CHAPTER ONE

THE GENESIS AND ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Existing Economic Relations

The present day world, on the threshold of the 21st century, is in its bid to solve numerous pressing problems of humanity which the last few decades had begun in forceful thrust. Bilateral and multilateral efforts, on regional and international levels, have been made to sort out plans to minimise adverse impact of several problems on the world community. A few of the political questions which occasionally brought the world to the verge of major wars, under the clouds of cold war, receded to the background due mainly to either fear or mutual suspicion of big powers. With the cold war showing its own fade-out, hitherto mutually antagonistic world systems are now seeking linkages of integration and co-operation. Yet the ever-increasing pressure of economic issues appeared in threatening postures to widen the gap between the rich and the poor nations. It is, however, more alarming in the case of newly independent nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It was in these countries that the colonial past had done much havoc on the economic life of the people. Associations were formed, summits held, and decisions taken to

1 Hindustan Times 11 sept., 1989.
thrust out differences in the politico-economic front, to bring about equilibrium in the international economy, and to reduce the gap between the rich industrial North and the poor agricultural South. Most of the organised efforts failed to produce desired results as they were formed and maintained within the framework of bolcpolitics. During the post World War II period the super-powers took upon themselves the responsibility of leading the destinies of the rest of the nations. No independent choice was possible without displeasing either the Soviet Union or the United States. Any independent choice of foreign policy formulation by a new nation which was not with the United States was considered as its enemy and one which was associated with the United States was regarded by the Soviet Union as its antagonist. The world seemed to be bracketed between the super-powers and to share between themselves whatever good the human race inherited from the past. In other words the world seemed to be divided into two and the super-powers were scrambling for new areas of influence to widen their ideological horizon and economic infiltration. World War II witnessed co-operation between the United States and the Soviet Union to meet the common danger from Nazi Germany. When the war was over both returned to their respective ideological shell and resumed competition for world domination. Both wanted to enhance their spheres of influence in
their respective favour. Soviet Union brooded over many of the war torn East European countries and still further extended its warm feather to embrace as many as possible. On the other hand, the United States, alarmed by the growing Soviet menace through communist expansion, erected walls of protection for the West European countries and assumed for herself the protection of democracy as understood by her everywhere. The cold war was kept alive by the fear of the capitalist countries about the ultimate motives of Soviet expansion and the fear of the communist countries that the imperialists were determined to destroy the achievements of socialist revolution. Both parties appropriated to themselves of all the virtues of political action, and imputed to their enemies sheer malice as their motivation. The losers were the new nations. The economic imperative assimilated to political ideology forced many nations to rally either the Soviet Union or the United States. The new nations found themselves in an embarrassing situation and they were on the look out for a way out.

Simultaneously with the alignment of nations around the super-powers a new wave of independent thought developed in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The colonial system had collapsed and the process of liberation of colonies had
accelerated. Many nations won political independence from colonial masters within a short period of forty years and there were now more than a hundred independent political entities. These new nations were subjected to extreme poverty, inequality and unemployment. Many of them were not big enough to sustain their rapidly increasing population. For some the very survival was found hard and cruel. A poverty curtain has descended right across the face of our world, dividing it materially and philosophically into two different worlds, two separate planets, two unequal humanities, one embarrassingly rich and the other desperately poor. To liberate these poor peoples from the shackles of colonialism ushered in a new era in the history of international relations by a newly emerging movement of nations known as the Non-Aligned Movement. The Movement was formed not merely for maintaining political independence, but also to shape their economic, cultural and social life. The Movements' ideals reached down to important aspects of human existence. To that extent it was a defiance of historical events which had prescribed hegemony of some over others as a fact of existence.

Therefore, it was neither an alliance nor an international organisation in the common understanding of these terms, rather it was the natural response to a particular situation of a large body of weak states in international affairs.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) spread over all the continents bringing together 102 nations and two-thirds of humanity. It includes with in its fold big and small, moderately rich, poor and very poor people but embodied the rising aspirations of teeming millions. It emerged as a clear warning to imperialist domination and economic exploitation. Its main thrust has been to create conditions for the effective use of newly acquired political independence of former colonised nations in their economic development and peaceful social transformation. But this thrust of the Movement as a collective organisation of the 'have not' states and also of its members individually has been severely constrained by the structure, process and style of functioning of the international economic system. Though freed after many decades of foreign domination and exploitation the new nations wanted an independent role in international politics because centuries of exploitation did not make them fully devoid

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of natural resources by which they hoped to rebuild their miserably shattered economy, but with assistance from advanced countries. Therefore, the fundamental dimension of the Movement is its stress on economic development which is closely related to peace, disarmament and co-operation.

The non-aligned countries recognised that political independence could be an empty mockery without economic independence. Economic independence as far as the non-aligned countries are concerned is the problem of development and eradication of poverty. In this connection the Brandt Commission made the following observation:

"History has taught us that wars produce hunger, but we are less aware that mass poverty can lead to war or end in chaos. While hunger rules, peace cannot prevail. He who wants to ban war must also ban mass poverty. Morally it makes no difference whether a human being is killed in war or is condemned to starve to death because of the indifference of others."

