The Nehru Years: Indian Non-Alignment as the Critique, Discourse and Practice of Security (1947-1964)

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The Nehru Years
Indian Non-Alignment as the Critique, Discourse and Practice of Security
(1947-1964)

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Abstract

The thesis focuses on non-alignment in the context of the Indian state in the years when Jawaharlal Nehru was Prime Minister (1947-1964). The central argument of the thesis is that non-alignment can be theorized and studied as an approach to security, particularly the critique, discourse and practice of it. The opening chapters discuss this argument in detail – the first chapter is a review of the literature and the second chapter is an extensive discussion of the critique of the nation-state and the idea of the international within the conceptualization of non-alignment. These ideas are further investigated by discussing the Indian response to four international events – the Korean War, the Suez Canal Crisis, the Hungarian Revolution and the Congo Crisis. These events are studied in three chapters. The thesis is bookended by an introduction and a concluding chapter.

The narrative uses material from six different archives in India, the UK and the US. As the events studied all took place in the 50s and 60s, the thesis has relied very heavily on historical analysis. The use of rare archival material aims to contribute to the writing of India’s diplomatic history (for instance, correspondence between Budapest and Delhi on the Hungarian Revolution, or the memoirs of India’s first Ambassador to the Congo and reports of the Indian representatives of the UN commissions during the Korean War). As all the chosen case studies are international events, the thesis contributes to the writing of India’s international history, India’s international relations and International Relations per se. The theoretical framework of the thesis has borrowed heavily from Critical Security Studies and also aims to contribute to that literature by bringing a non-Eurocentric viewpoint to it. The wider debates in the thesis also help redefine points of view on Indian foreign policy, particularly in respect to the significance and continued relevance of non-alignment to modern India.
This thesis is a study of non-alignment as it was conceptualised and developed in the context of modern India, particularly in the period immediately after independence. The main architect of India’s external affairs at this juncture was the first Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. The thesis is restricted to events that took place during the time he held office, between the years 1947 and 1964. In particular, this study aims to study non-alignment as an approach to security and as an approach to politics. There are three themes along which the thesis proceeds. First, the thesis contends that the historicity of non-alignment is put forward in ambiguous terms, leading to protracted debates about its past relevance and continued significance; second, that non-alignment frames politics innovatively, and with a willingness to move outside the gamut of security; and third, that this is an immensely precarious wager that encounters many points of resistance, which are not adequately engaged with in a sustained theoretical manner in literature on non-alignment. Thus, the thesis will argue that there has yet to emerge a serious critique of the political nature of non-alignment, and the systematic dismantling of security it undertook.

There is some disagreement amongst scholars about the originary sources of non-alignment, but in this study, I will argue that it was the political landscape of the fin-de-siècle that inaugurated non-alignment, and not the post World War II world. In the initial period, the accent was on the making of the non-alignment, and in later stages on the uptake of this idea in the form of political action. Certain aspects of non-alignment are resurgent at various points in time, and it is repeatedly remade at the seams. This iterative dimension of the idea is significant because it denotes a novel understanding of the nature of world politics. Non-alignment frequently moves between a disavowal of ideological politics and an engagement with the communities that have adopted those political processes. This is perhaps the most significant aspect of non-aligned politics, especially in its earliest stages because it sought to unmoor the foundations of security as being necessarily ideological. Particularly in the Cold War period, through non-alignment, an attempt was made to draw out the perceived theoretical opposition
between the two blocs, and to call into question the centrality of security to both those imaginations. This process is in itself significant, but it is also important to acknowledge that it is the consequence of political judgement and choice. In the thesis, I use non-alignment/non-aligned politics/non-aligned political action to denote a particular understanding of world politics, a willingness to engage with this politics and the actual action itself. Independent India was called upon to act in roles of international diplomacy but widely criticized when Delhi made an attempt at evolving a foreign policy framework that was conceptually distinct from the ones already in play. Even so, Nehru at the helm of affairs pushed forward a distinct retelling of international issues and India acted from a position of her own, however flawed that position might have been at times. Descriptions of non-alignment are often inattentive to this aspect, or significantly underplay its originality. In uncritically accepting that position, much of contemporary political commentary has moved a long distance away from the critical examination of non-alignment, unlike in the 1950s and 1960s, when political scientists constantly vetted Indian non-alignment.

In part, this is because non-alignment is seen as emerging from Nehru’s thinly veiled liberalism, collapsing ineluctably into his later-day realism. Yet, even more interesting than the history of non-alignment – where it came from and whose minds it took shape in – is the innovativeness with which it was reproduced, especially at the United Nations. Regularly, in the period under study, non-aligned India is seen adopting a stance that makes security irrelevant to the ordering of international political life. The start of the Cold War, the founding of the United Nations and the emergence of the modern Indian state all coincided with each other, and non-alignment emerged in speaking to all three of those events. The Cold War had placed security at the centre of political life. International public life was constrained entirely by the inability of states in either of the two blocs to look beyond the idea of security as the casting mould of international relations. The founding of the United Nations, whose membership was based on the principle of sovereignty, brought new possibilities forward to realign politics and security in their relation towards each other. For the newly decolonized states, in the 1940s, but also until much later, the United Nations represented a forum where agency bore the minimum possible relation to power. Although the political processes at the UN were by no means insulated from power politics, the debating procedures of the UN, especially in the General Assembly where these could be held
without the fear of the veto, provided these countries with the platform where they could be heard, especially a platform where their disapproval, protest and condemnation could be recorded. In other words, it gave the disenfranchised the opportunity to take a position contrary to that which was dominant. This was the moment when Nehru oriented India’s diplomacy towards mediation in international conflicts, in a role increasingly identified with the neutralist states. Yet, surprisingly much of India’s diplomacy at the time is unacknowledged in the literature on these conflicts, and also in literature on India’s international relations. There is also a curious lack in discussing India as the only non-aligned founding member of the UN. By being non-aligned and throwing her weight behind the UN, India brought non-alignment to the most globally representative organization of the time. Although other founding members of the UN such as Egypt came to be non-aligned eventually, it was Indian opposition to the highly security-centric discourse of the Cold War that came to be non-alignment’s most visible characteristic in the initial few years. These aspects of its history have received limited attention.

Equally, there is much to be written about the levels of abstraction within the non-aligned approach to security, i.e. ways in which non-alignment is unable to grasp the currents of world politics, or change their course. As especially the latter half of the thesis will illustrate, there are significant inconsistencies in the framework of non-alignment. The thesis outlines the possibilities, limits and adaptability of non-aligned politics, but also points out that as the prime motivator of this process, Nehru left much to chance. By assuming that even in changing historical circumstances, choice would always be possible, and that that choice would always be guided by sound political judgement, he placed too much emphasis on political actors. In India, he sought to make the diplomatic corps the pivot around which non-alignment revolved, but as the historical analysis in the thesis will show, envoys from Nehru were often only following his orders, and found themselves constrained in expressing views contradictory to his. With leaders of other non-aligned nations too, such as Sukarno, Nasser and Nkrumah, Nehru had differences of opinion and even though India followed the policy of being non-aligned with the non-aligned, this meant that the divergence of views between these different forms of non-alignment did not receive any methodical examination. Nehru, and others such as Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Krishna Menon, showed unease with certain aspects of the Non-Aligned Movement, the changing contours of Asia-Africa.
cooperation and the concept of the Third World (often confused with the concept of a bloc). The adjacency of these concepts meant that they were bandied together without clear distinctions, particularly in the 1950s. In turn, this meant that India stayed at somewhat of a remove from these forums even while participating in them, mostly by laying emphasis on the fact that she was constrained by domestic issues. Thus, by engaging with these audiences in a limited way, Nehru kept Indian non-alignment rather insulated from the exchanges between these political collectives. We see in later phases, his distance from formerly like-minded thinkers and leaders. This estrangement did nothing to revitalise non-alignment that would have perhaps benefitted from contestation over its meaning, and reflection from a wider variety of sources. The literature on non-alignment also disregards this side of the story.

A popular explanation for this absence is to point to the inefficacy of non-alignment. In this version, non-alignment simply doesn’t work, either for India’s national interests or for the reordering of world politics. So, studies very often begin by decrying its continuing legacy and influence, and move on to discussing alternatives. These sorts of narrative rely very heavily on expansive descriptions of the interface between non-alignment and politics without taking apart particular instances from its history. Rather, this thesis discusses the links between the history of non-alignment and the legitimacy of the claims forwarded in its name. A fresh interrogation of these links shows that non-alignment of the past has deep and lasting significance for the history of that period, and also in shaping the present. A historical examination of select episodes shows that on balance, perspectives on non-alignment are sometimes inadequate, and sometimes inaccurate. The thesis aims to contribute to the literature in a way that recovers meaning and establishes relevance. To that end, the thesis discusses the analytic and material cognates of non-alignment in conjunction with each other to argue that they are both largely unacknowledged. The chapters are organized in a way that forwards that argument.

There are two opening chapters – the first is a literature review that brings together perspectives on non-alignment, both contemporaneous to the period that is under study and more recent analyses. Apart from discussing this literature, the objective in this chapter is to delineate various perspectives found in the literature and to analyse their usefulness to the study at hand. The chapter also looks more broadly at International
Relations theory, particularly in its non-Western and critical variants to suggest useful tools for the study of non-alignment. Particularly significant is the discussion of the Critical Security Studies literature and its special significance for the study of non-alignment. The chapter ends with a note on methodology.

The second opening chapter attempts a recasting of some of the arguments that emerge from the analysis in the first chapter to suggest a different reading of non-alignment. The chapter begins by discussing Gandhi and Tagore’s perspectives on politics and uses those and other ideas to substantiate Nehru’s international political thought. It then goes on to suggest that in order to successfully theorize non-alignment, it is necessary to historicize it. The main argument in this chapter is that non-alignment was an approach to security that underwent three phases – in these phases, elements of critique, discourse and practice were present in varying degrees, with the initial phase being the most critical. These phases correspond to the empirical chapters that follow. The central argument is that non-alignment is best understood not only as an approach to India’s international relations, but also to International Relations in general. Therefore, the case studies chosen are all instances of the breakdown of political processes where India’s national and territorial interests were not threatened, but where India chose to mediate nevertheless.

In following that logic, Chapter 3 is a study of India’s involvement in the Korean War, particularly in the later stages of that war and in bringing it to a close through the successful negotiation of an armistice agreement. The period under review is 1950-1953. In this phase, I study non-alignment as adopting a critical stance towards security. The emphasis in this period was on dismantling ideas of security rooted in the Cold War framework. The Korean War is an insightful case study because India’s diplomacy at this point, especially at the United Nations, comes forth as rooted in the unmaking of security through an emphasis on political processes. These processes are discussed in detail. The chapter also details the beginnings of independent India’s diplomacy at the UN.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the latter half of the year 1956 as bringing together two crises that coincided in time almost to the hour but were starkly different in their causes and consequences. These are the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution. India was
intimately involved with both in very different ways. In the Suez Canal Crisis, India assumed again the mediatory role she had so well constructed for herself during the Korean War. The anti-colonial fervour of the crisis and India’s support of the Egyptian cause did not impede her from mediating with both sides and India contributed substantially to the closing of the crisis. On the other hand, in the case of Hungary, Nehru exposed himself to severe criticism, both international and domestic for his delayed and ambiguous response to Soviet actions in suppressing the revolution. Both these events are discussed in conjunction as an attempt to read them not as discontinuity, but as representing a discursive moment, one in which non-alignment as an approach encountered its first challenge, and responded by somewhat diluting the critique of security that was so stark in the first phase.

Indeed, the next crisis we discuss goes a step further away from the critical stance adopted by non-alignment in the early 1950s. In Chapter 5, I discuss the Congo Crisis, one where India was involved between 1960-1963. It is my contention that India’s involvement in the crisis, particularly in the form of heavy military support to the UN, points to a phase in non-alignment where it had lapsed into a practice of security. The advent of peacekeeping and the UN’s reliance on India’s troop contribution for its continued survival and success in the Congo exposed India to rapid alienation from African member-states, and cost Indian lives on the ground. In turn, this exposed Nehru’s administration and foreign policy to criticism from within the domestic realm in India. The crisis was soon overshadowed by the border problems with the Chinese and the eventual Sino-Indian War of 1962, but the Congo Crisis shows how India chose to strengthen the UN by military means, in complete contradiction of her stated position a decade earlier.

The three empirical chapters thus correlate to the three phases spread over the Nehru years where India first started out by adopting a highly critical stance towards the centrality of security to political imagination. This constructive phase reached its high point in the Bandung Conference of 1955. This position fell into flux in the latter half of 1956; by this point, the distance between the securitized and the political positions began to close and the ambiguities once nurtured in order to help define India’s positions on issues were now used to justify them in a political language. By the early 1960s, non-alignment went into its third phase where it was used to mandate the use of
force for the purposes of peacekeeping. Thus, over the space of a decade, security moved back into the centrality of the political imagination. The concluding chapter considers this movement as discussed in the three phases and offers some final remarks. The chapter titles in the thesis are borrowed from Nehru’s descriptions of the events under study. They are doubly interesting because they are signal terms marking the political environment in which Nehru thought non-alignment was operating. Thus, when he said, “India ploughs a lonely furrow”, he was identifying non-alignment as isolating India, an effect Nehru sought to overcome through enthusiastic diplomacy. When he said, “We live in an unreal world”, he could have been pointing to the imaginary or inauthentic nature of world politics, which made it difficult for non-alignment to sustain the critique it was built on. The Korean War took many surprising turns, but the armistice negotiations quickly fell into a lull; so unexpected was an agreement between the two superpowers that Nehru called it an “outbreak of peace”. In 1956, as events proceeded quicker than non-alignment could reconcile with, Nehru spoke of the inability of foreign policy to distinguish between right and wrong under “the fog of war”. Finally, as Indian troops sustained casualties in the Congo and African states were estranged from Indian involvement there, Nehru wondered if the use of force could be a guarantor of security, and if so, “security for whom”? In each phase, there is an acute sensitivity to the question of security, but one that does not necessarily translate into critique, or inform policy.

This thesis attempts to make a contribution in two connected ways – the first is by theorizing non-alignment as an approach to security using tools from within the Critical Security Studies (CSS) toolkit. CSS aligns neatly with the study of Indian diplomacy during the Cold War because it questions the primacy of security within political discourse, particularly in the realm of the international, where the units of political action are states. By bringing CSS to the study of non-alignment, there is an added emphasis on rethinking possibilities for writing non-Western theory. The second way is by historicizing four events in India’s international relations in order to be able to offer to Critical Security Studies a new perspective on thinking politics. The possibilities for a critique of security that were present within the narrative of non-alignment in the early stages are useful for CSS because they introduce new shifts in the theorization of security. Even more crucially, the lapse into discourse and then into practice makes evident the limits of that critique.
The reading of non-alignment in its early years shows how naturally it aligns with some of the larger anxieties theorized within CSS. It comes as somewhat of a surprise, therefore, that this study has not been previously or differently attempted. Yet, different approaches within International Relations theory have attempted their own readings of non-alignment. As with each one of those, Critical Security Studies too makes possible a paradigmatic approach to non-alignment; the specificity of that approach lies in its essential refusal to treat security uncritically. Critical Security Studies literature offers problematizations of security, but also of the critique of security. Therefore, in using it as an approach to study non-alignment, we deal with three sets of questions – is critique possible, is it sustainable and does it open up new sites for the emergence of political action? The early history of non-alignment shows that these possibilities exist at various times, and often simultaneously, and their impact on international politics has been transformative. Similarly, international politics has also had an influence on non-alignment and has challenged it in ways that raise questions about its efficacy, and its relevance. The following chapters tackle some of those questions.

There are now two versions of the debate surrounding non-alignment: one that was stalled in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the latter which is ongoing and deals with the relevance of non-alignment in contemporary world politics and as a foreign policy for India. Both those debates can be traced back to Nehru’s conceptualisation of non-alignment at the height of the Cold War. This thesis is interested in the historical treatment of that period because the contestation over the meaning of non-alignment has been at the centre of both those debates. Better understanding of non-alignment at its foundational stages might facilitate more comprehensive analysis of how its scope has changed over time. Some studies now claim that non-alignment is no longer relevant. Albeit, that should in no way diminish its place in the history of modern India’s international relations. The processes set in motion by that policy still inform India’s external affairs and narratives on Indian foreign policy are often constructed orienting towards or away from non-alignment. It might be difficult to find a policy in another national setting that is neither denied nor confirmed, yet so clearly at the centre of a nation’s political life. This thesis is a study of this policy, and of the foundations of that policy in political thought.
Chapter 1

‘An Unreal World’

Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Non-alignment

This chapter is written with two objectives in mind – first, to provide a literature review of the prevalent approaches to the study of non-alignment, and second, to discuss the theoretical and methodological approaches this thesis will employ. There are four parts to this chapter – the first is a discussion of perspectives on non-alignment and how they correspond with theories of International Relations; the second part discusses approaches to non-alignment from within non-Western International Relations theory; the third part discusses how the study of non-alignment and Critical Security Studies together is useful. The chapter ends with a section on methodology.

This review of the literature is necessary not only because non-alignment has no settled definition but also because the inability to define non-alignment impedes a sustained study of it as political theory, thought or narrative. The difficulty of locating non-alignment within theories of International Relations as they exist points to the inability of those theories to accommodate it despite their prolific expansion in the last century. Rob Walker contends that these theories are “less interesting for the substantive explanations they offer about political conditions in the modern world than as expressions of the limits of the contemporary political imagination when confronted with persistent claims about the evidence of fundamental historical and structural transformation.”1 In the case of non-alignment, this has proven an accurate diagnosis. In 1945, the political discourse of the West was largely inattentive to the possibilities of reimagining politics outside of security, and also actively placing constraints on political discourses that were making an attempt in that direction. Indeed, this trend continued and by 1962, Nehru was lamenting the “unreal world” that India was living in, speaking of the imaginary or inauthentic nature of world politics, making it difficult for non-aligned politics to sustain itself2.

The anti-colonial movements of the early- and mid-twentieth century had gained enough momentum to be taken seriously as fresh evidence that there was a lag between political discourses on the one hand and global movements on the other. This gap was further widened by the inability of a Eurocentric political discourse to acknowledge or remedy it. Dabashi says that Eurocentrism is now completely blasé, that of course Europe sees the world from its vantage point. But, already at the beginning of the last century, anti-colonial leaders were alert to this lapse. Indeed, the anti-colonial oeuvre read Europe and Empire as occupying the same category of political thought and sought to overcome Eurocentrism by dismantling Empire. The questions of Europe and Empire were so closely tied together, that by dismantling Empire, the anti-colonials were forcing Europe to acknowledge the multitude of existing vantage points, even if they continued to see things from their own. Although they succeeded to a certain extent, particularly through the vehicle of the United Nations, International Relations theory has not paid sufficient heed to the trials and triumphs of these moves. That has remained the reserve of social and political history.

One of the ways in which the anti-colonials chose to override the Eurocentric character of the international space was by institutionalising processes that were simultaneously nationalist and internationalist. As I will discuss at length in the following chapter, non-alignment was a product of such an agenda. Therefore, by paying selective attention to these historical forces, theories of International Relations produce partial and incomplete analyses of non-alignment. This is partly because the field of global history has had limited interaction with the field of International Relations, even less so in the study of the Cold War. Studies that are interested in the “perspective that shifted south”, and so, are capable of discussing non-alignment in different contextual settings are only recently being written as the archives of ex-Soviet satellite states, the Soviet Union itself and those of countries such as India are becoming more accessible. This shift in perspective might also employ its own sets of assumptions about the “character and location of political life”. For instance, non-alignment was conceptualised in part as a response to Nehru’s assumption that the Cold War would be located not solely in

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6 Walker, Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory, 5.
the United States or in the Soviet Union, but increasingly in the countries of Asia and Africa. The assumptions on which non-alignment was based were partly derived from sources outside the Cold War paradigm. But the theories that attempted to explain non-alignment were still trying to impose on it categories derived from political realism for the most part, and liberalism in some other cases. Thus, although many studies reviewed here are useful in the insights they provide, they are unable to fully grasp the character of non-alignment.

The argument in this chapter is this: political realism was so deeply concerned with questions of power that it chose to define non-alignment as an unsustainable position; liberalism placed an emphasis on the normative sources of political action and so selectively read only those instances where non-alignment fit those criteria; both perspectives continue to treat non-alignment not as a historical model, but as evidence that the re-imagination of politics is a futile task, especially where it tries to mediate between the positions offered by realism and liberalism, which are seen as mutually exclusive. Marxist theories of state behaviour were more ambiguous towards non-alignment, but those that were particularly suited to contemplating the Indian model of the state – in the form of the Subaltern Studies project – were limited in their analytical scope due to their characterisation of non-alignment as the consequence of elite action. Non-Western theory can influence and be influenced by the theorisation of non-alignment, but is often too imitative of realist traditions in western International Relations theory. This thesis also suggests that Critical Security Studies (CSS) shares many anxieties with early non-alignment and so is best suited to developing a conceptual toolbox for such a study. Past studies of non-alignment have produced some insight into the political action it makes possible. In taking those insights as my point of commencement, I will attempt a review of the literature.

