CHAPTER SIX

TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF NATIONALIST DIPLOMACY
As was discussed in the preceding chapters, colonialism provided unifying factors from which an anti-colonial community of interests and feeling of solidarity among colonial peoples grew. With the impact of Western education there emerged an array of nationalist leaders in the colonies who perceived their struggle against the colonial powers in a global context. As the struggle against colonial oppression gained momentum, the need to broaden the struggle into a global confrontation between the colonised and the colonisers was increasingly felt by the nationalist elites who had evolved a common worldview.

Against this backdrop we have discussed the rise and growth of the diplomacy of the national leaderships in the colonised countries. A review of the diplomatic aspects of the nationalist movements in India, Indonesia and Algeria provides interesting facets of the evolution of the diplomacy of the colonised peoples. By adopting a comparative perspective for analysing the diplomacy of the three nationalist movements in India, Indonesia and Algeria and taking into account the external dimension of their struggles, it is possible to distinguish certain common approaches and features that are relevant to a
study of the multi-faceted and complex character of the Third World diplomacy.

PROPAGANDA DIPLOMACY:

In all the three nationalist movements under discussion we find that the power of propaganda was realised by the nationalist elites, who by the written and spoken word, diffused the idea of freedom among the colonial peoples. In India, from the time of Ram Mohan Roy to Vivekanand, and to the various streams of the nationalist leadership, the significance of propaganda was always stressed. If in the late nineteenth century the Indian nationalist propaganda tended to emphasize the great spiritual role for India in the global context, in the early decades of this century the propaganda became increasingly political.

As we have seen the Indian National Congress realised the importance of propaganda quite early in its evolution. *India*, the official journal of the London branch of the Indian National Congress, became a major vehicle of pro-nationalist propaganda in England and influenced the liberals in British parliament, academics and many political organisations.

The propaganda diplomacy of Indian National Congress in the US, reflected through Lajpat Rai's *Young India*, became
a vital instrument for making the American public aware of the political situation in India. In Japan, Mohammed Barketullah, who was to become the prime minister of the Kabul-based Indian provisional government, edited the journal *The Islamic Fraternity*, championing the cause of India's independence.

The other streams of propaganda diplomacy in the early phase of the Indian nationalist movement centred round the emigrant Indians in Europe and the United States. The anti-British propaganda was most strident in the writings of London-based Veer Savarkar, who through his journal *Bande Mataram* criticised the British colonial policies in India and sought the help of other European powers to redeem the situation in India.

Savarkar's propaganda was also aimed at procuring arms and material support from countries which were in adverse relationship with the British, to engineer an armed revolt in India. In the US Har Dayal edited *Ghadar* and strived, through a sustained anti-colonial propaganda campaign, to organise a military uprising in India.

The Indian nationalists in Germany also sought to highlight the colonial exploitation of India by the British through the printed word. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's *Talyar*, was a journal famous for its strong anti-British and pro-German orientation. The
propaganda vehicle of the Indian emigrants in Afghanistan and in Russia were two weekly newspapers, Zamindar and Azad Hindustan. These two journals became the symbol of anti-British propaganda in Tashkent.

Radio was also an important propaganda medium and was to become a vital element in the Algerian liberation war. The first Indian nationalist group that used the radio beams for diplomatic propaganda was the Indian National Army (INA) and its leader Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose opened Azad Hind Radio in Berlin and later expanded its propaganda diplomacy through other stations of Azad Hind Radio in Tokyo, Rangoon, Saigon, Singapore and Bangkok.

As we have observed while discussing the INA's diplomacy, the Azad Hind Radio became the most effective mode of propaganda warfare against the British. INA's propaganda strategy was strengthened by the publication of Azad Hind, the monthly magazine of INA but the main tool of diplomacy remained the Radio.

The importance of propaganda is also evident in the nationalist movement in Indonesia, where a semi-liberal leadership used the propaganda devices to put the case of Indonesian independence from the Dutch colonial rule in an Asian setting of anti-colonial sentiment.

The Indonesian newspaper het vrije woord (The Free Word),
represented a significant voice of dissent against the Dutch colonial excesses. This newspaper, which was the organ of the Indonesian Communist party, played a pre-eminent role in the Indonesian nationalist propaganda diplomacy. The anti-colonial writings of the group of Indonesian students in the Netherlands also was a contributing factor in the Indonesian nationalist diplomacy.

The most important use of media of the Indonesian nationalist elite was through the use of Japanese communication infrastructure to tell the world about the proclamation of an independent Republic. As was noted in chapter four, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia and the consequent wiping out of Dutch language meant that the indigenous Bhasa Indonesia became important.

