

## NON-ALIGNMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH "POWER POLITICS"

**Dr. Syed Kazim Raza Zaidi**

**Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Shia P.G. College, Lucknow (U.P), India**

Power has also been a subject of hot discussion. If on the one hand non-alignment has been branded as a policy based on morality and idealism, on the other hand it has been characterised as an exercise in power-politics. Some confusion and difference of opinions has arisen because different meanings have been given to power politics by different people. It is suggested that the term should not be given a literal, natural meaning. Through modern history it has come to acquire certain broad meanings, it has come to symbolize certain values in international relations. Without going into details, it may approvingly be quoted what **Schwarzenberger** says that "Power Politics" signifies a type of relationship between States in which certain patterns of behaviour are predominant, armaments, isolationism, power diplomacy, power economics, regional or universal imperialism, alliances, balance of power and war. (1) Subsequently he says that "power politics may be defined as a system of international relations in which groups consider themselves to be ultimate ends, (2)

Non-alignments reject this variety of politics, and attempts to highlight an organic link between the constituents of the international community: Looking at the main thrust of Non-alignment, perhaps it can be said that along with rejected power politics, did not accept that all politics is a struggle for power, as has been suggested by the **Hans J. Morgenthau** and others. It considers that it was just a kind of politics and there were other priorities of politics which were well worth following for the sake of peace justice and developments. Nehru's understanding was that the problems of Asia are essentially problems of supplying what may be called the primary human necessities. They were not problems which may be called problems of power politics."(3) In its totality, non-alignment was thus an alternative to end substitute of power politics in international relations.

The policies of Non-aligned countries reveal that though they rejected power politics, they know that international relations were not in exercise in sainthood. They were aware of the role of power through accelerated socio economic development. **For instance in Indian Jawahar Lal Nehru attempted to enhance the power of India through** planned developments, the objective of which

Received: 05.02.2019

Accepted: 27.02.2019

Published: 27.02.2019



was to create social structure based on social justice. He did not try to argue the war potentials of the country in order to enable it to play the game of power-politics. His enthusiasm for enhancing the constructive and positive are the indicating of the fact that he did not sufficiently prepare India as a militarily strong country to fight with, the enemies. Had it been the case India would never have suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Chinese forces when they attacked India's territorial sovereignty in 1962. The Chinese debacle has been considered as the major failure of Mr. Nehru's premiership. But it would be our short sightedness if we under-value his basic approach towards the restructure of the old and archaic Indian society. It is due to his policy of Industrialisation and scientific development that India stands today as the developed nation among the developing and least developing nations of the third world. In the light of the above discussion, we arrive at the conclusion that the non-alignment does admit the role of power in international relations but rejects at the same times, "Power politics" or 'group rivalries' or " the making of balance of power' with certain ulterior motives.

Some writers have called the non-alignment as emergence and origin of the third world alliance. The above views expressed and suggested by '**Peter Willets**' in his book **The Non-aligned movement: the origin of A third world alliances** is far from truth (4) The sub-title of this study is clearly objectionable because like power politics, alliance in international relations, has come to acquire a distinct meaning. It would be inappropriate if one just goes by the literal meaning of the term. With the passage of time and through persistent usage many terms in international relation's meaning which are different, sometimes even opposite, to the literal or original ones. Power politics and alliances are such term. (5)

About the meaning of the alliance, one may refer to the writings of a well known **American scholar Arnold Wolfers** who observes "in the technical language of statesmen and scholars the alliance signifies a promise of mutual military alliance between two or more sovereign states. (6) Clarifying its meaning further, he says that although some propagandist advantages may be gained by applying the term to loose agreements for co operation this use obscures the peculiarity for reaching commitment contained in military pacts by which a nation formally promises to join another

---

infighting a common enemy. This should make it clear even to a novice that non-alignment is not an alliance. In fact this former is antithetical to the latter. Non-alignment condemns and rejects alliances.

Non-alignment is not isolationism and it is not a negative policy or attitude to world affairs or to other countries, as some people are inclined to think Non-alignment represents on the contrary, a positive policy and practically all non-aligned-nations play an active role in world affairs. In fact that many of these countries play an unduly active role, a role not supported by their size, resources, or economic or military strength it is certainly not an attempt to escape from international responsibilities. **Prince Norodam Sihanauk** told the Belgrade Conference; Non-alignment represents a dynamic form of international life, not an unhealthy and passive introversion."(7)

Non-alignment is not sitting on the fence. It is wrong to suppose that non-aligned countries are not interested at all in world affairs, or are indifferent to the burning issues of the day, or have no conviction's of their own, that they are mere spectators in world affairs and merely follow a policy of what may be called passive resistance to the division of the world, and they are afraid responding unpopular causes and merely seek to joining the more successful band wagon."