Non-alignment and International Relations Theory

The first strand of literature on non-alignment sees it in relation to the power-centric discourse of the Cold War. The presupposition in much of this writing is to emphasize the Cold War as a period in which non-alignment came to prominence. One could argue

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that this method simply indicates the context in which non-alignment emerged without discussing how that emergence impacted on and changed the contours of that period. Studies that adopt this perspective often draw a straight line from the person of Nehru to the Non-Aligned Movement to show that non-alignment developed as an approach from the individual to the institutional and tapered off in importance with time, as the Cold War context within which it emerged came to an end with the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The logical extension of that argument is to treat non-alignment as neutralism or neutrality, which was in itself a distinctly legalistic formulation for times of war. Indeed, the argument for neutrality was drawn from a completely different historical context and framed within the discourse of war. Yet, for almost two decades, writers routinely used non-alignment and neutralism interchangeably and presumably to indicate the same position. Not only were they uninterested in repeated pronouncements by the Indian administration that these were indeed, distinct concepts not to be confused with each other, this assumption sparked off debates on the relevance of the non-aligned position. An example of this sort of analysis can be found in an important volume of essays edited by Michael Brecher that developed a methodological framework from which to understand non-alignment, with some reflection on the historical antecedents of the non-aligned position. Although it still remains a significant study of non-alignment in the Nehru years (the book was published in 1964) the essays in the book are driven by a single question – whether non-alignment would retain its relevance after Nehru, and more importantly, after the end of the Cold War and if it was really that distinct a position from the neutralism of European states, on which question the book is inconclusive.

Other writings dealing with the differences and similarities between neutralism, neutrality and non-alignment include Anabtawi, Liska and Martin amongst others – all dealing with different aspects of the same question. Morgenthau also attempted to clarify these positions vis-à-vis international politics per se. Some writers, such as

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Armstrong and Scalapino chose to consider the concept in its Asian context, but still abjured the term non-alignment.\textsuperscript{11} A long and detailed response to the question can be found in Peter Lyon’s work, which lays out an argument for why non-alignment is essentially the same as neutralism and that choosing different terminology deliberately obfuscates the similarity in those positions, giving non-alignment an aura of novelty that is undeserved.\textsuperscript{12} In fact, this is a larger question than Lyon contends, tackled in a dedicated issue of the journal \textit{Foreign Affairs}, where the editors Babaa and Crabb make the argument that “Commentators outside the neutralist zone have frequently used phraseology reflecting ignorance of the concept, and in some cases they have deliberately sought to discredit it.”\textsuperscript{13} They also go on to make the important point that the preferences of the non-aligned states matter too and that they chose to use nonalignment over neutralism because it denotes neutrality in its most political and positivist sense, while neutralism has come to be associated with the more legal or ethical connotations of neutrality.\textsuperscript{14} To avoid such connotations, they say that the uncommitted countries prefer non-alignment as the best alternative policy towards the great powers.\textsuperscript{15} Amongst the literature mentioned above, it is this selection of articles that takes a wide-range view of the debates on the matter and is the only work to seriously consider the terminology as reflecting an element of agency for states emerging into the Cold War arena of international politics.

Of course, non-alignment was a response to the Cold War, but as much of this literature is wont to ignore, it was also a critique of it. Nehru considered the Cold War misleading and dangerous – an anomaly in terms and stressed the inherent movement towards war in this approach; as he said, “War should be avoided. And if war is avoided, thinking in terms of war, too, should be avoided as far as possible. What is the alternative? The Cold War? Well the Cold War means thinking all the time in terms of war; in terms of preparation for war and the risk of having the hot war.”\textsuperscript{16} In his conceptualisation, war occupied a central position in the discourse on security, and as a result in the discourse on politics. He therefore sought to formulate non-alignment outside that discourse and

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\item[14] The sort of neutrality embraced by European states such as Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland.
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reiterated the positive constitution of the concept as “not a negative or merely neutral policy, but a positive policy naturally helping those forces that we consider right and naturally disapproving of those things that we do not like, but fundamentally keeping apart from other countries and other alignments of powers, which normally lead to major conflicts.” The imagination of non-alignment was therefore, not in opposition to alignment, but in opposition to security and alignment both, which were seen as mutually inclusive concepts. By being non-aligned, India could move towards decentring security from the discourse of international politics.

In the course of debates on India’s position on matters of international affairs, Nehru often declared, “our policy is not a negative policy”\(^\text{18}\). This positive constitution of the policy can be detected in the position adopted by the non-aligned towards the question of détente. The Indian position on détente was that it was basically the same approach as had dictated military alliances, that it was an arrangement between warring parties and that for it to have meaning beyond the Cold War, it would have to involve relaxation of tensions and normalcy of relations between all powers, big or small. As Nehru put it, “Peace is indivisible: it could not be reduced to a mere shifting of confrontation from one area to another, nor should it condone the continued existence of tension in some areas while to eliminate it elsewhere. Détente would remain precarious if it did not take into consideration the interests of other countries.”\(^\text{19}\) This position was equally endorsed by other non-aligned states - Bandarnaike questions, “whether this could turn out to be mutual accommodation between the great Powers”, anxious that if this were to happen, “it would spare their immediate regions the insecurity and instability of confrontation it, would shift the arena of their rivalries and conflicts to other areas”\(^\text{20}\).

As the Cold War and détente both belonged to the same conceptual category, Nehru, and other non-aligned states sought to emphasize the notion of peace as being quite distinct, and as necessitating its own political commitment. Détente, although a step in

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\(^{17}\) “Salient Features of India's Foreign Policy,” in Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (SWJN), 2nd Ser., vol. 34, eds., HY Sharada Prasad, A K Damodaran, Mushirul Hasan, (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund), 475.


the direction of peace, was not in itself considered a manifestation of peace between the
two superpowers. Instead, it was seen as the suspension of balance of power politics at a
time when equilibrium in the international system seemed to have been somewhat
achieved. The non-aligned approach, on the other hand, necessarily involved an
engagement with the very nature of state power. In parts, it initiated a critique of state
power but it also sought to ratify certain other aspects of the exercise of power by the
state. For Appadorai, non-alignment is an approach “supplementary to the one based on
power”, and one that “proceeds on the assumption that peace cannot be promoted by
creating positions of strength”.

This approach finds articulation in contemporary literature on the security dilemma,
first articulated by Herz, but picked up later in the Waltzian theory of defensive
realism. Although the question of arms race and détente were conceptually closely tied
together, Nehru did not consider détente a guarantee against the arms race. Authors such
as Rana consider non-alignment a method intended to overcome that limitation – Rana
is of the view that non-alignment was an effort to maximize power, an effort in which
he thinks it partially succeeded by disavowing military alliances and achieving strategic
autonomy. Although he makes no effort to discuss the constraints within which the
Indian state was operating, primary of which is resistance against the policy of non-
alignment, Rana considers it a highly effective foreign policy, one that adapted the
classic realist argument that “the essence of power is the ability to exercise compelling
pressure irrespective of its reasonableness.”

G S Bajpai, India’s first Secretary-General in the Ministry of External Affairs, took a
different view, seeing that the balance of power had become influenced by the notion
that “superiority of power can alone prevent aggression.” In a succinct analysis,
Bajpai traces the role of power in the creation of difference, and puts forward the idea
that a politics informed by such power does “justice to neither ideals nor to realities.”

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21 Angadipuram Appadorai, National Interest and India’s Foreign Policy, (New Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 1992), 12.
24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
He is also of the opinion that “no immediate Indian interest” will be served by entering into alliances and since the conflict of the Great Powers has assumed global scale, the strength of moral power is not adequate to the task and that India must strengthen her foreign policy. Albeit, Bajpai emphasizes that the “inherent goodness of that policy is insufficient to sustain or further it … but by seeking so to balance power that peace will be preserved by the fear of the consequences of war.” Therefore, Bajpai is not interested merely in the question of keeping non-aligned countries, especially India, “removed from the arena of conflict”, as Babaa and Crabb suggest non-alignment does in the face of power politics; instead, Bajpai advocates a rebalancing role for the non-aligned. Therefore, the analysis still hinges on the balance-of-power approach to world politics. There is also in Bajpai’s writing a call for increased pragmatism in foreign policy – a view taken in retrospect by other authors too, some of whom take a generous view of its accomplishments, whilst others are less satisfied. Andersen belongs to the former category, arguing that non-alignment was a central principle, around which revolved the “broad policy orientation underscored efforts to give India an independent and influential role in world affairs.” For Srinivasan, on the other hand, non-alignment is best understood in three phases – the ages of idealism, realism and opportunism. Of these, the first – the age of idealism – comes to a close with Nehru’s death, but that during his time, it was marked with a combination of a lot of idealism and some pragmatism, but not nearly enough. He is also of the opinion that non-alignment doesn’t have a core strategy, that “it was essentially improvisational.”

Non-alignment in the Nehru years has been widely analyzed within accounts on Indian foreign policy. Most studies begin by identifying Nehru as the prime architect and practitioner of foreign policy in India around independence; some studies characterize this period as one of three phases in which they see non-alignment in India from 1947 to the present day while some others see it as one of three contending visions for India’s

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
32 Nehru’s first pronouncement on foreign policy, and the place of what eventually came to be called non-alignment in it was in his speech as Vice-Chairman of the Interim Government on 7 September 1946, the text of which can be found in Jawaharlal Nehru, Speeches, vol. 1, (New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India, 1967), 23; an even earlier outline proposed by him is from 1927; see Jawaharlal Nehru, “A Foreign Policy for India,” AICC File No 8, 1927, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi, India. For a good survey of how and why Nehru is most closely associated with non-alignment, see Rudra Chaudhuri, “The Limits of Executive Power: Domestic Politics and Alliance Behaviour in Nehru’s India,” India Review 11, 2 (2012): 95-115.
strategic culture. Examples of the former can be found in Sumit Ganguly’s study titled ‘The Genesis of Nonalignment’, wherein he divides the history of modern Indian foreign policy into three epochs – 1947-1962, 1962-1991 and 1991 to present day, and says that the “ideational foreign policy” of the first epoch was the result of personal, national and systemic factors, where “the moral stance of nonalignment against colonization and apartheid neatly dovetailed with India's Gandhian heritage”. David Malone also identifies the 1950s and 1960s as being governed by “unified idealism”.

A second strand of foreign policy literature prefers to think of the Nehruvian era as part of three contending visions for foreign policy in India. Kanti Bajpai offers a typology of ‘Nehruvian international’, ‘neoliberal globalism’ and ‘hypernationalism’, while saying that the shift from the Nehruvian position to a more neoliberal and hyperrealist/hypernationalist position has only become more visible in this last decade. In a volume edited by Bajpai and Pant, three pieces tackle the question separately – in Raja Mohan’s chapter titled ‘Beyond Nonalignment’, he contends that although India did not formally discard it, the contours of its future foreign policy would bear no resemblance to the idea of nonalignment, which had shaped its image in the world so definitively in the early decades of the republic; he also draws a clear distinction between non-alignment and the Non-Aligned Movement, saying “The NAM often complemented India's pursuit of its international objectives but never fully supplanted nonalignment”.

In the same volume, Cohen and Kanti Bajpai also discuss Nehru’s influence in their respective pieces on India’s strategic culture – Cohen is of the view that “Nehruvian internationalism is ‘realist’ in its assumption that the world is not necessarily friendly to a weak and vulnerable state such as in India, and that national interests must shape the foreign policy of any state.” He contrasts this with Nehru’s liberalism to say that Nehru himself wavered continually between idealism and national egoism, or realism, arguing that idealism was, for India, a pragmatic and realistic policy...In brief, India could do

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well by doing good, and when it could not do good, the essentially just and moral India could, when necessary, use force to protect its vital interests. As in other great interests, this national egoism permeates Indian foreign policy.”

Kanti Bajpai’s piece on Indian strategic culture lays out his aforementioned typology in the context of India’s strategic culture. Rajagopalan and Ollapally confer that these contending views can be understood as ‘traditional nationalist’ or ‘pragmatist’ “with the former representing the established and dominant perspective, and the latter as the emerging challenger.” They make an interesting point to say that the traditionalist view has taken on different manifestations during and after the Cold War, first as ‘non-alignment’ and then as ‘strategic autonomy’, while arguing that these forms are ideal types and that often there is overlap between them. Rahul Sagar also describes these positions within Indian political thought as “visions” rather than ‘schools’, because the objectives they commend are often elucidated as images or ideals, rather than as conclusions derived from sustained arguments about the nature of international politics.”

Pratap Mehta questions the evolution of Indian foreign policy in an article titled ‘Still Under Nehru’s Shadow?’ while saying the more sophisticated accounts of foreign policy in India will be less concerned with the balance between idealist and realist strands and more with what historical circumstances tilt that balance and discusses, in quoting Raymond Aron, whether Nehru was an idealist abroad and a realist at home.

Of the pieces discussed above, only Mehta’s piece tackles the larger question in political philosophy, of how a state can critically respond to the question of power in world politics, whether political, military or moral, whilst the state itself is a repository and conduit for power. The focus of other studies has been on how states formulate their foreign and security policies in order to achieve and wield more power, and how those policies are informed by political vision, which might aid or hamper that process. Therefore, non-alignment is usually discussed in those terms. As Srinivasan puts it, because in Nehru’s time, non-alignment is often considered reflective of idealism in politics, there is not much emphasis on discussing its critical elements. There is also the tendency to treat only the post-Nehru period as that of realism in India’s international relations, and as a period when the question of power became central to India’s

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37 Stephen Cohen, “The World View of India's Strategic Elite,” in Bajpai and Pant, India's Foreign Policy, 51-81.
40 Mehta, “Still Under Nehru’s Shadow?,” 221.
approach to world politics. Commentators argue either that non-alignment did not engage with power at all, or did not manage to do so efficiently. The first charge is simply inaccurate, because non-alignment emerged in the context of rivalry between two power blocs, and as a response to this ordering of world politics. For India, after independence, it would have been myopic and fatalistic to imagine a foreign policy in a vacuum. It was also the product of a cumulative tradition of political philosophy, a question that I shall return to in the next chapter in detail, but it is important to note here that the anti-colonial movement in India was developed on the basis of a deeply sophisticated understanding of power, whose primacy was displaced by engaging with it and reframing it in different modes. Non-alignment was borne out of that very same anti-colonial movement, so its engagement with power was a fundamental and crucial aspect of it – it is what gave it its relevance.

Therefore, the more interesting questions to ask revolve not around an assumption that non-alignment was unconcerned with power, but in how the specific dimensions of that relationship were constructed. Evidently, Nehru chose to tackle the question of power in different frames – domestically, the question of state power was first framed towards a discourse of sovereignty and later towards the narrative of development. On the external front, an understanding of power had to be constructed in relation to the other understandings of power already in play. This structure was already dominated by two rival discourses of power, both according primacy to the question of security. These discourses were put into play by states that possessed power, and used it to consolidate their position in the system of states. Thus, state power was projected through superior might, with an emphasis on the increased militarisation of political issues. Not only did Nehru believe that India was not suited to a military approach to international affairs, he was acutely aware of the distinct disadvantage India had in terms of pure military strength. India’s struggle for independence from British rule was built on a similarly lopsided relationship and to some extent, Nehru replicated the methods used by Gandhi to overcome this fundamental handicap. Not only did he envisage non-alignment as a solution to the power asymmetry India was faced with, he also planned on turning it into a distinct advantage – by laying emphasis on the moral strength of the powerless. The iteration of the non-aligned stand is always accompanied in his writing and speeches with a reminder that India’s resources are limited, and such as they are, they would be utilized to further the cause of peace in the international arena and of
development in the domestic sphere. The assertion, therefore, that Nehru was a realist and that he chose to portray himself as an idealist rests on an obsolete notion that political actors must choose between ideas and interests. In fact, the distinction between those two approaches to politics itself has been made redundant by the inability to distinguish between them (as ideas such as democracy have over time become interests such as democratization) but also because studies in political judgement now show that this is a false distinction and an insistence on applying it to processes leads to a metalepsis in the best case and forced causality in the worst.\footnote{For a study of Nehru’s judgement, see Sunil Khilnani, “Nehru’s Judgement,” in Political Judgement: Essays for John Dunn, eds. Richard Bourke and Raymond Geuss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 257-276}

Yet, this approach is very prevalent in writing on non-alignment. So, Werner Levi considers non-alignment “more ardent than rational” and argues that a policy of “Indian neutralism” isolated India in the international system\footnote{Werner Levi, “Indian Neutralism Considered,” Pacific Affairs 37, 2 (1964): 137.}. Levi considered non-alignment another strategy intended to secure the best interests of uncommitted nations and suggested that in order to overcome that isolation, “the only conceivable situation in which neutralism could function was a balance of power in which the neutralist could act as a conscience and as a broker.”\footnote{Ibid., 144} Although non-alignment had repeatedly repudiated the balance of power, studies that read non-alignment as neutralism also eventually cast it in that mould. They also considered the non-aligned position excessively moralistic in tenor although in reality as driven by national interests as the two power blocs. Writers such as Jansen, accuse non-alignment of having a substantially deceptive façade apart from being a completely ineffective foreign policy for India and other non-aligned states and take it upon themselves to expose this hypocrisy\footnote{Godfrey H. Jansen, Nonalignment and the Afro-Asian State (New York: Praeger, 1966), 432.}. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit spoke to this criticism at the time it was first levelled, “Criticism is very often expressed that in the pursuit of idealistic objectives the framers of India’s policy have sacrificed national interest. While it is true that the policy of every country has to serve the cause of national interest, the problem of defining national interests continues to pose difficulty”, she said\footnote{Quoted in Manu Bhagavan, The Peacemakers: India and the Quest for One World, (New York: Harper Collins, 2012), 164.}. Yet, the bifurcation of ideas and interests is so entrenched in the analysis of state behaviour, and so evident in the analysis of Indian foreign policy, that there is no getting away even for concepts such as non-alignment that in some ways look to subvert this paradigmatic approach.

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43 Ibid., 144
There are two assumptions within this sort of literature – first, that non-alignment is nothing but foreign policy, and second, that it can only be analysed using realist theories of international relations, as they are best-equipped to understand the balance of power politics, exemplified by the Cold War. The problem of treating non-alignment primarily as the foreign policy of a state is that it measures the efficacy of the policy only by its ability to secure and promote India’s national interests. Thus, there is no study of non-alignment as an approach to international relations or as a theoretical model beyond foreign policy analysis. This reductionist approach also ignores the sites for political action that are opened up by the practice of non-alignment. As discussed in the empirical chapters of this thesis, there were significant moves made by the entry of non-alignment as an approach to international politics. However, non-alignment studied through the lens of foreign policy analysis is often blind to those questions. For instance, there was no immediate Indian national interest at stake in any of the four cases under study in this thesis, and none of them concerned any Indian territory or populations per se. Yet, non-alignment informed the approach India took to these crises and made possible alternative responses to the situations as they were, particularly in the realm of international diplomacy. Also, as mentioned above, this is the prime reason why realist theories of International Relations only present one dimension in which non-alignment might be theorized. By no means are they exhaustive on the discussion of non-alignment, or indeed the political actions of the non-aligned during the Cold War.

Contrary to the studies mentioned above, some authors have considered non-alignment both relevant and interesting for the interventions in international relations it made possible. Writing as practitioners, Gundevia and Pandit are frank about its singularity. For Gundevia, it was “an unusual phenomenon in world politics that cannot be understood within the confines of the traditional approaches in international politics” and “its very ambiguity gave it traction and academic respectability.”46 Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who writes that, “In essence our neutrality is the unjaundiced outlook we choose to apply to all international issues, believing that if we approach a problem with a calm mind our vision will be clearer and the result more fruitful”47, also echoes this view. Pandit is equally quick to admit that non-alignment might be difficult to grasp: “It is

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47 Vijayalakshmi Pandit, “India’s Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs 34, 3 (1956): 432-440.
true that in an atomic age of cut-and-dried formulas and decisions backed by the authority of power such a policy has the disadvantage of not fitting neatly into any prescribed formula.” 48 Sarvepalli Gopal considers non-alignment “an unconventional approach to power politics” that was India’s attempt at “gradually carving out space for an uncommitted world” 49. Gopal also points out that to define non-alignment narrowly is to overlook the contribution it made to the course of world politics, that non-alignment was not a “mere tactic to suit temporary circumstances” 50.