The leaders of the Movement were caught with the seriousness of poverty. But their problem was how to reconcile various conflicting elements and contradictory views within the framework of an organisation whose membership is mainly based on voluntary agreement. The non-aligned society was composed of heterogenous groups, uneducated, illfed or under-nourished, with varying degrees of cultural background and traditional loyalties. Perhaps, the only bond that united these peoples was their long drawn out freedom movements with sacrifice and blood that provided them with a sense of unity for future endeavours. The developing world is still a traditional peasant society. Generally this means that 30 per cent or more of the people are engaged in agricultural work or are unemployed peasants, that farming methods are traditional except where large estates have become tied to commercial needs of the industrialised countries; that most of the peasants are engaged in subsistence rather than commercial farming.

The countries with the background of feudal or agrarian economies were exploited in the immediate past by Western colonial powers and were steeped in abject poverty. What they

commonly shared were poverty or economic backwardness and hatred to their colonial masters, and a desire to rebuild their economic structure independent of external control. Consequently the Movements’ priority had been the economic development of the less developed countries. Thus, the Non-Aligned Movement, as its founding fathers envisioned, was essentially a people’s movement, a movement of the poor world who had been a victim to colonialism and who were struggling to be equal partners with the citizens of the developed countries in a modern world.

A peoples’ movement can never be an isolated event or serving sectoral interests but concerned with the entire humanity and its complex problems of interdependence. In 1954 while inaugurating the third session of ECAFF meet at Oottacamund, Pandit Nehru stated as follows:

If some countries which are fortunate, more fortunate than others, think that they can lead their lives in isolation irrespective of what happens in the rest of the world, it is obvious that they are under misapprehension. Interdependence, therefore, has become in the present day

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7 Pradeep Mathur and R.M.Sreevastava, Non-Aligned Movement: New Delhi and Beyond, p.5.
world a fact of social living which no nation could afford
to neglect however advanced that country may be. Today if
one part of the world goes down economically it has a
tendency to drag others with it.

Therefore, of all the macro-changes none, perhaps, is more
profound than the emergence of new levels of complex global
interdependence among states.

Indian Perception of the World Order

It was India under the leadership of Nehru in
collaboration with the great leaders, Nassar of Egypt and Tito of
Yugoslavia, that brought the Non-Aligned Movement to a position
from which it is able to command respect from a large body of
nations. India took the lead in erecting a common platform for
the new nations to sit together on equal terms to evolve a
programme of action and to counter the pressure from colonial and

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8 A meeting of the leaders of Asia and Far East sponsored by the
UN met in Dotachamund in June 1948. There emerged the Economic
Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) which provided
India an opportunity to raise the economic problems of the
developing countries. The ECAFE later changed into Economic and
Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

9 Charles W. Kegley Jr. and Pat Mc Gowan, *The Political Economy of
neo-colonial forces. The Brioni Summit, was attended by Nehru, Nassar and Tito to give effect to the structure and content of the Non-Aligned Movement. Here economic issues and the questions relating to the developmental problems of the developing countries were elaborately discussed. In all such discussions the cultural background of India was ripe enough to lead any movement directed to the development of the world community, as India had cultural and diplomatic ties with many ancient civilizations and maintained a global perspective to the problems pertaining to human development.

Influence of National Congress and its Leaders

The organisational set up - the Indian National Congress - with which the Indian freedom movement was led by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, represented a larger framework to evolve a universal outlook for the future of India. Gandhiji represented the true Indian spirit of truth and non-violence. The world view of Pandit Nehru assumed greater dimension to include far off regions and oppressed peoples with in the fold of the Movement.

10 At Brioni Island in Yugoslavia in July 1956 Nehru, Nassar and Tito held a joint tripartite conference which linked states in the three continents Asia, Europe and Africa. It was a conclave of three non-aligned nations who held similar views on international issues.
India’s freedom struggle, hence-forth, was in a wider perspective to include the freedom of the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Nehru’s view India had to identify her problems with the issues and aspirations which reverberated through the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. This view was forcefully expressed by him in his presidential address to the 49th session of the Congress in Lucknow in 1936. Nehru observed that India could not solve its problems, without placing them in a wider perspective. Nehru’s conception of the world made India an integral part of the world order when he said:

We realise that we cannot isolate India or the Indian problem from the rest of the world. To do so is to ignore the real forces that are shaping events and cut ourselves adrift from the vital energy that flows from them.

India’s freedom struggle was based on the great principles of ahimsa and non-violence. The successful conclusion of a freedom struggle in India without bloodshed and violence was a landmark in the whole history of human kind. Naturally, it had

exercised its impact on similar movements in other parts of the world with a sense of righteousness. Therefore, opinion did not differ as to the leadership of the new Movement. Nehru became the recognised leader and champion of the Non-Aligned Movement and the onerous task of initiating a new world order amidst cold war situations fell upon him. The spirit of tolerance and goodwill, and the principles of non-violence were found their rightful place when the foreign policy of India was formulated. The roots of Indian foreign policy are to be found in her civilization, the heritage of British policies, the independent movement and the influence of Gandhiji.

