CHAPTER III

RISE OF THE THIRD WORLD: THREATS TO BIGS HEGEMONY
Chapter-III

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By the end of World War Second anti-colonialist movement had, to some extent, gained momentum and desire to independence had reached stupendous proportions, and the old colonialism, based on territorial dominance, had nearly ended. The velocity of the anti-colonialist movement was so strong that when the UN Charter was written in 1945, the principle of Right of all peoples to choose their forms of government according to freely expressed wishes of the people concerned was acceptable.

So, the United Nations has declared in its Charter and in its delegate bodies, its interest in the movement to self-government. This interest is exercised along two dimensions - that of trusteeship and that of decolonization. Of these two, decolonization has made up the bulk of the movement since the number of the trust territories and their population represented only the tip of the colonial

Since the establishment of the United Nations, owing to decolonization process under the two systems (Trusteeship in Chapter XII and XIII and Non-self governing territories in Chapter XI), the membership of the United Nations has increased due to decolonization process. It is now 159 though in the beginning the membership was 51. Most of them belong to the Third World. The term 'Third World' was coined in 1952 by Alfred Sauvy at the height of the cold war and applied to the developing countries that remained outside the two Power blocs but belonged to the non-communist world. Angelopoulos himself uses the phrase in a specific sense, namely, to describe the group of developing countries in the early 1970s. However, it may be that in the 1970s the phrase Tiers Monde was used more in the sense of 'third Force' rather than 'third World', indicating 'non-alignment' rather than underdevelopment. It is interesting to note in this respect that William Safire in his the New Language of Politics (1972) does not include the 'third world' but in the


discussion of 'third Force' points out, strictly speaking, the phrase in English should be "third World" following the French tires Monde but "third Force" is used more frequently. He argues that tires Monde was originally popularized in France during the period of 1947-49 to describe the political parties that took their stand between Gaullist and others.

With the lessening of the tension of the cold war and the creation of many new independent states throughout 1960s the phrase tires Monde seems to have taken on a new meaning which however retained something of the original:

(a) The confrontation was now seen as between the 'rich nations' and the 'poor nations' the rich nations also being referred to as 'industrialized or developed;

(b) the East-West confrontation was supplemented by a 'North-South' confrontation, the majority of the tires-monde bring in the Southern hemisphere;

(c) the original confrontation of the East and the West was retained in the adoption of 'First World' to denote the industrialized market-economy countries (the capitalist

countries or the Western world' to indicate the centrally directed countries of the COMECON countries) the public sector and the role of the state in the overall economic system is a much more important factors in "third world" economics rather than in traditional Western economics..." 6

The Third World, which consists very largely of former colonies of European or American empires, conflict between them has often involved or engaged the interests of the former metropolitan great power or powers. During the post world war II period, the 'First World' (Western, industrialised, non-communist states) and the 'Second World' (Communist States) developed their own confrontation and competition for influence and power and such confrontation and competition were also quickly translated to the Third World in its weakness, with or without invitation. 7


The Third World was not born as a free and fully autonomous entity. The process of colonian and imperial rule was in the nature of a big melting pot into which the Third World societies were sucked and moulded. They emerged out of this melting pot with hybrid structures and distorted personalities. But this was not all the colonial metropolis, while granting independence to a particular Third World country or region. The past-colonial behaviour of a Third World country or region, therefore, cannot be understood except in the context of this melting pot process. The continuing involvement of the great powers in the Third World stemmed out of this process as a massive and, perhaps, inevitable legacy.

The term and its various characteristics which add up to make a country a part of the Third World is one that encompasses in its totality the feeling of deprivation, both in terms of the recent past as well as the current situation, among a large section of the World's population vis-à-vis the privileged few (in relative numerical terms). Although there are concrete indicators - economic, military and

technological - which bear out of this thesis of deprivation and colonial and neo-colonial exploitation. What binds the Third World together - in an emotional and psychological sense - is the perception of having been at the 'receiving end' for the last 300 to 400 years, i.e. at the 'receiving end', economically, militarily, politically and the corresponding desire to change this state of affairs and to regain a degree of autonomy within the basically hierarchical international system that gives a certain amount of unity to the Third World - despite its diverse nature and its own internal problems - particularly vis-a-vis the dominant powers within the international system. And it is this interplay of the Third World's quest for autonomy on the one hand with the great powers' desire to control and manage the international system on the other that provides the major contradiction within the international system as it is organised today.

However, there is great inequality in power, again in all its manifestations, including the economic, military and political, between the great powers of North (and particularly the Super powers) on the one hand and the countries of the

Third on the other. This inequality is, in fact, quantitatively so great that it tends to take on a qualitative dimension as well. This is particularly true of the Third World's relationship not only with the two superpowers, the US and the USSR, but also in its relationship with the economic giants, West Germany and Japan as well as the countries of the EEC collectively. It is this inequality which renders the Third World - or large parts of the great powers - militarily, economically and politically - and thus renders the Third World's aspiration for autonomy from these managers of the international system so difficult to achieve.

Bennet wrote that "Although self determination and self-rule are attractive goals for politically dominated peoples, independence is no panacea, and the problems following political liberation may seem greater than those previously surmounted". Most of the Third World countries are economically underdeveloped and must face the dilemmas of gradually overcoming poverty, disease, hunger and literacy. Both outside aid and internal savings are required to build a self-generating economy. Without population control gains in total production may be partially or completely wiped out on a per capita basis.