Therefore, in Harshe’s view, the literature that considers the relevance of nonalignment “considerably circumscribed” bases its views on an “insufficient knowledge and understanding of the motivations and inspirations of nonalignment” 51. Mishra attributes this ignorance to the lack of a “cohesive and well-integrated theoretical framework of nonalignment” 52. Likewise, in a review of an edited volume of the collected documents of the Non-Aligned countries, Jankowitsch and Sauvant and in a review of the NAM in world politics, Singham make the point that the academic world has not given enough importance to the international relations of the third world in general and non-alignment in particular; Singham says, “the tendency has been to say that the Non-Aligned Movement cannot be of any significance in an age of détente, which is as meaningful as saying that the Republic Party must disband because the US is not going to become a monarchy.” 53

Although these studies provide some insight, two observations can be made about them - the first is that they make very little distinction between non-alignment in the Indian context and the Non-Aligned Movement. The second is that although these are invocations to a more comprehensive approach to non-alignment, none of these writings actually attempt to theorize it beyond saying that it cannot be theorized using existing approaches. On the question of the Non-Aligned Movement, it is interesting to note that theoretical approaches rooted in liberalism tend to presuppose certain synonymity between Nehru and non-alignment and between non-alignment and the Non-Aligned

48 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
Movement. Thus, invariably, histories of non-alignment, however long or short, are more often than not, hasty biographies of Nehru, and lean very heavily on the force of his personality to explain inconsistencies or peculiarities within the way the concept took shape. Studies on non-alignment that locate it within the person of Nehru blame him for either espousing impossible ideas while sacrificing national interests, or for pursuing national interests cloaked in the purple prose of ideational rhetoric. For instance, Rana, in an otherwise lucid study of non-alignment, justifies its shortcomings given the milieu in which it emerged. Thus, the study misses the point that although its historical context is indispensable to understand it, the innovativeness of non-alignment was that it sought a fresh approach to the conduct of international politics. Although that attempt was flawed in parts, the book places so much emphasis on the constraints within which non-alignment was functioning that it comes to see it as a by-product of other processes at work, robbing it of its own standing in the approaches towards international relations. It looks to place non-alignment along pre-judged structures of international politics to demonstrate that of the many alternatives available to India, Nehru chose what was most suitable, least inconvenient and quite efficient.

This characterisation holds limited explanatory power about the roots of non-alignment and doesn’t extend our understanding of what non-alignment could have meant for Nehru himself. This account also does not take into consideration the opposing view, proposed by writers such as B R Nanda that in the quest to establish non-alignment, Nehru was “spurning obvious advantages because of his clear-eyed appreciation of the post-war situation in its historical context”. Rana’s book and Nanda’s study also place too much emphasis on Nehru, without providing a thorough theoretical treatment of non-alignment. Others such as Edwardes rue in Indian foreign policy what they call a “naive faith in the legacy of Nehru”, which they consider a sloppy position on foreign policy in any case. Brown considers with regret the influence that Nehru’s personality came to have on non-alignment or India’s external relations in general, bemoaning the possibility that in his absence, these would utterly fail and be inadequately guarded from the “harsh rules of the political game”. In part, this tendency is understandable because, as this thesis will argue in detail in the second chapter, Nehru occupies a very

54 Rana, Imperatives of Nonalignment, 322.
particular location in the history of modern India, most of all as an instantiation, “in whose own figure most expected the contradictions of India to resolve themselves”\textsuperscript{58}. Yet, the later unravelling of non-alignment, much of which started in 1956 when Nehru was still at the helm of affairs, cannot be explained using this perspective, as is discussed in later chapters of this thesis.

A more useful study of Nehru’s non-alignment with more than biographical attention can be found in Lal’s study of Indian foreign policy, which discusses what he calls the “internationalist value assumptions” inherent to nonalignment to make the point that charges levelled against it often conflate what they want nonalignment to be with what nonalignment actually is. He says, quite eloquently, that the “moral indifferentism” that non-alignment is often accused of can actually be read in any one of three ways – as a result of “normative, not moral, judgements, acts of pure opportunism and the increasing desirability for rationality while staying away from power politics”. In the end, Lal concludes that non-alignment is a combination of all three, with changing levels of each depending on the situation and that “factual” disagreements between this foreign policy stance and others has been misunderstood as a “moral” disagreement that misrepresents nonalignment entirely\textsuperscript{59}. The article is also interesting for the emphasis it places on the constraints within which Nehru was operating to say not only that they shaped non-alignment but that they were not fully accounted for and that although the development of the discourse of non-alignment was organic, the constraints placed on it could have been, and very well were to a large extent, external and so not accounting for them would prove hugely onerous in the future.

Without doubt, Nehru was the architect of non-alignment and is rightly, most strongly associated with it. Even so, it might be more accurate to say that a variety of influences collected together in his articulations of what he thought non-alignment was or ought to be. Some of these influences came from political philosophy – Gandhi and Tagore had a strong hand; post-independence, he gathered influences from Indian government officials and other international figures. Through the 1950s, Nehru wrote and received colossal amounts of correspondence, especially as it pertained to world politics. As non-alignment was the guiding policy between lots of these standpoints, the consequences of


those actions also impressed upon the understanding of the concept itself. Nehru was continually attentive to others’ perceptions of India and Indian behaviour on the world stage. A lot of this clearly filtered into his foreign policy, the bedrock of which was non-alignment. Yet, the iterative dimension of policy does not come across in these studies at all. Even in discussing Nehru’s authorship of the concept and its subsequent dispersal and expansion, it would be valuable to note the various ways in which it was employed – how it was constantly framed and reframed so it might evolve and adapt to happenings in world politics. For a study of non-alignment, or of Indian foreign policy, it would be equally valuable to note setbacks to that evolution. One such later study that applies approaches from within International Relations was more sensitive to this dimension and in fact, thought of it as non-alignment’s contribution to International Relations theory. Apart from considering it “an inevitable phenomenon in the development of international relations in the second half of the twentieth century”, they consider also, that “the democratization of process of international relations” is made possible through this comprehensive vision of the world of international relations”, most useful in that it came to “represent a system of values in a state of constant development.”

Writers such as Chari have asserted this point stating that although “long-term interests lay in the pursuit of a policy of independence”, those interests could only be achieved in the short run by first seeking economic cooperation internationally, including with the major powers. Although nonalignment had from the beginning an “anti-status quo bias”, it was first and foremost an act in “political positivism”. Chari expands considerably the idea that “security can be achieved in many ways” saying rightly that “the strategy of insuring security within the ambit of nonalignment is, therefore, completely different from that of seeking military alliances”. He goes on to explain that "the strategy of nonalignment, also implied buying time, through maintaining maximum independence of policy by keeping aloof from the Cold War politics of two blocs, during which they could develop themselves first in the economic field and then in the military field. Obviously, in the early stages, their security could only come from the international system.”

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61 P. R. Chari, “Non-alignment and international security,” India International Centre Quarterly 3, 3 (1976): 74
62 Ibid., p.69
63 Ibid., p.74
Speaking to that position, at the end of the Cold War, is an extremely significant discussion of nonalignment in an article where Subrahmanyam introduces the idea that non-alignment needs a definition and that “the contradictions in theory and practice” bring home the urgency of defining what is meant by it. Subrahmanyam enumerates the characteristics attributed to non-alignment, deconstructing its meaning for security doctrine. It is somewhat ironic that he does not seem to consider non-alignment’s relationship to security a definition adequately technical in its conceptual reach – throughout the article, he discusses how non-alignment could offer an “alternative security doctrine” but he seems to consider this a tangential effect, not the mainstay of non-alignment. Towards the end of the article, he sees non-alignment very much as a view towards conducting India’s external affairs and bemoans its descent into conceptual chaos, but underplays the interpretative framework offered in the title and first half of this article. Instead, he holds the view that “You could not be non-aligned towards a threat of war to your own country” and that it was impossible to distinguish whether the Cold War was a “power struggle or an ideological one”, thus concluding that in that case, non-alignment can only be viewed as “the assertion of autonomy” and that it is, at its basis, an anti-thesis of bipolarity. This became over time, a rather influential view, and remains popular even in contemporary estimates of non-alignment.

Subrahmanyam’s distinction between power and ideology has not been picked up by more recent analyses of Nehru’s international politics. Chacko contends that Nehru’s politics was informed by the pursuit of an “ethical modernity” and that it was "underpinned by a critique of the hierarchical nature of the emerging post-imperial world order and had as its ultimate goal, a post-sovereign state world community". The interesting relation to note here is one that Chacko draws between sovereignty and ethical politics, arguing that in pushing forward the latter, Nehru sought to overcome the constraints of the former. In some other recent work, Bhagavan has argued that Nehru’s

65 Ibid., 95.
66 Ibid., 77
vision was to integrate India into the international community in pursuit of the idea of ‘One World’. Although Bhagavan advances a rich historical argument, and Chacko pursues a theoretical approach to similar questions of ethical politics, both pieces conflate to a considerable extent Nehru’s pursuit of a post-ideological world with what they contend was his desire for a post-sovereign world. Chacko rightly differentiates “narrow nationalism” from the “nationalist spirit”, but wrongly sees Nehru’s vision as being that of a “post-sovereign internationalist ethic” 69. Kanti Bajpai’s characterisation of “Westphalia plus non-alignment” better captures the notion of sovereignty and its relation to non-alignment 70. As Bhagavan argues, Nehru did refer to the idea of ‘One World’, but he referred to it in relation to the Cold War model of ‘Two Worlds’ i.e. groupings of states characterised by their ideological preferences. As Krishna Menon put it, “In 1945, immediately before India got her independence, it was all ‘one world’; but by 1947, it was ‘two worlds’” 71. This was a shift away from the bipolar model, not the Westphalian model.

Although Subrahmanyan characterises non-alignment as being critical of bipolarity, a tendency in the literature on non-alignment is to equate it with the Non-Aligned Movement and to consider the NAM a sort of third bloc representing the Third World. So, for instance, Lawrence’s study of the ‘Rise and Fall of Non-Alignment’ is mostly concerned with how the Cold War spilled over to the Third World, and how non-alignment as a policy responded to that difficulty 72. This school of thought also often holds the assumption that the move from non-alignment to the Non-Aligned Movement was the logical and inevitable extension of a doctrine to its organized form. This viewpoint works chiefly by integrating two assumptions – first, that non-alignment was anti-western or anti-European and second, that the Third World conferred and behaved as one undivided whole. Keenleyside also holds a similar view, arguing that on witnessing the “protracted political crisis” in Europe, Indian nationalist leaders became “condemnatory of the course of European politics” 73. He extensively quotes Gandhi writing in Indian Opinion, Rajendra Prasad in the Indian Annual Register and Nehru in

69 Ibid., 195
70 Quoted in ibid.
various statements referring to the potential defensive strength of India’s goodwill towards the world often contrasted to “violence in Europe”\textsuperscript{7}. Keenleyside’s survey of the literature on nonalignment is comprehensive, but the selective reading of his choice is apparent as he launches into scathing attacks on the “hypocrisy in this Indian posture of moral rectitude”\textsuperscript{75}.

This is conceptually limiting because the evidence is not in favour of this argument in post-independence India in cases such as the crises in Korea and Congo, where India worked alongside the international community and sought to integrate itself in full measure by taking on a mediatory role. Although he belabours “Indian repudiation of and alienation from Western politics in the pre-independence period”, the author doesn’t consider that the resistance is perhaps to colonial and not to Western politics, and so cannot be transplanted with equal conviction to independent India to make the claim that non-alignment is a product of anti-Westernism. In many ways, this article continues in the tradition of Cold War histories that primarily map international relations, as they existed within the East-West paradigm. Sadly, analyses of non-alignment came to be written in the same vein and were unable to break through this dichotomous mode that non-alignment bore resistance to.

In a more thorough analysis, Rajan says, “Generally speaking, moderate and radical Indians alike regarded war as a consequence of the preoccupation of states with their own national interests and their tendency to resort to imperialism, and ultimately to fascism. These traits the Indians regarded as endemic to Western political systems and, taken together, they were the source of the Indian repudiation of and alienation from Western politics during the pre-independence period.”\textsuperscript{76} India of the 1950s (and indeed earlier) was deeply sceptical of following a doctrine that had not been produced organically, or through experience, a shortcoming Indians were weary of inheriting from their colonial past. This led to a deliberation of the spaces in which non-alignment would come to operate. Non-alignment came to be seen not only as “foreign policy posturing but also a part of the overall social process of the development of the Third World”\textsuperscript{77}. Similarly, in a fascinating study of an external view on non-alignment vis-à-

\textsuperscript{74} Jawaharlal Nehru, Quoted in ibid., 480.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 482.
\textsuperscript{76} M S Rajan, ed. India's Foreign Relations During the Nehru Era (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1976), 456.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
vis these social processes of development, Roy Allison discusses the history of the Soviet view of nonalignment, which aims to move away from the “Soviet grammar of the Third World” it seeks to demystify. Allison studies non-alignment as strategy, and while the first part of the book deals with the “means” question, the latter is more concerned with the “ends” - in what way could the Soviet Union contribute to the development of non-aligned countries? The Soviet Union’s views on non-alignment were largely based on its bilateral associations with the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. In drawing up a collective history of these relations, Allison brings to bear conceptual nuances within non-alignment (throughout the book, he distinguishes neutralism from non-alignment). In the end, the book is an interesting foray into the study of non-alignment, the most attractive feature being the theorisation of military alignment vis-à-vis international security, which Allison manages very deftly while balancing it out with the role of the many economic incentives pushed forward by the Soviet Union. The book raises some interesting thoughts on the texture of the security relationships fostered by the Soviet Union and in so doing, makes for a crucial historical study, albeit more concerned with the geopolitical considerations of the Non-Aligned Movement than with the doctrinal underpinnings of non-alignment itself.

Discussing non-alignment in an isolated Third World context also leads to the conceptual lapse of discussing non-alignment as synonymous with the Non-Aligned Movement. Indeed, it is with alarming regularity that the two are conflated with each other. The voice of the Non-Aligned Movement was primarily that of a counter-hegemonic discourse, located in its anti-colonial, anti-racial, anti-imperialist mandate, best understood as an “organisational history of new countries seeking a voice in the international system”. Consequently, the Non-Aligned Movement came to be assessed on how it had performed on those initial promises and its successes and failures were judged against those criteria. Of course, there was a difference between India adopting non-alignment and her joining the Non-Aligned Movement. As a result, the body of

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work that mixed up the two, held non-alignment up to the same criteria, often unfairly. It would be analytically more helpful to understand non-alignment “in relation to the international circulation of ideas critical of the prevailing status quo”\(^81\).

Indeed, non-alignment had many attractions for post-colonial states. The Asian Relations Conference and the Asian-African Conferences held in Bandung, Bogor, Belgrade had dealt with questions of race, anti-colonialism and great power politics. In many ways, the conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement were critical to the discourse of non-alignment because they were acts of empowerment in themselves. They had been staged in the midst of the Cold War, signalling to the power blocs that security concerns beyond the Cold War did exist and that those concerns could be taken forward by smaller, weaker, Third World states\(^82\). As Nehru himself put it, non-alignment was “freedom of action”, which had been “of service to the cause of world peace” and that “the newly independent states of Asia and Africa” had adopted a similar outlook making non-alignment “an integral part of the international pattern”\(^83\), particularly in countries that had just emerged from colonial rule.

Albeit, where theory tries to locate non-alignment in the binaries produced by colonialism, it struggles to move beyond the dichotomies of colonial-post-colonial/colonial-anti-colonial narratives. In fact, it could be argued that because non-alignment is both postcolonial and anti-colonial at once, representing it as discourse rooted in either or both is limiting the analysis to a one-dimensional interpretation of its agenda. Given the post-colonial nature of states that participated in the Non-Aligned Movement at its inception, assumptions about the core of non-alignment are understandable. Therefore, it might be useful to distinguish non-alignment, understood as a critique of security from the Non-Aligned Movement, whose post-colonial character and anti-colonial tenor were its most visible characteristics. As the review has discussed so far, it might be worthwhile to distinguish non-alignment and the Non-Aligned Movement, as having a certain degree of overlap, but only in specific spheres.

\(^81\) Ibid.
The significant aspect of this overlap is the emphasis in both on Afro-Asian solidarity and indeed, Asian-Asian solidarity. These movements for solidarity were a distinct feature of non-alignment as a direct consequence of the spatial organization of the processes of resistance and empowerment as conceptualised by it. In a sense, this concept of spatial organization ran parallel to the Non-Aligned Movement, and was used within it, but also outside of it. Nehru was of the opinion that “It may be that the Cold War and the East-West antagonism of the 1950s will be gradually softened and transformed by the new pressures that have emerged within each bloc, as well as by the insistent demand of the “uncommitted” countries for a systematic and world-wide assault on hunger, disease and ignorance.” This assault was carried out by the NAM as a collective but also by member-states such as India, who were at the forefront of these struggles even before the establishment of NAM. As Parekh brings out very well, “Over the centuries and especially under Gandhi’s leadership, India had acquired special skills in uncovering the common ground and opening up a dialogue between apparently opposite points of view. Nehru thought that a political philosophy based on such a metaphysic was the indispensable basis of world peace.” In its subsequent institutionalized phase, non-alignment expressed itself through, what Abraham calls “a non-racially defined group of countries that took as their starting point the insecurities produced by the Cold War” in ways that rejected the imposition of disjuncture between the global and the local. In a sense, non-alignment was capable of thinking globality by thinking “the politics of thinking globality.”

In the following section, therefore, I consider the possibilities of theorizing non-alignment through approaches from non-Western International Relations theory. In order to do so, I will first discuss the difficulties of writing such theory and then discuss its inattention to non-alignment.

Non-Alignment and Non-Western International Relations Theory

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84 Ibid.
86 Abraham, “From Bandung to NAM”, 214.
87 For a fascinating account of the negotiation of these spaces, see Angadipuram Appadorai, “Non-Alignment: Some Important Issues,” International Studies 20, 3 (1981).
Writing in 1963, Nehru thought the term ‘non-alignment’ was inadequate; he wrote, “The twin policies which have guided us since independence are, broadly, democratic planning for development at home and, externally, a policy which has come to be named, rather inadequately, “nonalignment.”89 When Krishna Menon first used the term in the United Nations, in the early 1950s, it was meant to denote a splitting of the ways – as Menon first put it, “We are not aligned to either side; we are non-aligned.”90 Rapidly, the idea expanded beyond this nomenclature, and began to denote a position of dissent. It engaged with the realist assumptions about power, and retained a broadly liberal sense of politics based on cooperation, but it also began to emphasize its critique of political processes. Nehru often referred to the manner in which both superpowers, and other states, not least the colonial powers, had abandoned their commitment to the value-oriented aspects of politics. He sought to animate politics by emphasizing its ethical dimensions. In order to put that process into motion, he continuously and consciously breached categories of political thought as we understand them now, or as they were understood at the time. Although these moves were influenced by a tradition of political thought, and action (as I shall discuss in the following chapter), that tradition has had almost no impact on the manner in which International Relations theory is thought or written. This is puzzling because the arena in which non-alignment was operating was mostly international.

The question I want to deal with here is that if we consider non-alignment a non-Western approach to politics, are non-Western approaches to International Relations theory more suited to deconstructing it? If this synthesis of approach and subject of inquiry has not yet happened, then what are the particular aspects of non-Western IR theory that are inhibiting it? My contention is that the reason for this disassociation is first, that non-Western theories of IR are as accepting of the primacy of security in politics as their Western counterparts, but also that they have been inattentive to non-alignment per se and have accepted its relation to International Relations theory as put forth by more mainstream approaches.

If we consider more closely what the expected markers of difference are between Western and non-Western theoretical approaches, then the first of those would be their

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89 Jawaharlal Nehru, “Changing India,” 455.
90 Brecher, India and World Politics, 3.
responses to Eurocentrism. While International Relations theory on the whole is stymied by its unreflective acceptance of a Eurocentric point of view, certain approaches within its fold have been more critical of this stance. This reflection has also turned towards non-Western theory, which has suffered from its conceptual association with western theory. Even in nomenclature, it is bound to share a particular frame of reference – one put out by the disciplinary preponderance of western theory. In International Relations, this tendency is reproduced many times over, as the West/non-West binary is at the center of the discipline and in many of its theoretical and normative concerns. Therefore, theories that are sensitive to geographical and historical specificities while speaking to the global are still marginal. Where they are being written, a template of what legitimately constitutes theory often circumscribes them. This is especially true of International Relations theory, where three additional tendencies can be observed – theory’s engagement with the non-West, its reading of non-Western theory as necessarily critical and the potential of non-Western theory to overcome its non-Western origins.