India's Foreign Policy in the Making

In recent days India acquired political prominence over her neighbours and her position has been recognised by all major outside powers. Her size and resources made India an important and independent factor in international relations. These same factors made India a potentially big power and she had to behave as a great power in international forums. This political fact had been recognised by Pandit Nehru when he observed that India

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was too big a country to be tied down to any country.

The fundamental principles of India's foreign policy may be traced back to the Congress Resolution of 1938. The people of India always desire to live in peace and friendship with all other countries. They wish to remove all causes of conflict to establish world peace on an enduring basis. But as Nehru has put it a vague statement that we stand for peace and freedom by itself has no particular meaning, because every country is prepared to say the same thing, whether it means or not.

India's desire for peace, therefore, has been genuinely expected by Indian national leaders and they have tried to achieve those objectives which they cherished for many years.

Domestic Milieu

Independent India opted for non-alignment as the central theme of her foreign policy. External forces and internal compulsions in addition to traditional factors enabled her to adopt quite a new concept as the basis of India's foreign relations. Three aspects of India's domestic environment: Indian

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tradition and recent history, its plural society which indicated a secular pattern of state for the country and the low living standards of the people which required the use of foreign policy as a tool to raise the living standards, constituted the foundation stones up on which the foreign policy of India was erected. Internally India was under the adverse impact of the unfortunate partition. The partition placed on her shoulders the heaviest and the most unkind economic burden. During the last days of British Raj India was under severe economic pressure. The unending thirst of the British for maximum economic advantage had already squeezed the very soul of India's economy. Free India had to solve these crucial problems. She had to set apart a sum of Rs.20 crores to meet the immediate financial obligations to Pakistan. The strains and stresses caused by the partition, the problem of evacuee property, huge influx of refugees, communal riots, above all the problem of integration of India brought strains on the shoulders of national leaders while they formulated India's foreign policy objectives. The magnitude of these menacing problems was beyond any reasonable calculation.

The economic problem, particularly, the problem of poverty was an equally important problem for independent India. Besides several streams of conflicting interests and heterogenous socio-
political background there were the exploitative economic policies bequeathed by British India. The economic problem was the most pressing and important problem that confronted India. The freedom fighters made poverty a broad national issue and helped to unite different sections of Indian society. Jawaharlal Nehru, the chief architect of the foreign policy of free India, had a clear vision of the Indian situation. During the discussions in the Constituent Assembly, Nehru declared, "Ultimately foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy."

In fact, economic policy is related to domestic environment. Domestic environment suggests economic conditions conducive to keep good health of the people. No nation can withstand the vicissitudes of poverty unless it makes great strides in its foreign policy objectives by realising the meaning of interdependance.

When the principles of Indian foreign policy were formulated emphasis was placed on peace as the essential condition of progress. Benefits of progress must also be shared by the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak alike. Non-alignment, it was strongly contented, will help achieve allround progress of

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world community. To align oneself with any of the power blocs meant to strengthen the power position of the side to which India joins to the detriment of the other side, there by weakening international equilibrium resulting in the creation of tension in world politics. Indian leaders saw clearly that alignment with one military bloc or the other could only mean conformity and predeterminism based on the formations and policies of the dominant member or members of that block. They rightly decided, therefore, to reject the jaded pattern of conformism and the pitfalls of predeterminism. They could see that alignment with military blocks was tending to lead nations to loss of objectivity, as well as of independence of judgment and discretion. At the same time they felt that as a member of the family of nations India could not keep off from the stream of world civilization and shirk her responsibility to the world community. For them Non-alignment was the consensus formula that could hold together the cross-sections of Indian public opinion. Its enunciation by Nehru was perfectly in tune with the consensus represented by the "Congress system".

15 Main Stream, March, 1983.
External Environment

Freedom movement in India was a strong reaction against imperialist domination and economic exploitation by the British. The bitter experiences under foreign rule engendered hatred towards colonial powers. Their hatred hardened further as the colonial powers tightened their grip on the vital economic life of the colonies in Asia and Africa. However, in the case of Africa, the same external forces with colonial and imperial policies, worked to thwart freedom movements, to perpetuate their hegemony and exploitation over the vast stretches of the Continent. There were violent outbreaks of wars between the colonial powers themselves. And all these wars were fought mainly at the expense of colonial peoples. The burden of such expensive foreign wars were put on the shoulders of the colonies, further causing strains in the life of the colonial people. One of the significant experiences which conditioned the thinking of Asian and African peoples with regard to world affairs and put them on the road of non-alignment was the constant use of their resources in both men and money in the wars waged by these
imperial masters for their own purposes. There were powerful common elements in the historical experiences of all these states: Viz., they had all been militarily subjugated, economically exploited and racially discriminated against by the imperialist powers. All of them were economically underdeveloped and the task before them was rapid economic development. Many of them had experienced sentiments of powerful nationalism and were imbued with a spirit of national pride and destiny. Though they were rather weak participants in military terms they had a desire to play an important role in international affairs.