The nationalists used Bhasa Indonesia as an effective vehicle in nationalist propaganda diplomacy. The nationalist propaganda was geared to strengthen the fragile Republic through internal stability and external support from other anti-colonial movements sweeping Asia. The Indonesians used the communication and information infrastructure to disseminate the information about the problems faced by the nascent Republic. It used the mass media to enlist diplomatic support from the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. For the nationalists in Algeria, propaganda was a vital
element in the liberation war. The militant nationalist diplomacy was propagated through the pages of the FLN newspaper *El Moudjahid*. The large-scale suppression of Algerian nationalist aspirations and the wanton counter-terrorist measures resorted to by the French authorities in Algeria were documented and focussed upon in the propaganda war.

Intellectuals like Frantz Fanon, who made a signal contribution to the Algerian nationalist ideology, worked in Tunis for Free Algerian Press Service and propagated the theme of anti-French sentiment with world-wide appeal. Through his journalistic and other writings Fanon made the Algerian issue an international one and thus gave the nationalist diplomacy new intellectual strength.

The most significant area of diplomacy through propaganda was, as in the case of INA, the radio station. The establishment of the clandestine *Voix de l'Algerie* (Voice of Algeria) radio station became a major device in propaganda war in which radio became an important instrument. The FLN also took advantage of the facilities given to them by Nassir and beamed through the Cairo radio intense anti-French and anti-colonial propaganda.

Thus, in all the three cases we find that propaganda was a major tool of nationalist diplomatic strategy.

The similarity of approach of the Azad Hind Radio and the
Voix de l'Algerie is very obvious. The tone and content of the propaganda shows how two different colonial struggles used the same method of airing their grievances against alien rule. The same can also be said about propaganda diplomacy through the written word, where the nationalist elites, despite local circumstantial variations, nonetheless addressed themselves to the central issue of freedom from foreign domination.

This use of propaganda diplomacy has been followed by several anti-colonial movements since the Algerian war of liberation. In the struggle against the white minority rule in Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), the then banned Zimbabwe News, the journal of Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU), had a prominent place in liberation war. In the struggle against colonialism, as witnessed in the Namibian war of independence, the role of nationalist media has been remarkable. The propaganda diplomacy of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) consisted of radio broadcasting and newspapers.

For more than two decades there were externally directed SWAPO radio broadcasts geared at arousing and heightening the political consciousness of the Namibian people. They were first launched from the External Service of Radio Tanzania in the early 1960s. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, in addition to Dar-es-Salaam, SWAPO started broadcasting to the Namibian people from radio stations in
Lusaka, Addis Ababa and Brazzaville. With further
decolonization Luanda and Harare supplemented the radio
broadcasts.

There were daily SWAPO radio broadcasts directed at
Namibians back home from six radio stations. The six
countries concerned also helped SWAPO in printing and
publishing their materials. These Voice of Namibia
broadcasts in all major Namibian languages, as well as in
Afrikaans and English, helped interpret the events in and
around Namibia, counter colonialist’s anti-SWAPO
propaganda and propagate ideas of democracy, equality and
anti-racism.

The other aspect of the propaganda diplomacy of the exiled
liberation movement was reflected in periodically putting
out anti-colonial publications. The more important ones
included Namibia Today, The Combatant and the monthly
SWAPO Information Bulletin which was published in Luanda
by the SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity.
These publications detailed SWAPO’s struggle for
independence and formed a significant part of SWAPO’s
propaganda diplomacy.

Likewise, through transmissions of the African National
Congress’s Radio Freedom, broadcast from Angola, Zambia,
Tanzania, Ethiopia and Madagascar, the ANC has
successfully employed propaganda diplomacy to fight
apartheid. With journals like Sachaba, Dawn and Mayibuye, the ANC print propaganda keeps the world informed about its campaign against racial inequality in South Africa.

In another part of the world, the Tibetans, fighting for independence from Chinese communism, have also used systematic propaganda methods through instruments like the Tibetan Review, the monthly published from New Delhi by Information Office of the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibet Journal and Tibetan Bulletin published through the Information Office of the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala. Besides the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamshala plays an important role in Tibetan propaganda diplomacy.

The propaganda of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) is organised through a well-run press in East Jerusalem. Several dailies like al-Quds, al-Fair and al-Shab operate under severe press restrictions of the Israeli authorities and continue their propaganda offensive. A wide-ranging media offensive has also been undertaken outside the Middle East by the PLO. This includes the weekly Filastin al-Thawra (Palestinian Revolution), founded in 1972 as the organ of PLO. Several Fatah mouthpieces: al-Hadaf, al-Hurriyya and an international news agency Wikalat al-Auba al-Filastiniyya al-Arabiyya (WAFA), which is a member of the Non-aligned news agencies pool.
Palestinian activists also work for several general Arabic newspapers and periodicals, particularly those published in European centres and enjoy considerable influence. An Institute of Palestinian Studies affiliated to the University of Kuwait, with connections to many academic and research institutions in Western countries, makes the Palestinian cause known to the educated Western clientele. It brings out a monthly Journal of Palestine Studies which is also published in English and French.