First, International Relations theory concerns itself with the non-west, but not in viewing it as a distinct political space that is capable of producing its own theoretical insights. Instead, the mandate has been to ‘emancipate’ the non-west by allowing it to inhabit a space within the mainstream of International Relations theory, a space clearly ear-marked as being post-colonial. Mostly, this is a result of applying the term post-colonial to theory that simply emanates from ex-colonies or that proposes to explain phenomenon in ex-colonies. Such calls for non-western theory often commence by pointing to its distinctiveness, then discuss it within the frames of reference that is familiar via their own schools of thought, and conclude by saying that by virtue of their co-existence, non-western approaches to International Relations theory can be easily understood within International Relations theory as it exists and that their contribution to the conversation is to bring a different set of historical experiences that might further illuminate what we already know. So, for Acharya and Buzan, “Contributions like postcolonialism in IR, Indian subalternism (e.g. Spivak, 1988) and Mohammed Ayoob’s (1998) notion of ‘subaltern realism’ attest to a continuing effort to represent the South as a distinctive political and intellectual space.”

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Walt’s theoretical explorations represent the North as a distinctive political and intellectual space.

In fact, their opening remarks highlight that “the ultimate purpose of the special issue is to stimulate non-Western voices to bring their historical and cultural as well as the intellectual, resources into the theoretical debates about IR.”92 Thus, the implication is that a mainstream debate exists and that other points of view must be aligned to this debate in furthering its polemical value. Not only are they unconcerned with the violence of this move in erasing difference, which could be of immense potential to this project, they are also dismissive of any such difference existing in the first place. Thus, in their concluding remarks, they are certain that “there exists now a single global conversation… which is impossible to pick/unpick into West/non-West”. Presumably, this difficulty stems from “the fact that the West/non-West distinction may cause some unease as being old-fashioned and confrontational and misleading given the diversity that undoubtedly exists within both camps.”93 However, the writing doesn’t look to further diversify this distinction but to erase it – the differences are so numerous that they are brought together as aspects of one irreducible whole. The problem with this approach is that it assumes a lack of critical positions where there are many. In being critical of the status quo, these positions are concerned with what theory is and how it operates, outside its traditional scope. By saying that these concerns can be sufficiently addressed within the structure of International Relations theory, as it exists, we overlook the possibility that critical positions from outside of it are looking to unmake the entire edifice of it, not cause minor inflections on an otherwise exhaustive body of knowledge.

Second, a diametrically opposite tendency is to presume that all non-Western theory is post-colonial theory and as such, is a critical variant of International Relations theory. So, where theory is being produced in the non-west, it is automatically assumed that such theory is grounded in the critical perspective of the global South. It is assumed that these theories are interested in challenging the status quo by virtue of their geographical origin. Yet, statements of purpose originating in the Third World are often not critical of security. Indeed, influential approaches from within the non-Western stable consider security insufficiently dominant in the study of the non-West. Ayoob, for instance,

93 Acharya and Buzan, “Conclusion,” 431.
claims, “a paradigm that does not make security its centre-piece will lack adequate power to explain the domestic or international behaviour of Third World states”\(^{94}\).

Curley and Siu-Lin argue that not only is it undesirable, it is also difficult to adopt a critical stance towards security in the Third World because the framework of securitization has limited applicability outside of Europe\(^{95}\). Acharya deals with the conceptual challenges for desecuritization in Asia by studying them empirically through case studies\(^{96}\) and also more broadly discussing the scope for security theories in Asia\(^{97}\).

Calls for deeper and wider engagement with security fall outside the critical flank of International Relations theory.

Most of these studies take as their point of commencement the negligible emphasis on security. They import wholesale, the ordering of International Relations theory as a theory of international security. So, for instance, Ayoob insists, “the primary objective of Third World state elites is… to reduce the deep sense of insecurity from which Third World states and regimes suffer domestically and internationally.”\(^{98}\) In the same exposition, Ayoob is of the opinion, that “…the Third World forms a distinctive category if we use the yardstick of power applied collectively to the postcolonial states.”\(^{99}\) Even though Ayoob is able to make certain claims about the nature of security, or rather insecurity, those claims are based on a series of assumptions, where the Third World is treated as a collective unit without problematization; Ayoob suggests, throughout the book, in pointing to the specificity of the ‘Third World’, that different processes of state formation lead to different types of state that in turn lead to different forms of security. Yet he is concerned neither with further differentiation between individual Third World/postcolonial states nor with what those processes of state formation entail. Where he speaks of violence, he claims, “the collective violence in state-making is generated on the level of state power”\(^{100}\). This is also misleading because the politically generative forces of war and the socially reformatory currents of

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\(^{97}\) Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives On and Beyond Asia*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 256.

\(^{98}\) Ibid., 2-3.

\(^{99}\) Ibid., 15.

violence are reduced to a homogenous specificity – that of the Third World state. The state becomes the residue of the effects of war and violence, instead of being continually made by it.

On the other hand, Acharya suggests that the location of security in post-colonial states is only given importance to the extent that it affects the central strategic balance of the world that has historically been located either with the imperialists or in the Cold War era, with the superpowers. Both these assertions are acceptable and are echoed in imperial history and more recently, in Cold War history that, especially in the case of South Asia, has offered a reading of the region as a site for superpowers to indulge their security dilemmas. Presumably, Acharya’s motive in highlighting this location of security is to offer alternative locations of security in regional consensus. This liberal reading of Asian security intrinsically links the development of cooperative security models to the refashioning of Asian identities as being interconnected so that they might have “bought” enough time and space…to adapt to the demands of multilateralism. In many ways, this is an unflinching adaptation of the theorization of European modernity with the advent of the European Union. Yet, it is an uncritical acceptance of a process of modernity and the theory that supports it without asking what shape the theory should assume if it is to deal with this expanding historical diversity.

Thus, non-Western theory could very well extend the scope of existing schools of thought on either side of the realism/liberalism divide. Yet, within International Relations theory, it is often assumed that theory emerging from the non-West must be necessarily interested in postcoloniality and therefore in adopting a critical stance towards mainstream International Relations theory. By equating both, non-Western theory is denied access to the assumptions from within the realism/liberalism approaches that it is comfortable espousing. In being considered non-Western and therefore critical, the assumed continuities and discontinuities of critical approaches are foisted upon non-Western theory. On the other hand, when critical theories of International Relations are applied to the Third World, they are transplanted out of context. For instance, vis-à-vis the study of the state in the Third World, most non-Western theory is ambivalent towards the state or sees it as an essential guarantor of

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security in the anarchic international system (a realist approach) or as an institution primarily concerned with creating and negotiating norms (a liberal approach). On the contrary, critical theories would look to dismantle, critique and do away with the state, following from the European historical context that are largely the subjects of their study. But, both approaches by themselves fail to formulate a substantial critique of the Third World state. A critical stance towards security is possible while simultaneously critically engaging the state. This aspect is neglected by critical theories of IR because in the European experience, the state acted as a conduit for securitization, so it is presumed that the experience of the non-West has been the same. However, especially in the colonial context, a state external to the nation acted as that conduit, bringing securitization to these contexts, before there was a state internal to it, before that state took root and before that state gained legitimacy. Thus, substantial insight can be achieved from fusing the critical value of these IR theories along with the understanding of the historical context of Third World states. This would also enrich the canon of the critical theories that could accommodate and indeed, speak for contexts beyond Europe, and beyond the metropole. Therefore, a more useful method of looking at “the postcolonial moment” might be, as pointed out by Barkawi and Laffey, to acknowledge “the mutual constitution of European and non-European worlds and their joint role in making history.”

Third, is the question of universability – is it possible for non-Western theory to produce analytical insight beyond the confines of the area under study? If not, then must it locate itself in a limited localized context, without laying claim to any explanatory power beyond that context? As discussed above, because the temporalities of the non-West are distinct, even when co-constituted by their colonial contexts, only a very particular kind of retelling of the political processes can speak to the international at large. Rather than attempting that sort of theory writing, the approach has been to discuss the non-West only in its instantiation as a state. Alagappa, for instance, discusses the concept of ‘master narratives’ in India, Japan and China while mapping International Relations Theory in Asia. The focus has been in these studies on looking at regional relations rather than broader international ones, and comprehensive

studies of Indian foreign policy, such as in Bajpai and Mallavarapu also take that approach. Bajpai attributes this trend to the non-West itself and says, “…Indian IR scholars, like many outside the Anglo-American academy, have fairly rationally concluded that there is a division of labour internationally within which they must work. In that division of labour, it is theirs to use theory (at best); it is not theirs to make theory.”

Behera’s comprehensive and ambitious essay on International Relations theory in India is instructional in this regard. Given the limited scope offered by the regional emphasis of the layout of the issue, the essay conveys a bird’s eye view of the state of IR in India. A short exposition of non-alignment is included, but it is insufficiently dealt with and is immediately followed by an emphasis on Third World/Asian security arrangements. For instance, Behera mentions that “He [Nehru] conceived non-alignment both as a principle of exercising autonomy in foreign affairs and as a mechanism or an ‘order-building’ instrument by trying to create a ‘third’ area of peace outside the two power blocs to secure a just and equitable world order.” This is followed by a couple of lines on the Non-Aligned Movement and its significance for the Third World. But, the crux of the dilemma is spelt out most clearly in her protest that “It is clearly not easy to move from the domain of ‘particular’ to ‘universal’. Behera suggests, in other words, Indian International Relations theory’s universality is contingent on its universability. Behera points out that this difficulty persists because of the ontological and epistemological constraints present in Indian International Relations theory but she wants these difficulties to be overcome so it might achieve a universality it has so far been unable to achieve. Although this point is accurate as a description of IR writing in India, it doesn’t account for the history of political thought that made possible many of the same moves. Behera’s article provides one of the most comprehensive accounts of International Relations theory writing in India, yet fails to imagine possibilities of collaboration with other fields.

Chen discusses this limitation, imposed or internal, in an article on the “problem-solving not critical” nature of the call for non-Western theory. He says, “the Gramscian

107 Ibid., 346.
hegemonic status of Western IRT precludes one from questioning the West’s assumed right to determine which ways of producing knowledge are legitimate (or not) and to use the standards of a particular kind of knowledge-making enterprise (i.e. positivism) for judging the legitimacy of all other different ways of creating knowledge. Chakrabarty take this argument forward, arguing that “most intellectual endeavours to construct non-Western IRT in Asia run the risk of inviting nativism – the mirror image of universalism – which do not involve a critical self-reflection and questioning of the a priori assumptions, procedures and values embedded in the modernization and development enterprise. Following the historicist trajectory laid down by the West, attempts to ‘catch up’ with Western IR make the discipline turn neither post-Western nor democratic. Indeed, they can never catch up and will remain stuck “in the transition narrative that will always remain grievously incomplete.” Chakrabarty and Chen both raise a very pertinent point – that theories of postcolonial state behavior look to circumvent Eurocentrism but are rarely able escape its logic. Abraham suggests “the problem lies in the prefix post”- and that it is largely ceremonial owing to an emphasis on chronology as a key point of difference. Chakrabarty considers this move unavoidable and says that any analysis of the global must now necessarily work in a framework within which Europe is both “inadequate” and “indispensable.”

This manner of theoretical reflection on the non-West’s relationship with Europe (and the rest of the West, but mainly Europe as the seat of Empire), but also Europe’s relationship with itself can be found within the tradition of political thought in twentieth-century India. Increasingly, and with particular salience to the questions in this thesis, the political thought of Gandhi and Tagore has been read in conjunction with International Relations theory. Indeed, recent scholarship has tried to place Gandhi’s political thought in the larger tradition of Western political thought, illustrating how it is possible to write theory that draws on the history of political thought in the non-West in a manner that enriches both canons. This literature discards an assumed theoretical contradiction between two traditions of thought to illustrate that their emphases might be similar, even if their idioms were not.

In his review of Wagner’s *War and the State*, Barkawi says, “Since in modern history these great powers are overwhelmingly located in Europe and the West, Eurocentrism is intrinsic to realism”\(^{112}\). Barkawi’s analysis is accurate in saying that realism has been inattentive to its manifestation outside of Europe. As Mantena’s discussion of Gandhi’s thought suggests, “if we, with Gandhi, take political action, rather than the construction and legitimation of norms, as the starting point of politics and political theorizing, the realist call to attend closely to dynamics of power, conflict, and domination can be mobilized on behalf of principled and progressive politics. This reading of Gandhi thereby seeks to enable another realism that can navigate a way out of its traditional impasses, a transformational realism that need not begin and end in conservatism, moral equivocation, or pure instrumentalism.”\(^{113}\) Mantena demonstrates how Gandhi impinged on realism, as it is understood in IR theory, in formative ways, by unmaking it, and remaking it to suit his particular historical context. Further, Uday Mehta theorizes Gandhi in conversation with Hobbes, Locke and Kant. Mehta places Gandhi in contrast with these thinkers, saying that Gandhi must be read “not just as having a very different politics, but rather, in some crucial sense, as being a deeply anti-political thinker.”\(^{114}\) Mehta argues that for Gandhi, morality is contingent on fearlessness, but political reason is tied to security and self-defense\(^{115}\). In fact, Gandhi critiques politics as being unnecessary, and dangerous. By emphasizing Gandhi’s refusal to accord primacy to politics, Mehta is able to open up the playing field for non-Western theory even further, where it is able to adopt a critical stance towards security, the state, even politics.

Tagore is even more critical in his view of the nation-state and of politics. I will return to a fuller discussion of his political thought in the following chapter, but it is crucial to note here that his interventions were not merely “a peripheral-core encounter” and that he possessed a degree of what Collins calls “avant-garde intellectual thinking”\(^{116}\) characterized by a deep suspicion of politics, which he equated with patriotism\(^{117}\). This


\(^{115}\) Ibid.


\(^{117}\) Ibid., p.73
anti-political thinking, both from Gandhi and from Tagore is crucial to understanding the development of the anti-colonial movement in India, which eventually had a formative impact on the language of her international relations. Vajpeyi refers to the “wide discursive availability” of both Gandhi and Nehru\(^\text{118}\) and the same can easily be said of Tagore. As these were successful in articulating and achieving an anti-colonial aspiration, they now suffer from that fixed location in the imagination of International Relations. It is more likely that this is not the case, and that further exploration, and theorization, will show that especially in reading Tagore, one is very aware of what Foucault called “the astonishing efficacy of discontinuous, particular, and local critiques”\(^\text{119}\).

By mounting a critique of these concepts, and then discarding them or regarding them as dangerous, even subversive, Gandhi and Tagore dealt in their own work with the wider significance or irrelevance of nationalism, politics and the state\(^\text{120}\). They also dealt deeply with questions of morality and creativity. As such, their political thought and the political action that it informed (notably for Gandhi) critiqued and challenged categories of thought as they are understood in the Western political canon. Above all, Gandhi and Tagore offered contending and devastating critiques of the notion of ‘Empire’. But, they were also concerned with dismantling the consequences of Empire in India (for Tagore, this routinely extended to all of Asia). Thus, they saw the changing nature of the relationship between the empire and the colony as producing certain forms of knowledge. Thus, through the anti-colonial movement, they first appropriated the means to produce their own readings of that relationship in order to ultimately overthrow it. The anti-colonial movement, therefore, was itself constituted internationally, and simultaneously took place in the empire and in the colony. Therefore studying the political thought and action of that period constitutes a necessary and inevitable source for writing non-Western theory, particularly in the Indian context.

Another point to be noted here is that the anti-colonial critique and the theoretical traditions it drew from had elements of what we now recognize as realist/liberal and

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\(^{120}\) Their work has been referenced here, because as I will argue in the following chapter, their thought had a fundamental influence on the concept of non-alignment, but also because along with Nehru, they represent “an important moment in the making of a tradition of public reason” and the “search for a modern morality” Sunil Khilnani, “Nehru’s Faith,” *Outlook Magazine*, 09 December 2002. accessed July 28, 2013 http://www.outlookindia.com/article/Nehrus-Faith/218248.
even critical schools of thought. All the above-mentioned objectives are central to the scope of a non-western International Relations theory. Yet, even though a move is being made in the realm of global history and political theory to offer new readings of Gandhi’s and Tagore’s political thought, in International Relations theory, a call for “new theory” is either ambivalent towards this tradition or mentions it in passing - an invocation of the past as an impetus for future research. As Collins puts it, “One starts to ‘provincialize Europe’ in surprising and unrecognized places.”

A significant exception to this impasse within theory is the Subaltern Studies collective and its pioneering work on India’s colonial past and the consequences of the anti-colonial movement on the form of the Indian state. In offering a critique of both Gandhi and Tagore, amongst others, this strand of scholarship expands non-Western theoretic perspectives on India beyond their limits. The inattentiveness to non-alignment, however, represents a vacuum within its work because its focus on the ‘subaltern’ alienates from Subaltern Studies figures who do not easily fit that description. Collins makes this point about the inability of Subaltern Studies to elucidate the historical significance of Tagore. Given Tagore’s angst towards nationalism, a sentiment shared by Subaltern Studies, this is quite surprising; still others such as Gandhi or Nehru or even Ambedkar, who lends himself more clearly to that theoretical format, find fragmented scrutiny in that body of work. This is possibly a result of what Sen calls “its marriage with…‘post-modernism’.” For Subaltern Studies, with its emphasis on post-modernism, an “identification of the elite as the vanguard of ‘modernity’” makes it difficult to sufficiently theorize the political thought of such “elites”. Instead, it is concerned mostly with decentering these elites and their “nationalist” histories. In its polemic against elite nationalism, Subaltern Studies takes to task Gandhi for failing to declare his nationalist agenda, and dismisses off-hand Nehru as the inheritor of that compromised mantle.

Where it does undertake such a project, it has produced some astonishingly original insights that would do very well to inform the mandate of non-Western theory. As

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121 Collins, Empire, Nationalism and the Postcolonial World, 152.
122 Ibid., 9.
124 I discuss in the following chapter, the resistance to nationalism put up by the elites themselves.
125 A notable exception to the latter is Partha Chatterjee, whose chapter “Moment of Arrival” in Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World (London: Zed Books, 1993) deals exclusively with this question.
Chatterjee puts it, the project was still concerned with a problematization of the Indian nation-state and in order to accomplish that, “abandoning the linear narrative for a series of interventions in different disciplinary fields.”\textsuperscript{126} This unfolding, however, has not included the field of International Relations. A possible explanation can be found in Sen’s assertion that a fallout of the anti-nationalist method is that it “has often had the impact of making the interpretation of India's past more inward looking...”\textsuperscript{127} Guha points to this mandate: “To study colonial India is therefore to seek a path toward that specificity and to let its distinctiveness show up in its interpretation.”\textsuperscript{128} Naturally, a direct casualty of this positioning of the critical gaze is that it has been almost apathetic towards a systematic study of independent India’s international relations, in theory and in practice.

I suggest in the following section that these gaps in the theoretical study of non-alignment can be overcome by applying conceptual categories from within Critical Security Studies (CSS) to it. I will discuss why Critical Security Studies (CSS) is useful for the study of non-alignment, and how the theoretical study of non-alignment in its three phases outlined here and through the thesis, can significantly contribute to the writing of more comprehensive CSS.

**Non-Alignment and Critical Security Studies**

There has been a wide range of debate within International Relations on the concept of security and how it might be defined\textsuperscript{129}. Within Critical Security Studies, this exercise has been accompanied by an effort at decentring security from the position it occupies on the political landscape. While retaining that fundamental concern, Critical Security Studies literature developed through various stages in which it sought to engage with a multitude of concepts for the critical study of security. The first wave of literature within CSS represented a problematization of security that dealt with the need to securitize “more issues or by securitizing them more”\textsuperscript{130}. Aberystwyth, Paris and
Copenhagen all represent, albeit with differed emphases, schools of security thought that dramatically changed the theoretical landscape moving away from traditional grammars of security\textsuperscript{131}. Nevertheless, amongst others, a main criticism of securitization theory was that it is too narrow a conceptualization of security\textsuperscript{132}. A second wave of literature sought to overcome that limitation by borrowing methods from other disciplines – by placing an emphasis on linguistics\textsuperscript{133}, sociology\textsuperscript{134} and criminology\textsuperscript{135}. Later work focused on “the public language of security” and theorized it in relation to the work on exceptionalism in the political thought of Schmitt, Agamben and Foucault\textsuperscript{136}.

