CHAPTER FIVE

JAWAHARLAL'S INTERNATIONALISM AND NON-ALIGNMENT POLICY
CHAPTER - V

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I. INTERNATIONALISM AND THE POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT:

An internationalist is expected to have intimate relations with all nations and all peoples of the world. He cannot by the very fact of logic be an isolationist. But, although an internationalist, Jawaharlal decided to follow a policy of non-alignment or dissociation from military and ideological line-up in the post-war international relations. He did not want to enter into other peoples' quarrels or interfere in the affairs of other countries. He felt that the less India interferes in international conflicts the better for her unless her own interest is involved, for the simple reason that it is not in consonance with her dignity just to interfere without producing any effect. As he said, "I am not anxious to put my finger into every international pie."¹

This policy of dissociating himself from international affairs seems on the face of it, to be contrary to his role as an internationalist. But this is not true and we should not go by its appearance, as shall be seen subsequently when the real meaning and implication of his policy of non-alignment is understood.

Jawaharlal was, of course, not in favour of remaining isolated or cut off from the rest of the world. As he said, "We wish to have the closest contacts, because we do from the beginning firmly believe in the world coming together and ultimately realising the ideal of what is now being called One World." He did not seek to evade his international responsibilities nor did he refrain from boldly expressing his opinion on various issues. He looked at the world with a friendly approach towards all nations. Yet he believed in the policy of non-alignment in other's affairs, and for the sake of the same, non-alignment with military blocs.

II. NON-ALIGNMENT - ITS SIGNIFICANCE:

The term non-alignment assumed meaning and significance in the context of the cold war. It grew historically out of the immediate need after the Second World War to avoid division of the world into power-blocs and resist pressures by big powers for alignment. It stood for a struggle for strengthening the independence of the newly emerging countries and against colonialism and imperialism.

The termination of the Second World War witnessed the rise of a bi-polar constellation with the two super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, threatening to demarcate the world into two rival spheres of influence. More and more states were being drawn into two antagonistic blocs of power sworn to mutual combat. The rapid development of nuclear weapons, with almost infinite destructive power, by both the blocs posed a real danger of the

2. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-47.
cold war exploding into a universal holocaust. The newly emerging independent states "realised that the major powers in the cold war struggle were bent on dividing the world into rival spheres of influence and that a fresh attempt was being made to bring the smaller and weaker states under control through formation of military blocs and alliances." Hence they became convinced of the need for a policy of non-alignment.

India as a newly emerging independent state had the choice before it of either participating in the cold war and inevitably joining military alliances and compromising to a considerable extent the newly won sovereignty; or keeping itself off from them or as it is said of "keeping away from bi-polar confrontation, preserving the newly won sovereignty and playing an independent role in international politics, trying to reduce tension and control conflict situations." Jawaharlal felt that the only rational choice before India was of steering clear of the bi-polar confrontation by adopting the policy of non-alignment. This was necessary he felt from the standpoint of national security and national development, as well as from that of promoting a workable international order.

Soon after assuming charge of Foreign Affairs portfolio in the Interim Government of India, Jawaharlal made a statement on 7 September, 1946 which is probably the first, the most authoritative and the most comprehensive enumeration of the policy that has since developed into the concept of non-alignment. He said, "We propose,

as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups of groups aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an ever vaster scale. We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close and direct contacts with other nations and to cooperate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom."  

An analysis of this statement shows that basically non-alignment stands in the first place for non-engagement in power politics, refusal to take side in the politics of bi-polarity especially in the context of cold war politics, and not entering into military alliances with any country, in particular with either the Western bloc or communist bloc as such commitments would put considerable restraint on the freedom of manoeuvre and impose rigid limits on foreign policy choices. In the second place it implies "Acting according to our best judgement," reservation of one's right to judge issues of international politics on their merits, and following an independent approach to foreign policy by not being tied down to a particular line of action. In the third place, it implies an attempt to maintain friendly relations with all countries. However, the basic urge behind the policy is the preservation of independence on the part of the weak nation which would like to concentrate its limited resources in building up national power and capacity in as short a time as possible.

6. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-79.
Jawaharlal made this point clear by further saying in a speech in the Constituent Assembly on March 8, 1949, "We have stated repeatedly that our foreign policy is one of keeping aloof from the big blocs of nations - rival blocs- and being friendly to all countries and not becoming entangled in any alliances, military or other, that might drag us into any possible conflict."\(^7\)

This policy of non-alignment was above all based on Jawaharlal's genuine concern for peace in the world and passionate desire to stop the cold war, qualified by a concern to safeguard India's interest. In course of time this policy of non-alignment became the very foundation of his foreign policy and one of his greatest contribution to international relations. By making non-alignment the logical framework of his foreign policy, he correctly interpreted the logic of the basic determinants of India's foreign policy and took a long term view of India's national interest and of international relations as a whole.

### III. NON-ALIGNMENT - NOT A NEGATIVE CONCEPT:

It needs to be clarified that the policy of non-alignment, inspite of the use of the prefix 'non' is not a negative policy. It is a positive, definite and dynamic policy. Though founded on the basic premise of dissociation of India from military and ideological line up in the post-war international relations, we should not go by its appearance and treat it as a negative concept. It is of course true that the cultural gap hinders the understanding of those Westerners.

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\(^7\) Nehru, J. - Speeches I, P-243.
who are not familiar with ways of thinking of the Indian people. A Japanese scholar offers necessary enlightenment on the subject. He points out that to Indians "negatively expressed virtues have more power" and that "a negative form is not only negative but also positive and affirmative." He gives several examples to substantiate his point-non-idleness (apramad), non-violence (ahimsa), non-property (aparigraha), etc. Thus seen non-alignment is meant to convey affirmative, positive and constructive ideals in the realm of international relations.