Mini-states lack the economic base to build a viable economic structure independent of heavy reliance on others. Frustrations and impatience with slow progress are almost certain to accompany the struggle for development. The international community may seem deaf to the appeals of the poor nations for special concessions to help them escape from poverty. The self-interest of the rich are not likely to identify strongly with the welfare of impoverished peoples nor to be outweighed by humanitarian compassion.

Once the unifying force of the common goal of independence has been removed, the political vitality of the new state must also be strengthened. The development of political consciousness of nation building must be undertaken. The struggle for self-government is a revolution that has nearly run its course. But out of that struggle has emerged the new North-South confrontation of which the world is increasingly conscious. Whether the nations of the globe with the aid of international machinery and cooperative efforts can successfully resolve the new challenges remains to be proven. At this stage it seems certain that the new problems are no less formidable than the old**.

After the post Second World War, the hierarchical nature of the international economic order put the two Super powers at the apex of this order and the Third World countries despite the euphoria following formal decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s, have by and large remained, although with certain relatively significant exceptions, are at the bottom of the international pecking order. So the Third World countries faced the hardships and frustrations of economic, social and political disequilibrium.

Due to disequilibrium the regional conflicts arose in the Third World countries and the great powers intervention became relevant and important. The role of the great powers particularly the Super Powers, in the international system has been primarily one of conflict management and, quite often, of conflict-exacerbation, rather than helping in the resolution of regional conflicts. As Sisis Gupta argued that:

"Although the relation between Super Powers have been stabilized, there has been a perceptible rise in the level of permisibility of chaos, conflict and violence in those regions of the world which are peripheral for the purposes of the Central balance. The evident fact that conflicts and clashes among the states of these regions provide the great powers with a high degree of leverage on them and a great opportunity to increase their influence over the parties in such a conflict must be appearing to them as a matter of some advantage, though as status quo states they cannot but be interested in maintaining a minimum degree of stability even in the remote regions of the world."

Further, not only the roots of these regional conflicts in the Third World today traceable in substantial measure to the acts of omission and commission performed by the European colonial powers - the great powers and conflict managers of earlier days— but that during and after the period of the former decolonisation they have been exacerbated by the policies, strategies and

activities of those who currently hold great, and particularly super, power status. Not only have these antagonisms been allowed to fester because low-level peripheral tension suited the interests of the super powers once the central balance had become stabilised, but, in fact, many of them were actively encouraged, particularly by means of arms transfer, by those who aspired to manage the post World War international system. In addition a new phase of gunboat diplomacy on the part of the great powers now threatens to erode if not completely destroy the incipient political autonomy of the Third World countries. It is ironic that while negotiations about a New International Economic Order are in progress, the international political order seems to be moving in a retrogressive direction which, if it is not reversed, will led to increasing control of the Third World's political activities - conflictual or otherwise - by the managers of the International system and thus stifle all demands for political justice in the Third World - at the level of individual, social stratum, class, nation or region. This in essence, would perpetuate global inequality in the guise of preserving World Order - an order imposed and controlled by the big few (and particularly by the big two) for their own benefit.

The urge for economic emancipation and democratization of international economic relations also lies at the heart of the demand for the establishment of a New International Economic order. (NIEO). The call for an NIEO was not just a call for an "income redistribution from the rich to the poor". It was according to the UN resolution on the subject (1 May 1974), a call for a restructuring of international economic relations on the basis of:

"equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interests, and co-operation among all states irrespective of their economic and social system ... (the NIEO) shall correct inequalities and redress injustice, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries, and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for the present and future generations".

Naturally to transform it into a just economic order became the goal of the struggle of the Third World against colonialism neo-colonial exploitation, and the structures of economic dominance.

However, the Third World countries have held many conferences "to discuss and agree upon the most effective measures" to remove the hindrances in way to economic and social development. Such a conference met in Cairo in July 1962. With the Cairo Conference of July 1962, the Third World launched concerted efforts in the United Nations which led eventually to the establishment of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The UNCTAD held its first meeting in Geneva from 23 March to 16 June 1964. The UNCTAD and the group of 77 have since become the principal forum and instrument respectively of the Third World's struggle for a NIEO.

19. Declaration of the Head of the State or government of Non-aligned countries, Belgrade, 1961, Paragraph 22.
There is a tendency on the part of some Western scholars to describe the military of the Third World as a product of action taken by the organization of Petroleum-Exporting countries (OPEC) in 1973 as regards oil prices and the alleged objective of political power of the leaders of the Third World. It is true that the OPEC action improved the bargaining strength of the Third World and put teeth into its struggle for an NIEO. The sixth and seventh special session of the General Assembly showed how the developed countries themselves were persuaded to negotiate with the third world on all the aspects of an NIEO. However, the hike in petroleum prices hit the oil importing developing countries too hard. So much so that special efforts were made to preserve the solidarity and unity of purpose of the countries of the Third World by neutralizing the adverse side-effects of the hike in petroleum prices on the developmental prospects of the most seriously affected countries.

Further, in the aftermath of the OPEC action, the non-aligned countries pledged their solidarity with the OPEC "in the face of the campaign of threats, blackmail and reprisals."

mainly from the West. They also hailed the OPEC action for changing the direction of the financial resources.