There were identity of interests and perceptions among the leaders of the national movements in these different countries. But the person who noticed the vast changes on the international setting earlier than any one else was Jawaharlal Nehru. The potentialities of a world movement lay open before him. However, the identity of interests were not the result of the work of particular individuals or leaders or nations, nor that of any attachment to particular ideology but was an offshoot of

experiences in each country under the same mode of colonial operations. Under similar circumstances people react in the same manner. Therefore, it is quite logical that the newly independent nations should accept non-alignment as the basic principle of their foreign policy. There developed a strong desire to preserve the fundamental national goal of socio-economic development based on the principle of peaceful co-existence. The peoples in Afro-Asian countries endorsed the view of their national leaders. Among countries joined together under the banner of non-alignment, the solidarity of India with the Movement, was expressed through the words of Pandit Nehru.

"We are of Asia and the peoples of Asia are near and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of Western, Southern and South-East Asia. In the past her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many ways".

India felt herself as part of the Afro-Asian community. Her future development was bound up with the development of the

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newly emerging nations; her independence could only be assured by the emergence into independence and strengthening of independence of Asian-African countries.

India's colonial experience and a desire to safeguard her newly found freedom compelled Nehru to view with apprehension the defence pacts and military alliance which may have signified a return to imperialist influence. The concept of internationalism developed in the context of Asia initially, but of the entire Third World later, must be viewed as a precursor of what came to be known as an area of peace—a community of states bound not territorially but morally. The Afro-Asian countries, or peoples freed from foreign yoke, never wanted to carry the evil impress of colonialism or imperialism any more. On behalf of freedom and independent action the new nations came closer to assert their solidarity. Freed after decades or centuries of colonial rule they wanted an independent and active role in world politics, free from the associations and prejudices of the

colonial past and the constraints and compulsions of bloc politics. In short, most new nations wanted freedom of action in international affairs. This freedom of action, they thought, would help reduce tension in the international field and promote peace among nations. At the same time by not aligning with either bloc the new nations expected to secure the support from both sides. In this way Non-alignment became an identity of independence in foreign relations. It entailed an assertion of the right of otherwise poor and backward countries, to refuse to enter military alliances with bigger and more powerful powers, in order to remain outside the range of the unrelated conflict of power blocs.

The great war made an entirely new world where the old pattern of international relationship underwent tremendous changes. The arrival of new nations under the non-aligned framework accelerated peace efforts on a global scale. The people of the newly liberated countries were conscious of the price they had paid for their independence and determined to

preserve it at all costs. They never wanted to become tools in the hands of former colonial powers. The common hatred derived from long sufferings under colonial rule created a kind of unity that continued even after independence to forge an effective weapon to strike at the root of bloc politics. If they stood disunited, they feared, the same powers would subjugate them again through the leverage the colonial powers left behind in the economy of erstwhile colonies.

The fragile infra-structure of former colonies coupled with poor and uneducated masses posed serious problems to the decision makers at the governmental level. To overcome such difficulties a systematic development process was to be adopted. The developmental programmes required sufficient capital for investment for which the new nations had to depend on industrialised countries who were divided among themselves to constitute two opposing camps. Practical wisdom suggested non-commitment to any power block to strengthen either side and the option of free choice from the considerations of national interest. The new nations, therefore, wanted peace prevail.

"World peace was a pre-condition for the economic development of India which was urgent to a country low in percapita income and in saving and economically under
developed, the assistance of the more developed countries by way of capital and technological know-how was a sine qua non for development and we know that the outbreak of war would make it impossible to get such co-operation."

What was true in the Indian context was more so with any developing countries. The Movement envisaged only a peaceful world order without mutually antagonistic rivalries among the big powers and their subordinate forces. But the adoption of non-alignment as a policy was in part the result of the desire to remain non-dependent. While India's foreign economic policy was formulated it was effected by constraints from repaid economic growth in the international environment and hence the options chosen have been those which would retain her autonomy of action.

Perceptions of the Super Powers - The US View Point

The Non-Aligned Movement was perceived differently by the aligned countries of the East and the West. There were two

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24 Appadorai, Select Documents of India's Foreign Policy and Relations, p.35.
levels of perceptions, one in terms of bilateral relations and another ‘collective’, i.e., as a member of an alliance system—North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or the Warsaw Pact. The United States and the Soviet Union had evaluated the Non-Aligned Movement differently in several phases of its evolution during the last three decades, in the context of their world view and primary global concerns. When the process of liberation movements in Afro-Asian countries was going on the United States had few pre-conceived nations of economic relationship with many of them. She was in search of answer to the chaos in Europe which was the main theatre of World War II. The U.S. concern was to see how the ruined economies of the war-torn countries of Europe could be set right to prevent further degeneration. She had in mind no serious thought regarding equally pressing problems manifestly affecting the new nations in Asia and Africa. The U.S. priority was given to political problems which were