Hence, in so far as the negative appearance of the term non-alignment is concerned, it should be understood in the light of the thinking of Indian people who have expressed a whole lot of positive and constructive ideas through negative expressions. For instance, 'violence', a negative phenomenon, otherwise described by the positive noun 'Hinsa' is countered by the use of an otherwise negative noun Ahinsa or non-violence. Similarly, the negative phenomenon 'destruction' expressed by the positive term 'Vinash' is negated by using a negative but essentially an affirmative term Avinash (non-destructible). This is reminiscent of the dialectical concept of negation of negations. Alignment, though a positive noun has all the attributes of a negative phenomenon, though expressed by a positive noun. Hence, "its refutation by a negative term, non-alignment, implying in essence undoing of alignments is basically

an affirmation of a positive concept sub-suming a positive act, and not as superficially seen or interpreted a negative term and a negative policy."\(^9\)

As the same time non-alignment is not a neutral or passive policy. Jawaharlal had never seen independence of India in terms of isolationism. That is why, the description of his foreign policy as 'neutralism' irritated him. Neutralism implies a refusal to express positive views on specific issues with positive action. But on no importance issue, from her first appearance as an independent nation had India refrained from expressing a definite point of view on specific international issues.

As Jawaharlal said in this context, "Some people use the word neutral in regard to India's policy. I do not like that word at all, having myself been in the past, perhaps even now to some extent not exactly a negative individual but a positive individual working for positive causes and having a certain contempt for a neutral person who has no views at all ........... I do not even like India's policy being referred to as 'positive neutrality' as is done in some countries. Without doubt, we are unaligned, we are uncommitted to military blocs. But the important fact is that we are committed to various principles, various urges, various objectives and various principles, very much so. When proposals have been made that we

should form some kind of bloc of 'neutral' countries, I have not
taken very kindly to them."\(^{10}\)

Vincent Sheean, in depicting the nature of Indian foreign policy,
has observed, "Neutralism is not a good word, because it states
an untruth: India is not neutral and has in fact deployed an incessant
activity for twelve years ............ India is no more 'non-committal'
than it is neutral' and it is only uncommitted up to the time when
it commits itself as it does on each question when it arises."\(^{11}\)

Hence, although Jawaharlal's doctrine of non-alignment implied
a policy of non-interference, it was not supposed to assume an attitude
of indifference to international issues, not did it mean that either
Jawaharlal or India would ordinarily be neutral in a conflict between
freedom and the opposite. Hence, Jawaharlal in his address to the
U.S. Congress in Washington in 1949 observed, "Where freedom is
menaced or justice threatened or where aggression takes place, we
cannot be and shall not be neutral."\(^{12}\) Thus, India's policy of non-
alignment was not an attitude of isolationism or escapism; rather
it involved activism in international affairs.

Thus, non-alignment is neither a negative nor neutral policy
but is a positive and dynamic policy of playing an active role in
international affairs. Jawaharlal neither sought to evade his inter-
national responsibilities nor refrained from expressing boldly his
opinion on various international issues. He took independent decisions

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\(^{10}\) Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-85-86.
\(^{11}\) Sheean, Vincent - Nehru, the Years of Power, P-122-123.
\(^{12}\) Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-591.
in each case on its merit and refused to mortgage decision making to one leading power or another. However, for Jawaharlal, this policy of non-alignment and steering clear of power blocs had the positive connotation of a peaceful world for all to live in. As he remarked in the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations held at Belgrade in 1961, "If we give it a positive connotation, it means nations which object to lining up for war purposes, to military blocs, to military alliances and the like. We keep away from such an approach and we want to throw our weight in favour of peace."\textsuperscript{13}

The policy of non-alignment had, thus, this positive object of world peace in view. Its other positive aspects were enlargement of freedom in the world, replacement of colonialism by free and independent countries and a larger degree of cooperation among nations. It was in favour of friendly cooperation with all countries, without adherence to political alignments or military pacts.

IV. **RATIONALE BEHIND THE POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT**

Foreign policy is never determined by any single factor or a few factors, but is the result of the interplay of a large number of factors that affect the formation of policy in different ways in different circumstances. The basic determinants of foreign policy are geography, economic development, political tradition, domestic milieu and international milieu. Hence it has been rightly said, "Decision-making in foreign policy can have a claim to rationality only when these have been seriously taken into account."\textsuperscript{14} When the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} Nehru, J. - Speeches IV, P-361.  \\
\textsuperscript{14} Bandhopadhya, J. - The Making of India's Foreign Policy, P-28.
\end{flushleft}
basic determinants of Indian foreign policy are considered, non-alignment becomes the only rational choice of strategy. But it required the personality of Jawaharlal to transform the rational into the real. However, the policy of non-alignment was logically indicated by the basic determinants of India's foreign policy. As Jawaharlal himself said in the Lok Sabha on December 9, 1958, "It is a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind during our struggle for freedom, and inherent in the circumstances of the world today........... I am quite convinced that whoever might have been in charge of the foreign affairs in India, they could not have deviated very much from this policy." Hence the basic factors that conditioned Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment were geopolitics, economic development, national security and nation-building, and the international milieu.

A. GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR:

Geography helps to shape foreign policy, as geographical factors like the size, the location, state boundaries, natural resources and population, contribute to the power of the nation, which in turn shapes foreign policy. According to Morgenthau, "the most stable factor upon which the power of a nation depends is obviously geography." For instance, the fact that the continental territory of the United States of America is separated from other continents by bodies of water 3000 miles to the east and more than 6000 miles

15. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-28.
wide to the west is a permanent factor that determines the position
of the U.S. in the world. This geographical position of the U.S.A helped
her in the past to follow an isolationist foreign policy under the
Monroe Doctrine; but it has also made her vitally interested in the
security of Western Europe which is her first line of defence, and
also in the developments of Japan. The insular location of Great Britain,
in being separated from the European continent by the English Channel
is a fundamental factor in the determination of her foreign policy.
Similarly, the immense territorial extension of the Soviet Union is
a source of great strength and has made the conquest of Russian
territory a liability for a conqueror rather than an asset.