However, the OPEC action would undoubtedly have lost much of its force and effectiveness. The overall approach of the Third World may be seen as following either or both of the two conflicting stands, viz antarky and delinking on the one hand and integration and real interdependence on the other.

Furthermore, "the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1980 should review the implementation of the NIEO and take effective measures to promote its establishment". Hence, the struggle of the Third World is too pessimistic and counterproductive and has resolved equally serious economic crisis in the past and opened up new frontiers of progress and perfection.

There are possibilities of action on the part of the Third World at various levels. For one thing, the sovereign of the third World have accepted in principle the need to rationalize the economic structures of their societies. They

25. Ibid., p. 152.
must demonstrate political will and display administrative capabilities adequately to carry out this much-needed rationalization.

Secondly, at the level of the Third World as a group, the concept of collective self-reliance is largely theoretical. Sustained efforts are needed to exploit the avenues of cooperation identified and to harness the potentials of growth and development.

Thirdly, in negotiating with the developed countries on the subject of a NIEO, the Third World needs to build up an adequate fund of knowledge and information, as also to develop the face of attempts to divide and work up intermediate solutions to reach agreed goals.

And lastly, sincere and dispassionate attempts should be made by both the North and the South to harmonize, as much as possible, their perceptions of a NIEO. One way to do this is to redefine the goals of development. An attempt was made to conceptualize basic needs*, but it appeared as though it was meant only for the Third World. There may be possibility of

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redefining the concept of "basic needs" as just needs" that are equally applicable to the North and the South. If it is conceded that there are natural and ecological limits to development, then the task of finding a median between subject poverty and unrestrained affluence becomes inescapable.

Consequently, the demand of the New International Economic Order by the Third World is the more equitable distribution of wealth between the rich and the poor nations to which the rich are not prepared. They assert in all conferences for their rights of equal share in the economic resources whether available on land or at sea. But unfortunately they have neither money nor technology and for this they are dependent upon the Super Powers. The Law of the Sea Conference demonstrated the divisions that could appear on particular issues. The long-coast and broad margin states in Africa and Latin America got their regions to endorse the 200-miles zone concept despite the fact the more numerous land-locked and short-coast states would get little. An alliance of Western and Third World land-based mineral producing states secured agreement to production ceilings on deep scabed mining that assured greatly reduced

revenues and hence greatly reduced sums for distribution to Third World members of the proposed seabed authority.

In addition, there is more indirect impact of regionalism on world economic policies which is expressed in the work of the United Nations and its associated agencies. This impact can best be described as 'regional pressure group activity. Moreover, the result of its work has unambiguously been helpful to economic welfare in the Third World, as compared to earlier ways of approaching world trade and financial questions. It is beyond dispute that the grudging recognition on the part of the industrialised states that massive redistributive policies are in order would not have developed in the absence of this regional pressure group activity. However, to creating new institutions capable of generating pressure for new policies and programmes aiming at redistribution, the Third World blocs have also succeeded in forcing changes in global trade and financial institution.

The era into which the world is moving appears to be characterised by these features. Military blocs are losing


cohesion. The two Military bloc leaders can no longer on the obedience of their allies and will therefore resort to more direct contacts and to more unilateral behaviour. Economic blocs will gain in cohesion. Western Europ will move towards unity on matters of defence and foreign policy. The global stalemate will respect to nuclear weapons will continue whether or not there is a comprehensive arms control agreement. The proliferation of nuclear capability will also continue, though the qualitative differences between nuclear latecomers and the two superpowers will not disappear. More effort will go into redistributive policies designed to make the Third world catch up economically and socially. A consciousness towards safeguarding world ecological and environmental values will grow. The two super powers will show less willingness towards military and ideological self-assertion and other groupings will show more. Nationalism in the West will wane but it will intensify in Third World. With the completion of the decolonization process there will be less global consensus on basic political and human rights and values. The World will be divided into many unffidy and overlapping blocs lacking clearly defined leaders and military/diplomatic power will be distributed in a way in which some groups will have disproportinate shares in some
domains, and other groups in other domains. In short, the ensemble will be a multi-bloc asymmetric system. However, most of the Third World nations have refused to join either of the bloc (the US bloc and the Soviet bloc) and have decided to be nonaligned - another source of irritant to the former colonial powers.

The United Nations which had been gathering a store of experience, a power of analysis and a slowly increasing treasury of real wisdom in the first five years of its labours. Much constituent work was being put behind them that was to prepare the way for important developments of future history. But after the emergence of the Third World there was a sudden change in the order of events, and the world was given a visible and unwelcome example of instant history. The two controlling coalitions have existed in the United Nations. From late 1947 until 1955 the United Nations was controlled by a coalition composed of Western European, Latin American and Commonwealth states led by the United States. This coalition was particularly united on any issue that involved or could be presented as involving, cold war competition with the Soviet Union. It also


usually stayed together on issues of human rights, social concerns and internal UN administration. However, there were sharp disagreements on colonial and economic questions which could be prepared over only with difficulty. Though this coalition worked well, it was not a cohesive group. It might best be compared to a multiparty coalition in a national legislature, where power is kept by concessions concerning that none of the parties defects to the opposition. None will get everything it wants, but each has to be given enough to be kept satisfied. In international terms, the US-led majority was a very mixed group. Led by a super power, it included several temporarily weakened but still rather powerful states, a number of states large enough to be at least regional that would always be weak. The inclusion of the strong states meant the coalition had ample material resources for putting ideas into action, but the division between weak and strong was a source of tension as the weaker members wanted more attention paid to norms protecting weak states while the strong wanted to pursue conflict with other strong powers.