DIPLOMACY OF ACQUIRING ARMS:

In our discussions of the anti-colonial movements we have alluded to the diplomacy of acquiring arms and ammunition and other military-strategic support, which has been a significant aspect of the diplomacy of the freedom struggles in Asia and Africa. From the early decades of this century, the Indian revolutionaries active in Europe and US, had resorted to the diplomatic tactics of acquiring arms and material support from the adversaries of the British. Thus we had a committed band of Indian revolutionaries hatching a conspiracy in the United States for an armed uprising against the British rule in India. In Berlin, as was discussed earlier, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and his group sought German military help to overthrow the British in India.
In the later phase of India’s freedom struggle, Subhas Bose tried to exploit the political division of Europe and sought arms and military training from the fascist powers in Europe to oust the British from India. His diplomatic efforts were aimed at urging upon Hitler that India had a prominent strategic place for the British war plan, and India’s siding with the Axis powers in the Second World War could change the strategic equation in favour of the Axis powers.

In his later years, Bose tried to use his diplomacy to influence the Japanese to make available arms and military assistance to attack India from the eastern front and free the subjugated Indian people. He used his propaganda mechanism to emphasise the need for an armed attack on British India and convince the Japanese allies that military support for the INA was dictated by the requirements of the prevailing power structure in Southeast Asia, from where the INA was organising its armed attacks.

In the Indonesian nationalist movement a section of the leadership used diplomatic means to attain arms to fight the colonial rule. The supporters of Perjuangan (struggle) among the nationalist ranks, advocated the need for an armed revolt against the Dutch and for that purpose they sought the help of their Japanese allies. During this period, several members of the nationalist elite were
actively seeking military support from the Japanese. The process was accelerated after the defeat of the Japanese in the Second World War, when it was simpler to negotiate arms deals with a retreating force.

The Japanese occupation of Indonesia during the war was the biggest impetus to this trend of Indonesian nationalist diplomacy. Their presence greatly militarised the Indonesian polity and strengthened the sections of the nationalist diplomacy who wanted an armed struggle to end the Dutch rule. This tendency among sections of the Indonesian elite was mainly responsible for violent nature of the later phase of the anti-colonial movement in Indonesia.

The most important example of how a nationalist elite uses tools of diplomacy to acquire arms and ammunition can be found in the Algerian case. Here a militant leadership under the FLN banner, waged a relentless war against the French. This violent war, that lasted eight years, was fought with the arms and military expertise acquired from friendly neighbours. Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt were the three most important nations for the Algerian arms diplomacy. These governments, who had a parallel nationalist movement with that of Algerians, provided sanctuaries to the FLN guerillas to operate from their territories.
The FLN strongman Ben Bella made many diplomatic overtures to seek arms and training in terrorist and guerilla warfare from neighbouring fellow Arab nations. Moving from one Arab capital to another and also to the friendly communist bloc countries like China, Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in search of arms, he sought the diplomatic and material support for the Algerians fighting a bloody war with the French. The armed wing of the FLN, the Armée de Liberation Nationale (ALN) had several of its officers trained in Tunis and Rabat. After 1956, the open frontiers between Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria were extremely useful for arms supplies and troop movements, giving more muscle to the FLN military strategy.

The sanctuaries in Tunisian and Moroccan borders as also in Egypt were used by the FLN to mount the military offensive on the French army in Algeria. Ben Bella and his supporters in Cairo were to ensure an uninterrupted supply of arms and the Algerian nationalist diplomacy was generally geared to facilitate the work done by the Exterior Branch of the FLN.

In this case also one can find similarities of diplomatic approach for acquiring arms for liberation war. The activities of Ghadarites in the USA or the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin and the diplomatic initiatives of Subhas Bose in Berlin and Tokyo are not very different in their essentials from the diplomatic bargaining of a
Ben Bella in Cairo, Tunis or Moscow, or the negotiations of the militant Indonesian nationalists with the retreating Japanese forces in Jakarta. The basic aim of all the leaderships remained to liberate their country and they were ready to resort to arms action to achieve this goal.

This trend of nationalist diplomacy is evident in the present international system. There exist cases like Northern Ireland and the Basque country where violent minority factions in the nationalist movement against internal colonialism have been able to capitalize on the theme of independence. These groups are tempted to adopt extremist goals and methods. The support obtained from political extremists at home and abroad has helped to keep their cause alive.