In the case of India, geopolitical considerations, which as
mentioned earlier, are basic to a state's foreign policy, indicated
the rationality of an independent and important role in world affairs.
Because of the bigness of her territory, population and large stock
of natural resources, it would not be rational for India to behave
in international relations like a small state and to restrict her freedom
of action by being politically or militarily aligned with one of the
two power blocs. As Jawaharlal rightly said, "I can understand some
of the smaller countries of Asia being forced by circumstances to
bow down before some of the greater powers and becoming practically
satellites of those powers, because they cannot help it. The power
opposed to them is so great that they have nowhere to turn. But
I do not think that consideration applies to India........ India is
too big a country herself to be bound down to any country, however
big it may be." 17

17. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-32.
By virtue of location, India occupies a pivotal position in Asian and world politics. In the context of her central position in the Asian sub-continent, Jawaharlal said "India belongs to South-East Asia, it belongs to South Asia, it also belongs to West Asia. It just depends on which way you look at it because it happens to be the centre of all these."\(^1\)\(^8\) India is a major connecting link between West Asia, South-East Asia, East Asia and the Far East. This strategic location of India between the East and the West has a great significance for her role in international relations. Perceiving this aspect Jawaharlal said, "............. India becomes a kind of meeting ground for various trends and forces and a meeting ground between what might roughly be called the East and the West."\(^1\)\(^9\) Realising this strategic importance of India's location, the two super-powers, U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. have attempted to programme India into their respective global strategies, and to influence her national development and foreign policy in terms of their own perceptions of the global strategic environment.

The geographical insularity caused by the Himalayas in the north and the Indian Ocean in the south has enabled India to stay away to a certain extent from the political and ideological crusades of the mid-twentieth century and pursue the policy of non-alignment. Recognising the impact of geographical factor in determining the policy of non-alignment, Jawaharlal said in the Rajya Sabha in 1957, "I do not say that our country is superior or that we are above passion

\(^1\)\(^8\) Nehru, J. - Speeches I, P-350.
\(^1\)\(^9\) Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-22.
and prejudice, hatred and fury. But as things are, there are certain factors which help us. First of all, we are geographically so situated that we are not drawn into controversies with that passionate fury that some other countries are. This is not due to our goodness or badness, but is a matter of geography." Thus, geographical factor became one of the major determinants for the pursuance of the policy of non-alignment.

B. **ECONOMIC FACTOR:**

Another major determinant behind Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was the economic factor. As Jawaharlal said in 1947, "Ultimately, foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy, and until India has properly evolved her economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague, rather inchoate and will be groping."  

The cardinal features of Indian economy at the time of independence were economic backwardness marked by a stagnant agricultural economy, primitive type of industrial production, lack of heavy industry, inadequate supply of capital, high rate of population growth and as a consequence low standard of living and vast expanse of poverty. This stagnancy of the economy, accentuated by years of war and military preparedness, were further aggravated by partition and rehabilitation of refugees. Hence the need of the hour was high rate of economic growth which in turn demanded high rate of capital investment and building up of a diversified economic infrastructure. Only through rapid industrialisation and agricultural

20. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-73.
revolution the problem of poverty could be tackled and economic prosperity be ensured.

The economic problem was further accentuated by the emergence of hostile neighbours like Pakistan and China on the Indian border. The problem of security of the nation required investment of a sizeable portion of our resources in building up defence preparedness. This conflict between the need for development and the need for defence did put a serious strain on the limited national resources that were available for economic development. In such a contingency if economic development was to be pursued and poverty to be eradicated, India had no alternative but to be dependent on foreign aid both in the form of financial capital and developed technology. In order to have it, Jawaharlal had to explore and exploit all the available sources and accept foreign aid from whatever corner available irrespective of the nature of the political structure and the ideology on which it was based. As Jawaharlal himself admitted, "Even in accepting economic help........... it is not a wise policy to put all our eggs in one basket."22

Thus, Jawaharlal realised that for tiding over the problem of economic stagnancy and poverty India shall not align itself with any of the major power or power bloc and thereby alienate the other. He wanted diversification of the sources of aid so as to prevent exercise of political pressure from either of the superpowers, which would have led to loss of national sovereignty. Hence, emerged his policy of non-alignment. As Michael Brecher has rightly put it,

22. Nehru. J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-35.
"India's economic weakness and the basic goal of development provide powerful inducements to the policy of non-alignment. The doors must be kept open to all possible sources of aid, Western and Soviet, if the desired economic revolution is to be achieved."  

Jawaharlal felt that an atmosphere of peace is a vital imperative, the minimum precondition for economic development, "for without peace it was not possible to give political freedom economic content and reality." Unless an atmosphere of peace prevails all around both inside the nation and outside, the national and international energy cannot be ministered to the cause of economic upliftment. Hence peace is considered absolutely essential for economic progress. If, on the other hand, war, big or small, ensued, national energies and economic resources shall be diverted to meet the challenge of war and thereby fritter away the limited economic resources that can otherwise be devoted to economic development. Joining any power bloc or military alliance would have involved India in war preparation, prevalence of an atmosphere of tension and sacrifice of the atmosphere of peace that is so much essential for economic development and prosperity. Hence Jawaharlal preferred, in the interest of India's economic development, not to align India with any power bloc and thus pursued the policy of non-alignment.

C. INDIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND NON-ALIGNMENT:

The policy of non-alignment is deeply embedded in the traditions and heritage of India, in the cultural background of Indian

society and in her profound convictions and attitude to life in general. Indian tradition and heritage is characterised by the philosophy of live-and-let-live. Non-alignment springs out of this philosophical and cultural background of India.