It is not, though it could be, and in any case, not more than any other policy, a policy of expediency and opportunism, on the contrary, in the words of **the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Sirimao Bandernaike** the path of non-alignment is not an easy one for small, developing nations to tread. From our experience, I can say with certainty that non-alignment is not the time of least resistance, but is, rather the most difficult, challenging and position policy of our time."(8)

### **Need for a Comprehensive Definition**

Since there was no definition of non-alignment in a authoritative and precise sense, when the 30 year reign of the Congress in New Delhi gave way to the Janata Party rule during 1977-79 the new party too began to affirm that whatever they did, confirmed to non-alignment. **The Janata Party went one step ahead by claiming to practice "Genuine Non-alignment". Without again defining it.** Consequently some retired diplomats who were deeply involved in the external affairs Ministry, Government of India, have vehemently criticised the Janata party's newly coined. "Genuine Non

alignment". However, the criticism made against, "the genuine Non-alignment" could equally be applied to their own way of Non-alignment". **P.N. Haksar**, for instance, complains "that in Janata party brand, there is greater involvement with phrases than with meaning and substance."(9)

**Mr. T.N. Kaul**, again appears to be thoroughly allergic to the use of the word "genuine". Kaul bitterly observes that genuine only raises doubts in our own minds and that of others that perhaps we have not been "genuine in the past. (10)

The criticism and counter-criticism of non-alignment rest not merely up on the absence of a definition but up on the much important matter of relationship between non-alignment and real politics. Certain questions given rise to the suspicion whether the aims of non-alignment that is the preservation of political independence, world peace and independence of opinion and action, policy makers of country will never concede that they have to sacrifice independence of judgement and action by adopting a policy of alignment. **In 1956, Britain and France defied America** when they launched an invasion of Egypt. France struck a sharp postures of independence when it began to build an autonomous nuclear force in defiance of America. In actuality, the degree of independence varies remarkably from case to case, and no country, aligned or non-aligned can enjoy absolute independence in the fullest sense.

Now take the issue of anti-colonialism India can certainly be proud of its record on this issue. The pressures of circumstances, honest difference in Interpretations of high principles, and consideration of real politics may lead any country including India to take steps which others may interpret as supportive of colonialism. Thus, in early 1950s India permitted Britain to operate four depots in this country which supplied Gurkha recruits to the British army fighting a war in Malaysia. Faced with the accusation of pro colonialism, Prime Minister Nehru, initially denied, and subsequently acknowledged the existence of these depots.

At the Cairo preparatory conference of non-aligned countries held from 5 to 12 June 1961 India opposed the participation of the provincial government of Algeria. Subsequently, India submitted to the majority opinion and with draw the opposition. Mean while was accused of lack of sympathy for the anti-colonialist struggle in Africa, (11)

India welcomed the formation of Malaysia in 1963. To India this was a measure of decolonization. But the Indonesia, another stalwart among non aligned states, this was subservience to British colonialism. In fact this was an important matter of discord between India and Indonesia is those days.

As to the use of force, for the purpose of de-colonization Indonesia accused India of double standards. India used force in 1961 to liberate Goa from Portuguese domination, but had been advising Indonesia to resort to peaceful methods for freeing West Iran from Dutch domination. (12) Moreover Cuba's role in the decolonization of **Angola**, membership of Pakistan, Nehru's mild and oblique disapproval of American Intervention in Cuba, India's request for Military help from America and Britain in 1962, and its signing of Treaty friendship and peace with Russia in 1971. The **status of Afghanistan, Kampuchia, Vietnam, and Cuba** which are gaining advantages of military alliances like **NATO and Warsaw Pact** without a formal membership of such bloc. To say that the Soviet bloc is the natural allies of non-alignment has its separate entity or not, is not consuming. These are only a few illustrations to show that in real politics a shifting amalgam of high principles and cold self interest governs some of the complex foreign policy moves of a country, be it Cuba or India. One of the founder of this movement, Burma raised the issue and demanded to re-define freshly the objectives of Non-aligned movement. Having been subjected to criticism and failure, Burma withdraw from th movement. All this required an urgent looking on the said demand but it has put up a far reaching goal to be achieved.

## References

Supra Note 15.

George Schwarzenberger, Power Politics New York, 1951, p. 13.

Dorothy Norman, "Nehru: The First Six Years". Bombay 1965 Vol. 2 p.

Peter Willets, "The Non-aligned Movement: The Third World Alliance".(Bombay 1978).

Supra note 15, p. 16.

Received: 05.02.2019

Accepted: 27.02.2019

Published: 27.02.2019



---

Arnold Walfer's "Alliances" International Encyclopedia of Social Science. New York 1969 Vol. 1, pp. 268-90.

Belgrade Conference Report 1961.

Cairo Conference Report, 1964, p. 190.

Haskar. P.N., Non-alignment, "Retrospect and Prospect" Mainstream May 26, 1979.

Kaul. T.N., "Diplomacy in Peace and War" Delhi Vikas 1979, pp. 5-6.

Editorial, The Statement, 17th June, 1961.