There have been allegations that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) received arms from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Basque ETA (Euzkadi ta Askatasuna; Basque Homeland and Liberty) has used Libyan and Algerian training camps. Following the FLN example, the guerilla tactics and terrorism has been adopted as a liberation technique by several groups within the Palestinian liberation movement.

The diplomacy of acquiring arms for national liberation was evident in the anti-colonial wars in southern Africa.
In the Soviet bloc the liberation movements found their natural ally, hence the diplomacy of the anti-colonial movements in southern Africa was geared to acquire arms from the communist giant to fight liberation wars. One of the first such liberation group was the anti-Portuguese Frente Libertacao de Mocambique- FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique)- founded in 1962. It was based in Tanzania and in sustained guerilla campaigns it attacked and ambushed colonial army posts, convoys and other economic and military targets.

Angola, like Mozambique, fought 15 years of revolutionary war against Portuguese colonialism (1961-75) under MPLA (Movimento Popular de lberatacao de Angola; Peoples Movement for Liberation of Angola) from bases in Zambia. In Zimbabwe fighting against the Rhodesian white minority government was Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwean African Peoples Union (ZAPU). Both these nationalist organisations steadily built up their forces, armed and supplied by Tanzania and Zambia who in turn were armed by the socialist bloc countries.

Likewise, there was a 23-year old war between Angolan-based SWAPO with South African government. Counting on the Soviet support for the national liberation movements in Africa, SWAPO established the Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) in 1966 and began the armed revolt.
The armed support to the ANC formed part of the socialist bloc's southern Africa policy. The front-line states like Angola, allowed its territory to be used by the ANC for organising military offensive against South Africa. The ANC through its military wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (the Spear of the Nation) combined armed struggle with other forms of mass organisations, both legal and semi-legal. It fought apartheid through guerilla operations against South Africa from bases in Mozambique. ANC headquarters are in the Zambian capital Lusaka but its offices are active in Maputo in Mozambique, in Gaborone in Botswana, and in Maseru in Lesotho.

NATIONALIST DIPLOMACY IN METROPOLITAN CENTRE:

Another interesting aspect of the anti-colonial diplomacy can be discerned in the efforts made by some sections of the nationalist elites to highlight their case for independence at the metropolitan centre of the colonial power. Thus in London we find a British committee of Indian National Congress (in later years the India League), to amass diplomatic support for the nationalist cause from the sympathetic and liberal sections of the British public opinion.

In Amsterdam the Perihiimpunan Indonesia, the organisation of Indonesian students, played an equally important role
in furthering the cause of the Indonesian nationalism. Hatta and Sjahrir, the two leaders who had important contribution to make in Indonesian diplomacy in later years, and Tan Malaka, the veteran communist, were the prominent Indonesians involved with this organisation.

These men made the exploitative nature of Dutch rule in Indonesia the prime target of their attack and tried to muster favourable public opinion to demand changes in Dutch policy towards its colonies. The Dutch socialists were specially contacted, as they were considered to be the severest critics of colonialism.

In tune with the prevailing militancy of Algerian nationalist diplomacy, the FLN activities in the metropolitan centre were characterised by excessive violence, racial prejudice, and intense dislike for things French. The Federation de France, which operated from Paris to raise funds to buy arms for the liberation war, signified how war of attrition was moved closer to the heartland of the colonies. The groups had been able to manage support and sympathy of several Left-wing intellectuals in Paris. They had sympathetic journals like Combat who cared for Fanon's "Wretched of the Earth".

The federation's diplomatic move in the initial years of its existence in Paris was to expand this goodwill but as the war in Algeria became more and more violent, the
Algerians active in Paris also made terrorism their avowed strategy with serious repercussions for the government of the day in Paris.

On a more moderate plane, the federation sought intellectual help and inspiration from the Federation d'Etudiants de l'Afrique Noir (FEAN), the organisation of African students in France which had made many supporters of independence and considered all connections with the French Republic as subordinating African nationalism to French imperialism.

Here again we can see a diplomatic pattern of dealing with the colonial power by activating public opinion in the metropolitan centre. The diplomatic activities of groups and individuals from the colonial countries in London, Paris and Amsterdam have many features in common since they all followed basically the same political aspirations of freedom and equality.

In the present time also the liberation diplomacy of freedom struggles is active in soliciting moral and material support for the nationalist cause from important world centres. For example several UK-based organisations produce factual material on Namibia that reveals the true position in Southern Africa.