This sort of work began to make forays into the questions that are at the crux of this thesis – questions about the political limits that security enacts\textsuperscript{137}. For instance, Jabri discusses “the domination of contemporary politics by discourses and practices that reinforce a politics of antagonism”\textsuperscript{138}. Within the debates on emancipatory theory\textsuperscript{139},


\textsuperscript{135} For instance, see Rita Floyd “When Foucault met security studies: A critique of the ‘Paris school’ of security studies” (paper presented at the BISA annual conference at the University of Cork, Ireland, 18 December 2006); Claudia Aradu and Rens van Munster, “Exceptionalism and the ‘War on Terror’: Criminology Meets International Relations,” British Journal of Criminology 49, 5 (2009): 686-701).”

\textsuperscript{136} For instance, see Andrew Neal, “Foucault in Guantánamo: Towards an Archaeology of the Exception,” Security Dialogue 37, 1 (2006): 31-46.)


Aradau’s work on desecuritization\textsuperscript{140} is significant because it brings together a discussion on ethics and emancipation as “unmaking security”\textsuperscript{141} and goes on to say desecuritization must be thought politically\textsuperscript{142}. Aradau employs a method by which she not only problematizes theoretical approaches that restrict security to the ambit of war, but also discusses the particular form of politics (normal versus panic, for instance) that are assumed by such theorization\textsuperscript{143}.

Some strands within these critiques speak most closely to the thesis at hand because they highlight essential problems in formulating an idea of politics in modern India. In order to offer alternative mechanisms for the study of security, this thesis contends that perhaps, a little less attention to security and a little more conversation with politics might be more productive. The primacy accorded to the study of security, particularly when it is aimed at deepening or broadening the scope of security-centric discourses might only have limited use. A study of the primary institutions of political theory – the nation-state, for instance – might prove insightful for the study of security because they simultaneously address issues of identity, agency and location. Security subverts this tradition by founding a co-constitutive relation of inclusion/exclusion, self/other and friend/enemy\textsuperscript{144}. The production of difference is no longer a tool of the regulation of power, but the location of power in discourse and practice so as to produce danger and otherness. Therefore, the literature that deals with security as comprising structures of power simultaneously extends the scope for the study of politics in new directions. This method of study is also useful because it treats security as a derivative concept – the idea that understandings of security reflect deeper assumptions about the nature of politics and the role of conflict in political life\textsuperscript{145}. In that sense, a conceptual strand can be drawn from the body of work discussed above to call for a return to politics and indeed, to demonstrate that such a project has already been undertaken.

\textsuperscript{144}Aradau, Rethinking Trafficking in Women: Politics out of Security.
\textsuperscript{145}Victor Mauer and Myriam D. Cavetly, eds. \textit{The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies} (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2009), 75.
Much of the work outlined above looks to problematize security (mainly work from the three schools of critical thought) but a second wave (for instance, Aradau, Neocleous, CASE Collective) look to problematize these problematizations further by introducing alternative ways of “unmaking security”. For the thesis at hand, two of these ways are particularly salient, especially because they are highly relatable to each other and might in practice, constantly impinge on each other and share objectives, as the historical analysis that follows discusses. The first of these ways of unmaking security is desecuritization. The application of power intended to produce security produces binaries instead that in turn, produce securitization. Waever argues that securitization is first and foremost a failure to deal with issues according to the normal rules of politics.\textsuperscript{146} While this establishes the necessity for the move towards desecuritization, advocates of desecuritization are unconvinced about its efficacy as a tactical tool and Waever cedes that for a political actor, the attractiveness of securitization as a tool might outweigh the incentive for desecuritization.\textsuperscript{147} The question of the efficacy of desecuritization thus remains unresolved. The second way of unmaking security is that of emancipation as discussed above primarily in the work of Booth, etc. However, Aradau argues that the distinction between security and emancipation has now been fudged in ways that limit the remit of emancipation to the logic of security. In one pithy observation, Aradau suggests: “The struggle for security is restyled as a struggle for emancipation, without unpacking the links between emancipation and security.”\textsuperscript{148}

Even more so, both these strategies for the unmaking of security become counter-intuitive because they depend on the emergence of possibilities within security, rather then working through politics to strengthen them.\textsuperscript{149} In other words, these tools set out for themselves the bolstering of security through politics, while the scope of the critique would be wider if it were the other way around. A critical examination of the sort of politics one is suggesting is indispensable to this problematization of security. Indeed, the critique would have moved beyond its mandate if the focus on ‘security’ were abandoned more frequently than is now deemed possible or desirable. This focus on the desecuritizing tendencies and emancipatory possibilities within security is

\textsuperscript{146} Waever, “Securitization and Desecuritization,” 46-86.
\textsuperscript{148} Aradau, Rethinking Trafficking in Women: Politics out of Security, 71.
\textsuperscript{149} Booth, Theory of World Security, 250.
methodologically unfruitful because first, it has not been ascertained whether these possibilities exist and second, because ironically, they make a move towards securitization more convenient. A paradox presents itself because in the approach outlined above, to achieve a deeper politicization of issues, those issues must first be desecuritized, but if security is seen to hold emancipatory possibilities, then this move to desecuritize is thwarted.

The possibilities for political action are thus diminished, not multiplied, by investing in methods of desecuritization and emancipation. As Aradau suggests further, these uses of security work the assumption that security should be the concept that defines politics¹⁵⁰, yet again obviating the possibilities for political action. This is also counter-productive because, as Neocleous discusses, this opens up the absolutely terrifying possibility that at the heart of the logic of security lays not a vision of freedom or emancipation but a means of modeling the whole of human society around a particular vision of order¹⁵¹.

This loops back into the work discussed above that make a demand for political action over and above the problematizing of security. This also reminds us of Foucault’s hesitation in discussing the possibility that freedom nullifies security¹⁵².

In fact, Neocleous strengthens his charge in that he sees our political language becoming saturated by security, “The contemporary social and political imagination is similarly dominated by the lexicon of security and the related idea that we are living in an increasingly insecure world”¹⁵³. He borrows from Foucault to illustrate that if critique is “an act of not being governed quite so much” then this requires an understanding of the history of security as an idea and ideal¹⁵⁴. The CASE Collective also adopts this mode of intervention and discusses how politics is problematized in this process¹⁵⁵. This sort of intervention begins by delineating theoretical attempts to unmake security as embracing a two-fold understanding of politics, both as “normality (the objective socio-political ordering) and politics as normativity (the principles and

¹⁵⁰ Aradau, Rethinking Trafficking in Women: Politics out of Security.
¹⁵³ Neocleous, Critique of Security, 2.
¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 7
ethical concepts that can transform the status quo\textsuperscript{156}. It also establishes the continuum between desecuritization and normality and emancipation and normativity\textsuperscript{157}.

One of the emphases of the critique of security within Critical Security Studies is the way in which theory ‘makes’ security. The deeply political nature of theory is constantly revisited within the literature studying Security Studies. Equally, it is also reflexive in raising questions about the mandate of Critical Security Studies itself. Needless to say, the ‘critical’ in Critical Security Studies is simultaneously concerned with both these functions. One of the ways in which this mandate can be summarized is to think of it as asking the question, ‘Security of whom, by whom, for whom?’ The answer to that question is also deeply contested, as it is highly unlikely that across the spectrum of security studies, there will be unanimous agreement on any of the three components of the question. Hence, it should come as no surprise that writing security is considered an unavoidably exclusionary exercise. At any given juncture, it is quite possible that the security agenda is blind towards a certain object and it is at the expense of others. It is significant to note that the inclusion/exclusion that follows from these dynamics lends form to politics\textsuperscript{158}, and also that it establishes the relationship between security and politics. The following section will discuss what is the framework in which this thesis will discuss this relationship, and what methods are used to write it.

Methodology

In the first phase, the research focused on gathering data from the following archives:  
The National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi, India  
The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi, India  
The Institute of Foreign Policy Studies (IFPS), Department of History, Calcutta University, Calcutta, India  
The National Archives of the United Kingdom (UKNA), London, UK  
The United Nations Archives and Records Management System (UNARMS), New York, USA  
The United Nations Intellectual History Project (UNIHP), New York, USA  
The Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), Wilson Centre Digital Archive

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., 455  
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., 456  
\textsuperscript{158} Aradau, Rethinking Trafficking in Women: Politics out of Security.
Andrew W. Cordier Papers, The Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, USA

This material consisted primarily of official correspondence, to and from Nehru who held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, the diplomatic corps, the Minister of External Affairs, heads of state, and UN officials, including the Secretary General of the UN. These were supplemented with accounts of Indian diplomats who served in the UN as Permanent Representatives or as heads of diplomatic missions in any of the fields under study. These included memoirs, oral histories, and correspondence with the Foreign Affairs Ministry, India, particularly correspondence with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretaries, and with the Prime Minister (who was also the Foreign Affairs Minister). Private paper collections available in the NMML Manuscripts Section were also used to supplement these records. Amongst published documents, The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) Volumes and the Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, First & Second Series were referenced extensively.

Some sources used in the writing of this thesis were used for research for the first time. For the chapter on the Korean War, a monograph-length note by KPS Menon, when he was Chairman of a UN commission was used to discuss India’s relations with Korea, especially in the context of anti-colonialism. In the chapter on the Hungarian Revolution, two particularly valuable volumes of documents were obtained from Calcutta University. These were first published and inaugurated when Arpad Goncz, the then President of Hungary had visited India in 1991. These documents carry correspondence from the Indian legation in Budapest to New Delhi during the height of the Hungarian Revolution. Before the publication of these documents, only the correspondence mentioned in the Selected Works of Nehru had been used to write accounts of India’s involvement in the international response to the revolution. Similarly, on the Suez Canal Crisis, a note from Apa Pant, Nehru’s emissary to East Africa has been used as a backgrounder for India’s approach to Africa in general, and Egypt in particular.

The most challenging chapter to write was that on the Congo Crisis because it had virtually no secondary material from the Indian side. As the papers on the crisis had only just become available at the National Archives of India at the beginning of the PhD, this might well be the first study to use them. Especially as the crisis involved a
rather controversial figure in Rajshewar Dayal, who had been loaned from the Indian Foreign Service to the UN in order to be the Secretary General’s Special Representative to the Congo, Indian records are very important to get a full picture of the crisis as viewed from an international point of view. Additionally, as it was the Indian Army working under the umbrella of the UN that ended the Katanga secession, so Indian records were also crucial to gain a full understanding of the military operation and its political fallout. Finally, I have also been able to secure the memoirs of India’s first Ambassador to the Congo, DN Chatterji, who has written extensively about all angles of the crisis from an Indian point of view. In writing this last chapter, I have also used the papers of Andrew Cordier, who was Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and whose papers are housed at Columbia University.

As mentioned in the introduction, the thesis has two opening chapters – these are a literature review and a theoretical discussion of non-alignment. The three empirical chapters are based on three periods – Chapter 4 discusses an early period of non-alignment when it was most critical in its stance towards security; Chapter 5 discusses two crises in the year 1956, when non-alignment encountered two different discourses of security and Chapter 6 discusses non-aligned approaches to the practice of security. In this format, the chapters loosely represent the taxonomy of critique, discourse and practice of security, which is to say that although all three are present in all the cases under study, in each case, and in each corresponding chapter, one of the elements is most noticeable.

This phased chronology represents the shifting relationship between politics and security. The thesis is a historical analysis of this shift. It is suggested that the movement between the three stages can offer a new understanding of the limits and possibilities of a critique of security when it informs political thought and action. Non-alignment was conceptualised as the reclaiming of politics from its orientation towards security. Therefore, this thesis will use methods from within the Critical Security Studies toolkit to analyze non-alignment in the Indian context. The three conceptual categories – critique, discourse and practice are used to explain three parallel movements in the relationship between politics and security. The argument is that in the first stage, India’s non-aligned politics is concerned with unmaking the ordering of world politics around a security-centric agenda. This phase therefore represents a
moment of deconstructing and problematizing politics by questioning its dependence on security. This is therefore, the stage in which the critique is most obvious. In the second phase, the critique remains significant, but is diluted by historical circumstances. So, at this stage, the critique is somewhat muted, and non-alignment comes into conversation with security. Earlier unequivocal assaults on security give way to dialectic between security and non-aligned politics. In the space of this dialectical engagement, the critique of security is unevenly applied. In a state of flux, non-aligned politics is not comprehensive in its critical approach to security. By trying to differentiate between various types of security and privileging some discourses over others, non-alignment becomes complicit in the discursive modus operandi of security. This is therefore the state in which, non-alignment is discussed as a discourse of security, albeit with some critical elements. In the third and final stage, non-aligned India participates in the use of force to solve international political problems, even outside her own periphery. This contradicts the stand taken by Nehru in the earlier phases of non-alignment where clear distinctions had been drawn first, between sending troops and sending logistical support and then between sending unarmed troops and armed ones. India participated in international military manoeuvres intended to be offensive, even as the UN undertook them. This represents a clear shift from the phases where the critique, and discourse of security were dominant, to one where India was actively participating in the practice of security, notwithstanding non-alignment’s critique of securitized politics. There are certain elements of an engagement with the changing discourse of security, and even within the practice, there is a critique of the use of force, which is heavily caveated. For that reason, I argue that it impossible to clearly delineate the three phases into this taxonomy. But critique, discourse and practice are the three overlapping conceptual categories by which we might better understand non-alignment approach to security.

I also argue that the history of modern India and its international relations as informed by non-alignment is an important case from which we can derive conclusions about the relationship between politics and security and the transformative potential of that relationship. The anti-colonial tenor of early non-alignment and the subsequent post-colonial aspirations in the narrative of non-alignment give rise to a particular form of politics. It becomes difficult to theorize non-alignment precisely because it is difficult to discuss a form of politics that has in part been inherited from the colonial experience, and in part, shaped by the resistance to it. The spaces in which non-alignment operated
were diverse and often it moved between the national, the regional and the international. In using Critical Security Studies to analyze the course of non-alignment as it ran between the 1940s and the 1960s, we might keep in mind that “any critical reading of international politics must at once incorporate both critique and a transformative agenda based on an alternative reading of politics, one that, in late modernity, must recognise the complexity of political agency and its location, not just in relation to the continuities of power, but also in the interactive sphere of public discourse and contestation.” In undertaking this kind of theoretical exploration, it might be possible to significantly contribute to a widening of the Critical Security Studies agenda. By reading the history of non-alignment as the limits in the critique of security, it might be possible to reverse that gaze and to further problematize the assumptions within Critical Security Studies, whilst disbanding some of them as quite obviously Eurocentric.

Studying Critical Security Studies and non-alignment in the same frame also facilitates the historical turn in the study of International Relations. The history of non-alignment provides us with fresh evidence with which to deconstruct the theoretical claims advanced by International Relations theory in general and CSS in particular. This also makes it possible to newly approach the study of security within International Relations by viewing it in conjunction with concepts such as Empire, not from the vantage point of the metropole but from that of the colony. Given that modern Indian history is dominated by the study of the colonial experience and its theorisation, it comes as no surprise that Empire as a frame of reference is used rather innovatively. However, the historical turn in International Relations theory has not paid sufficient heed to that theorisation and is focused almost entirely on either foreign policy analysis, strategic studies or military history. The emphasis on foreign policy is constructivist, dealing either with questions of “efficacy” or “legacies of victimization.” The theorisation of security in the realms of strategic studies or military is too often concerned not with security, but with war as an instantiation of the absence of security. Even so, it is focussed not on “war per se, but about how to prevail in it, or more broadly, how to use military and other instrumentalities to attain or secure interests and other valued

159 Ibid. p.7
Diplomatic histories of wars that India has fought or that India has come in contact with seem to address this issue but are more attentive to “how actors make strategic choices.” This thesis will employ a different approach, one that is more concerned with routinely asking “what security is and what it means to adopt a critical stance in the study of it.” The following chapter lays out the conceptualisation and the origins of non-alignment, and the subsequent chapters each deal with one of the three stages in which it developed in the Nehru years.

Chapter 3

‘A Lonely Furrow’

Non-alignment as an Approach to Security and Politics

In this chapter, I propose to discuss non-alignment as being rooted in two specific aspects of Nehru’s political thought. These are: one, a very specific re-imagination of the international and two, a critical engagement with the nation-state. I will suggest that both these aspects originate in a profoundly progressivist sense of history, and informed a dialectic that culminated in non-alignment. The chapter will also discuss how non-alignment is an approach to politics that is modernist, statist and critical.

To this end, the chapter is organised in four sections: the first section discusses the international as a conceptual category for Nehru; the second section is an exposition of Nehru’s idea of the Indian nation-state; in the third section, I bring together both those narratives to discuss what non-alignment is - in part a critique of security, in part a method of doing politics and in part, a deliberation on the tensions between security and politics. In the fourth section, I briefly discuss the Non-Aligned Movement and how the empirical chapters will develop this thesis further.

Imagining the International

In this section, I discuss Nehru’s conceptualisation of the international and how he imagined it to be more than an aggregation of states. I will then suggest that this idea of the international was rooted in the critical stance adopted by Marxism towards the capitalist condition and in the narrative of the anti-colonial movement. In the end, I will suggest that by combining these two critiques, Nehru was able to conceptualise the international, with inspiration from Tagore, and to develop what was a challenge to Eurocentrism, not only in theory but also in the practice of international politics.

Nehru’s predilection for history predated the attainment of Indian independence or the beginning of the Cold War. In fact, his major pre-independence works are all histories – in Glimpses of World History (1934), Nehru offers a view of the wider world, and its contending ideologies; in An Autobiography – Towards Freedom (1936), he traces his own life alongside the development of the Indian freedom movement and then locates
both in the timeline of world history; and finally, in *The Discovery of India* (1946), he recounts India’s history from ancient times to the twentieth century to highlight her identity as a nation. Throughout this work, he locates the self, the global and the nation as being analogous. Subsequently, in his writing post-independence, there is a discernable shift towards distinguishing these concepts from one another, seeing the nation-state as more than a collection of individuals, and the international as more than a collection of nation-states.

As Nehru’s ideas developed in the period before India became independent of British rule, it is possible that his idea of the nation-state was an image of the future. While certain writers have claimed that Nehru resisted the conflation of the nation with the state, it is my submission that he employed the past of the Indian nation to advance an idea of the state it would be. In subsequent stages, he constantly narrated the nation as an instrument of the state. Indeed, the “status of the past” was a crucial question in order to shape the future. For theorists of International Relations, the state in India on coming into existence in 1947, immediately acquires a European character. Therefore, the state in India is often theorized in those terms, or is differentiated on account of its nationhood or postcolonial character. There is a discernable lack of theoretical reflection on the relation between the nation and the state as bearing any significance for India’s international relations, although there is a considerable amount of work on the relation between nationalism and the state. Yet, the nation-state that was at the centre of the political project in India was not self-evident or uncritically adopted at all. Nehru developed a critique of it and although like other postcolonial elites, he chose it “to form the core” of his “political project”, the process by which he came to do so is significant in itself.

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165 For a detailed exposition of this idea, see Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Imaginary Institution of India: Politics and Ideas*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 71. Kaviraj says that for Nehru, “history came to be a central idea”.
168 Ibid.
Nehru’s foremost occupation, and one that extended to well before independence, was to establish a selective continuum between the nation and the state, in a way that propelled the state forward, instead of holding it back. Indeed, for the study of modern India, it is useful to remember that “states have given birth to nations at least so often as nations have given birth to states”\(^{170}\). Therefore, the historicization of the early modern period is important to understand the form of non-alignment during and after independence. By differentiating between the nation and the state, but by conjoining them in international affairs, Nehru was also able to conceptualize the international on different levels. The international was for him a lived reality; in this he was helped by his position as a public figure, assuming neither solely a national role nor an international one, but being entrenched in both simultaneously and perpetually\(^{171}\). Indeed, as Gandhi had once remarked, Nehru’s “nationalism was equal to internationalism”\(^{172}\). By simultaneously being the recipient of and contributor to both narratives, Nehru engaged with the discourses of nationalism and that of internationalism that were developing in parallel at the dawn of independence, and indeed, from the early years of the twentieth century. This also made available to him different narratives of history, from which to cast a mould for his own thought\(^{173}\). In putting into play different aspects of these historical narratives at different points in time, Nehru was able to employ, not a first or a second, but rather multiple first readings of history\(^{174}\).

The first of these readings was rooted in a primarily economic theory of socialist thought – it was the Marxist critique of the exploitative nature of a capitalist society\(^{175}\). Nehru was an enthusiastic votary of socialist thought and of the anti-colonial discourse of Marxism, announcing on the eve of Indian independence, “I hope, India will stand for Socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a Socialist State and I do


\(^{171}\) Mehta refers to how the British rulers of India were “like men bound to keep time in two longitudes at once,” Henry Maine, *The Effects of Observation of India on Modern European Thought* Cambridge, the Rede Lecture, 1875, quoted in Uday S. Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 13.

\(^{172}\) Mohandas K. Gandhi, quoted in Chacko, “Internationalist Nationalist”, 178.