Indian tradition and culture is based on tolerance. As it is said, "The Indian mind believes that the roads to truth and the realisation of ultimate reality are infinite. No system of thought and belief is capable of comprehending the complete truth." The concept of different roads to truth calls for tolerance and this tolerance constitute a part of Indian way of thought. In the formulation of the policy of non-alignment, Jawaharlal was influenced by India's past heritage and the moral tone of Indian culture, such as faith in toleration and that all doctrines are only partial truth, Buddha's elucidation of the Majhima or the Middle Path, the Gita doctrine of non-attachment the Vedant instruction to be detached sakshi or spectators of the world, as well as the philosophical idealism of the Indian political thinkers.

India's attitude to the ideological war of the mid-twentieth century was influenced by this spirit of tolerance. The Indian philosophical attitude did not believe in the messianic mission to convert the peoples of the world to one political or religious faith. Hence it is very aptly said, "The idea that many different religions have equally valid claims to contributing to the total understanding of the truth, reflects itself in the political realm in the rejection

of the absolute perspectives of either the Marxist ideology or Western beliefs. Under the impact of such Indian tradition and heritage, the heritage of tolerance of different faith, belief and ideology, Jawaharlal did not consider it appropriate to align himself with either of the ideological power blocs. Hence his policy of non-alignment in foreign affairs.

Jawaharlal was also influenced by a high degree of political idealism inherited from the Indian Renaissance of the 19th century. The ancient Indian tradition of non-violence in general and the Asokan tradition in particular, found its manifestation in an idealistic approach to politics, both in national and international level. The Indian cultural tradition of universalistic outlook is visible in the philosophy of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhi. Aurobindo for instance, believed that a truely united world would result primarily from a great spiritual development of mankind, from a universal religion combining the highest ethical tradition of all nations and a free cultural grouping of the human race. Tagore gave typical expression to this idealist view of internationalism when he said, "We in India shall have to show to the world what is that truth which not only makes disarmament possible but turns it into strength. That moral force is a higher power than brute force will be proved by people who are unarmed........" Jawaharlal came under the spell of this idealism and dedicated himself to this end that "this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion

27. As quoted by J. Bandhopadhya in 'The Making of India's Foreign Policy', P-72.
of world peace and the welfare of mankind."28 But this end cannot be fulfilled and India cannot play such missionary role by aligning itself with any power bloc, thereby alienating the other. It shall have to, in order to attain this objective, befriend all nations and all peoples all over the world. Hence emerged Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment.

Apart from being influenced by the moral and idealistic heritage of Indian culture, Jawaharlal was also influenced by Gandhian doctrine of non-violence in pursuing the policy of non-alignment. By emphasising on the need for adopting the right means in the relations among nations, Jawaharlal has often referred to the legacy of Gandhi. His basic approach to world politics in general and Indian foreign policy in particular has been profoundly influenced by the Gandhian tradition. He constantly referred to the influence of Gandhian tradition in India's political behaviour, particularly international behaviour and to the ideal of One World as a basic goal of Indian foreign policy.

A moral tone, a friendly but fearless approach, a polite but firm refusal to submit to evil with 'a temper of peace' and a spirit of cooperation - all these were legacies of the Gandhian age and they were bound to project themselves in Jawaharlal's policies. So far as Jawaharlal was concerned, non-violent and peaceful means were acceptable to him not only because they are morally sound; they were also defensible from the practical and pragmatic standpoint of the modern civilisation characterised by technological and nuclear

28. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-14-15.
revolution. In the nuclear age, violent means was considered by him obsolete and out-of-date. Hence he said, "The means must be such as lessen conflict and hatred or at any rate, try to limit them as far as possible and to encourage goodwill." As Michael Brecher rightly points out, "There is too, a conviction that non-violence is applicable to the international arena ....... Nehru assumes that this technique of political action can also serve to mitigate world tension." Since alignment with any power blocs shall indirectly involve participation in war and acts of violence, non-alignment policy became Jawaharlal's basic concern. Thus the logical outcome of his philosophy was "a foreign policy which would steer clear of the contemporary power balance and open up a new dimension of political relations. This was precisely the function of non-alignment." Hence, Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was inspired by Indian tradition and culture as well as Gandhian concept of non-violence and truth.

D. NATIONAL SELF RESPECT AND NON-ALIGNMENT POLICY:

Another important motivating factor behind Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was the desire to assert India's independence and self-respect as a free nation on an equal footing with all other nations of the world. Jawaharlal believed that each nation has the sovereign right to remain independent of other's influence and determine its course of action in relation to other nations unimpeded by extraneous influence. To compromise this ideal is to sacrifice the national self-respect. But alignment with power blocs not only lead to surrender

31. Nanda, B.R.(ed) - India's Foreign Policy, The Nehru Years, P-177.
of such national self-respect but also surrender of national sovereignty. So he rejected outright the policy of alignment with power blocs and pursued the policy of non-alignment. Voicing India's independent approach, he said, "Every country has a right to choose its own path and go along it. We have chosen our path and we propose to go along it and vary it as and when we choose, not at somebody's dictate or pressure, and we are not afraid of any other country imposing its will upon us by military methods or any other methods. Our thinking and our approach do not fit in with this great crusade of communism or crusade of anti-communism."  

Jawaharlal laid stress on the factor of self-reliance because ultimately a country must learn to cultivate its own strength. This is particularly vital for a people who have remained dependent on a foreign power for a long time. Non-alignment connotes independence of judgement and evaluating each question on its own merits. Not bound to the East or West, an uncommitted nation can follow its own policy. Jawaharlal made his stand clear by saying, "I am not prepared even as an individual much less as the foreign minister of this country to give up the right of independent judgement to anybody else in other countries. That is the essence of our policy."  

Non-alignment had for Jawaharlal an added merit of satisfying a deep inner urge for recognition, a natural by-product of colonial subjugation. It enabled a relatively militarily weak, newly independent nation to play a major role on the stage of world politics. Membership 

32. Nehru, J. - Speeches III, P-285.;
33. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-80.
of a bloc was equated by him with loss of freedom of action in external affairs. This in turn was identified with a return to colonialism, in a new guise.