The pro-SWAPo London-based Namibia Support Committee has a
number of publications and occasional papers, including *Action on Namibia* (a bulletin produced six times a year), the monthly *Namibia News Briefing* and material from its sub-groups on campaign related to women's liberation, political prisoners and repression. Then there is the Anti-Apartheid Movement's regular newspaper, *Anti-Apartheid News*. The ANC’s official organ *Sechaba* is published from London and plays a significant role in fighting Apartheid and publicising the ANC "Freedom Charter".

In their efforts to gain recognition from the Western countries the PLO has used the mass media in important world centres. The propaganda of the liberation movement for the Palestinians has acquired bases in Western capitals like London, Bonn, and Paris. Palestinian students and workers in West Germany regularly send money to sustain and broaden the independent movement.

In the US, the PLO’s diplomacy has been to get further support from organisations like the Washington-based Palestine Human Rights Campaign, publishers of the *Palestine Human Rights Bulletin*, and to activate Third World diplomatic support at the UN meetings in New York. In Europe the propaganda is carried out through journals like the London-based pro-Palestine newspaper *al-Quds al-Arabi*. In the same fashion the Tibetan nationalists campaign in important world centres through journals like
the London-based *Tibet News Review* and *News Tibet* published by The Office of Tibet in New York.

DIPLOMACY OF PROCLAMATION OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS:

The diplomacy of gaining recognition for a provisional nationalist government proclaiming independence from the colonial rulers forms another significant element of the nationalist diplomacy. The proclamation of independence demonstrates the use of symbolism in nationalist diplomacy.

In all the three freedom struggles in question we find instances of the nationalist leaderships proclaiming a provisional government at some stage of the anti-colonial movement, urging the world to take notice of the advances made by the nationalists towards self-government. In our discussion we have seen how Mahendra Pratap’s Kabul-based Indian provisional government and later Subhas Bose’s Azad Hind Government contributed towards making the Indian independence an international issue.

In case of Indonesia, a long and protracted struggle was launched to gain recognition for the nationalist Republic’s government announced by Sukarno in 1945. Rabat was the capital of the Algerian provisional government headed by Ferhat Abbas. Thus in all three nationalist
movements a provisional government was established by the leaders in the various stages of the evolution of the struggle against colonialism.

In case of India Subhas Bose oriented his diplomatic efforts towards achieving recognition for his Azad Hind Government. He lobbied the political leadership in the Axis countries to recognise his government and Germany, Italy, Japan were quick to extend diplomatic recognition to the Azad Hind Government. To promote the Indian provisional government, Bose participated in the celebration of Burma’s independence and took seat with other heads of states in Rangoon.

He was received with full state honours when he visited Tokyo in 1943 to attend the Great East Asia Conference there, asserting his position as the head of an Indian government in exile. This diplomatic gesture established Bose and his Azad Hind Government as a powerful factor that had influence in the course of events in India. The propaganda machinery of the Azad Hind Government was fully exploited by its publicity department to make a case for recognising the provisional government.

The strenuous efforts of nationalists for recognition of the Indonesian Republic provides us another instance of this aspect of the diplomacy of the nationalist movements. A beleaguered Indonesian leadership, facing political
oblivion in the wake of Dutch police actions, mustered enough courage to proclaim the Indonesian Republic and sought help of friendly Asian governments to recognise it. In this regard the Indian government was of particular help for the Indonesian leadership through diplomatic support, becoming one of the earliest countries to recognise the Indonesian Republic.

Symbolic gestures such as sending Indonesian emissaries to Arab capitals to amass diplomatic support for the Indonesian Republic formed part of this diplomacy. The Islamic factor was made out to be a unifying bond for relations between the Arab world and the Republicans. Efforts were also made to tap the diplomatic goodwill that prevailed in the US towards the anti-colonial movement in Indonesia.

In the case of Algeria, the GPRA, based in the Moroccan capital, used all its international contacts to achieve diplomatic recognition for the FLN government in exile. By emphasising in various international fora that the FLN was the real representative of Algerian aspirations, the GPRA leaders sought to mount a diplomatic offensive on the French.

The GPRA sent its delegations to various capitals in the neighbouring Arab states as also the capitals of the two communist giants, who influenced by the Cold War logic,
POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY IN NATIONALIST DIPLOMACY:

The nationalist diplomacy also took into account the political expediency of its anti-colonial activity. The main task of this aspect of nationalist diplomacy was concerned with the identification and exploitation of the political-ideological antagonisms among countries or political blocs to further its own diplomatic interests.

As was noted in Chapter Three, this dimension of the nationalist diplomacy in its earliest form, is highlighted by the diplomatic efforts of the Berlin Committee to impress upon the Germans the urgency of their support for Indian independence. By exploiting the existing division in the balance of power in Europe during the First World War, Indian nationalists in Germany were fulfilling this task. In the later phase of Indian nationalist diplomacy, Subhas Bose exploited the then existing political-ideological division of the world to gain diplomatic support from the Axis powers.