\(^{173}\) This characteristic comes out quite strongly in Guha’s discussion of Gandhi’s choice of successors in Ramachandra Guha, *The Last Liberal and Other Essays* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004).


\(^{175}\) Partha Chatterjee also discusses this “appropriation”, but is of the view that Nehru used “the scientific method of Marxism” for purely nationalist purposes. Partha Chatterjee, “Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World,” *The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 140.
believe that the whole world will have to go that way”\textsuperscript{176}. The subsequent influence of socialist thought on India’s political economy is very well documented\textsuperscript{177}. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, when India was still under colonial domination, the Marxist trope of ‘exploitation’ carried different significance. In an international setting dominated by the presence of Empire, the exploitation of the weaker sections of society within one nation was being amplified and replayed as the exploitation of the weaker nations of the world. In India, writers such as Dadabhai Naoroji had pointed out this “drain of resources”, but had sought redressal within the colonial framework\textsuperscript{178}.

With the advent of Gandhi, whose politics was fashioned very differently, the economic aspects of the critique were diminished in favour of a moral attack on the evils of colonialism and an exhortation to the British to redeem themselves through the practice of ethical politics. However, globally, Marxists attempted to influence anti-imperial struggles quite directly, as is evident in the League Against Imperialism held in Brussels, Belgium in 1927, an anti-imperialist meeting organised by the Comintern\textsuperscript{179}. Thirty-seven colonies were represented amongst the League’s members; Nehru attended this meeting, and seems to have encountered for the first time an avenue for the development of Marxist thought in conjunction with an anti-colonial impulse. Subsequently, this confluence of narratives comes forth more sharply in his own political thought\textsuperscript{180}. Although the League eventually failed over disagreements amongst members, it provided a model for future organisations – the similarities in basic structure with the Non-Aligned Movement are quite evident\textsuperscript{181}.

The second of Nehru’s readings of history came from his involvement in the anti-colonial struggle in India. Having understood the implications of being a colony, the


\textsuperscript{177} For a narrative of India’s political economy woven into its political history, see, Sunil Khilnani, The Idea of India (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999), 263.

\textsuperscript{178} Dadabhai was himself influenced deeply by the Marxist method, being a member of the Second International. His ‘Poverty and Un-British rule in India’ is the pioneering treatise on the economic effects of colonial rule on India. In it, he calls upon the British “to be British” towards India. See, Dadabhai Naoroji, Poverty and Un-British Rule in India (London: S. Sonnenschein, 1901), 675.

\textsuperscript{179} For an interesting account of the League, see Vijay Prashad, The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World (New York: New Press, 2007), 364; for an interesting account of Nehru’s interface with the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, see Frank Moraes, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, 2nd ed., (Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2008), 107-123.

\textsuperscript{180} To see how that changed over the years he was in power, see Paul F. Power, “Indian Foreign Policy: The Age of Nehru,” The Review of Politics 26, 2 (1964): 272.

\textsuperscript{181} Vijay Prashad, Darker Nations, 364.
movement was struggling to overthrow colonial rule and gain independence\textsuperscript{182}. However, Nehru was aware that even if the independence movement were successful, India would merely transition from being a colony to being an ex-colony. She was tied to the colonial framework through which she had entered a period of modernity - her political identity had been constructed in relation to the Empire. Even though the movement had introduced a new method of doing politics, its main objective was to secure the independence of India from colonial rule. Having secured that objective, it was unlikely to have an influence on independent India, or on her status in the larger world\textsuperscript{183}. It was also unlikely to remake the image of India in the space of a moment, at the point where India became independent. For that, India would have to undergo a shift from being perceived either as an economic resource or as an ex-colony; a new identity would have to be forged on the basis neither of political nor of economic history, because these were both histories of subjugation. An overemphasis on these aspects would have resulted in a view that one’s cultural past was too dislocated to inform a sense of politics; it would be seen as a “history of lack, a history that always falls short of true history”\textsuperscript{184}.

On the other hand, an accentuation of India’s cultural past would have led to a movement similar to the militant nationalism brought forward as a political method by the Fascist and Nazi experiences\textsuperscript{185}. This possibility was, of course, taken into account by Gandhi whose own method was so heavily reliant on non-violence that it was in nature antithetical to the assumptions that these other movements were based on. Gandhi addressed the question of violence as manifest in human relations and in relations to man’s morality, but also in its larger form – as the question of colonialism. His method was very heavily reliant on the framework of the Empire – it was a response to “a danger whose reality was always to be found elsewhere”\textsuperscript{186}. Thus, even when Gandhi was working outside the framework of the nation, he was working within the framework of Empire, overturning it but working from within its larger form. Nehru’s

\textsuperscript{182} For how nationalist histories of postcolonial states are written through histories of their anti-colonial movements, see Erez Manela, \textit{The Wilsonian Moment: Self Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), xi.

\textsuperscript{183} Not because it wasn’t radical enough, but because it was too radical; discussion in the next section.


\textsuperscript{185} Chatterjee suggests that this might have to do with the fact that they didn’t consider themselves “culturally inferior/ill-equipped”. See, Chatterjee, “Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World,” 1.

\textsuperscript{186} Faisal Devji, ed., \textit{The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and the Temptations of Violence}, (London: Hurst Publishers, 2012), 44.
conception of the international, therefore, had a different point of reference. In line with this view, Nehru said in 1938, “the essence of the problem of peace is the problem of empire”\textsuperscript{187}. His internationalism was also explicitly positioned as being more progressive than thinking within the confines of the ‘nation’. A similar forceful articulation, and an eventual political architecture, is found in some of Tagore’s work, as outlined below.

Tagore’s international thought was deeply anti-political, anti-nationalist and anti-imperialist, as he read all three as mutually constitutive. In his treatise Nationalism, Tagore put forth the view that politics, as a method of achieving social cohesion, was deeply problematic. Tagore was wary of the “profound inauthenticity”\textsuperscript{188} of politics. In his arguments against nationalisms, both European and Japanese\textsuperscript{189}, he expressed an anxiety that a political form of life would unavoidably lapse into an “aggressive, competitive and acquisitive practice of imperialism”\textsuperscript{190}. In openly critiquing nationalism as the manifestation of politics, he sought to restore the creative potential in life - an alternative that he considered would bring about a “reconciliation of these two great worlds”\textsuperscript{191}. Tagore’s philosophical position was therefore anti-political and assumed politics and nationalism to be mutually constitutive and reinforcing. For Tagore, the onslaught of politics would dilute the social texture of peoples, who, finding themselves organised as nations, would emulate rather than innovate, leading to a tedious sameness between worlds. He was certain that nationalism would phase “India’s entry into the universal”\textsuperscript{192} and politics was wont to rely on such a vile nationalism.

This was a sentiment Tagore shared with Gandhi, although their views on how to address this problem were starkly at odds. Both Tagore and Gandhi saw the nation-state as undesirable and sought to put forth a community-based conceptualisation of social life, although Tagore was more focussed on the development of the individual. But they


\textsuperscript{188}P N Furbank, quoted in Sunil Khilnani, “Looking for Indira Gandhi,” \textit{Seminar}, August 2004, 13, saying this about political life, but it could have just as easily been applied to the domain in which those lives took place.


both employed the concept of community differently – Gandhi saw the village as the ideal representation of social life, whilst Tagore was more focussed on the flows between communities, such as might already exist. They both placed an emphasis on the social over the political, the cultural over the national. For Gandhi, this was to be achieved by replacing the state with smaller units of administration. This is where we can sense a divergence in their views – for Tagore the role of the nation-state could be restrained by first, emphasizing its dependence on a larger system of states, and second, by encouraging the movement of people and ideas outside of the structure of the state.

In light of the exhaustive historical description of the processes of globalisation, especially in the late twentieth century, this idea might seem rather self-evident. However, the internationalism of Tagore’s political thought at the turn of the twentieth century when India was still only a colony, is very radical. The constituent of the international he foresaw would be the Indian nation-state, but that nation-state not yet a reality, Tagore anticipated India as a “land without a centre”. The state could become a repository of the diffused form of the aspirations of its peoples, yet because those aspirations had also been expressed elsewhere in the world, they would not become provocations to nationalism. It is this “idea of India” that is carried forward in Nehru’s own international political thought, albeit with different inflections of emphasis.

Similar to the international, for Tagore, East and West were also conceptual categories. He considered at length their shared impulses, even where they had developed in parallel, not in conjunction. Tagore critiqued ideas such as nationalism that he thought were dangerous, but encouraged others that he thought could be syncretised in India. Tagore warned against the unthinking adoption of any one model saying, “We began with a blind, foolish, insensate begging at the door of Europe, with our critical sense entirely benumbed. That was not the way to make any real gain.” Yet he warned against “a wholesale suspicion of the West”, wholly aware that in escaping “the quicksands of our infatuation, we may go to the other extreme”. After all, “the reaction of disillusionment is just as unreal as the first shock of illusion”, he said. For Tagore,

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the idea of the international was “including but not restricted to the West”\textsuperscript{197}. This, of course, is the most recognizable characteristic of non-alignment – an accent on the force of an idea, not on its origins. Although non-alignment often takes on the semblance of advocating internationalism, in reality, their contingent character unites both non-alignment and internationalism; non-alignment was to a large extent, contingent \textit{on} internationalism\textsuperscript{198}. By projecting India as non-aligned, Nehru was abstaining from alignment, but a different course of action would have ended up “confining India within local horizons”\textsuperscript{199}. Tagore had subverted the antithetical understanding of the East and the West by pointing to their mutually inclusive character. In so doing, he prefaced Nehru’s ‘non-alignment’, whose motif was to politicise geography differently.

I return to a fuller study of Nehru’s understanding of the international. But before that discussion, it is important to highlight a second aspect of Nehru’s political thought – one that was concerned with the ‘nation-state’. This concern developed in parallel with the ideas discussed above. The following section looks at it more closely.

\textbf{A Critique of the Nation-State}

In the following section, I suggest that Nehru’s engagement with the state was in conversation with Gandhi’s critique of it. Nehru’s vision reflected the overall anxieties present in Gandhi’s political thought but rejected its underlying assumptions. Nevertheless, Gandhi’s approach informed Nehru’s subsequent departure from the then prevalent modes of politics. Both Tagore and Gandhi developed critiques of the form of the nation-state. For Tagore, as discussed above, politics was deeply problematic because it made possible the organization of peoples as nations\textsuperscript{200}. Politics, in Tagore’s view, diminished the scope for socio-cultural forms of organization, favoured the form of the state and therefore, led inevitably to imperialist modes of thought\textsuperscript{201}. Tagore’s antidote to this condition was to inspire the free movement of people outside the borders of the state. In emphasizing the interconnectedness of people, he sought to make the

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\bibitem{198} Paul F. Power makes the point that “true internationalism is incompatible with alignment”, but this formulation insufficiently explains the motivations of non-alignment towards internationalism. See Power, “The Age of Nehru,” 272.
\bibitem{199} Bose, “Postcolonial Histories”, 146.
\bibitem{200} Collins, \textit{Empire, Nationalism and the Postcolonial World}, 72-73.
\bibitem{201} Ibid. 90-91.
\end{thebibliography}
state irrelevant. Thus, in a way, he laid the foundations for a state that is able to move beyond its security-centric role.

For Gandhi, the danger of the state was not so much in its capacity to make a certain sort of politics possible. Certainly, he was deeply aware of the state as a repository of violence, writing in 1935, “The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence” [202]. Yet, for him the critique of the state was founded not in the processes it set in motion, but in the processes that were required to make the state possible. Thus, he posited the non-violence of the anti-imperial struggle for freedom against the violence of the imperial state. Violence, he saw as deeply entrenched in both state and society, but while the state’s existence was tied to the “violent politics of life” [203], society was more capable of redeeming itself through “the formal recognition of a force that already sustained society” – that of nonviolence [204]. Yet, Gandhi’s critique is not solely confined to a study of non-violence as his method. His central concerns became more sophisticated in parallel with the anti-colonial movement he staged. With each wave of protest, he was able to further refine his own critique. At an earlier stage, he was chiefly concerned with the recovery of “a line of moral inquiry” [205]. A shift is perceptible from his early writing, for instance in Hind Swaraj, where he highlights the possibilities for ethical action present in politics [206].

Over the years, he adopted a position that was more wary of politics, although he remained committed to ethics as a formative discourse. Earlier anxieties with regard to the state inform the profound anti-statism of his later years [207]. Gandhi attempted a theoretical reversal: in 1939, he wrote, “In an Ideal State there will be no political

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[204] Ibid., 5. Devji also discusses how this ideal community was not to be based on ethical relations, ibid.,111.
[206] Sudipta Kaviraj, ed., Politics in India (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 57. Kaviraj says, “Hind Swaraj” is illustrative of Gandhi’s “tendency to moralize and to paint the ethical content of politics in such bold strokes”.
institution and therefore no political power.”208 By divorcing politics from the State, he was able to undermine the centrality of the state in two ways – first, by offering a model of government even more diffused than the federalist structure, through his vision of “village republics”; second, by highlighting the possibilities for moral action not in a collective form of politics, but in an individual form of life. For Gandhi, the state was essentially a symptom of crisis. The crisis in question was the loss of sovereignty over self, once sovereignty had been understood solely in terms of the state. As the state functioned on a fundamentally reciprocal basis, by prioritising the state over other forms of social interaction, the possibilities for moral action by individuals would be diminished.209 Such a contingent morality would only exist in the “shadow of politics”.210 Therefore, in order to secure the conditions for moral action, Gandhi “fragmented sovereignty”; he sought to agitate the alliance between state and sovereignty. In many ways, Gandhi anticipated Foucault’s call to action, “We need to cut off the King's head: in political theory that has still to be done.”212

Having thus formulated a radical critique of the politics that had formed the state and sustained it, Gandhi also developed a theoretical perspective on war. Gandhi’s philosophy drew a distinction between politics and war. He was interested in two aspects of war – the politics that makes war seem necessary, and therefore, possible, and the sequence of war. The study of the first aspect led him to believe that with regard to war, “the logic of its necessity seems always to trump the tragedy of its effects.”213 He saw politics as having a vacuous presence, preoccupied by its instrumentality, and the efficacy of that instrumentality.214 He saw the state as being hopelessly infatuated by such a politics, one that found its equilibrium through an incessant calculation of what “larger purposes” were to be achieved.215

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211 Ibid., 6.


Having already established the moral vacancy brought on by politics, his attention was to identify the potential for moral action within the conditions in which war was being waged, by sequestering it from politics. Although war was justified by the invocation of another, better future, in itself it was devoid of the “permanent idealism of politics and peace”\textsuperscript{216}. Therefore, Gandhi was interested not in a morality that sanctions war as a means of politics, but morality as a possibility in times of war. It, thus, existed in that twilight zone where politics was not to be found in its “pacific instantiation”\textsuperscript{217}, but where a total loss of human life had not yet occurred\textsuperscript{218}. Here, he thought the conditions of moral action could assert themselves with complete autonomy: they were not constrained by the normality of politics. When states went to war, their moral choices stood completely exposed. Therefore, when he said that “India shall survive this death dance and occupy the moral height,”\textsuperscript{219} he was referring not only to the possibility that India would not go to war, but that regardless of that action, she would find ways in which to fully exercise her moral agency. In Gandhi’s view, if morality was not in any way contingent on politics, if indeed, politics was perilous to the scope of morality, then a state of war where politics had broken down could create other different conditions for the exercise of morality.

Two aspects of Gandhi’s political thought have been discussed here – the first is the assumption that politics makes state and second, that war, as distinct from politics, permits morality. The state was essentially prone to violence, in Gandhi’s critique, and to imperialism, in Tagore’s analysis. These critiques were fundamentally opposed to the creed of politics that made the state possible, but in so doing, they tied the two concepts together; both agreed that the state was the site where politics took place, while Gandhi also theorized it as the site of war. From Tagore and Gandhi, Nehru inherited this image of the state. However, he interpreted it in a radically different way. Indeed, Gandhi chose first to bring forth the ethical content of politics, and then to focus his attention on ethics alone. In part, this was because the frame of reference within which Gandhi was

\textsuperscript{216} For an exposition on why war is warranted by “the permanent idealism of politics and peace”, see Uday S. Mehta, “Gandhi and the Common Logic of War,” 136.
\textsuperscript{218} The atom bomb presents a difficulty for Gandhi’s theorisation of violence and war. For a statement of this problem, see Devji, Impossible Indian, 149-162.
working was that of the problem of modernity. For him, the framework of the Empire meant “the forcible imposition of European modernity on India”\(^{220}\). In order to move out of that framework, it was necessary to bring about a sense of India’s own modernity. For Gandhi, this could only be done outside the orbit of the state\(^ {221}\). But, by suggesting these ideas in conjunction, Gandhi opened up possibilities for a new vision of the state, a prospect taken up vigorously by Nehru.

The basic assumption in Nehru’s thought at this juncture was to treat the state as a desirable entity. If located against the narrative of the state in Tagore and Gandhi’s thought, this assumption strikes a discordant note. For instance, it has been suggested that Nehru’s “étatisme” was “an entirely novel ideological reconstruction of the elements of nationalist thought that was then being undertaken in the final, fully mature, stage of the development of nationalism in India - its moment of arrival” and “a reconstruction whose specific form was to situate nationalism within the domain of a state ideology”\(^ {222}\). Placed against the context of the independence movement, Nehru’s statism is analysed as a logical, even inevitable outcome. In fact, this perception is quite popular: “So organic and consequential were those principles to India's recent history that they can be noted without analysis; for an Asian country newly liberated from more than a century of rule by a European power it would have been unthinkable not to espouse those causes”\(^ {223}\). Other readings have suggested the contrary – that Nehru’s attempts at conceptualising the state differently are unique, that “the political history of Asia and Africa are full of examples of states which simply inherited colonial bureaucracies, with a tired political imagination”\(^ {224}\) but that this was not true of Nehru who sought to invigorate the concept of the nation-state.

In either reading, the estimation is that Nehru was “at times Gandhian, at others Nehruvian”\(^ {225}\), that is to say that while Nehru adapted some of Gandhi’s political thought, he also made sharp departures from it. The departures referred to in these

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\(^{221}\) Kaviraj suggests that Gandhi “refused to deal in modernity’s terms”. See, Kaviraj, *Imaginary Institution of India*, 24.

\(^{222}\) Chatterjee, “Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World,” 132.


\(^{225}\) Vajpeyi, *Righteous Republic*, 172.
analyses are of the political kind, about the content of the state. However, my emphasis in the following section is on what I consider his most significant departure – one in which he places his conviction in the form of the state, in arguing for the state, in considering it essential, if not inevitable. He does this not by repudiating the European model but by imagining the form of a state that would be particularly suited to accommodating the paradoxes of the Indian nation. By overlooking the element of translation and redefinition in Nehru’s theorisation of the state, we are also inclined to ignore his critique not only of other states, but of the system they occupied. The Gandhian critique and rejection of the nation-state had been acknowledged by Nehru but the inherent contradictions present in the Gandhian vision of politics made it impossible for Nehru to endorse it – as Kaviraj puts it, “After all, the independence movement was about the capture of the state, and it was anomalous to suggest that the state that was captured with such effort should then be reduced to insignificance.”

Placing too much of an emphasis on the discontinuities between Gandhi and Nehru suggests therefore that while Nehru manipulated the form of the state, he was really only disagreeing with Gandhi. The analysis of Nehru’s political philosophy has suffered from this belief in two related ways – the first is to treat his political thought as being systematic and comprehensive; consequently, the second is to be in constant judgement over his work or actions, rather than to treat them as a historical object of inquiry. The tendency is to assign a degree of archetypal certainty to his work so much so that Nehru's reputation has receded owing to a discomfort with the ambiguities he so consistently nurtured. In the following section, I suggest a different reading of some of these themes.

Nehru’s Non-Alignment

In the previous two sections, I have attempted to foreground some of the premises of Nehru’s political thought. In this section, I suggest that he developed a novel understanding of the state, which in turn constituted a critique of politics and security. In the end, I discuss ways in which the critique periodically lapsed into discourse and practice.

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A different reading of Nehru’s politics can be employed to suggest that it was simultaneously modernist and statist and critical. As discussed above, the political philosophies of Gandhi and Nehru are assigned a shared provenance in the political history of modern India. I suggest, however, that highlighting their critical ambition allows us to see the political thought of Gandhi and Nehru as cognates of each other. The normative strength of Gandhi’s method did not have to be set aside once India took the form of a nation-state. In fact, by developing the critical positions taken up by Gandhi and by locating them in Tagore’s idea of the international, Nehru was able to re-imagine the state itself as capable of exerting moral force and to imagine it as the location of politics, which had become and was increasingly becoming “the dominant medium of public life”.