27 After the World War II Communist regimes were established throughout the Eastern and Central Europe with the support of Soviet Union. Alarmed by the Russian move the Western nations took upon themselves the responsibility to check any further expansion of Soviet influence. Then a whole complex of political, psychological, economic, subversive and indirectly military measures were used by one side to extend its influence in the world and to weaken that of the other.
coming to the fore regarding the attainment of independence by colonies that had not yet gained independence, and the political unrest of the colonial peoples in every part of the world. More than that, cold war rivalries and mistrust of Soviet and Chinese activities in the Third World marked U.S. reaction to the emergence of new states during the 1950s and 1960s. The policy of containment adopted by Washington to halt Soviet expansion in the post war period frequently spilled over into the Third World and was inconsistent with the basic thrust of non-alignment.

One of the fundamental guidelines of the U.S. foreign policy was the protection of her vital interests everywhere in the world and in protecting those interests the Americans mainly rely on strength. If so, the concept of "Non-alignment", clearly did not correspond to the American post-war international relations. The U.S. foreign policy option was clearly stated in the doctrine of "rolling back communism" proclaimed in 1947. The doctrine embodied the idea that the colonies and dependent nations would continue to serve American interests by joining its

military alliance system even after gaining independence. The U.S. perception of non-alignment, later, came from the Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in his frequently quoted speech of June 9, 1956. He described 'non-alignment' as immoral and indifference to the fate of others. The extent to which the United States focused her attention on the economic aspects of the complex international situation in 1950s and early 1960s was conditioned by the hope that the United Nations and its associated economic and social bodies would provide adequate means for integrating them into world economy. In fact, the long U.S. involvement in Vietnam corresponded with the formative first decade of NAM and limited U.S. opportunities for common cause with the non-alignment.

The U.S. perception of Non-alignment was shrouded in fears and apprehensions based on misconception of international situations. The Eisenhower administration saw Bandung as a vehicle for the extension of Chinese, and ultimately Soviet

31 The First Afro-Asian Conference which met in Bandung, Indonesia from April 18 to 24, 1955 was attended by the representatives from 29 countries. The participants discussed the possibilities of economic co-operation and development in the Afro-Asian countries.
influence in the developing countries and opposed the conference from the very beginning. Thus, even before the Movement took shape in 1961 the U.S. policy was negative towards the concept of a third political grouping outside the prevailing bipolar framework. But by the Belgrade Non-aligned Summit the U.S. position considerably changed. A message from President Kennedy to the Conference Stated:

"The peoples represented at Belgrade are committed to achieving a world of peace in which nations have the freedom to choose their political and economic system and to live their own way of life and since our earliest beginning this nation has shared that commitment."

The message at least accorded recognition to the "right of self determination" of nations for which the new nations were fighting a long battle and continue to fight under the Non-Aligned Movement. The message of president Kennedy adequately represented a change in the U.S. perception of the whole issue.

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33 Message from President Kennedy to the first Non-aligned Belgrade Conference, cited in Richard J Jackson, The Non-aligned, the U.N. and the Super Powers, p.216.
and it revealed the recognition of a 'third force' which could not be disregarded altogether. However, the basic premise of U.S. policy persisted in different forms and with certain modifications, despite the change of successive administrations over the decades. It has been said; from Nixon to Ford, to Carter and now with Reagan the U.S. reveals an abiding capacity to misjudge issues, misunderstand the surging passions of the newly liberated and fighters for freedom and by so doing counterpose its power to the genuine aspirations of mankind. This fatal flaw in the mental make-up of the successive American leadership since the demise of Franklin Roosevelt is most baffling and disquieting, in a country whose politics determine the trend and tension of world politics. In later years too, the U.S. State Department in public, admitted that genuine non-alignment was not contrary to U.S. interest. In private however, there was concern that the concept was potentially dangerous to U.S. interests and in particular conflicted with the network of

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regional treaties and special relationships on which American security interests were then based. This showed the fundamental incompatibility of U.S. foreign policy objectives and the policy of non-alignment.

Time and again the U.S. was ambiguous in stating her stand on the Movement. The main concern was her security interests which developed from the big power status and communist menace from Soviet Union and China. Even then in a message from the State Department to American embassies abroad specific instruction was given as follows. "Except where the U.S. involvement in a series of defensive alliances, genuine non-alignment is not incompatible with the present U.S. interests. At the same time the instruction contained the warning that the communists and so-called neutralists must be prevented from exploiting non-aligned concepts, slogans and activities in such a way as to weaken present alliances, and to increase communist prestige, influence and penetration in the developing countries. From this it is evident that there was not much change in the

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U.S. perception except superficial expressions made on behalf of political compulsions. The huge military entanglements and economic commitments in Europe and elsewhere along with strong anti-communist sentiments put constraints on a wider scale on U.S. position, vis-a-vis a third grouping in the world. That is to say, the U.S. perceptions of the Non-Aligned Movement under cold war international situation persisted through successive administrations and the U.S. failed to view the Movement as a lasting phenomenon.