At first the cold war was sufficiently intense to keep the coalition together; the decolonization brought to the United Nations a number of new African and Asian states less

interested in cold war and more interested in decolonization and economic development. As the UN membership slowly rose, the US-led coalition began eroding. The influx of African and Asian members in the early 1960s, simply overwhelmed a weakened US-led majority in two ways: First, it increased the pre-existing tensions between colonial and anticolonial states and between industrial and developing states. Second, the new members were less tied to the United States and often frankly anti-western close observers of the numbers realized even in the mid 1950s that the US-led coalition was having trouble raising two-thirds majorities; after 1960 it was clear to all the US-led coalition could not even muster a simple majority. The late 1950s and early 1960s were thus a time of exploration. Alone, the Africans and Asians almost constituted a majority and the United Nations has been controlled by a stable coalition of African, Asian and Latin American states known as collectively as the Third World. In 1964 this coalition consisted entirely of weak states. The Third World coalition is interested in using the United Nations to create norms and rules protecting the weak from the strong and to advance group demands for changes in international regimes perceived as working to Third World in disadvantage. It is particularly interested in ending colonialism, attacking all other forms of imperialism,
promoting development and creating new rules for international activity ensuring the Third World as a whole a greater share of material benefits and decision-making power. Even today the Third World majority does not always have the material resources encourages compromise on material questions, but also greater resort to symbolic politics on matters that are, or can be presented as, mainly moral issues.

Yet differences among members in level of economic development, basic structure of the economy regional situations, individual interests and orientations in super power conflicts are creating some strong internal tensions. So far, the Third World majority has been able to manage these tensions by using two devices: First, proposals are kept at a broad level of generality and tend to consist of loading everyone demands together. Second, the coalition devotes much attention to issues on which all can agree, such as the eradication of racist regimes in Southern Africa, the promotion of Palestinian claims of statehood, the advancement of economic development and the promotion of Third World influence in international decision-making.

The main contrasts between the two controlling coalitions lie in their access to material power and their goals. The US-led coalition had access to ample material power and used the United Nation as one of many fora for affirming and refining the goal of an open and universalistic system allowing scope for individual and other non-state actors that had been stated during the second World War. The Third World coalition has access to rather limited material power but wishes to challenge many of the existing international norms and regimes. For it, the United Nation is one of the major fora available for any purpose and one of the few places where those with the power to make changes can be forced to pay attention to the whole range of the Third World demands. Further, it finds in the UN's modest resources a significant addition to its own. The Third World Coalition thus uses the United Nation more intensively than did the US-led coalition, but its relative lack of power has exposed more clearly the limits on the United Nations control over outcomes in World Politics.

The goals of different coalitions, their relative power outside the United Nations and their mechanisms for maintaining coherence all influence the way in which the United Nations

decisions are used. A coalition of strong states with status quo or reformist goals need not rely very heavily on symbolic politics. To the extent that it does, symbols are used to keep coalition members together, to encourage active roles in implementation and to pre-empt criticism by opponents. This does not mean that such a coalition will content itself with mild appeals. Though its goals are modest, its rhetoric may be immodest when it feels deeply threatened. The US-led coalition provides an excellent example of such a coalition. Its modest goals allowed it to use the United Nations relatively sparingly. This is not to say that the US-led coalition had no vision of the World other than protecting the status quo. In certain areas all or most of its members sought to change traditional features of international relations. US policymakers shared the goal of creating an international system that would encourage democracy and free enterprise in a community of independent but mutually cooperative states. Most members agreed that ending colonialism was necessary to a just international order, but saw this as a gradual process in which the peoples of individual colonies would first be reached for independence. Additionally they expected that the smaller colonies would usually opt for local self-government within a continued relation to the metropole rather than independence. This
ending of colonialism would mean global acceptance of self-determination, a major normative change as compared to the nineteenth century. The concept of self-determination, for example, has been used primarily as an instrument of political pressure for the emancipation of colonies from Western rule. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to colonial countries and peoples affirms that "all peoples have the right to self-determination", but is clearly directed against the remnants of Western colonialism, and has been invoked in this sense in subsequent Assembly resolutions. "Self-determination" has also been invoked in the drive of the less developed nation for reaffirmation of their sovereignty in the economic sphere. In 1955, largely by the votes of these nations and over the opposition of many European states, the Assembly's Third Committee adopted, for inclusion as part of Article 1 in both draft covenants on Human Rights, the following provision:

"All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of this right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic

social and cultural development. The peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.  

However, the US-led coalition sought to change the traditional presumption that, massacre aside, the way in which governments treated their own people was a domestic affair. This general notion that peace and democracy depend on respect for human rights received great impetus from the Axis, whose conduct appeared to prove once and for all the proposition that there was a strong link between suppression of the people at home and aggression abroad. Both the UN Charter and the Assembly decisions were used to promote new norms in this area.

The US-led coalition did employ some strident rhetoric on occasion. Most was inspired by cold war conflict with the Soviet bloc, which offered a different and uncongenial vision of

37. GAOR: 10 Sess, 1955, Annexes, Agenda item 28-1 (A/30 77, para 77)
38. Peterson, M.J., op.cit., p. 188.
the World. Whether this vision is seen as an attack on democracy on continued capitalist domination. It represented challenge to the basic tenets of international order held by the US-led coalition. This meant that Soviet efforts to advance their vision had to be combated with symbolic as well as material means. Assembly rhetoric provided part of the symbolic contribution.

