had in fact violated all these principles and in the process made a mockery of the so-called five principles of peaceful co-existence. Furthermore, many observers at the United Nations seem to have shared the feelings expressed by the Libyan Government whose Ambassador in an official communication to the Security Council accused India

93. See address contained in Provisional Verbatim Records of the Two Thousand and Second and Two Thousand and Third Meetings of the UN General Assembly, Tuesday, December 7, 1971, A/PV.2002, pp.2 - 45 and A/PV.2003, pp. 2 - 238.

of deliberately exploiting the difficulties in East Pakistan in order to dismember the country. The Libyan letter inter alia read:

"The allegations by India that the international community did nothing to alleviate the sufferings of the refugees, are unfounded. It was India who rejected the Secretary General's proposal. For while the International community including my Government, contributed hundreds of millions of dollars for refugees, India imposed severe limitations on the work of international relief organizations. And despite promising discussions that were under way between India and certain other governments to rectify the situation in the Eastern part of Pakistan, India showed its goal of dismemberment by a military invasion, and not a solution to the problem by peaceful means, as required by the Charter."⁹⁴

In an era where the non-aligned states have consistently fought for the principles of non-intervention; non use of forces in the settlement of international conflict; democratisation of international relations, the actions of non-aligned India were a blow indeed. Above all, India's actions constituted a serious precedent in international relations and the third world nations had greater reasons to be concerned.

President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then addressing the Security Council as Foreign Minister put the problem succinctly:

"Today it is Pakistan, tomorrow it will be Bhuttan... The pandora's box has not opened for Pakistan alone, Pandora's box has opened for many countries, and in a very decisive way... It is a challenge to the United States; it is a challenge for all members to see whether this kind of muta-

94. Letter by the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Republic. The letter was dated 16 December, 1971 and was circulated as UN Official document No. A/8614.

tion can take place in the world through physical force, physical blackmail and physical intimidations."⁹⁵

Thus, while the emergence of Bangladesh, thanks to India's military action, may have radically changed the strategic and power position of South Asia in India's favour, the international consequences of this "adventure" seriously tarnished India's image as a non-aligned state and perhaps laid to rest the "myth" of non-violent India!

V

CONCLUSION

India is a great country. It has a long and rich though at times tortuous history. Under Nehru's leadership, India has been in the limelight of international politics. Her pioneering role of non-alignment has been appreciated and indeed the philosophy of neutralism has now come to mark the official policy of the majority of the countries of the world.

95. Provisional Verbatim Record of the Sixteen Hundred and Eleventh Meeting of the Security Council held on Sunday, December 12, 1971, S/PV.1611, p. 86. One of the ironies of international relations is that India, apart from being a pioneer of the principles of Panch Sheel and a forceful member of the non-aligned movement, is also a party to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution adopted in December 1965. Entitled "THE DECLARATION ON THE INADMISSIBILITY OF INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF STATES AND THE PROTECTION OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY", it has among its provisions the following articles:

"No State has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any state, interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are condemned" and
"...No State shall organize, assist, forment, finance, incite or tolerate subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another state, or interfere in civil strife in another state".

India under Nehru, later under Shastri and currently under Indira Gandhi has played an important role in world affairs. Nehru's contribution in the cause of international understanding and world peace has rightly been acclaimed. At the Belgrade Conference, for example, his main preoccupation was the preservation of world peace. Indeed, this even led him to be labelled by Peking as a "spokesman of the imperialists" who "by means of a general and vague discussion on the so-called questions of war and peace attempted to divert the objectives of the Conference and direct its main spearhead not against imperialism and colonialism but against the Soviet Union, China and the Socialist camp."⁹⁶

The question is to what extent India's model of non-alignment today a legacy of the Nehru's conception of the philosophy of neutralism he so articulately pioneered? Put differently, can India's foreign policy today in the aftermath of Bangladesh and the Friendship Treaty be viewed in the same context of the principles of non-violence and Panch Sheel?

What sort of implications has India's emergence as a "super-power" of the sub-continent brought into play. These are important questions and perhaps in the months and years to come as events unfold themselves we would all be wiser and make some sombre evaluation. For the present, it is not intended at least in this study to indulge in conjectures.

One element is however quite clear. India is increasingly acting like a great power. She has now joined the nuclear

96. Bhat, op. cit., pp. 130-131.

97
club though New Delhi continues to insist that her nuclear explosions are strictly for peaceful purposes, may suspect her motives. For obvious reasons, Pakistan has been the most concerned. 98
The nuclear explosion has thwarted, hopefully on a temporary basis, the trend towards rapprochement between India and Bangladesh on the one hand and Pakistan on the other.

It is conceded by all that only a thin thread separates nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and those for military purposes. This being the case, one can understand the violent reaction of

97. On May 18, 1974, about 8:05 a.m., India made its first underground nuclear explosion at Pokhran (the New York Times, May 19, 1974, p. 1). This has evoked mixed reaction. The West has generally viewed the development with dissatisfaction. Canada has been particularly annoyed since she had rendered considerable assistance in the development of India's nuclear know how.

98. Pakistan has repeatedly warned that India was about to go nuclear. In July 1966, in a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General, Pakistan alleged that India was planning to become a sixth nuclear power. The letter stated:

"The Government of Pakistan have reason to believe that the Government of India has decided to embark on a programme for the production of nuclear weapons and that without violating the test ban treaty, test explosion of nuclear devices will be carried out underground in the near future ostensibly for peaceful purposes."

Pakistan to India's atomic explosion. The question is, will Pakistan also endeavour to become a seventh member of the club? And if it does, what problems and prospects for peace will all that bring to the sub-continent as well as to the area in general?

Clearly, India's pre-eminent position in the sub-continent, her emergence as a nuclear power (even assuming that she solemnly sticks to her undertaking not to be a nuclear weapon power), will have some definite impact on her foreign policy. Furthermore, it stands to reason that India's official foreign policy will continue to be that of non-alignment. Yet, despite her reinforced strength and power, it is debatable whether she will be able to exercise the same influence and moral authority among the uncommitted nations that New Delhi under Nehru's leadership used to enjoy. Another legitimate question is of course whether India herself is that interested in regaining the type of reputation of the fifties which characterized her as an outstanding example of a non-aligned state!

99. It is interesting here to recapitulate India's reaction to China's atomic explosion as indeed to the reports then broadcast over Radio Pakistan of July 31, 1966 (and quoted in the Indian papers - The Indian Express, the Hindustan Times etc. of July 31, 1966) that China was to assist Pakistan for an establishment of an atomic power station in East Pakistan. Regarding the first, Indian External Affairs Minister was reported to have told the Washington Post (April 12, 1967) that India very definitely "is now out to obtain a joint guarantee from both the US and the USSR against nuclear attack" since India felt that she was "under an imminent threat by a country (China) that has become nuclear". Indeed, India used the factor of lack of adequate lack of guarantees to the nuclear have nots in the event of nuclear attacks, as one of the reasons behind her opposition to the Non-Proliferation Treaty which she refused to sign. For an interesting study on India's opposition to the NPT, see articles written by eminent Indians at that time including: T.V. Parasuran, "Revolt Against Nuclear Monopolists", INDIAN EXPRESS, 21 April, 1967; B.N. Chakravaty, "India Should defer signing Nuclear Treaty - Draft Provisions will not protect her interests", STATESMAN, April 24, 1967; P. Chakravati, "Is deterrent possible without obligations", Hindustan Times, 26 April, 1967 and the Editorial comment of the Patriot, April 20, 1967 entitled, "Nuclear Retreat".

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