



Role of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in Non-Aligned Movement

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ABSTRACT: The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a forum of 120 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide.^{[2][5]}

The movement originated in the aftermath of the Korean War, as an effort by some countries to counterbalance the rapid bi-polarization of the world during the Cold War, whereby two major powers formed blocs and embarked on a policy to pull the rest of the world into their orbits. One of these was the pro-Soviet socialist bloc whose best known alliance was the Warsaw Pact, and the other the pro-American capitalist group of countries, many of which belonged to NATO. In 1961, drawing on the principles agreed at the Bandung Conference of 1955, the Non-Aligned Movement was formally established in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, through an initiative of Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, and Indonesian President Sukarno.^{[6][7][8]}

KEYWORDS: non-aligned, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Prime Minister, cold war, India, movement, worldwide

I. INTRODUCTION

For India, the concept of non-alignment began as a policy of non-participation in the military affairs of a bipolar world and in the context of colonialism aimed towards optimum involvement through multi-polar participation towards peace and security. It meant a country should be able to preserve a certain amount of freedom of action internationally. There was no set definition of non-alignment, which meant the term was interpreted differently by different politicians and governments, and varied in different contexts.^[1] The overall aims and principles found consensus among the movement members.^[2] Non-aligned countries, however, rarely attained the freedom of judgement they desired and their actual behaviour towards the movement's objectives, such as social justice and human rights, were unfulfilled in many cases. India's actions often resembled those of aligned countries.^[3] The response of the non-aligned nations during India's wars in 1962, 1965 and 1971 revealed non-aligned positions on issues such as secession.^[4] The non-aligned nations were unable to fulfil the role of peacekeepers during the Indo-China war of 1962 and the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 despite meaningful attempts.^[5] The non-aligned response to the Bangladesh Liberation War and the following 1971 Indo-Pakistan War showed most of the non-aligned nations prioritised territorial integrity above human rights, which could be explained by the recently attained statehood for the non-aligned.^[6] During this period, India's non-aligned stance was questioned and criticized.^[7] Jawaharlal Nehru had not wanted the formalization of non-alignment and none of the non-aligned nations had commitments to help each other.^[8] The international rise of countries such as China also decreased incentives for the non-aligned countries to stand in solidarity with India.^[9]

India played an important role in the multilateral movements of colonies and newly independent countries that wanted to participate in the Non-Aligned Movement. The country's place in national diplomacy, its significant size and its economic growth turned India into one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement.^[10]

Prior to Independence and India becoming a republic, Jawaharlal Nehru contemplated the path the country would take in world affairs.^[15] In 1946, Nehru, as a part of the cabinet of the Interim Government of India, said during a radio broadcast; "we propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale".^[16] In 1948, he made a speech to the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) titled "We Lead Ourselves" in which he said the world was going through a phase in which the foreign policies of major powers had "miserably failed".^[17] In the speech, he talked about what alignment entailed, saying:

What does joining a bloc mean? After all it can only mean one thing: give up your view about a particular question, adopt the other party's view on that question in order to please it [...] Our instructions to our delegates have always been first to consider each question in terms of India's interest, secondly, on its merit - I mean to say if it did not affect India, naturally on its merits and not merely to do something or to give a vote just to please this power or that power ...^[18]

In 1949, he told the Assembly:

We have stated repeatedly that our foreign policy is one of keeping aloof from the big blocs [...] being friendly to all countries... not becoming entangled in any alliances... that may drag us into any possible conflict. That does not, on the other hand, involve any lack of close relationships with other countries.^[19]

Some saw confusion in these speeches and the West questioned Nehru's "neutrality";^[20] in the United States in 1949, Nehru said; "we are not blind to reality nor do we acquiesce in any challenge to man's freedom from whatever quarters it may come. Where freedom is menaced or justice threatened or where aggression take place, we cannot and shall not be neutral".^[20] The term 'Non-Alignment' was used for the first time in 1950 at the United Nations when both India and Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia rejected alignment with any side in the Korean War.^[21] Over the years, Nehru made a number of comments on non-alignment; in 1957 he said, "Non-alignment seems to me as the natural consequence of an independent nation functioning according to its own rights. After all alignment means being regimented to do something you do not like and thereby giving up certain measures of independent judgement and thinking."^[22]