A coalition of weak states with far-reaching goals must rely very heavily on symbolic politics. To the extent that its goals cannot be obtained with its own resources, such a coalition must persuade others to use their resources. Symbolic politics are used, then, to persuade others that they ought to share the goals and help attain them. Such efforts can take any or all of three forms: showing how norms professed by the others mandate accepting the weak coalition's goals, appealing to the others' self-interest, or instilling guilty feelings. The Third World coalition has used all three approaches to varying degrees. Western governments and individuals who profess any form of socialism or Marxism tend to be very sympathetic to Third World leaders professing similar ideas. On occasion Third World analysts and governments have echoed the

views of Western analysts who see international economics as a positive-sum game in which all can benefit from cooperative activity and certain changes in the rules. Such arguments have not been prominent in Third World group rhetoric. Westerners are not now attracted by argument that the Third World's current lack of development is West's fault. Worse, such arguments tend to backfire, fear that making any concession will be seen as acceptance of the guilty verdict has slowed down some Western governments responses.

Further, the different rate of economic progress among Third World states suggest that some of the blame for current Third World governments - a point advanced by the Japanese for sometime and more recently by Secretary General Perez de Cuellar. Whatever their difficulties in making decisions because of outside pressure, a growing number of Third World governments are beginning to admit that they have the main responsibility for dealing with their own problems.

A rational-actor suggests that Third World governments should drop the guilt arguments and focus instead on common

42. Peterson, M.J., op.cit., p. 190.
norms and interests. However, a number of factors maintain the prominence of guilt rhetoric. First, the slowness of Western response leads to extreme frustration and encourages its continued use. Second, both the Nonaligned and group of 77 were built on an anticolonial ideology that cannot be abandoned too quickly. Third, the normal tendency of the organizations to modify their ideologies slowly is powerfully reinforced by the necessities of coalition maintenance and the internal workings of those groupings. The US-led coalition however held together far longer on cold war issues than on any other because of this phenomenon; the Third World coalition now uses calls for a New International Economic order and campaign against Israel and South Africa in the same way. Finally, the inherited anticolonial ideology, plus the fact that Western countries happen to be on the other side of the issues of the greatest concern to the Third World, allows the more radical members of both the Group of 77 and the Non-aligned to campaign for continued attacks on the West. Until lately, the radicals were more organized than the moderates and able to push both the Group of 77 and Non-aligned in a more anti-western direction than set by the existing organizational ideology.

The Third World coalition used the United Nations to legitimize its own views, but also used fairly strident rhetoric because it wanted to overturn or greatly revise the previously existing international order. An alliance between the Soviet bloc, Third World Marxist-Leninist states and other radical elements of the Non-aligned would, if they ever became sufficiently, the United Nation would be used to provide the doctrinal justifications for actions the majority was tackling to revamp the world.

Though there would still be some competition for influence between the two coalitions - the US-led coalition and the Third World, this would be less intense than in the current ideology-fueled competition between the Super powers. The United Nations then work as an institution for mediating conflict and encouraging cooperation much like the San Francisco conference hoped. If, however, the strong wanted greater changes, the weak would have considerable difficulty protecting themselves. The General Assembly would be used to legitimize weak state views, but would be pitiful shield against a concerted programme of revolution or revisionism sponsored by a coalition of

strong states. The Third World coalition realizes this intuitively; hence some members fears of "super power condominium" when the United States and the Soviet Union moved into a period of relatively good relations and began cooperating on a wider variety of issues in the mid-1970s. The Third World coalition views its situation very differently. Lacking very many other advantages in World Politics, it has tended to place a very high value on controlling the General Assembly and, if possible, the Wider UN system. This requires sticking together. The dynamics of coalition maintenance have led leaders of the Third World coalition to adopt a very different pattern of linkage in the General Assembly, which consists of aggregating many individual abstract propositions into a larger overall package. This process not only produces grand packages, such as the New International Economic Order or the New World Communications and information order but inflates their individual components as well. Development of the concept of "Permanent Sovereignty over natural resources" provides a good example. The notion of the "Permanent Sovereignty" was first advanced in the late 1950s.45 The efforts to promote the idea of

permanent sovereignty was continued. Hence the General Assembly decided at its seventeenth session to study certain principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among states, it included the principle of sovereign equality. The special committee established at the Assembly's eighteenth session to prepare a report was able to reach agreement on the following "points of consensus":

1. All states enjoy sovereign equality. As subjects of international law they have equal rights and duties.

2. In particular, sovereign equality includes the following elements:

   (a) States are juridically equal.

   (b) Each state enjoys the rights inherent in full sovereignty.

   (c) Each state has the duty to respect the personality of other states.

   (d) The territorial integrity and the political independence of the states are inviolable.

46. GA Res. 1815 (XVII), December 21, 1962.

47. GA Res. 1966 (XVIII), December 16, 1963.
(e) Each state has the right freely to choose and develop its political social, economic, and cultural systems.

(f) Each state has the duty to comply fully and in good faith with its international obligations and to live in peace with other states.