In the case of Indonesian diplomacy, the efforts of the nationalists to exploit the Cold War rivalry to gain support of the United States in their fight against the Dutch fall into the same category. Similarly, in Algerian nationalist diplomacy this trend is evident in exploiting the Cold War rivalry and getting arms supply from the socialist bloc in their war against the French.
In the subsequent liberation movements this diplomatic expediency has continued to be recognised. Hence while in the southern African liberation movements and among the Palestinian freedom fighters the Soviet bloc is seen to be the solid backer, among Tibetan nationalists the West provides the support for their fight against the Chinese communism. Thus in all cases the nationalist diplomacy appears to have exploited the Cold War rivalries to further its cause of independence.

CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY:

Perhaps the most significant part of the nationalist diplomacy is the diplomacy through conference. From the earliest anti-colonial stirring in Asia, the importance of diplomacy through conference was realised by nationalist leaderships. In this diplomatic endeavour, India, by its sheer size and political potential, became a pioneering nationalist movement. The Indian presence in the Amsterdam Socialist Congress held in 1904 shows this awareness of conference diplomacy. Madam Bhikaji Cama's presence at the 1907 International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart was the natural corollary of this diplomatic trend.

The advent of the Russian revolution, with its pronounced anti-colonial posture, inspired many conferences
highlighting the exploitative nature of the colonial system from a Marxist-Leninist perspective. The Baku Congress and other communist-inspired conferences attended by nationalist elites from several colonial countries were subsequently followed by the Brussels Congress against colonial oppression and imperialism.

Represented there were some of the top nationalist leaders from the colonies who for the first time came to perceive their shared colonial problems and aspirations for freedom. Nehru played a significant role in this Conference and the contours of the nationalist diplomacy in different colonies of Asia and Africa were beginning to take a form.

The Brussels Congress marks an important epoch of the nationalist Afro-Asian diplomacy that guided the conduct of external relations of the freedom movements of the colonies for a long time. The Congress was followed by the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi.

The ostensible motive behind convening the diplomatic gathering of the representatives of various Asian nations was to study the national liberation movements in different colonies in the continent. The diplomacy of the Asian freedom struggle received a new fillip after this Conference which was most clearly revealed in the subsequent political developments in Indonesia.
The Conference provided an excellent opportunity for the nationalist leaders from various Asian countries to understand each other and exchange experiences of their anti-colonial struggle. Sjahrir's presence at the Conference and his interactions with other participants were extremely useful for Indonesian nationalists for whom the Conference was a big morale booster.

Another crucial event in the evolution of Afro-Asian diplomacy was the convening of a conference on Indonesia, held in New Delhi to focus on the political situation arising out of the Dutch police action in Indonesia. At this Conference Nehru played a pre-eminent role in urging the world opinion to exert its pressure to check the Dutch military oppression in Indonesia.

The first Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung in Indonesia in 1955 signifies the growth and strength of Afro-Asian diplomacy. The diplomacy at Bandung was aimed at placing the newly emergent Afro-Asian nations in the wider context of Cold War politics of the international system. Besides, the issue of decolonisation was also discussed at the deliberations at Bandung, where the top Afro-Asian leadership shared a common platform and evolved a diplomatic consensus on important world issues. The Left-oriented Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), convened several international conferences in the post-Bandung phase, to deliberate on
the matters of development, disarmament and decolonisation. This Cairo-based organisation was of particular salience for the Algerian liberation war and the FLN leadership tried to gain maximum diplomatic mileage from AAPSO's various international conferences.

The spirit of Bandung received a new dimension with the convening of the first Non-aligned Conference, giving a concrete ideological coherence to the Afro-Asian diplomacy. The concept of Non-alignment soon became the rallying point for Third World diplomacy. The diplomacy through conference embedded the idea of a collective power and Third World consciousness.

By the time the Belgrade Conference took place, there had been many global developments necessitating the creation of a Third World coalition. The year 1960 marked the rise of several independent African nations after years of colonial rule. This political awakening naturally made itself felt in the deliberations at Belgrade. Algeria, which was still fighting the French, was represented at the Conference and the FLN delegates were given an opportunity to make a plea for political and material support from the Non-aligned member states.

A series of conferences preceded the attainment of independence in countries of India, Indonesia and Algeria. In all these international gatherings the primary aim of
the nationalist diplomacy was to gain freedom from foreign
domination. In contemporary diplomacy the liberation
movements like the PLO, through the Palestine National
Congress Foreign Relations Committee with its official
foreign minister and diplomatic representatives
successfully use international conferences for enhancing
their diplomatic profile.