Thus an impression grew among the non-aligned that the United States was on the wrong side of colonial issues and that progress towards decolonisation would be made only over opposition from Washington. For the United States her friends were those who stood with her to drive out communism from the face of the earth, whereas for the new nations their main concerns were neither communism nor democracy but poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition or the teeming millions who were striving for human existence in the developing world. Generally, for the non-aligned countries the Movement provided the life blood for future development. And they longed for

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adequate assistance from whatever sources to meet the recurring challenges to their economic systems.

The Soviet Perception

As long as the Non-Aligned Movement remained a political force with its anti-imperial, anti-colonial and anti-racial attitude rendering support to those peoples who are fighting for freedom from foreign domination the Soviet Union wholeheartedly supported it. From the cold war perspective the Soviet Union held that liberation movements were directed against the Western powers. Naturally, she maintained a soft corner with the new Movement as it did not add to the strength of the Western bloc. While the U.S. criticism of the Movement went to the extent of calling it 'immoral' and its leader Jawaharlal Nehru a "crypto-communist" the Soviet leaders were very moderate in their assessment of the new Movement. The Soviet Union cautiously avoided in arriving at a judgement regarding the performance of the developing countries. But when India expressed her independent opinion on international forums, particularly her stand on Korean war, colonialism and apartheid in South Africa and her willingness to share in the rising expectations of the struggling people, the Soviet Union turned the scales in favour of the Movement. She recognises, after an initial vacillation
and misjudgement, the importance and worth of the emerging countries in the unfolding of a new world order.

The positive steps taken by Khrushchev marked a new turn and during the leadership of Breshnev Soviet foreign policy had positively reappraised the significant role of the Non-aligned Movement in world affairs. Andropov and Chernenko earlier and now Gorbachev endorse this assessment. In the CPSU Central Committee Report to the 25th Congress of the CPSU Leonid Breshnev said of the newly independent countries that:

"they are defending their political and economic right against imperialism with mounting energy, striving to consolidate their independence and to raise the social, economic and cultural level of the peoples."

Later, when the pace of decolonisation accelerated in the 1970s and the radicalisation of the Movement started, since the Algiers Summit, in 1973, the Soviet Union opened her eyes wide to look at it liberally and found identity of interests between the Soviet

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38 Ibid, p.16.
States system and non-aligned international system. The Algiers Conference of the non-aligned countries adopted resolutions on the Middle East situation, and the Palestine problem. The resolutions strongly condemned Israel as the aggressor and criticised all those powers, particularly the United States, for giving military and economic support to Israel and called for immediate cessation of hostilities. This stand of the Movement was widely appreciated in the Soviet Union. At a time when the United States and other developed Western countries were indifferent to the demands of the developing countries, the Soviet Union extended possible help in terms of military and economic assistance. She had the opportunity of demonstrating, at least to certain states, its capacity as an alternative world power capable of helping the newly liberated countries, in protecting their identity and providing aid, loans and economic help to them on preferential terms.

The Soviet Union was very liberal in offering moral and political support wherever the slightest degree of opposition to the Western state system, based on capitalism, existed. This has created a new awareness and attachment between the Soviet

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Rusheedudin Khan, "NAM and Global Powers", p.17.
objectives and the developing countries concerns and caused apprehensions in the West. The identity of interests between the two clearly manifested itself in the U.N. forums when various questions of international importance were discussed and decisions were taken. The alignment of positions in the U.N. and outside, between NAM and the Soviet Union, have been opposed to the interest of the United States and Western alliance system because of the Soviet understanding, sympathy and diplomatic flexibility in accommodating the four basic NAM concerns, namely decolonisation, disarmament, development and democratisation.

The Soviet affinity to non-aligned countries has been further increased as many developing countries adopted socialistic pattern of development programmes through planning. However, it should be recalled that, both the United States and the Soviet Union, in fact, initially viewed the NAM with nearly identical scepticism, but yielded in later years to mutual suspicion and competition for influence in the Third World.

Infact cold War rigidity left little sympathy, in Washington, Moscow or even Beijing for the idea of non-aligned or

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neutralist group of states. Stalin's concept of a "world in two camps" divided between socialism and imperialism left no alternative in the inevitable class struggle. Therefore, the Soviet sympathy to Non-Aligned Movement should be viewed from the economic angle. Viewed from that angle the Soviet Union was not at all sympathetic to the economic demands of the Movement. She was keeping away from taking the responsibility of giving economic assistance to the developing countries. The Soviet perception was that the economic backwardness of the newly liberated countries was the result of out-right exploitation and plunder of the erstwhile colonies by the colonial powers. Moscow held the view that the problem of the South represented a historical legacy of colonialism and that this absolved it of any responsibility for them. To Moscow it was a confrontation between the pillegers and the pillaged. Even then the Soviet Union lost no time to announce support to the cause of the developing countries whenever and wherever it was possible, provided the support risked no substantial loss in terms of finance.