Among the points on which there was lack of agreement was whether a state has the right to dispose freely of its natural wealth resources. Some maintained that an absolute right exists. Others felt that any statement to that effect should be balanced by a reference to the General Assembly's resolution of December 14, 1962, which recognized the international law standard as governing compensation for expropriation of private property.

However, in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States Resolution 2381 (xxix), adopted in 1974, the concept had been broadened to include other forms of wealth, and the idea of host-state control over foreign investment strengthened.


Article 2(1) of the Chapter II said that every state has and shall freely exercise full permanent sovereignty, including possession, use, and disposal, over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activities”. The rest of Article 2 then set out a wide-ranging definition of the mechanisms for exercising this “full permanent sovereignty”.

The United Nations, however, as stated in the Charter itself is based on “the sovereign equality of all its members” and as stated in its preamble, is established to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of human person, in the equal rights of men and women and nations large and small...” The desired goal of the organization is therefore to achieve universal membership. Consequently, frequent references in the debates of the General Assembly and Security Council, in favour of universal membership, have been made. A number of resolutions in favour of universality too, have been adopted. It is evident from the debates that it was never intended to make the United Nations a club of like-minded states; neither was it intended to prevent membership of states having different


52. Ibid., p. 2.
(and undesirable) ideologies and different economic and political systems.

Under the Charter the membership of the United Nations is based on the principle of "Universality" not "selectivity". Members are required to be "like-minded", at least to the extent that all must support the purposes and principles of the Charter and fulfil their obligations thereunder. According to Article 4(A) "Membership in the United Nations is open to all other peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and in the judgement of the organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations".

A state, which fulfills the criteria stated above, is free to seek, and would be and has been generally admitted to the United Nations membership has been rejected on the ground that the applicant country, though independent, is too small or poor to support the burdens of the membership. Naturally, there is an enormous increase in the membership of the United Nations. Furthermore, as the result of the expansion of the

55. Ibid., p. 85; Brownlie, I., op. cit., p. 4.
membership of the United Nations, it has grown from a body of fifty-one members to one hundred fifty nine (159); the majority of which is non-Western, underdeveloped, and who have gained their independence recently. Roughly three fifths of the total membership belongs to the Afro-Asian regions. Many of them are mini-states which are the product of the decolonization process. They view full membership in the organization as the final stamp of approval on their independence. In addition, the Third World majority feels that further ministate membership would add to their preponderance in the United Nations.

However, the increasing number of ministates in the United Nations has become a matter of concern to many. L.M. Goodrich has pointed out the concern as follows:

"Fears have been expressed that the admission of ministates to the United Nations will strain the physical and financial resources of the organization, overload the already heavy agenda of its principal organs, and further reduce the credibility and influence of the General Assembly resolutions".


He further points out that:

"the burdens of the membership are often beyond what these small new states can carry. This applies both to the financial costs and the need of making available for UN service and participation in various United Nations meetings personnel that is needed for domestic purposes".

Those supporting the ministates right to membership in the United Nations argue that these are exaggerated. They believe that the interest of populas and wealthy states are protected by the basic fact that the General Assembly can make recommendations only rather than make decisions that are legally binding on governments. Furthermore, the influence of these states in General Assembly decision-making is not measured by the votes that process. Proponents emphasize that ministates require services which the United Nations is best equipped to provide. The ministates on the other hand, view their admission to the United Nations as "a necessary certificate of sovereignty"

60. Ibid., p. 50.
and "most economical or convenient form of multiple diplomatic
representation. Through the United Nations, the ministates
could secure a wide range of essential technical assistance.
In addition, the United Nations can give the statement of small
countries the political experience they need to conduct their
international relations effectively. Hence, apposition to
their membership would be "easily equated to neoimperialism,
an onus no one wanted to bear".

However, the ministate problem exists and would continue
to exists in the year ahead as with their increasing number,
they would be and are in a position to change the balance of
power in the United Nations, warns a keen analyst of International
Organization. In his article, entitled "Microstates in World
Affairs", published on May 9, 1971, by American Enterprise
Institute for Public Research, Elmer Pliske, Professor of
Government and Politics, at the University of Maryland, points out
that the rapid proliferation of the tiny countries in the world
community are being considered as a source of erosion of their

61. Boyce, P.J., "Microstates and Their Role in International
Affairs", Australian Foreign Affairs Record, Vol. 48,
No. 1, Jan, 1944, p. 23.


Problem?", American Journal of International Law, Vol. 71,
influence in the international community. "Like it or not", Plischke asserts, "microstates proliferation is eroding the equilibrium in the community of nations; corrective actions are available and sooner or later hard decisions will have to be made". The only practical alternative", he suggests is "to retard and manage the future proliferation of states and delimit microstate participation in forms and affairs". Unchecked increase of the ministates", Plischke maintains "is likely to effect the existing international system" and express doubts at to "whether the change can be endured by the World community". According to him, in the years ahead, 50 to 100 or even more states may gain independence and if unchecked, will join the United Nations; two out of every five then would be microstates. He has treated those states as microstates whose population is fewer than 300,000 people. Many eminent scholars of interna­tional organization and persons associated with the United Nations have questioned seriously the Wisdom of admitting ministates, to full membership. But legally their objections to the admission of ministates is not tenable.