By joining a power bloc, a country may be called upon to fight a war because some members of the bloc are involved. The decision to fight a war or make peace does not remain the exclusive decision of the nation concerned. As Jawaharlal said, "By aligning with only one power you surrender your opinion, give up the policy you would normally pursue because somebody else wants you to pursue another policy." Hence, from the point of view of national self-respect, a straightforward, honest and independent policy was considered the best.

Hence, Jawaharlal followed an independent policy which was neither pro-West nor pro-East. He refused to take sides in the cold war politics, always reserving the right to have his own opinion on the issues at stake. His policy of non-alignment was the first overt gesture of free Asia and Africa to step out as an independent entity. It was an expression of their distinct identity intent upon standing on their own and following their own interests. As he said, "After long years of alien domination, colonialism, and suppression, the countries of Asia and Africa want to think and act for themselves. They have rejected the idea of being told what to do and what not to do." What held true for Asia also held true for India.

34. Nehru, J. - Speeches II, P-284.
35. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-84.
Non-alignment, therefore, implied for Jawaharlal national self-respect and a sense of equality with other nations. For many years, India had been dominated by the West, and had lacked opportunity to voice her opinion unhindered by extraneous influence. Once she was free from foreign bondage, she was destined to play her part in world affairs in par with others. Hence he said, "People have often indulged in or have presumed to give us advice, not realising that India as she is constituted today, wants no one's advice and no one's imposition upon her. Any attempt at imposition, the slightest trace of patronage, is resented and will be resented."36

E. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MILIEU:

The policy of non-alignment was also determined by the domestic milieu. That Jawaharlal recognised this compelling influence of the domestic milieu on foreign policy and vice versa was evident when he said,"The internal policy and foreign policy of a country affect each other. They should, broadly, be in line with each other, and have to be integrated. By and large, there has been in India an attempt at this integration."37

The bulk of the Indian people would have regarded an alliance with either of the two power blocs as a betrayal of the Indian freedom movement, and Jawaharlal could not afford to ignore this basic fact. Also, non-alignment helped the process of state-building in India by harmonising and stabilising the diverse political forces in the country, in addition to helping the process of economic development.

36. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-9.
37. Ibid., P-83.
These were segments of political opinion and organisation on both the right and left, inside the Congress and outside, which could have been seriously disaffected by India's alignment with one of the two power blocs, to the point of threatening the internal security of the state. As it was rightly said, "The forces on the extreme right were neutralised by the government's refusal to align itself politically or militarily with the Soviet bloc, and those on the extreme left were neutralised by the policy of anti-imperialism and the refusal to be associated politically or militarily with the moves and counter-moves of the Western bloc." Thus, the policy of non-alignment was in fact a great harmoniser of conflicting domestic interests and effectively promoted the national political integration of India during the Nehru era.

The international milieu in which the newly independent India found herself was also a major determinant of the Indian policy of non-alignment. By the time India won her independence and Jawaharlal assumed the role of Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of India, the world had already been split ideologically into two Power blocs and cold war between these blocs had already set in. Non-alignment assumed meaning and significance only in the context of the cold war. Instead of participating in the cold war and compromising the newly won sovereignty of India, Jawaharlal chose to keep out of the bi-polar confrontation and play an independent role in international politics. Non-alignment was the only rational choice from the point of view of national security and national development as well as from

38. Bandhopadhya, J. - The Making of India's Foreign Policy, P-315.
that of promoting a workable international order. As it is aptly said, "In the given international milieu the policy of non-alignment was best suited for the avoidance of war and nuclear annihilation, strengthening the United Nations, promoting the solidarity of Afro-Asian countries and opening of a third area and dimension of world affairs for safeguarding India's national interest against the actual and political threat from Pakistan and China, and for the assumption by India of a leading role in world affairs." \(^{39}\)

Thus, Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was determined by the realities of India's geography, economic development, national, political and ideological tradition, domestic milieu and international milieu. It was a logical corollary of the given basic determinants of foreign policy. Jawaharlal rightly observed that the policy of non-alignment was not the creation of any one individual, it was rooted in India's history and geography and the outcome of many given conditions. However, "it required the wisdom of Jawaharlal to interpret the logic of the basic determinants of India's foreign policy correctly and to take a long view of India's national interests and of international relations as a whole." \(^{40}\)

**F. POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT AND THE AREA OF PEACE:**

Peace and progress were the watchwords and the rallying cry of non-alignment. Jawaharlal conceived non-alignment to avoid the spill-over of the cold war to the new nations because such a spillover would prevent the developing states from reaching decisions

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39. Bandhopadhyya, J. - The Making of India's Foreign Policy, P-316.

independently. He felt that there was no reason why India should enter the lists of Europe as champion of this or the opponent of that or get herself entangled in the animosities of past history of Europe which bred these quarrels. As a matter of fact he considered it as the height of insanity to do so. As he himself said, "So far as India was concerned, placed as she was historically and geographically it would have been quite astonishingly foolish to fall into this business of cold war, either on grounds of principle or on grounds of expediency."  

Non-alignment, Jawaharlal felt, shall make it possible for India to remain outside the mainstream of big-power rivalry. It is within the power of nations favourably situated geographically to avoid the inner-currents of big-power hatred, jealousy and manoeuvring. The Scandinavian states, he felt, had succeeded in doing so to a large extent and this contributed much to their peaceful life devoted to civilised pursuits. The U.S. also did so during the years of her infancy as a nation. Such a policy might make it possible for India to avoid being drawn into what Jawaharlal has referred to many times as Europe's 'legacy of conflict.' This he felt shall spare India the time and resources for the development of her economy and raising the material status of the people which according to him were the most pressing problems of the nation. As he said, "The major problem of India and all other Asian states are about food, clothing, education, housing and so on, and attention to such problems is bound to suffer

41. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-83.
if Asian relations become entangled in the European whirlpool.\textsuperscript{42}