Later, when in 1974 and 1975 two special sessions of the

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Okshana Reznikova, The West and the Non-alignment, p.197.
U.N. General Assembly were held to consider the trade and economic problems affecting the developing countries, the Soviet Union responded strongly in favour of them. To the Sixth Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly which was convened to lay down the fundamental guidelines for the restructuring of international economic relations the Soviet Union stood with the developing countries. At the Thirtieth U.N. General Assembly Session, Andrei Gromoyko said:

"We fully appreciate, why these countries which are still affected by the consequences of exploitation, discrimination and economic coercion, are now taking part in putting forward and elaborating questions bearing on the establishment of International economic relations, that would be based on equality and justice."

Moscow has ultimately perceived NAM as a vehicle to under-cut Western bilateral ties in the Third World.

As Moscow reassessed its policy towards the Third World and the Non-Aligned Movement its tactics to gain influence in the Movement did not lead to viewing it as a complete whole but to

43 G. Bondarevsky, "The Non-aligned Movement and International relations", p. 56.
taking seriously only selected members. Initially the largest and most powerful countries capable of shaping the Movement's course were singled out for special attention. India, Egypt, Indonesia and Algeria were recipients of large scale Soviet military and economic assistance and their leaders were called regularly to Moscow. Soviet diplomacy towards the non-aligned, therefore sought to reinforce the Movement's anti-colonial orientation and negative stereotypes of the U.S and the rest of the west. Moscow followed a policy of establishing a stronghold within the NAM through co-ordination of the radical elements in the Movement, taking Cuba in much confidence. Among the Third World countries Cuba alone endorsed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and by the end of the 1970s Moscow had turned increasingly to Havana as a channel of influence into the Non-Aligned Movement. Thus the Soviet Union could enlarge the sphere of anti-Western elements by including other hard-core radicals like, Vietnam, North Korea, Angola and PLO at the 1976 Colombo Summit. Ultimately Soviet interests in the NAM clustered around anti-Western feelings and was focused on directing the Movement

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as far as possible against Western imperialism and world domination.

Economic Non-alignment in the Indian Context

A country's foreign policy is compounded out of several factors such as traditional, stable or unstable and also long term and short term aims and objectives. It should embody the wishes and aspirations of the people. In other words, it is an extension of the countries national interest into the outside world and the paramount consideration involving the foreign policy is national interest to which everything must subordinate. The framers of foreign policy, therefore, must have clear insight into the nation's internal and external possessions which would give its people a happy and honourable life. Whatever policy we may lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. The protection of national interests as the main objective of a nations foreign policy, strictly speaking, can have less application in the context of

47 Jawaharlal Nehru, Speech in the constitut Assembly, cited in Appadorai, p.17.
highly interdependent world. Realising this limitation of interdependence of nations one must understand the formulation and implementation of India's foreign policy.

In its formative stages the Non-Aligned Movement tried "to keep away from the power-politics of groups aligned against one another. But the leaders of the Movement were conscious of the integral relations between politics and economics. The bearing of economic factors on the foreign policy a nation was obviously realised even before India's independance. During the freedom movement the national leaders of India visualised a democratic socialist society for free India and the concept of national planning was accepted as a means for her economic development. Early in the 1870s the national leaders began intensive investigation into the economic disabilities or woes of India. In 1876 Dadabhai Navroji, published his work "The poverty of India". For many thoughtful Indians poverty and unemployment brought

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48 Jawaharlal Nehru, Broadcast speech cited in A. Appadorai, Select Document on India's Foreign Policy and Relations. Vol.1, p.4.
49 The idea of planning was familiar with Indian leaders long before India achieved independence. Sri. Visvesvaraya in his book "Planned Economy for India" drew up a ten year plan for India. When in 1931 representative governments were formed in some of the provinces the Congress got an opportunity to put its ideas regarding planning into practice.
distruction to the Indian polity. In the opinion of nationalist spokesmen, lack of production rather than faulty distribution was the root cause of the poverty. The problem when viewed from that angle hinged on the incapacity of India to produce enough grains and to find adequate storage facilities for whatever was produced. The Indian economists, therefore, laid greater emphasis on increased production of food grains so that the base of economic welfare can be strongly built. Any improvement in the economic conditions of a country postulates an increase in national wealth. A mere redistribution of existing wealth would make no essential difference to the people and would merely mean the distribution of the poverty. A dynamic national policy must, therefore, be directed to a continuous increase in production by all possible means, side by side with measures to secure its equitable distribution. This particular approach to the economic ills of the Indians gained wider currency and played a crucial role in the development prospects of India. It made poverty a broad national issue and helped unite the different sections of Indian society in raising a common demand for the

abolition of poverty. In otherwords, the danger of poverty had been an embarassing problem for free India and the problem of poverty made economic development very essential.