Indian non-alignment was a product of the Cold War, a bipolar world^[23] and India's colonial experience and the non-violent Indian independence struggle. According to Rejaul Karim Laskar, the Non-Aligned Movement was devised by Nehru and other leaders of newly independent countries of the Third World to "guard" their independence "in face of complex international situation demanding allegiance to either of the two warring superpowers".^[24]

The term "non-alignment" was coined by V K Menon in his speech at the United Nations (UN) in 1953,^[25] which was later used by Indian Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru during his speech in 1954 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in which he described the Panchsheel (five restraints) to be used as a guide for Sino-Indian relations, which were first put forth by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. These principles would later become the basis of the Non-Aligned Movement. The five principles were: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in domestic affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence. Nehru's concept of non-alignment brought India considerable international prestige among newly independent states that shared its concerns about the military confrontation between the superpowers and the influence of the former colonial powers. By laying the foundation stone of 'Non-Alignment Movement', India was able to establish a significant role for itself as a leader of the newly independent world and in the multilateral organisations like the UN.

According to Jairam Ramesh, neither Menon or Nehru "particularly cared for or were fond of the term 'non alignment' much less of the idea of 'non-aligned movement' or a 'non aligned grouping'".^[25]

We are presently celebrating the birth centenary of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the greatest sons of India. He was a multi-faceted personality. He was first and foremost a patriot, a great freedom fighter who bravely faced personal privation and misfortune during the struggle, was chosen by Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, as his second in command to lead the nation after Independence, was India's first Prime Minister, builder of modern India, and initiator of the policy of non-alignment which has since found universal acceptance.

Non-alignment was not a negative policy of being neutral in great power disputes or staying equidistant from the two super powers. The emerging Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union which intensified in the 1950s, the period which also saw the emergence of new Asian and African nations, free from the colonial yoke, provided the ground for the adoption of the policy of non-alignment which was specially suited to the requirements of the newly independent Asian and African countries.

II.DISCUSSION

The Non-Aligned Movement had its origins in the 1947 Asian Relations Meeting in New Delhi and the 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia. India also participated in the 1961 Belgrade Conference that officially established the Non-Aligned Movement but Nehru's declining prestige limited his influence. In the 1960s and 1970s, India concentrated on internal problems and bilateral relations but retained membership in the increasingly factionalised and radicalised movement. During the contentious 1979 Havana summit, India worked with moderate nations to reject Cuban President Fidel Castro's proposition that "socialism" was the "natural ally" of non-alignment. The Sino-India war of 1962 was one of the first situations in which the non-aligned countries faced a situation that was not directly related to the two blocs or issues such as colonialism.^[26] The Belgrade Summit had been held in 1961 with representation from 24 countries, the reaction of which ranged from ignoring the situation, making low-profile appeals and statements to making attempts to mediate.^[27]



According to V.K. Krishna Menon in 1964; "non-aligned nation(s) must be non-aligned with the non-aligned ... that is why, when some people here say, 'why haven't the non-aligned people stood up and shouted against China', I tell them, 'they have their own policy, they have their own independence'".^[28] In 1984, Sarvepalli Gopal said; "India ... found non-alignment deteriorating into isolation. Even the other non-aligned leaders, with the honourable exception of Nasser and Tito were guarded in their response to India's case."^[28]

The response of non-aligned nations to the Indo-Pakistan conflicts revealed insights into their views towards self determination, issues of secession, the use of force in boundary disputes, armed intervention, external support in liberation struggles, human rights and genocide.^{[29][30]} Many of the non-aligned nations were facing similar problems in their own countries.^[30] The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 saw a continuing decline in the role of non-aligned nations in peacekeeping, a decline that started with a failure to mediate during the 1962 Indo-Sino war.^[5]

For Jawaharlal Nehru the policy of non-alignment was an indigenous product, emanating from India's long struggle for freedom. So were probably the compulsions of the leaders of the Asian, African and Latin American countries who were able to assert their national identities mainly by adopting the policy of non-alignment.