However, many new states are being admitted as fall members in the United Nations (e.g. Seychelles) and they are

behaving in as responsible manner as their 'big brethren'?
The American apprehension about their conduct or role in the
United Nations seems to be based on wrong presumptions. Any
endeavour to reopen the issue would not be in the best interest
of the international community. Moreover, seeking amendment
of the Charter means opening a Pandora's box and some of it
may even lead to the questioning of the basic postulates of the
Charter such as 'big power' hegemony in the Security Council,
the veto etc. and even if consensus is arrived at about the
"special", associate membership for the ministates, the
international community would be faced with another problem,
perhaps, very unflattering and unpleasant one, namely, the
financial implications arising out of the two-tier membership,
all the more so if a large number of member-nations decided to
have the benefits without their share of financial burden.
Would the organization then continue to be a world organization
both in the name and spirit or be converted more or less into a
Rich Nations Club? Moreover, the United Nations can help these
new and emerging states to find their place in the world.
Secretary-General Hammerskjold often referred to the important
gle role of the United Nations during this period of transition.

65. Ahmad, Ishtiaq, op.cit., p. 132.
"The United Nations is now, or will be their organization. The United Nations can give them a framework for their young national life which gives a deeper sense and greater weight to independence."

However, the increasing number of Membership in the United Nations almost all of them being underdeveloped (including the ministates) has made the Big Five reluctant to entrust the real power to a body where they do not have a veto. This increase has upset the voting behaviour in the United Nations - the change as noticed was anti-American. This changed in the voting behaviour caused anxiety in American and Western circle. Which consequently affects the decision-making in the United Nations General Assembly. Which worries the Western powers and makes the Third World happy. In fact, the United States commanded an "automatic majority" or an "automatic two-third majority" in the General Assembly during the years before 1955 and thus exercised nearly complete control over the General Assembly's decision. In the following years, from 1955 to 1960, the newly admitted members behaviour lessened America's control but the

United States position was still strong. Finally, the considerable increase in the membership since 1960, it is said, has ended America's dominance. Undoubtedly, so far as the voting results of the General Assembly are concerned, the position of the USA is weakened after 1960 but in comparison to the USSR, on combined categories of cold war, peace-keeping, arms control and disarmament issues, the United States continued to be generally successful and the Soviet Union to be unsuccessful. Even the anti-Western attitude of the Third World - (which includes microstates) has been a source of irritant for Western nations.

Furthermore, of all the organs of the United Nations, the General Assembly has received the greatest impact from the increase in the number of sovereign states which would have made the General Assembly something of a real world forum. The balance of the organization has, of course, drastically shifted. Whereas the majority of the original members were European and American the majority now are African and Asian. This has brought in its train a shift in the concerns and in the character of the

68. Baily, D. Sydney, op.cit., p. 239.
The US-led coalition split on the issue in 1950. The Soviet bloc was then able to make common cause with African, Asian and Latin American members and with their help steer greater attention to group and economic rights in the mid-1950s. Thus even before the Third World coalition had coalesced Assembly discussions were emphasizing group and economic rights over individual and political ones.

The dynamics of coalition formation and maintenance affect the symbolic content of decisions and so influence addresses' response to them. The US-led coalition held together by disaggregating issues. Its leading members' tendency to prefer disaggregation was reinforced by the fact that only by keeping things separate could the long-rolling that held the coalition together continue. Except on cold war issues, where an all-out ideological contest with the Soviet bloc mandated strident rhetoric, the symbolic appeals were universalistic but measured. Nothing encouraged supporters or opponents to feel urgency except when warfare had broken out and UN mechanisms were being used to control or stop it. However, the Third World

70. Peterson, M.J., op.cit., p. 198.
coalition had a very different style both its leading members' philosophical preferences and the coalition's internal dynamics encourage linking issues. Not only do individual issues, but it also linked to the grand overchanging concepts of anti colonialism and a New International Economic Order. The appeals remain universalistic, but it was opposed by the United States and the other Western countries. The Soviet bloc, too, has found elements to oppose in Third World demands. Whereas the Soviet bloc supports general calls for a new international economic order but is happiest about those parts emphasizing the role of state guidance in the economy and least happy about those parts entailing new demands on the UN's regular budget.

Unless there is a strong confrontation between the superpowers and the Third World governments. But the Third World governments are generally happy with the amount of time allocated to various issues in the General Assembly. Collectively they control the agenda, and individually they can "tune out" by adopting the group position or failing to amend meetings. The industrial countries, particularly of the west, feel the effects of reallocation more since the dynamics of Assembly activity pull them in the position of responding on most issues. The norms

of the Third World solidarity is sufficiently strong, however, that the less enthusiastic as well as those who might oppose can be put under severe pressure with accusations of betrayal. For instance, Antigua and Barbuda has invoked it in efforts to secure wide agreement to bring Antartctica to the General Assembly as a North-South issue. It has tried to deal with the inconvenient fact that several Third World states participate in the very regime it wants to replace by such things as:

"What is sad about this connivance between the
Eastern and Western industrialized nations is that
a handful of Third World countries are active parti­cipants with them in efforts to exelude other Third
World nations".