India’s experience of the “operative calculus of imperial power” had forged a deep suspicion of narratives rooted in emancipation and Gandhi’s broadly ethical framework had discarded the politics of the state. For Nehru, it was necessary to situate this moral force in a way that the state would neither take on an emancipatory role nor displace politics by emphasis on ethics. Nehru addressed that problematique by asserting the critical value of that narrative vis-à-vis both politics and war. Gandhi’s positioning of the two concepts saw them as antithetical to each other. By establishing a continuum between the two concepts, the Gandhian critique of both made it possible to use politics and the state interchangeably. On the contrary, by developing a critique of the mechanisms of the state in times of peace and in times of war, Nehru was attempting a reversal of the self-estrangement of politics. Indeed, for Nehru, there was “more to politics than the forceful machinery of the state”. In order to make this possible, the critique had to be directed at ‘security’ – the larger purpose that seemed to direct both the peaceful idealism of politics and the anarchy of war. Therefore, Nehru’s critique concerns itself with the ontology of security and its centrality in the contemporary understanding of modernity. This critique informed India’s international relations and the conduct of her external affairs to a large degree. Taken together, the approach to

230 A condition identified in Marxist theory, but applied here as a method.
politics, the theorisation of security and the foreign policy these informed all came to be known under the rubric of non-alignment.

Through non-alignment, Nehru developed a critique in three stages: first was an assessment of capitalist modernity and the communist response to it. This was evident in the manner in which the Cold War had developed. Whilst constantly agonizing over the effects of the Cold War, he refused to deal with it in its own terms. In order to discredit it, he called upon India’s experience of colonialism saying,

“[Gandhi] created connecting links between conflicting elements. I would not say that all conflicts are thus avoided. But the door is always open. And remember also that Gandhi was absolutely unbending when it came to giving up a principle; when it came to surrendering a vital position. But he never closed the door to the other party wishing to enter, to talk to him and to discuss matters. He fought the British but he was always friendly to them. That dual conception is not quite understood. That is why we cannot understand or appreciate the Cold War mentality.”\(^\text{232}\)

Nehru sought to recall Gandhi’s position as being anti-colonial not anti-British; his larger implication was that the danger of an ideological conflict was seldom the wars, hot or cold, that it caused; rather, it was the premises around which it was built – that of security – that would perpetually frame the political relationship between the parties to the conflict. In fact, he found the situation absurd: “The Cold War approach seems utterly illogical because a cold war has some meaning only as a prelude to a hot war. If the hot war is not to take place, then some other method has to be evolved. But the cold war prevents other methods being evolved.”\(^\text{233}\) Having pointed to the limitations of this approach to politics, Nehru created the space in which to introduce non-alignment as an alternative, as in his view there was “no justification for saying there can be only two ideologies in the world” and it presented “too great a limitation of the power of thinking, or of action.”\(^\text{234}\) By aligning the two dominant ideologies of the Cold War with their geographical spheres of influence, he put forth a critique that cast Europe as a

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\(^{232}\) Tibor Mende, *Conversations with Mr. Nehru*, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1956),140.

\(^{233}\) Ibid., 75-76.

\(^{234}\) Ibid., 49.
historical category, but Asia as a sociological one. While Europe’s character was in his critique the history of war, colonialism and empire, the relations between its peoples and their vision for the future could define Asia’s character.

So, in the second stage, non-alignment relied very heavily on a discourse of the imminent prominence of Asia, and concurrently of India. It characterised Asia as being on the verge of forming her own modernity/modernities: “Today I do venture to submit that Asia counts in world affairs. Tomorrow it will count much more than today.” By thus consistently presenting Asia’s past and her future as diametrically opposed, Nehru skilfully cast India’s present as an anachronistic moment where her influence exceeded her might, but was based on an estimation of her impending future. Although it has been suggested that essentially Nehru was punching above his weight, or that it was the appeal of his own personality that resulted in this outcome, I suggest that in fact, this seems very much an act of purposiveness. After all, with regard to India, it was a consistently stated position. Says Nehru, “In the subconscious mind of India there is questioning, a struggle, a crisis. As of old, India seeks a synthesis of the past and the present, of the old and the new.” Not only did Nehru thus shape the narrative of India in the language of futurity, he did so with no hubris towards history. By stating that India was seeking “synthesis” and disliked an “upheaval of so much that is old”, he was alluding to a narrative of continuity, which was to be achieved in the present moment. Nehru was aware that Gandhi worked on the basis of continuity – he said, “[Gandhi] conceived that revolution in terms of continuity and not in terms of a break. His language was one of continuity.” In imagining India, and indeed Asia of the future, the past did not have to be forsaken; it had to be reshaped in order to make the future possible.

The problematique was to maintain continuity with the past whilst moving away from the burden of history. In Nehru’s work, this is achieved by censuring Europe and her appetite for colonialism: “Asia till recently was largely a prey to imperial domination and colonialism; a great part of it is free today; part of it still remains unfree; and it is an astonishing thing than any country should still venture to hold and to set forth this

236 Edwardes suggests that there is a basic incongruence between Nehru’s personality and the role he undertook. Michael Edwardes, “Illusion and Reality in India’s Foreign Policy,” \textit{International Affairs} 41, 1 (1965): 48-58.
238 Mende, \textit{Conversations with Mr. Nehru}, 139.
doctrine of colonialism, whether it is under direct rule or whether it is indirectly maintained in some form or other.”

He is equally critical of Europe’s domination not only of the world, but also of the imagination of the world: “Europe is an important and vital part of the world but it is not the whole world. This fact is often forgotten. It was forgotten in the past 200 years because, in a sense, Europe dominated the rest of the world. That period of domination is over, and where it lingers, here and there, it will go very soon.” Where Gandhian philosophy had rejected European templates of modernity, Nehru’s critique temporized between them.

Therefore, in its most formative stage, the critique conjoined Europe and Asia together: “Anything that happens in Europe will affect Asia. Anything that happens in Asia will affect Europe. Asia has changed”. In the period before independence, Nehru took a long view of the situation: “Many difficult problems trouble Europe today, and yet it may well be that the future historian, with a truer perspective, will consider China and India as the most significant problems of today, and as having a greater influence on the future shaping of world events. For, essentially, India and China are world problems…” Immediately after independence, he envisaged a more dominant role for Asia vis-à-vis Europe’s problems:

“May I say that we are equally interested in the solution of European problems; but may I also say that the world is something bigger than Europe, and you will not solve your problems by thinking that the problems of the world are mainly the European problems. There are vast tracts of the world, which may not in the past, for a few generations, have taken much part in world affairs. But they are awake; their people are moving, and they have no intention whatever of being ignored or of being passed by.”

As decolonization unfolded, the states of Asia and Africa formed the Third World, a concept that became even more prominent in the 1950s. Simultaneously, Nehru

239 “The Importance of Asia” in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 8, 291.
240 Ibid., 290-295.
began to present India as the locus of a geographical-temporal critique developed in the first and second stages, identifying India as the source of non-alignment, which was now “an integral part of the international pattern”, and “widely conceded to be a comprehensible and legitimate policy, particularly for the emergent Afro-Asian states”\(^\text{244}\). It could be said that India came to occupy a “special place which could not be identified as being either with the ‘haves or the ‘have nots’\(^\text{245}\). It was, however, a concept firmly opposed to the balance of power model of international politics and Indian representatives vociferously opposed the idea of a third bloc framed by the need for security by instead focussing on the idea of peace - “an area of peace”, not territorially, but politically, diplomatically, morally...Third Bloc, never! The Third Bloc is a foolish idea...a bloc means power and a Third Bloc to be effective must have at least two and a half times the power of one bloc!”\(^\text{246}\). In their pronouncements, the positive constitution of the idea was realized when India led by example - “Non-alignment, in a sense, is an ugly word. It’s negative but becomes positive when you use it the way we do”\(^\text{247}\).

By outlining these three stages – that of the nation, the region and the international - as concentric circles of synthesis, Nehru attempted to move easily between them, placing an emphasis on one or the other as the critique then demanded. In this way, Nehru established India’s new identity around her specificities as a nation-state and her relations with the rest of the world\(^\text{248}\). Over time, this method presented some difficulties and those are discussed in the next section. The aim here was to outline Nehru’s vision of the state, his attempt at reimagining politics and the critique of security that emerged as a result. The conceptual understanding of security is discussed in more detail below.

Critique, Discourse, Practice


\(^{245}\) Edwardes, “Illusion and Reality”, 51.


\(^{247}\) Ibid., 7.

\(^{248}\) Sunil Khilnani, “Politics and National Identity,” in *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*, eds. Pratap B. Mehta and Niraja G. Jayal (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), 195, says “a willingness to invent, and crucially, to temporize when it came to defining the terms of India’s identity.”
Nehru was aware that Gandhi’s vision “represented something more than the immediate past”. This assessment was rooted not only in an ethical commitment to Gandhi’s politics, but also an intellectual discernment of it. The central ideas of Gandhi’s work – war, peace, politics, violence, morality and truth – were conceptually bound together. But Gandhi theorized the relation those ideas bore towards each other in an entirely novel, and perhaps too radical manner. Whilst the potency of his method was derived in large part from its novelty, more importantly, it was that Gandhi was able to make these ideas widely accessible. Through the course of the anti-colonial movement in India, the universability of Gandhi’s methods became increasingly evident; in hindsight, their universality appears unquestionable. A reading of Gandhi rooted in political epistemology suggests that by insisting on the fundamentality of certain concepts (such as violence) Gandhi rejected those concepts that he saw as problematic (such as the state) and neglected others that he saw as bearing a direct relation to the concepts that he had rejected (such as security). Thus, security was one of the least problematized concepts in Gandhi’s politics, not because it was essentially unproblematic but because it had been theoretically braided with the state.

Nehru, whose political thought was deeply influenced by the history of the twentieth century, read the ontology of security differently. Following the processes of state formation in Europe and imperial enterprise in the rest of the world, security had become the dominant mode of imagining the state. The Cold War represented an interregnum in that process. The extremity and all-round pervasiveness of the “balance of terror” coincided with the breakdown of empires. As new states emerged, they were occupied by the question of sovereignty – acquiring, consolidating and defending it. For Nehru, the sovereignty of one state was not conceptualised in relation to the sovereignty of another but in relation to the international. The idea simply was that if more states ascribed to this view, then the international would be remade not as the site of the Cold War, but as that of peaceful co-existence.

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250 Kaviraj, Imaginary Institution of India, 111, talks about the different registers in which Gandhi operated.

251 Winston Churchill’s phrase, quoted in Appadorai, Dilemma in Foreign Policy in the Modern World (Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1963), 6.

252 Eventually, this became problematic, as discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

253 The term here understood neither as Soviet policy towards the western world nor as Panchsheel specifically. Although Nehru said, “If these principles were recognized in the mutual relations of all countries, then indeed there would hardly be any conflict and certainly no war.” See Jawaharlal Nehru, “The Colombo Powers’ Peace Efforts,”
and great risks. If it is a question of taking risks, why take risks, which inevitably lead to greater conflict? Take the other risks, while always preparing yourself to meet any possible contingency that may arise.”

Thus, Nehru’s “straightforward, honest and independent policy” took on a deeply transgressive quality. Played out against the backdrop of the prevalent state system, non-alignment was thus, essentially an act of civil disobedience.

A discourse so deeply critical of the structure of international relations carried in it the possibility of isolating India. The international commitment that was an integral part of non-alignment itself came into question; the question being asked of all non-aligned nations was if “they believe that they are playing their full part as citizens of the world by sitting on the fence between two power blocs and enjoying the best of both worlds”, and India was no exception to this skepticism. In 1947, Nehru had warned the Constituent Assembly that by taking this course, India would have to “plough a lonely furrow”. Even more so, he was apprehensive of the narcissism of this position: “We are apt to be too sure of our stability, internal and external. Taking that for granted, we proceed to endeavour to remodel the world.” Anticipating this tendency, Nehru emphasized the constraints placed on a state like India, casting her position as that of vulnerability, “neither of the big blocs look upon us with favour” and often restating Gandhi’s preoccupations with the means-end question: “it becomes essential for us, for a while, to think more of how we are doing things than what we are aiming at, even though we should never forget what we are aiming at.” Thus, in this phase, non-aligned India was isolated in her critique of security and although Nehru had his apprehensions about India’s isolation, those fears played out in a completely different way in the following decade.

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258 “Note to Jayaprakash Narayan,” Nehru Papers, May 14, 1949, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi, India.
260 “The Importance of Asia” in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 8, 290-295.
The Non-Aligned Movement reinvigorated the idea of the Third World, especially around the Bandung Conference of Non-Aligned Nations held in 1955. Kaul describes non-alignment as “a common consciousness among the newly independent countries of the Third World”. Although many of the same states described themselves as the former and subscribed to membership of the latter, conceptually the two were separate. The Third World was the description that applied to nation-states, mostly from Asia and Africa, were not distinctly in the sphere of influence of either the US or of the Soviet Union. Yet, historians of the Cold War had posed the question whether the Third World was “a part of the Cold War or its antithesis”. Although both groups – the Third World and the Non-Alignment Movement - shared basic premises and mutual interests, they were distinct in one extremely important way - the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, being recently decolonized, had actively resisted aligning themselves militarily with either camp. The members of the Non-Aligned Movement abjured military pacts with either bloc, but also with each other. As Krishna Menon, once put it, “a non-aligned nation must be non-aligned with the non-aligned to be truly non-aligned”.

Non-aligned India was at the centre of this movement; her attempts at reframing the international informed the foundations of the movement. Once other states accepted non-alignment as the basis of their international relations, they challenged its ability to protect the sovereignty of their states. In the absence of the protective cover of security arrangements, they were fearful for their survival and for the furtherance of their national interests. This was a misguided reading of the tenets of non-alignment. By focussing on questions of sovereignty, the non-aligned states were giving in to the very assumptions that non-alignment was questioning. The international could not be reimagined or remade if territorial sovereignty remained a motivating factor for this re-imagination. The narrative of national interest was even more self-limiting because it could only be used to enlist the support of others who were already inclined to one’s position. Advancing in either direction meant moving away from the critique of the state and of the state system in Nehru’s non-alignment. By bringing into play these

263 Westad, epilogue, 209.
arguments, the Non-Aligned Movement rapidly lapsed into a discourse of security. Nehru, reluctant from the start to associate Indian non-alignment with the general ethos of the movement, distanced himself from what he saw as a potentially limiting discourse. The movement was democratic in its form, and it is possible that Nehru hesitated to be associated with an institution that was more a reflection of the historical momentum of the present than with an abiding normative commitment to reordering political thought. Non-aligned India’s early successes, such as in the Korean War (discussed in the following chapter) meant for Nehru that the Cold War could form a context where novel ideas could find life. Those ideas for him came together in non-alignment. On the other hand, as the Non-Aligned Movement expanded, as it did by the mid-1950s, its members were united in their commitment to remain non-aligned but every effort at setting an affirmative agenda brought to the fore divisions amongst them, not in the least between India and Indonesia.

This unravelling of NAM was also hastened by relaxations towards non-alignment in Nehru’s own position. In part, this came from the programme of consolidation of territory domestically (such as in Kashmir, Hyderabad or Goa) and regionally (such as in Nepal or Bhutan). But even more so, it began to be apparent when Nehru made a very large and comprehensive commitment to the formation and functioning of the United Nations. In 1927, Nehru had written: “We have no interests there or anywhere which require the protection of armed force and even if we had such interests it is better for them to suffer than to be protected at the point of the bayonet. The only interests we wish to develop in any country are such as are acceptable to the people of that country.” But the UN for him presented a challenge to his conceptualisation of the international, as he began to fear that trans-nationalism would strengthen nationalisms, not diffuse them. As he saw the ideological commitments of the two big blocs acted out at the UN, he began to envisage a role for India as mediator: “There are no affirmatives and negatives about it. There are fine shades of opinion, hints thrown out, general impressions created without commitments, reactions awaited and so on. If a reaction is favourable, one takes another step forward. Otherwise, one shuts up...What

267 Jawaharlal Nehru, “A Foreign Policy for India,” Article written in Montana, Switzerland, September 13, 1927, AICC File No 8, 1927, 1-27, NMML.
do we try to do? To soften and soothe each side and make it slightly more receptive to
the other.”269 Although there was handwringing over India’s inability to influence
matters substantially, it was clear that she would continue to have a role. Looking back
at the end of the Nehru era, Krishna Menon summarized the significance of non-
alignment as having established India, “not as a major power, but as an important
quantity in world affairs”, having prevented India “from becoming a satellite state” and,
as having “put a brake on war”270.

In part, Nehru could have seen this as a sort of affirmation of India’s still new identity.
But, also, it seems likely that he was keeping the door open for the West to bring about
“the peaceful transformation of an untenable relationship”271, despite not knowing
whether “India’s restraint would be emulated or exploited”272. In the 1950s, India
gradually moved from occupying this mediating role to having a more active presence.
Two aspects of this presence are especially important – the first is that it came about
through the medium of the UN – not only was Nehru committed to strengthening the
UN, he saw the relationship as being mutually invigorating; second, that peacekeeping
became very quickly a part of this relationship. India was one of the first contributors to
the UN Peacekeeping Force and also one of the beneficiaries of it, when the United
Nations Military Observation Group was deployed to maintain peace in India and
Pakistan in 1948. Thus, non-aligned India had to engage very substantially with these
questions of security, and this engagement came in phases, that reflect shift in Indian
thinking on security. This shift is most perceptible in India’s involvement in the Korean
War, her reaction to the events of 1956 – the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian
Revolution and her contribution to peacekeeping in the Congo Crisis. The following
three chapters look at the events in each of these cases, with 1956 being treated as one
historic moment that found expression in two crises. I suggest that such a study permits
us to recognize non-alignment as the critique, discourse and practice of security. The
analysis of archival material might reveal certain continuities between events, even if
there are discontinuities in their specific historical contexts. The previous chapter has
prefaced some of the discrepancies in treating non-alignment as being unchanging and

269 “Note to G. L. Mehta (Indian Ambassador at Washington),” Nehru Papers, 1 June 1955, NMML.
272 Andrew Bingham Kennedy, The International Ambitions of Mao and Nehru: National Efficacy Beliefs and the
handling India’s international relations in a rather maladroit way. The following chapters take a different approach.

In 1948, Nehru had announced, “It is not our purpose to enter into other people's quarrels. Our general policy has been to avoid entering into anybody's quarrels. If I may say so, I have more and more come to the conclusion that the less we interfere in international conflicts, the better, unless our own interest is involved, for this reason that it is not in consonance with our dignity just to interfere without any effect being produced. Either we should be strong enough to produce some effect or we should not interfere at all.” Only a few years later, India was very deeply involved in the various stages of the Korean War. At Bandung in 1955, Krishna Menon said, “Why should we get involved with these third-rate powers; our interests lie with the great powers.”

The following year, Nehru vociferously condemned the actions in Suez as “naked aggression”, and eventually, raised objections to Soviet actions in Hungary, saying they were “utterly in the wrong”. This diffuse rhetoric did little to serve India’s interests or raise her stature; instead she appeared too clever by half, eventually leading to some very serious allegations surrounding her involvement in Congo, where India had committed a very large contingent for peacekeeping during the crisis of the early 60s. Indeed, Nehru was deeply alarmed by the suggestion that “India intended to colonize the Congo”.

Thus, non-alignment took on the semblance sometimes of critique, at other times of discourse and also, as the practice of security at very close intervals in the period between 1947 and 1964. In any case, whichever of the three elements were most evident, it retained the other two as well – as a historical analysis of the period will show, it is not possible to always delineate between the three clearly as often critique is discourse, discourse is practice and so on and so forth. This shifting nature of the concept informed the international politics of the Indian state. Histories of Indian diplomacy are usually so concerned with establishing the retrospective significance of particular events that they neglect a study of the central idea that informed India’s…

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response to them. Most crucially, the historicization of the state is accompanied here with the location of that history in an international context. Thus, in this particular instance, this is an international history and a history of internationalism per se. The following three chapters – in looking at world events – will foreground some of these themes.
In the previous two chapters, I have suggested that non-alignment in its different phases had elements of the critique, discourse and practice of security. This chapter is concerned with the first of these phases - non-alignment as adopting a critical stance towards the imagination of security especially in the context of the Cold War. To that end, this chapter discusses India’s engagement with the Korean War, particularly between the crossing of the 38th Parallel by the North Koreans in 1950 and the signing of the armistice agreement at Panmunjom in 1953.