Non-alignment became the instrument that Jawaharlal used for implementing world peace. His concern was how to avoid clash between these two forces or camps. Because if they clash, there will be a world war. To prevent them from clashing, one must not take sides or join one party or the other. "Joining one party would result in the inability to command any influence on the party which one had not joined, nor would one command much influence on the party one had joined because in that party India would be a small figure."\textsuperscript{43}

Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was dictated by his faith in the creation of an 'area of peace'. He found in the doctrine of non-alignment a means to insulate the newly liberated countries against the neo-colonialism of the military alliances. He brought them together in a new grouping, a third area of peace. In the opinion of R.K. Karanjia, through his policy of non-alignment, Jawaharlal was able "to create an area of peace or no-war land, between the two blocs. Slowly and steadily he transferred this neutral area into a positive and constructive workshop of peace, where Russia no less than America, both East and West, could co-exist, cowork and cooperate in the reconstruction of the underdeveloped world."\textsuperscript{44}

Jawaharlal was of the opinion that while remaining quite apart from power blocs, India would be in a better position to cast her weight at the right moment in favour of peace. As he said, in

\textsuperscript{42} Nehru, J. - Speeches II, P-135.
\textsuperscript{43} Rao, V.K.R.V. - The Nehru Legacy, P-32.
\textsuperscript{44} Karanjia, R.K. - The Philosophy of Mr. Nehru, P-14.
1949, "We should not align ourselves with what are called power blocs. We can be of far more service without doing so and I think there is just a possibility that at a moment of crisis our peaceful and friendly efforts might make a difference and avert the crisis." Thus, non-alignment was considered to be of great service to the cause of world peace. As Michael Brecher has rightly observed, "The wider the area of peace, that is to say, the area of non-alignment, the less the likelihood of war among the super powers. Such is Nehru's oft-repeated rationale for India's foreign policy."

Besides, Jawaharlal also believed that by being non-aligned, India would be able to act as a 'bridge of understanding' between the rigid, ideologically bi-polarised world and thus contribute to peace. An uncommitted India could perform in a large measure, the necessary task of building a bridge which otherwise would not exist between the two power blocs. India was ideally situated to play this role as she was "an Asian state traditionally friendly to China, without any legacy of conflict with Russia, yet friendly to the West, and following a middle way in its programme of economic and social change."

If Jawaharlal's purpose was to bring the conflicting blocs and ideologies together so that they cooperate in bringing about peace and prosperity, it could not be by joining either of them. Hence, his foreign policy objective of acting as a bridge between the two power blocs set apart by ideological cleavage dictated him to adopt

45. Nehru, J. - Speeches I, P-262.
the policy of non-alignment. As Karanjia has rightly point out "Our main contribution rests in creating for India a non-aligned independent and internationally respected position which has enabled us to act as a link or bridge of communication between conflicting ideologies and hostile nations or blocs."\(^{48}\) This is where Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment, uncompromised by military alliance, has been of great service to the cause of peace and coexistence.

**G. NON-ALIGNMENT AND MILITARY ALLIANCE**

The most explicit expression of Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was his opposition to and rejection of military pacts and alliances. It was his firm conviction, as discussed in the earlier chapter, that military alliances attempt to create spheres of influence, promotes arms race and thus increase international tension. Jawaharlal's study of European history had made him highly suspicious of alliances. Their competitive and entangling nature had not brought peace in the past and they were not likely to bring peace and security either in the present nor in the future. The Western powers regarded the newly liberated countries as areas of power vacuum and wanted to fill that vacuum by military pacts. Such policies did not allow the newly independent states to grow on their own and forced them instead into positions where they became, once more, instruments of big-power politics.

In spite of India's economic backwardness, and her dependence on foreign powers for economic aid for national development, Jawaharlal

\(^{48}\) Karanjia - The Philosophy of Mr. Nehru, P-30.
was not in favour of the policy of alliance with any one of the power blocs. Such a policy he felt would undermine both internal and external security in the long run in a variety of ways. A policy of military alignment with a big power he felt would go against the powerful nationalist tradition and values of the nation. Moreover, the bigger military partner might not approve of India's politico-economic system or trends, and might encourage forces and tendencies within the state which would undermine the state system established by the will of the people. Alignment with a major power would further affect the external sovereignty of the state, especially with regard to treaties, the structure and orientation of foreign trade, voting at the United Nations and other such constraints. Apart from such interference, the weaker state may become involved in a global or major war against its wishes, resulting in internal economic and political dislocations. Besides, "military alliance with a big power may undermine the morale of the armed forces and seriously weaken the will of the people to defend their sovereignty against external attack or interference."  

Hence, non-alignment alone could be the diplomatic supplement to our defence effort.

Jawaharlal felt that even if a military pact is made for a justifiable defensive reason, its continuance would sooner, rather than later, begin to endanger peace. Military alliances, he felt, leads to colonialism through the back door. Elaborating this in the context of NATO, he said, "When the NATO was first envisaged it was for

49. Bandhopadhya, J. - The Making of India's Foreign Policy, P-63.
defence. But gradually we found that it was supposed to cover the colonial possessions of all those powers also .........."\(^{50}\)

Any alliance with either of the super-powers would necessarily lead a country to complete subordination to the will and policy of one of the big powers. If you are protected by someone you have to conform your policy to that somebody's policies. Large-scale military aid makes the government of that country so dependent upon the big power that all other questions are subordinated to it and the government tends to follow policies flattering to the big power. All efforts at building a self-reliant defence force and independent economy gets dissipated and the state develops an outlook of dependence. Thus, a military pact limits a country's independence because from then on its policy has to follow a pattern that is set by the big power. As Jawaharlal points out, "By aligning yourself with any one power you surrender your opinion, give up the policy you would normally pursue because somebody also wants you to pursue another policy."\(^{51}\)

Military pacts, Jawaharlal felt, were a wrong approach to international problems as it set in motion all the wrong tendencies and prevented the right tendencies from developing. While alliances led to suicidal arms race, caused misunderstanding and tension, non-alignment was a sure way of creating areas of peace and reducing the dangers of war. He did not approve of military alliances between great powers, but he was more critical of military alliance between  

\(^{50}\) Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-90.  
\(^{51}\) Nehru, J. - Speeches II, P-192-193.
big powers and small countries. As said, "In this nuclear age, the only countries that count are only those great countries which are unfortunately in a position to use these bombs. But to attach small countries to themselves in alliance really means - and I say so with all respect to those countries - that they are becoming very much dependent on these countries. Such associates do not add to their defensive power, for they have little or no military value."  