Likewise, the ANC and SWAPO have in their liberation
struggles heavily relied upon and successfully used the
diplomacy through conference. In international forums
like the Non-aligned conferences the liberation movements
have consistently raised their voices to further their
cause for freedom from colonial rule.

This trend is also evident in the diplomatic activities
of nationalist groups in various regional diplomatic
gatherings of political bodies like the Arab League and
the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The conference
diplomacy, therefore, occupies a significant place in any
discussion on the evolution of anti-colonial diplomacy.

NATIONALIST DIPLOMACY AT THE UNITED NATIONS:

The role of the United Nations Organisation in
accelerating the process of decolonisation has prompted
the Afro-Asian bloc to recognise this world body as
diplomatically the most significant to them. Ever since the establishment of the United Nations, the diplomacy of the Afro-Asian nationalist groups has been geared to eliciting support from this world diplomatic gathering. For example, we have observed how the Indian diplomatic efforts at the UN helped the Indonesian freedom struggle.

Likewise, a unified diplomatic move at the UN made a difference to the course of French decolonisation in Algeria. The unrelenting diplomatic offensive that the unified Afro-Asian bloc mounted at the UN General Assembly, made the French retreat from Algeria a political compulsion. In the wave of independence during the 1960s, new states with twin legacies of colonialism and underdevelopment, became the major instrument of Afro-Asian diplomacy at the U.N.

In real terms the UN became the measure of Third World diplomatic influence in international politics. It has evolved as an international organisation where the demands like decolonisation, disarmament and economic development voiced by the Third World are regularly debated. The UN has provided the justification for Third World diplomacy through its parliamentary procedures, recognising the status for voting blocs of which the Third World, as the largest, is a principal beneficiary.

For the still-struggling peoples like the Palestinians,
the United Nations offers a great hope and a key part of their diplomacy is in the process of garnering support from the world body, especially from its specialised agencies like the World Health Organisation for which PLO has twice unsuccessfully tried for membership.

The UN has undergone a marked evolution from the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people in 1969, to recognition of its right to self-determination in 1970 and of its right to struggle in 1971. In 1973 the summit of the Non-aligned movement recognised the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. In recent years the PLO has sought to exploit these positive trends and capitalize on them by projecting a new peaceful image of the struggle for a homeland.

The content and the character of the nationalist diplomacy as discussed in the preceding chapters is also reflected in the foreign policies of the sovereign countries where the freedom struggle was studied. Although all the three countries - India, Indonesia and Algeria - are members of the Non-aligned movement, yet there are interesting variations in their diplomatic behaviour. One can find clear linkages in the pursuance of their post-independence foreign policy with the experiences of the anti-colonial phase of nationalist diplomacy.

Thus, in the case of India, where the nationalist
diplomacy by and large adopted non-violence as policy goal, the diplomacy of the Indian Republic amply reflects moderation in foreign affairs. In Indonesia, because of the more violent experiences of decolonisation, the diplomacy of independent Indonesia has shown signs of isolationalism as reflected in the policy of Guided Democracy.

In the case of Algeria, because of the fiercely militant nature of the nationalist diplomacy, the diplomacy of the sovereign state has displayed radical overtures in policy pronouncements and foreign policy execution. In the Non-aligned camp Algeria represents the radical fringe which has consistently opposed the economic and cultural dimensions of Western colonialism. It is not surprising that Ben Bella was one of the very first Arab leaders who gave support to PLO, then underground, by establishing the Bureau de la Palestine with privileges due to any other diplomatic mission.

E V O L U T I O N O F T H I R D W O R L D D I P L O M A C Y

Anti-colonialism is the common ideological element that has imparted the necessary cohesion to the heterogeneous Third World. The sentiment of anti-colonialism that coalesced the nationalist elites and influenced diplomacy during the anti-colonial struggles is also reflected in
the evolution of the Third World diplomacy. The importance of the United Nations Organisation for the evolution of the Third World diplomacy is notable. At the United Nations the significant influence of the Third World diplomacy has been on the agenda, institutions and overall effectiveness of the world organisation.

The Third World diplomacy views its objectives as complimentary to those of the UN charter. The Third World diplomacy in the United Nations has used this forum for trying to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of many states of the developing world and for securing economic and technical assistance, and to fight against the remnants of colonialism and racism.

Much of the Third World diplomacy received its ideological content from the Non-aligned movement. The Non-aligned movement was an inevitable consequence of the decolonisation, with the Cold War providing the necessary context for its growth among the Third World countries. Essentially, it remains an anti-colonial and anti-racist movement. In recent years the Third World diplomacy has witnessed a shift of emphasis from the political to the economic and cultural aspects of anti-colonialism.