Historically the General Assembly has known two stable controlling coalitions: the US-led coalition of 1947-55 and the Third World that has controlled the General Assembly since 1964. The two coalitions have had different goals. Members of the US-led coalition had created the UN and the wider post war international order. Consequently, the US-led coalition used the

General Assembly, like the rest of the UN, to legitimize and strengthen the postwar order, to continue certain reform efforts begun in the Charter — such as elaboration of the notion of human rights — and to defend it against the alternative vision promoted by the Soviet bloc. Most members of the Third World coalition attained independence after postwar order was created. Even in areas where their substantive complaints are mild, this fact leads many to desire change simply because they do not like living in a system they had no role in creating. However, the members range from mildly revisionist frankly revolutionary in their preferred visions of the international order. They agree on several broad propositions, such as the need to end all remnants of colonialism in international relations. Even so, the Third World coalition still uses the General Assembly and the rest of the UN system to challenge many aspects of the current international order. Both the US-led and the Third World coalitions have faced problems of maintaining coherence. It is difficult to say that one's problems were more severe than the other's, though circumstances have allowed the Third World coalition a longer period of dominance. Both coalitions have faced the problem of having to maintain a relatively large size — two-thirds of the UN membership — in order to have the fullest control over activities and decisions. Each
Each coalition has faced different problems in maintaining control.
over two-thirds of vetoes, and has used different methods to do
so. These in turn have affected Assembly proceedings and deci-
sions in varying ways.

Initially the Third World coalition had a far easier time
maintaining itself. All members were relatively weak in global
terms, though some were regional powers. All members were also
developing states. Most had experienced colonial rule and/or
racial discrimination. Many also faced serious challenges to
building an effective state apparatus and instilling a positive
sense of national identity among their populations. The Afro-
Asian members also desired to remain outside superpower
conflicts. However, while the coalition would often change
position when it began disagreement among Third World states
because the coordination mechanisms were used to ensure that
potentially divisive questions did not appear on the Assembly's
effective agenda. The next few years are likely to see
the third world coalition limp along and
the issues that Unite the Third World are those where the
contrast with Western position is greatest. Once the discussion

gets beyond generalities to specifics, intra-Third World divisions surface. This can be seen in such matters as comprehensive North-South negotiations, the law of the sea, or UN restructuring, where intra-Third World differences are at least as responsible for the results (or lack of results) as West-South confrontations. By 1985 this trend had proceeded far enough that coalition formation in the Assembly was a more fluid process than it had been five years before, though not so fluid as to duplicate the situation between 1955 and 1964.

The Third World coalition took over the precedents for Assembly importance created by the US-led coalition, but attempted to use the Assembly for ambitions goals it lacked the capability to attain. Most group progress came from playing the United States off against the Soviet Union wherever the super powers saw influence in the Third World as important to their general competition, appealing to sympathetic segments of Western opinion able to sway their governments' policies.

Whatever the future of the Third World coalition, then the General Assembly will continue to have considerable influence over the agenda of World politics. It will continue to be used for producing a set of decisions that commit UN bodies to

particular activities and attempt to move member states in directions preferred by a majority. Though it will continue to make many decisions, the impact of these decisions on the actual outcomes of political interactions in the international system will remain weak. Again, whatever the future of the Third World coalition, the treatment of different types of issue will not change too much. Most decisions will still deal with internal UN questions. Side-taking will remain easier than conflict management in a body of almost 159 members as long as those members remain seriously divided by ideology and different degrees of happiness or unhappiness with the international status quo. Assembly debates will continue to be more useful for focussing on global issues and general points rather than on local questions or details of specific interactions. The Assembly will also continue to reinforce the position of states as central actors in World politics though its global conferences will provide new opportunities for lobbying by non-governmental organizations. However, some aspects of Assembly politics will change as coalitions evolve. Both the content of decisions and the strength of attempts to use the Assembly as a revisionist force in world politics will change if the Third World coalitions continues to fragment. It may even turn out in retrospect that the neo-conservative-isolationist alliance now directing United States policy towards hostility and confrontation in the United
Nations is a lagged response, more relevant to the Third World rhetoric and activities of the mid-1970s than to those of the 1980s. Yet that alliance may help perpetuate the very habits it deplores by providing the fragmenting Third World with rallying points that help it maintain cohesion with longer.

However, with the demise of European imperialism and the rise of Asian and African peoples to full statehood, the World has become politically, culturally and ideologically increasingly fragmented. To some extent the process of fragmentation has been paralleled by forces which have made for integration. There has, therefore, been a process of integration as well as of fragmentation. Integration psychologically and technologically fragmentation; politically, culturally and ideologically. Further, Professor Goodwin points out that the world in which the organization has existed has been marked by both fragmentation and integration; these world pressures being reflected in the changing relations between the United Nations principal organs. It is against this background that he looks at power and responsibility within the United Nations and investigates such problems as the impact of its expanded membership voting patterns and the cost

75. Peterson, M.J., op.cit., 263-64.
of universality. Naturally it is a source of irritant to the Big Powers. Because the Third World states now became more prominent framework of the United Nations. The Third World States now demanding the revision of entire International Law. The present International Law, in the opinion of the Third World nations, is framed by the Western colonialist to suit their need. However, it should be admitted without reservation, that the importance of the United Nations role in the years ahead and its effectiveness in dealing with the questions brought before it will be largely determined by the leadership and support of the superpowers which guides and will continue to guide the destiny of the world. The peaceful utilization of atomic energy, the proper use of the sea and the sea-bed, protection of environment against pollutions, preservation of limited natural resources for present and future generation need leadership and support by super powers. Hence, any attempt to compel the major powers to agree with what they disagree will certainly not be in the interest of international community. For a happy and healthy international society, the Big Fives to be conceded a leading role in international relations.