Part four of the constitution of India clearly demonstrate the national objectives or the new social and economic order which India wants to bring about. It aims at establishing a social order permitted by social and economic justice, to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living of the people, to establish economic democracy by securing certain rights, such as the right of adequate means of livelihood, protection against economic exploitation, public assistance in the case of unemployment, old age, sickness and so own. With these ends in view the Indian Parliament accepted in December, 1954, the "Socialist Pattern of Society" as the objective of social and economic policy. In order to realise this objective it is essential to accelerate the rate of economic growth and to speed up industrialisation and, in particular, to develop heavy industries and machine-making industries, to expand the public

51 The Directive Principles contained in the Indian Constitution provide an economic basis for democracy in India. These Principles are for the guidance of the state and comprise twenty in number grouped under three classes - Socialistic, Gandhian and Liberal.
sector, and to build up a large and growing co-operative sector. These provide strength to the economic foundations and increasing opportunities for gainful employment and improving living standards of the people.

The Directive principles of State Policy envisage equitable distribution of material resources of the community and prevention of concentration of wealth and means of production in the hands of a few. These objectives are closely linked to the promotion of international peace and establishing honourable relations between nations and promoting respect for international law and treaty obligations. It was to achieve these objectives, aiming at domestic welfare and international peace, that the broad outlines of Indian foreign policy were drawn.

India adopted a pragmatic approach in her economic relations with other developing countries and the developed world. Maximum care was taken to avoid conflict of interests among the developing countries themselves and fostering co-operation on a wider scale. The Indian leadership consciously moved in the direction of co-operation and mutual advantage and sharing of the benefits of co-operation equally among all nations. India sought international co-operation by the elimination of political and economic imperialism everywhere and co-operation of
free nations. For Jawaharlal Nehru, co-operation and economic development were the two sides of the same coin in the multidimensional world system, especially in the wake of reorganising the war torn world economy. Nehru held that:

"The crisis that has overtaken Europe is not of Europe only but of humanity and will not pass like other crises or wars, leaving the essential structure of the present-day world intact. That equilibrium can only be based on the ending of the domination and exploitation of our country by another and on a reorganisation of economic relations on a more just basis for common good of all".

Nehru could not take a partisan view of the situation conducive to Indian condition alone as his mind was broad enough to evolve a programme which would embrace all nations, mainly Afro-Asian countries, because the peoples of these regions are socially and economically backward and it is not an easy matter to get rid of this inheritance of backwardness and underdevelopment. It requires clear thinking, concerted action and a tremendous amount of hard work.

52 Jawaharlal Nehru, Discovery of India, p.424.
The overall economic situation of India at the time of independence was dismal. It was characterised by appalling poverty, low life expectancy, recurrent famine, communicable and contagious diseases, illiteracy, absence of industrial infrastructure, scarcity of skilled labour, unemployment and so on. The partition accentuated some of the existing pressures and caused severe drain on the country's resources. Moreover, the basis of the partition left a legacy of continuing strain on the resources of the country by way of defence expenditure and at the same time uneasiness in good neighbourly relations. It also increased expenditure on civil administration. Under such internal conditions reconstruction and development of the economy were obviously urgent in the post independence period. The rate of growth had to be accelerated to tackle effectively the basic problem of poverty.

Even after decades of developmental programmes per capita income in India as reckoned in 1987 stands at 300 U.S. dollars, and the average annual growth rate during 1965-87 period is 1.8 per cent. India had to satisfy the rising expectations of its people for a decent standard of living. This low level of per

capita income and rate of growth are to be changed through the mobilisation of international resources. But this can be done only by a careful utilisation, based on meticulous calculation of the availability of internal resources. At the same time a bold and imaginative foreign policy had to be evolved to attract foreign capital and technological know-how to enable India to build up the infrastructure for industrial development and to develop industries. As far as India was concerned, Non-alignment, as an instrument of foreign policy, served the purpose of delivering her people from the clutches of poverty. However, the pre-requisite for economic development in any country has been the creation of internal ideal conditions or stability in the economic field. India, since independence, embarked on strengthening her industrial infrastructure through internal restraints and concrete policy formulations.

Of course, infant India's immediate concern was political in the sense that 562 princely states and British Indian provinces had to be integrated into a Union of India and the task had been completed within a short span of an year and a half. The process of integration was followed by the articulation of

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A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, Indias' Foreign Policy and Relations, p.18.
foreign relations. Concern for peace, freedom and development determined the central theme of India's foreign relations. But the complexities of cold war aggravated international tension and tarnished the hope of a peaceful world order. Nehru sought peace and unity among great powers by which it was expected to improve upon the socio-economic backwardness of the peoples in the developing countries. In this context Nehru said:

We wish for peace. We do not want to fight any nation, if we can help it. The only possible real objective that we in common with other nations can have is the objective of co-operating in building up some kind of world structure, call it one world, call it what you like.

He was referring to the creation of a new international order where peace, goodwill and mutual assistance would prevail.

"A free and democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilizing the world's knowledge and

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56 Jawaharlal Nehru, Debate in the Constituent Assembly as cited in A·Appadorai, Indias' Foreign Policy and Relations, p.439.
resources for the progress and achievement of humanity".

It was an assurance to world community emerged from the cultural background of India for peace and development in the whole world.

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Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, p.439.