Certain broad parameters which served as basic commitments in the formulation of India's foreign policy were laid down during India's freedom struggle. For instance, even before the establishment of the Congress, the nationalist leadership condemned British colonial wars in Asia and Africa and the use of Indian troops in them. The Indian National Congress, which served as the vanguard of the freedom struggle, advocated as early as in 1897 a foreign policy of peace. Significantly in his presidential address Shri C. Sankaran Nair, President of the Congress in 1897, stated:

Our true policy is a peaceful policy...With such capacity for internal development as our country possesses, with such a crying need to carry out the reforms absolutely necessary for our well-being, we want a period of prolonged peace.

Sentiments such as these were later echoed by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Three main strands which constituted the basic ingredients of the Congress thinking on foreign policy during the first four decades were: one, anti-colonialism and sympathy and support for the peoples fighting for their independence and liberation; two, consciousness of an Asian identity; and three, an economic rationale behind the resurgence of imperialism, including the role of foreign capital.

The Congress' foreign policy since the mid-1920s was formulated to a very large extent by Jawaharlal Nehru. His visit to Europe in 1926-27 as the representative of Congress to the International Congress of Oppressed Nationalities held in Brussels in February 1927, which assembled on one platform the representatives of the colonial peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, brought him in touch with Left-wing political workers, organisations and thinkers from all parts of the world, and constituted a landmark in formulation of his ideas and attitudes. Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union in November 1927 made a deep impact on him. His admiration for the Soviet Union as the greatest opponent of imperialism deepened with time. Following Jawaharlal Nehru's lead, the Indian National Congress at its Calcutta session declared that the Indian struggle was part of the worldwide struggle against imperialism. The Congress also decided to set up a Foreign Department to develop contacts with its counterparts in other parts of the world. Jawaharlal Nehru emerged as the chief Congress spokesperson on world affairs, and the Congress used his services to formulate all resolutions on foreign policy.

Jawaharlal Nehru was not unconscious of his indebtedness to Indian history and tradition as a determining factor in the formulation of his policy of non-alignment. Speaking years later in Parliament, on December 9, 1958, he significantly observed:

What I have done is to give voice to that policy (non-alignment)—I have not originated it. Its is a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind.³⁰

Jawaharlal Nehru undoubtedly articulated those inherent inner compulsions. He, however, added new dimensions in application of the principle of non-alignment in international relations. As such, the pursuit of non-alignment was in the national self-interest of India.



III.RESULTS

The Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 started as an "internal issue" of human rights in Pakistan, an issue of human rights but became India's problem with the migration of millions of refugees into India, which was referred to as "civilian aggression".^[31] Two major alignments developed; Pakistan aligned with the United States and China, and India aligned with the Soviet Union.^[32] Without Soviet support, India would not have been able to defend itself against the US-Pakistan-China alliance.^[32] This polarization influenced all forums and international opinion, including that of the Non-Aligned Movement, which at the time consisted of 53 nations.^[32] The non-aligned responses varied from calling the situation an internal matter of Pakistan to seeking a political solution to a humanitarian problem but only one of the non-aligned states mentioned the human rights aspect.^[33] It took time for some of the non-aligned nations to deal with the emergence of Bangladesh and to appreciate the contradictory issues of Pakistan national unity and the Bengali right to self-determination.^[34] During the Uniting for Peace resolution, non-aligned responses became clearer; some of the African non-aligned nations were the most critical of India while others that wanted to stay neutral made contradictory statements. The predicament of small non-aligned states was also seen.^[35] India was disappointed with the non-aligned response. In August 1971, M. C. Chagla, a former foreign affairs minister of India, said:

Look at the non-aligned countries, we have prided ourselves of our nonalignment. What have the non-aligned countries done? Nothing. ... many countries have skeletons in their cupboard. They have minorities whom they have not treated well and they feel that if they support Bangladesh, these minorities will also rise in revolt, in rebellion, against the oppressive policies being pursued by the administration.^{[36][37]}

The signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1971 and India's involvement in the internal affairs of its smaller neighbours in the 1970s and 1980s tarnished its image as a non-aligned nation and led some observers to question India's non-alignment.^[7] Rather than an issue of non-aligned solidarity, India's declining influence in non-aligned areas compared to the rise of China also affected the international withdrawal of support to India.^[9] There was no commitment for the non-aligned nations to help each other.^[38] Non-alignment also affected India's bilateral relations with many countries.^[38]

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, played a key role in the Non-Aligned Movement. He was one of the movement's founders, along with Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, and served as its chairman in 1954 and 1961. Nehru's vision of a unified, neutral third world bloc, free from the influence of the superpowers, was a major driving force behind the movement. He also actively promoted the principles of non-alignment and peaceful coexistence through diplomatic efforts and speeches. Jawaharlal Nehru was a universalist. After his interaction with the International Congress of Oppressed Nationalities he was instrumental in the commitment of the Indian National Congress and of Indian nationalism to internationalism and anti-colonial struggles all over the world. He established close rapport with world figures like Albert Einstein, Romain Rolland, Madame Sun Yat-Sen and George Lansbury. To Nehru, national self-interest was not a narrow self-centred concept, but one in which there was no incompatibility with the interests of other nations.

Jawaharlal Nehru was for the reconciliation of the national interests of one nation with that of the other. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly of India in 1948, he observed:

Whether a country is imperialist or socialistic or communist, its Foreign Minister thinks primarily of the interests of that country. But there is a difference, of course. Some people may think of the interests of their country regardless of other consequences, or take a short-distance view. Others may think that in the long-term policy, the interest of another country is as important to them as that of their own country. The interest of peace is more important because, if war comes, every one suffers, so that in the long-distance view, self-interest may itself demand a policy of co-operation with other nations, goodwill for other nations, as indeed it does demand.

Every intelligent person can see that if we have a narrow national policy it may excite the multitude for the moment, just as the communal cry has done, but it is bad for the nation and it is bad internationally, because we lose sight of the ultimate good and thereby endanger our own good. Therefore, we propose to look after India's interests in the context of world co-operation and world peace, insofar as world peace can be preserved.¹²

As such Jawaharlal Nehru saw India's national self-interest both in the context of better world co-operation and India's long-term interests. In a debate on foreign policy on December 7, 1950, to a specific question as to the conflict between India's interest and the interest of other nations, his answer was clear and succinct.



If our viewpoint is different, you cannot expect me to give up our viewpoint or the results that we have arrived at, because some other nations think differently. I just would not do that. I do not understand long and repeated arguments about this. I am on my country's side and on nobody else's.¹⁵

In his view the interest of one nation was not necessarily in conflict with that of other nations. From that flowed the cardinal principles of non-alignment: the mutuality of the interests of nations.

The basic ingredient of self-interest of any nation is maintenance of territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Under the guidance of Jawaharlal Nehru, India proceeded to achieve rapid economic development through the medium of Five-Year Plans. It was realised that there could be no national defence without a national industry and self-reliant economy. India decided to develop her economy and technology as an indispensable pre-requisite for national security or defence. For that, India kept its doors open for aid from all available sources, provided there were no political strings attached. The emphasis to begin with was more on developmental growth rather than building armed strength. After the disappointments of the early sixties, Jawaharlal Nehru himself correct the imbalance in the principles of Panchsheel without compromising the essential essence.³³

IV.CONCLUSIONS

The national self-interest dictated to Jawaharlal Nehru a policy of non-alignment, which in essence meant keeping an independence of policy, not aligning with power blocs or making pre-commitments, keeping our options open, not taking decisions on pre-conceived notions, and judging each issue on its merits.

The very fact of India's achieving independence caused an enormous impact all over the world. Freedom fighters everywhere received a great impetus. At the initiative of Jawaharlal Nehru, India convened the Asian Relations Conference in March 1947; this served as a pace setter for the coming events. Nehru was conscious of the momentous event and summed up the shared sentiments when he said:

For too long, we of Asia have been petitioners in the Western courts of the Chancellories. That story must now belong to the past. We propose to stand on our own feet and to co-operate with all others who are prepared to co-operate with us. We do not intend to be a plaything of others. 'Standing on our own feet' and 'not being a plaything of others' was the essence of the policy of non-alignment.³⁴

The policy of non-alignment proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru was contagious, and soon the number of its votaries began to increase for the same reasons and motivations.