An impassioned internationalist, Jawaharlal opposed only those alliances built on shared antagonism; but welcomed and supported any friendly getting together of nations. He even supported the Commonwealth of Nations precisely on this ground. It involved no military or defence understanding and in no way tied India's foreign policy to that of any other country. As Prof. Rana has aptly put it, "Jawaharlal welcomed the Commonwealth because it helped improve the operation of the international system through generating non-alignment." Yet he stood against any extension of European military pacts into Asia. This attitude of Jawaharlal called for adoption of a policy of non-alignment although he was an impassioned internationalist. Hence, dissociation from bloc politics or military alliances became a focal point of his policy of non-alignment.

H. NON-ALIGNMENT AND ECONOMIC AID:

One of the most important considerations of Jawaharlal in the formation of foreign policy at the time of independence of India, was the need for rapid economic development. This was in view of

52. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-66.
53. Rana, A.P. - The Imperatives of Non-Alignment, P-292.
the fact that India had inherited a backward economy, a very low
standard of living and per capital income, lack of capital and technical
knowhow, and stagnant industrial and agricultural growth, which became
still more serious with the high rate of population growth. Under
these circumstances, heavy dependence on foreign aid became inevitable
for the development and stability of Indian economy.

The task of Jawaharlal's policy was to locate all possible
sources of acceptable foreign aid and to build up a pattern of economic
relations with all states so that the quantum of capital and technical
knowhow received could be maximised. On account of the cold war,
acceptance of aid from one source would antagonise another. From
India's point of view it was necessary to find out which particular
policy would maximise the flow of the required quantity and quality
of aid, and adopt that policy irrespective of whether or not a
particular state or power bloc wholly approved of that policy.
Jawaharlal developed the policy of non-alignment that enabled India
to get aid from both the power blocs. He felt that the diversification
of the sources of aid would enable India to minimise the pressure
that could be exerted by any state or bloc and to offset the inevitable
pressure from one side by the pressure from the other. Besides,
the preservation of external sovereignty, in the context of heavy
dependence on foreign aid also demanded the diversification of the
sources of aid. He thought it rational to depend on a number of sources
for economic aid, so as to avoid involvement in the cold war and
the compromise of her external sovereignty. As he admitted "Even
in accepting economic help............. it is not a wise policy to put all our eggs in one basket."\(^{54}\)

This policy of receiving aid from both the camps has been criticised by Jawaharlal's detractors as a kind of blackmail which enabled him to get substantial help from both camps and not 'just crumbs'. As one of his critics remarked, "India was not-aligned but doubly aligned - it was aligned with the super powers."\(^{55}\) But there can be no greater caricature of the policy of non-alignment, no greater travesty of truth than to hold that Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment was only intended to enable him to get aid both from the Soviet Union and from the United States. May be aid came from both these countries but chronology is important here. As it is said, "Jawaharlal declared his policy of non-alignment in 1946 as head of the Interim Government while American aid came in 1953 and Russian aid in 1954."\(^{56}\)

Although Jawaharlal believed that non-alignment does not rule out accepting aid from other countries, he emphasised that getting such aid should not be at the cost of our self-respect and independence. Whether we receive aid or not, there would be no compromise in the basic policy of not aligning ourselves with either of the power blocs. Alignment could have brought us many of the good things in life, but he preferred not to do so and retained his independent policy. As he said, "If at any time help from abroad depends upon

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a variation, however slight in our policy, we shall relinquish that help completely and prefer starvation and privation to taking such help, and I think the world knows it well enough." He believed that if the price to be paid for foreign aid was the giving up of the independence of action, then no Indian worth his name would be prepared to pay that price.

Jawaharlal's policy regarding receiving aid also included the condition that such aid should have no string attached to it. Rather than having his policies affected in any way by outside pressure i.e. that of the aid-giving state, he preferred that India should struggle by herself in achieving socio-economic development without any help from outside. As he said, "We have been careful in this matter to make it clear always that our policies cannot be affected by and there must be no strings attached to any kind of help that we get.............."^

AN ASSESSMENT:

In the international setting of the post-war bi-polar world, Jawaharlal with political acumen and foresight evolved the policy of non-alignment. He played a creative role as the precursor (1947-55), progenitor (1955-61) and pioneer (1961-64) of the non-aligned movement. Non-alignment in the sense of independence from alignments has been since his time the dominant ethos of India's foreign policy. It was the symbol of India's independence, of her determination not to be

57. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-63.
58. Ibid., P-69.
"pushed about by this power bloc or that." It was a common sense approach to international relations - why bind ourselves with either of the power bloc and lose sympathy of the other. Its basis, rationale and serviceability was gradually realised and most of the newly independent states of Asia and Africa have expressed in varying degrees their faith in the policy.

It is true that during the initial period, roughly from 1947 to 1950, it was looked upon with considerable scepticism, if not downright disapproval. As Jawaharlal said, "The world of the Big Powers at that time could think only in terms of black and white, with no browns as it were. The Russians pressed us for some time, but soon got reconciled to our independence. The Americans were more difficult because of Mr. Dulles and his doctrine of military alliances, power vacuums and the strategy of containment."^59

Thus, earlier "there was suspicion in the minds of the first group that we were really allied to the other group in secret though we were trying to hide the fact, but later the comprehension came to them that we were not really allied to either group, that we were trying to act according to our own lights and according to the merits of the dispute as they seemed to us."^60 Soon the world found this attitude justified and a large number of smaller states looked to India more than to other countries for a lead in such matters.