The more significant contribution of the Third World diplomacy has been towards altering of the international agenda and the context in which global problems are
considered, in particular the role and functioning of the United Nations.

The existing network of development-oriented bodies like UNCTAD, the UN Industrial Organisation (UNIDO), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and of political organs like the Centre against Apartheid, the Committee on Palestinian Rights shows the influence of the Third World diplomacy in the United Nations.

The Third World rallied in 1960 around seminal Resolution 1514, adopting the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and calling for an "end to colonialism in all its manifestations". This document, over the years, has served as a touchstone for the Third World diplomacy. Running through this and other foundation documents of the United Nations, which have shaped subsequent resolutions in their respective area, is a common thread of anti-colonialism central to the identity and survival of the Third World diplomacy.

THIRD WORLD DIPLOMACY AND THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE

The Third World diplomacy has also played important role in the struggle of the South in the North-South economic confrontation, and spearheaded the demand for reformed global economic and cultural systems. The economic goals
of the Third World diplomacy have been to lessen the wide and widening techno-economic gap between the rich and industrialized North and the poor and industrializing South.

The diplomacy has taken a major offensive to check the neo-colonial economic exploitation of the South by the transnational corporations based in North. Opposed the unequal and exploitative terms of trade between the North and the South and exposed the use of the economic and military aid as well as arms trade by the North as a lever for political control of the South.

The economic diplomacy of the Third World has been geared to focus on the widening disparities between the rich and the poor nations. It has urged that the present economic crisis is a structural crisis and can not be resolved until fundamental and far-reaching economic reforms are made in the existing international economic order.

The Third World countries in various international forums, most notably in UNCTAD and Group 77 have campaigned for establishing a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Their demands include, lowering of tariffs on the export of manufacturers from the developing countries, transfer of technology, radical reforms of the Bretton Woods system to give Third World countries greater decision making power in global economic relations, and development of a
comprehensive framework for restructuring of the debt burden of developing countries. The efforts of the Third World diplomacy in past several years have been to realise these goals.

In socio-cultural terms the Third World's fight against the neo-colonialism of the North is reflected in the continuing struggle over the Western domination in the field of culture. The level of Western domination in international media, advertising, publishing, film, video and television enterprises is so overwhelming that it amounts to cultural imperialism. The existing international information and communication system helps the West to impose its value system on the peoples of the Third World.

With increasing technological advancement in the field of communication and information the grip of the North over the socio-cultural aspects of the Third World appears to have increased manifold. Indeed, in the present age of remote controlled satellites and advanced computers, the very sovereignty of the smaller and weaker Third World countries is threatened. The Third World diplomacy has to take sufficient measures to check this trend.

In the seventies the struggle against the Western monopoly of global news and communication developed into the demand for the establishment of a New World Information and
Communication Order (NWICO) leading to the US withdrawal from UNESCO. The need to rethink a new global information order was sanctified by the MacBride Commission report published in early 1980s.

The apparent failure of the North-South dialogue has necessitated diplomatic moves towards regional cooperation and South-South dialogue among the Third World countries. Despite the apparent heterogeneity of the Third World, the common bonds of colonial experiences, need for scientific and economic development, and the evolution of political clout to combat neo-colonial tendencies have provided Third World diplomacy with its strength in the international system.

The Third World diplomacy has tried to analyse international problems as diverse as development, disarmament, the Middle East and South Africa as vestiges of the results of colonial exploitation. Emphasis of this dimension has given the Third World diplomacy a moral highground in dealing with former colonial powers. The anti-colonial focus is both deeply felt product of experience and a vital rallying point and source of strength within the Non-aligned movement and the Third World diplomacy in international conferences and organisations like the United Nations.

The mobilising themes of the Third World diplomacy have
evolved since the freedom struggles against colonialism. Anti-colonialism was the central bond in the early years, to be supplemented by the aspiration of political freedom from the colonial powers. In the late sixties, a more militant brand of anti-colonialism came to fore, spurred by the Vietnam war, and the liberation struggles in Southern Africa. From the outset, anti-colonialism and economic development were common concern, an increasingly radical critique of global economic and cultural structures have signified the maturing of the Third World diplomacy.

The economic bond and the sentiment of shared colonial experiences remained the most enduring sources of the Third World diplomatic solidarity. This solidarity has demonstrated the Third World as a collective actor in international politics. With the end of the Cold War and the bipolar system in international politics, the foreign policies of most of the Third World countries, whose bed-rock has been the Non-aligned movement, stand vindicated. The increasing multiplicity of the global system and the growing North-South and South-South economic interdependence would ensure that the Third World shall acquire more significant role in international diplomatic interactions.