An essential feature of the policy of non-alignment was the emphasis on peace, universal disarmament, and elimination of the element of fear. Nehru's views were full of idealism. He emerged as a philosopher of peace and freedom. To Nehru, peace was indivisible. He stated on January 12, 1951:

What we need is a passion for peace and for civilised behaviour in international affairs. It is the temper of peace and not the temper of war that we want, even though peace is sometimes casually mentioned....If we desire peace, we must develop the temper of peace and try to win even those who may be suspicious of us or who think they were against us. We have to try to understand others, just as we expect them to understand us. We cannot seek peace in the language of war or threats.

Jawaharlal Nehru was against creating positions of strength or playing the game of power politics. The doctrine of balance of power did not find favour with him. The commitment to peace also involved tackling the root cause of the social, economic and political conflicts, reducing international tensions and resolving conflicts without recourse to violence. He was aware that a peaceful approach would not necessarily guarantee peace, but he wanted to give it a fair trial. The resolution of conflict through discussion, negotiation and accommodation was his way. Jawaharlal Nehru repeatedly laid emphasis on pursuing a deliberate policy "of friendship with other countries" which he believed would go a long way in strengthening the security of the environment.³⁸

In short, Jawaharlal Nehru's concept of non-alignment was and continues to be affirmative and positive in content. It means breaking down prejudices, bringing people together, making them understand one another. Immediately after joining the Interim Government in September 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru made it clear that he would develop an intensive



concern in world affairs, and pursue an independent foreign policy compatible with India's national self-interests. He observed on September 7, 1947 that

We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which had led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale.

In a world riven with the Cold War, Nehru's emphasis on the need to cast out fear aroused misgivings on both sides. Panditji, however, stuck to his guns and soon emerged as a skilful moderator with considerable influence in harmonising contending influences. In the process, India began to exercise an influence much beyond its actual power. When the need arose, Nehru did not mince words in condemning aggression whether in Korea, Suez or Hungary.

Jawaharlal Nehru's convening of the conference on Indonesia in January 1949 in Delhi, to support the cause of Indonesian independence—which soon become a fact—marked in his own words “a turning point in history”. “It means new alignments and a new balance of power if not now, then in the near future.” He added: “We do not want to form a new bloc but inevitably the countries of Asia will come closer together and India will play a leading part in this.”

Jawaharlal Nehru soon devoted his attention to cement close and friendly relations with neighbours. Treaties of friendship were concluded with Bhutan in 1949 and with Nepal in 1950, two northern neighbours with whom India was closely bound by historical, cultural and social ties. India signed treaties of friendship with both Indonesia and Bhutan in 1951 and with the Philippines in July 1952. The same pattern of friendship was adopted with regard to her relations with Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Muscat, Syria and Turkey. The agreement of February 1954 with Sri Lanka on the presence in that country of people of Indian origin demonstrated the intentions of both India and Sri Lanka to work on this matter for a mutually acceptable arrangement. He also looked with pragmatism at the problem of Indians overseas, particularly in Burma, Fiji as well as East African countries. He advised Indian settlers to acquire local citizenship and associate themselves more with the interests of the people of that country. India was, however, against any discrimination towards them on the basis of colour and religion, and opposed the ill-treatment of the people of Indian origin in South Africa, a country with whom she served diplomatic relations as early as 1946.

The major problem facing Nehru's foreign policy was to determine relations with Pakistan, her immediate neighbour in the west and east, and with China, her big and powerful neighbour emerging out of civil war in the north. India hoped that the fact of geography and common history and language would help in furthering friendly relations with Pakistan but unresolved problems—the legacy of partition—proved a hindrance. Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir which had legally acceded to India complicated matters. Moreover, Pakistan's joining Western-sponsored alliances, namely, SEATO in 1954 and the Baghdad Pact in 1955, put her at complete variance with the policy of non-alignment being pursued by India.