59. Karanjia, R.K. - The Philosophy of Mr. Nehru, P-51.
60. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-25.
Two countries have put Jawaharlal's non-alignment to considerable strain - Pakistan (its entering into a military alliance with the U.S.A.), and more so, China. A testing period for non-alignment came in the early 60s with the heating up of Sino-Indian dispute. As Jawaharlal said in a speech at the Bangalore Session of Indian National Congress in 1960, "This is the very moment when I should stick to the policy of non-alignment even more firmly because it is now the testing time for my thinking, for India's thinking - when danger comes, are our hands to shiver, our feet to grow cold and are we to seek shelter under somebody's umbrella?"61 He admitted that it was true that because of the Chinese aggression "we have developed closer bonds with some countries who helped us. That was natural, but that does not mean that we have weakened in our desire to adhere to non-alignment fully............. we have arrived at a stage when any other policy may lead to world disaster. For our own part, we adhere to non-alignment."62

Hardpressed by the Chinese aggression, Jawaharlal necessarily developed close links with the Western powers, and the practice of non-alignment wore thin. But the enduring element of non-alignment which India under Jawaharlal's leadership did not foresake, was a mental outlook, a particular approach to world problems. As has been rightly said, "Of Jawaharlal's many contributions to the international scene, the most lasting has been the insistence, in fair weather or foul, on India's right, untramelled by the viewpoints

61. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-83.
of the Great Powers to frame her policies so as to safeguard her independence, defend and promote her national interest and work for progressive causes.\textsuperscript{63} On the whole, one can assert that Jawaharlal weathered the Chinese storm quite successfully, as far as the practice of non-alignment was concerned. The isolation of China, the localisation of the war, the neutralisation of Russia and the active support of the Western bloc are some of the great achievements of non-alignment.

Besides emphasising on progressive causes like internationalism, Jawaharlal's policy of non-alignment played a significant role in preventing a Third World War and this was of vital importance to Indian national interests in particular and to the world in general. It is said that he always "stood for peace, did not take sides but stood aligned with peace and not aligned with either parties to cold war conflict and helped to maintain peace between the major powers."\textsuperscript{64}

For Jawaharlal, abandonment of non-alignment by India would mean the strengthening of the forces of war and weakening of the forces of peace. Had India foregone non-alignment it is seriously doubtful that other nations could have maintained it and the area of conflict would have widened. Thus, from the point of view of purely national interests as well as the broader concept of internationalism, non-alignment was a sound policy for India. As it is said, "It is a tribute to the statemanship of Nehru that an uncommitted India is internationally more respected than if she had been a camp

\textsuperscript{63} Gopal, S. - J. Nehru, A Biography III P-274.
\textsuperscript{64} Rao, V.K.R.V. - The Nehru Legacy P-36.
follower of one or the other group." As the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal had to protect the interest of his nation, yet as an internationalist he partly sacrificed his country's narrow sectarian interest for a greater cause i.e. internationalism, by adopting the policy of non-alignment.

Although the policy of non-alignment has been subjected to severe criticism, yet Jawaharlal adhered to it in the interest of inter-nationalism. It has been criticised as "a policy of hedging or just avoiding pitfalls, a middle-of-the-road policy." A country like India which talked in a different language was looked upon as a nuisance and every group suspected it of joining hands with the opposite group. The policy was referred to "as being unrealistic, there have been hints that we are sitting on the fence and that we are doubtful and uncertain." It has also been criticised that it is an opportunistic policy and Jawaharlal himself admitted that "to tie a state to a bloc deprives it of freedom to decide further issues on the ground of national interest and to side with whichever state or states the best interests of the nation at the future moment might demand. Alignment with a power bloc obliges a state to put all one's eggs in one basket and that is a risky venture."

Dulles regarded non-alignment as an obsolete conception, "immoral and short-sighted." In a fast-shrinking world it is felt political neutrality is highly ambiguous. "There is a real sense in which everyone is on the spot and must take a stand sooner or

66. Nehru, J. - India's Foreign Policy, P-45.
67. Ibid., P-50.
later.\textsuperscript{69} It is argued that Pakistan, which followed a foreign policy diametrically opposed to non-alignment and went in for military alliances has fared better with the receipt of arms and economic assistance from the U.S.A., Soviet Union and China, while India has suffered because of its policy of non-alignment. In this context, V.K.R.V. Rao has said, "Would it not have been better for India to have followed a more realistic, even if less, idealistic foreign policy that would have won us foreign friends who would stand by us through thick and thin and not bother over much about the rights and wrongs of our domestic or foreign policies?"\textsuperscript{70} Yet, Jawaharlal adhered to non-alignment in the interest of internationalism.

It has also been said that Jawaharlal's non-alignment tended to tilt towards the Soviet bloc. This is evident from a study of India's voting behaviour in the U.N.O. as well as her reaction to Western and Soviet aggression. Jawaharlal readily and roundly condemned the western nations for any lapse but when it came to condemning the Soviet bloc he did not show the same moral indignation. It has been said, "Pakistan's joining the American alliance system and the U.S.A. unabashedly pro-Pakistan tilt were responsible for the continuing tilt towards the Soviet bloc in India's non-alignment policy, throughout the Nehru era. Our national interest lay in cultivating the Soviet Union, especially for its vetoes in Kashmir, and that is precisely what we did, despite our non-alignment."\textsuperscript{71} Thus, the policy

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\begin{enumerate}
\item Zakaria, R.(ed) - Nehru Abhinandan Granth, P-237.
\item Rao, V.K.R.V. - The Nehru Legacy, P-34.
\item Patil, V.T.(ed) - Studies on Nehru, P-158.
\end{enumerate}
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of non-alignment has been assailed and Jawaharlal has been criticised for such a policy. But the policy of non-alignment was the price that Jawaharlal paid for the nobler and the loftier cause of internationalism.