India was one of the first Asian countries to recognise China in 1949. Jawaharlal Nehru considered friendly relations with China essential for peace in Asia and worked for developing co-operative relations with that country. Under an agreement with China in April 1954 India accepted Tibet as an autonomous region of China. India and China also worked out the modalities of trade between India and the Tibet region of China. The preamble of this agreement laid down the principles which came to be known as Panchsheel, the five principles of peaceful co-existence, that were meant to serve as the guiding factors governing relations between the two countries. These principles were: 1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; 2. Mutual non-aggression; 3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; 4. Equality and mutual benefit; and 5. Peaceful co-existence. Jawaharlal Nehru said:

I have no doubt that these principles of inter-national behaviour, if accepted and acted upon by all countries of the world, will go a long way to put an end to the fears and apprehensions which cast dark shadows over the world.³⁹

Jawaharlal Nehru demonstrated his policy to decide every issue on merit when he declined to sign the Japanese Peace Treaty in San Francisco in 1951. He considered certain provisions of the Treaty as constituting a limitation on Japanese sovereignty and national independence. Following the signing of that Treaty, India took simultaneous steps to end the state of war with Japan and concluded a separate bilateral peace treaty with that country in 1952. By that time, the Korean crisis was dragging on. India's efforts under Jawaharlal Nehru to defuse the crisis were universally recognised. India's credentials as a genuine disinterested nation were recognised by 1953 when, following the armistice, it was appointed Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and provided the custodian force to supervise the



exchange of prisoners of war. The fact that both sides accused India of partiality indeed proved India's independent and bipartisan approach.

India considered the struggle in Indo-China as a symbol of national resistance to Western domination and directed its efforts towards a negotiated settlement based on the people of Indo-China deciding their own future without foreign intervention. Under Nehru's direction, Krishna Menon played a dominant behind-the-scenes role in bringing about the Geneva Agreements of 1954. India's sincerity in promoting the cause of peace received due recognition when it was chosen as the Chairman of the International Control Commission set up under the Agreements. This helped to raise India's reputation in international affairs and there was wide appreciation of its commitment to value-based politics.

The Bandung Conference of twenty-nine Afro-Asian nations held in April 1955 in Jakarta was symbolic of the nascent solidarity of Asia and Africa. The Conference demonstrated the growing maturity of the Afro-Asian nations and their desire to play an independent and constructive role in world affairs. The Conference provided a forum to Afro-Asian nations for developing a common understanding on international problems. The Indian exposition of non-alignment and of Panchsheel, as embodied in the 1954 agreement with China, found eloquent expression at the conclusion of the Conference. The Bandung Conference also endorsed the call earlier given by Nehru in April 1954, suggesting a stand-still agreement on the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. This formed part of Nehru's step-by-step approach towards disarmament for furthering the cause of peace.

In 1960, Panditji attended the UN General Assembly. His presence demonstrated India's long-standing support of the relevance of the world body. While the events leading to the conflict with China in 1962 troubled Nehru during his last years, in 1961 his worldview received institutional vindication when the first Summit of Non-Aligned Nations took place in Belgrade. The Summit demonstrated the growing strength of non-alignment and the desire of the countries following that policy to strengthen co-operation among themselves. The declaration adopted by the Conference emphasised the need for co-existence of different social systems. It pointed out that these differences did not constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the stabilisation of peace, provided there were no attempts at domination and interference in the internal development of other peoples and nations. Nehru asserted that the era of classical colonialism was now over and there was need for readjustment of priorities of member states in the new context of growing rivalry in nuclear armaments. The acceptance of Nehru's viewpoint at Belgrade constituted a major triumph in international affairs.

We cannot do better than quote Nehru himself in summing up his foreign policy. Speaking in the Rajya Sabha on September 3, 1963 he pertinently observed that his foreign policy was "a right one, a good one and successful one". The policy on non-alignment, which was formulated and articulated by Jawaharlal Nehru, was not only a means of safeguarding India's own national self-interests, but also constituted an earnest attempt to democratise international relations. Two-thirds of the countries of the world are today members of the non-aligned movement; it has rightly been described as the world's largest peace movement. That constitutes a fitting tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru's vision and wisdom.⁴¹

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