The chapter is divided into three sections: in the first section, I discuss the contextual specificities of Asia and the interface on the one hand between India and Asia and on the other, between Asia and Europe. In the previous chapter, I have discussed at length Nehru’s articulation of the ‘international’ as a space; in this chapter, I discuss more particularly his understanding of Asia. The second section is a narrative of the Korean War, a chronology of events, with particular attention to the substantial role of non-aligned India in bringing the war to a close. This section is most concerned with the manner in which India navigated the ‘international’ as a space and how the Nehruvian conceptualisation of international relations made these moves possible. In the last section, I discuss in detail why India’s approach to the Korean War, rooted in non-alignment, was essentially a critique of security. I argue that this critique was mounted on two planes – the first was a challenge to the Eurocentric imagination of international relations, the second was an attempt to shape the United Nations as a global platform where issues could be dealt with politically, not militarily. This in turn, made it possible to move away from securitized discourses, both of nationalism and internationalism. The critique was in part a dismantling of security and in part the politicization of the international, both processes working in conjunction with each other.

In sum, the chapter argues that the Korean War represents a moment of great historical significance not just for the states directly involved in the conflict, but also for states such as India. It is surprising therefore, that India’s involvement in the war has received
such scant attention, although the studies that do exist employ distinct and novel approaches. This chapter is an attempt to add to that literature.

**India, Korea & Asia**

The intellectual networks between India and the rest of Asia in the early- and mid-twentieth century developed in the context of and in response to the Empire. A strand of intellectuals in colonial India routinely expressed their anti-imperial positions in an Asian idiom. This form of historicized expression was developed by three simultaneous methods – the nationalist, the Asianist and the cosmopolitan. While nationalists operated within their respective countries, early Indian pan-Asianists such as Rasbehari Bose and Taraknath Das based themselves in other Asian countries such as Japan and China. Intellectuals such as Tagore, who emphasized universalism and were less interested in Asian essentialism, promulgated the cosmopolitan position. When Tagore’s seminal work *Nationalism* was published, it used both Asian and European examples to illustrate the ills of nationalist thinking. In fact, Tagore was deeply suspicious of the East/West binary and sought to alleviate the colonies by urging them to express their socio-cultural aspirations, which he saw as being stifled under colonial rule. As he was wary of both ideology and of politics, he emphasized the value of syncretism, one he thought was best assured in the cultural domain.

Tagore’s anti-imperial stance was inherently a political position and he is a significant early figure in the India-Korea political relationship. In 1924, Tagore travelled to Japan and expressed his support for the anti-colonial movement in Korea. The political

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dimension of his activism became more apparent when five years later, in 1929, he further extended that call, writing a poem asking Koreans to overthrow Japanese colonial rule, reclaim their national history and strengthen the idea of Asia. Again, in 1938, Tagore exchanged public letters with the Japanese poet Yone Noguchi, publicly denouncing the militaristic nature of Japan’s relations with Korea. Tagore used the example of Korea under Japanese rule as a warning against nationalistic projects, which according to him would inevitably lead to imperialism, but also to say that this was possible even outside of Europe – after all, this was one Asian state subjugating another. His position met with resistance and criticism amongst Japanese nationalists, but also, interestingly, in China, where his repudiation of nationalism and politics provoked nationalist fervour – “We cannot but oppose Dr. Tagore, who upholds these things that would shorten the life of our nation” said one widely circulated pamphlet.

The nationalist discourse within Asian nation-states, such as Japan and colonies, such as India, would often overlap with the discourse of Asian nationalism, and the lines between the two were blurred for some years, especially as they were both agitated by a “war against colonialism in politics and against orientalisme in science.” A leitmotif of Asian nationalism as conceived in India was the discourse of unity between India and China, on account of civilizational and socio-religious commonalities. At the Brussels Congress in 1927, Nehru invoked that discourse and cast it in a political mould by saying, “India and China must now resume the ancient personal, cultural and political relations between the two peoples. British imperialism, which in the past has kept us apart and done us so much injury, is now the very force that is uniting us in a common endeavour to overthrow it.” In Gandhi’s reading, it was vital for India to observe and learn from the anti-colonial movements in Russia and China: “not simply the greatness of the past history of these nations that attracts us…it is because we believe that there are movements going on in those countries.” Over time, the nationalist discourses


within both India and China became more prominent as independence movements gained momentum.

On the contrary, Asianism suffered, as tensions between China and Japan became more obvious, especially when Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931. This event was significant for two reasons – first, India in the throes of a non-violent anti-colonial independence movement was dismayed by Japanese actions, and Indians felt there was “little to choose between imperialism, Western or Eastern.” Second, China’s response to Japanese action demonstrated the differences between Indian and Chinese anti-colonial methods. Gandhi, who was usually inattentive to the idea of Asia, was moved to make a statement, “China’s is not active non-violence… I must say it is unbecoming for a nation of 400 millions, a nation as cultured as Japan, to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan’s own methods.” India now had a renewed reading of Chinese politics, one that was divorced from her larger reading of Asia.

With India, China and Japan all breaking away from each other in significant ways, it was only a matter of time before the Asianist discourse was to dissolve completely. Over time, the weaknesses of Pan-Asianism became even more apparent. The organisation of the Pan-Asiatic Conference of 1926 and the Asian Relations Conference of 1947 brought to the fore tensions between the different ways in which Asian states were responding to modernity, independence from colonial rule and nationalism, as also the competitive attitude they held towards each other. Nevertheless, the encounter of the different ‘Asias’ inhabited by Japan, China and India aided Nehru’s internationalism by providing a conceptualisation of ‘Asia’ as a distinctive space. This was premised to a large extent on the histories of China and Japan, and also on the history of Japanese imperialism towards China and Korea.

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286 Madhavi Thampi makes the point that the invasion of Manchuria turned India’s attention back to China and away from Japan; see Madhavi Thampi, *Indians in China, 1800-1949* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2005), 200-201.


Although the political histories of states in twentieth-century Asia differed from each other in many ways, there are two significant ways in which they resembled each other. The first was the central idea with which all these divergent trajectories were concerned - the idea of modernity and how it could be best achieved. Second, however disjointed they were in their approaches to modernity, all these national projects were engaging with the unprecedented transformations of the global political landscape brought on by the twentieth century. Most Asian states experienced the radicality of the twentieth century while still not being full-fledged states. As Asian nation-states were in fact, becoming nation-states, forging national identities and responding to the realities of decolonisation, they were emerging into a world dominated, but also shaped by, other modernities. As they came to terms with this reality, the nature of their relationships with each other changed, but so did their relationship with Europe. The framework of Empire had dominated the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But with processes of decolonization, there was an attempt to break Asia away from Europe and her discursive preponderance. Nationalist discourses pointed to the end of colonisation as the beginning of Asian (and other non-European) modernity; a subaltern perspective on the Asia-Europe relationship suggested that nationalist politics was informed by European ideas, and so Asia-Europe relations were characterised by their discursive unity and would remain so.

Both these readings, however, disregarded a crucial feature of this process – not only did the Empire become a less predominant framework within which these relationships were taking place, it was also categorically invalidated in two attempts, one not quite so successful and the other more enduring. The League of Nations (founded 1919) and the United Nations (founded 1945) represent discernible shifts away from the idea of the Empire. Together, they illustrate two waves in which Empire lost its stronghold over the imagination of politics and opened up ways in which that politics could be re-imagined. This points out what we already know – that the end of World War II brought with it a wave of decolonization, the end of Empire, as we knew it and the formation of an international organization with which to replace it. In fact, both the League of Nations, and subsequently the United Nations are assumed in the present times to be essentially international organisations. But a closer reading of the processes by which these

institutions were formed, and studies into their ideological origins suggest that they weren’t always so. In fact, some studies have gone so far as to suggest that one of the founding ideas of the United Nations only meant for it to ensure the continuation of the fundamental ideas of the colonial project. One could say that even their nomenclature points to the articulation of these organisations as simply being a grouping together of ‘nations’.

The question that arises is whether the Empire faded away to leave behind a vacuum partially addressed by the formation of an international organisation or was it replaced by a different framework within which nation-states engaged with each other. The point of asking this question is not to measure the extent to which the United Nations as an organisation is truly international. The more specific notion that is important here is to see how the framework of the ‘international’ comes to replace that of the Empire. Given that decolonization as a process is still ongoing, the idea is not to suggest that Empire in any way ended with the introduction of the international as a sphere. Rather, it is to understand the specific relationship between Asia and Europe, representing here distinct stages of modernity, and how they came to shape the international. Indeed, the suggestion is that the changing configuration of that relationship is what makes the international possible. That is evident in two ways: first, in the juxtaposition of the ‘global’ with the ‘international’ and that they are both concepts so mutually inclusive that without the inclusion of Asia into the ‘international’, it would literally not exist. Second, and more interestingly, it is to understand the international not just as an interface between Europe and Asia, but as a conjectural moment between the two modernities that they represent – one in its highly developed phase and the other in its very early adaptive phase. The international, therefore, became an arena where ideas came into circulation, but were also now open to contestation. Not only did this represent a significant departure from the idea of the Empire, it also invested the international with a character that was essentially political.

The political nature of the international was derived from these intertwined sources, the first of which is the predominantly sociological nature of Asian collectives. As most of Asia, faced with colonial domination, had not achieved political independence, the

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responses of Asian collectives to questions of modernity were very often framed in the absence of the framework of the nation-state. Once they were so organized, they were able to negotiate political questions. Their response to the condition of modernity and their approach to organising themselves entail such a move towards political discourse that once they are full-fledged members of the system of states, they are able to carry forward that political discourse to the international arena. Two, the historical nature of European politics is such that it draws upon a canon, which becomes fundamental to international politics, and indeed, to international law. It also solves a crisis of orientation for the international, because as it seems, the non-Europeans are orienting towards or away from the template of Europe. The international, therefore, becomes the space where certain states at certain points in time are either interrupting the course of European politics as it expands into a global format, or where they are hoping to become more closely associated with what they see as a progressivist path towards modernity. In either scenario, the two are global and modern simultaneously.

The coming together of Asia and Europe in this conjectural moment was an ongoing project, the fallibility of which is evident for two connected reasons – the first is the failure of the League of Nations, which represents a lost opportunity to move out of the framework of the Empire. The second and related reason is the probability that the processes of politics will be outweighed by the logic of security. The failure of the League of Nations actually comprises these correlated aspects here – the failure to make Empire irrelevant, the failure of an attempt to institutionalize international politics and most crucially, the failure to prevent war. Not only does the League fail in its stated objectives, the moment where it loses credibility becomes the moment where it is necessary to consider other ways in which the international might be approached.

Therefore, the articulation of the ‘international’ is an important moment not only for the processes it set in motion but also for the sources from which it was derived. The concept of the ‘international’ was simultaneously global and modern because the temporality it reflected was global and modern; it was a temporality reflective of the moment in which Asia was making new historical claims. It is interesting to note that thinkers like Tagore, for instance, were not interested in Asian essentialism at all. In

fact, they reject it as do they reject a “wholesale suspicion of the West”. Instead, the new historical claims being advanced are rooted in criticality. As discussed in the previous chapter, the criticality was applied as much to Indian or Asian political thought as it was to Western or European political thought. Tagore attempted a re-imagination of Asia as a vibrant participant in the international whose cultural and people-to-people flows would act against nationalist impulses. Yet, he was unable to understand the deeply political nature of subjugated peoples and their aspirations to political expression and national identity. Gandhi took that idea forward, and successfully and repeatedly choreographed it to achieve political mileage, and eventually, secure anti-colonial objectives. Yet, as also previously discussed, he was in opposition to the state and to Western modernity, and indifferent to the ‘international’ as a sphere.

In very different ways, both Gandhi and Tagore defined anti-colonialism and Asian nationalism for an Indian audience. In so doing, they presented the conditions in which it becomes possible for Nehru to first, imagine the international, but also then, to define Asia’s position within it, and indeed, to come to the conclusion that the international is incomplete without the integration of Asia. However, the relationship between Europe and Asia had not only been deeply political, it had also been asymmetrical to a very large extent. The processes of decolonisation, for Gandhi and Tagore, were to bring about not only freedom from colonial control but from this asymmetrical relationship where not only was the balance of power perpetually tilted in one direction, it had also become the only metric by which this relationship had been measured. In order to move away from that logic, Nehru projected, first in the case of India, and later for Asia, a discourse of futurity. As discussed previously, he used the ‘Greatness of Asia’ only partly as invocation to civilizational heritage. More importantly, he emphasized what was yet to come, as is evident in his reiteration of the idea of the ‘Asian century’.

Thus having articulated the international quite early on, Nehru also became an enthusiastic votary of it. India, in the Nehru years, was actively involved not only in India’s external affairs, but also in international affairs in general. Early Indian participation at the United Nations was quite mind-bogglingly substantial for a state with very limited means. India was also at the forefront of much of the agenda setting at the UN\textsuperscript{292}. In that respect, it might come as no surprise that India was so involved in the

Korean War. But that conclusion would be more a consequence of hindsight than of historical analysis. It is my suggestion in the following two sections that not only was Korea “the first international test”\(^{293}\) India had to face, it was also in many ways the first test of the concept of the ‘international’, which Nehru played such a large role in articulating. Thus, it was almost logical for India to be involved in the resolution of the Korean War, and in achieving it through the instruments of the United Nations.

Even more so, the Korean War represented an avenue for India to integrate into the international both Russia and China. Although Russia was represented at the UN and China wasn’t, the issue of UN representation bore significance not only because of its inherent complexity but because the UN was meant to be the arena where competing or contradicting modernities would open themselves up to each other through political contestation over issues. In a sense, therefore, the strengthening of the UN would entail the accommodation not only of numerous states, but also of the discourses of modernity they personified; those discourses would be juxtaposed against one another and in so doing, the UN would constitute an embodiment of the international as a space where all modernities, Asian and European included, could make a move towards an advanced version of their own modernities.

When seen as part of the “struggle to make Asia”\(^{294}\), it comes as no surprise, therefore, that Nehru placed such stock in bringing China into that framework. Often seen as logically anomalous, his support for Chinese membership of the UN and his conception of India’s role as being quite central to the organisation make perfect sense from the point of view of the forceful and equal representation of Asia at the UN or indeed, within the international. It was necessary for Asia to resemble some sort of loosely cohesive unit but this could not be achieved with China on the outside. As discussed previously, the anti-colonial discourse of politics in India was inherently so opposed to dichotomous categories, that Nehru saw as completely illogical the First World/Second World binary. The only way in which it would have been possible to regard Russia and China as presenting a discursive challenge to Eurocentric imaginations of politics would be if they actually participated in a conversation that was political. The Cold War had

\(^{293}\) Y D Gundevia, “Some Interesting aspects of Nehru’s policies,” Speech given to the Poona Branch of the Indian Council of World Affairs, Subject File No 7, Y. D. Gundevia Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi, India; also quoted in Chaudhuri, Forged in Crisis, 50, 320.

replaced that with an emphasis on the aspects of the international that were solely concerned with security. Nehru saw the Korean War as an outcome of this animosity, and sought to manipulate it in such a way that would end the war on the Korean peninsula, diminish the effects of the Cold War in Asia, and strengthen the international through the participation of India, Russia and China at the UN. Non-aligned India was best placed to act in a catalytic role, because she was at once Asian, international, yet neutral with respect to the Cold War. Nehru’s was not the only assessment to reach this conclusion, as will be discussed in the following section.

When in 1953, KPS Menon went to Korea as Chairman of the UNCOK, Tagore’s poem for the Korean people was often recited back to him, which he took as testimony to the societal ties between India and Korea. The unfortunate fact, of course, was that Tagore’s message was still relevant in 1950s Korea and that colonialism had merely been replaced by another form of dominance. Although Tagore’s poem reflected the pathos that characterised his deeply spiritual writing style, it also called for Korea to imagine herself sociologically, as a constituent of Asia and as a society of the future. Although Tagore’s own larger discourse was anti-nationalistic, by defining the purpose of a Korean collective, Tagore’s message resembled a political call to arms. Essentially, Tagore was attempting a move away from the highly securitized identity thrust upon colonies, and was appealing to a socio-cultural identity amongst them. Yet, he had envisaged this socio-cultural identity along international lines, not national ones.

For Nehru in the 1950s, ‘nationalism’ and ‘internationalism’ both represented parallel expressions of the political. From the 1940s to the 1960s, Nehru’s nationalism and his internationalism grew simultaneously. As an early biographer puts it, “It is rather interesting to note that as his role as a nationalist became more and more intensified, his faith in internationalism grew deeper and deeper. He could combine the philosophy of nationalism with that of cosmopolitanism or universalism. In India, as well as in the world at large, he held the above synthesis almost as a political doctrine of his own.”

Nehru developed a critique of the nation-state, but also sought to accommodate it within

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the larger system of states. As discussed in the previous chapter, his critique was statist and modern, and he saw the international as an arena where states would be able to mitigate their nationalistic impulses. Therefore, in the early years, India’s involvement in and commitment to the UN and the Commonwealth of Nations represents not a contradiction but a continuation of the anti-colonial discourse in India. From Gandhi and Tagore, Nehru adopted the criticality that made his modern statist vision for international politics distinct from other contemporary imaginations.

I return to a fuller discussion of that critique in the last section. The following section discusses the ways in which the plane of international politics was navigated during the Korean War, and how the Indian diplomatic apparatus, at this point a little over three years in commission, handled an international crisis that had potential to turn the Cold War into a hot one.

The Problem of the Independence of Korea

One of the features of Nehru’s approach to international affairs was his awareness of a nation’s portrayal in history. From this vantage point, Korea represented an example of a nation unable to escape its history of subjugation. In the aftermath of Japanese defeat in World War II, the US and the USSR took control of the Korean peninsula, divided along the 38th parallel. The US-USSR Joint Commission was set up in 1945 to deliberate on the future of the Korean peninsula. However, the commission reached an impasse as both nations were unable to reach an agreement on the formation of a Korean government. As a result, the US sponsored a resolution on 17 September 1947 to bring the ‘Problem of the Independence of Korea’ to the UN. The United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) was set up on 14 November 1947 through a US-proposed UNGA resolution. Although India had no direct interest in the Korean issue, she was in the process of establishing herself as an active member of the UN. Nehru saw Korea as an extension of the Cold War rivalry between the two superpowers, and therefore, non-aligned India became very vocally involved in the resolution of this deadlock, and a member of the commission. Being told that India had to “shoulder more responsibility”, KPS Menon, of the Indian Foreign Service was sent as Indian representative; eventually, he was elected Chairman and served in that post.
from January to March 1948\textsuperscript{298}.

The issue before the UN at this point was to achieve “the obliteration of the 38\textsuperscript{th} Parallel” and the UNTCOK emphasized that it had “no political prejudices”, “no ideological predilections” and did “not constitute a bloc”\textsuperscript{299}. Evident from this message was the influence of the Indian non-aligned position on the commission itself. The Commission ran into difficulties from both sides, when Syngman Rhee, the first President of South Korea, refused to take the initiative to bring the war to a close, and the Soviets decried the work of the Commission. As a result, the UNTCOK oversaw elections in South Korea in May 1948, but was not allowed to do so in North Korea. In the final report of the UNTCOK, Menon highlighted the problems of Korea, “a hermit nation which has been thrust into the play of international forces through no fault of its own” and called upon the Great Powers “on whom a solution would finally rest” to “emerge out of this episode with enhanced prestige in the eyes of the world and in particular in the eyes of those great Asian States”\textsuperscript{300}. The language of the report stresses the Asian context of the problem repeatedly and as such, represents a significant departure from previous UN documents relating to Korea. In December 1948, the General Assembly accepted this report, dissolved the UNTCOK and replaced it with the United Nations Commission On Korea (UNCOK), tasked with the removal of all barriers to the unification of Korea, observation of the actual withdrawal of the occupation forces, and active from 12 December 1948 to 7 July 1950.

Although all attention was focused on US-USSR differences at this time, Nehru also understood the inconsistencies within those positions, pointing to the fact that both states were “in a cleft stick”\textsuperscript{301}. It became evident to him that China’s involvement in the question of Korea was unavoidable, and that China’s membership of the UN was crucial to that process. Therefore, when both the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) applied for UN membership in 1949, India refused to recognize either of these governments, as this would take away


\textsuperscript{300} “Statement of Mr. KPS Menon, Chairman of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, as the Interim Committee,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D8714-CJK/50, 19 February 1948, 21, \textit{National Archives of India (NAI)}, New Delhi, India.

from the larger objective of achieving unification on the peninsula. Instead, Nehru pressed for the admission of China into the UN as “essential to the very existence of the UN as a true world organisation.” Nehru also had a clear appreciation of the differences between the Russian and Chinese positions regarding what China saw fundamentally as an issue that threatened her national security but Russia saw as an episode of Cold War rivalry. On India’s role in the matter, Nehru held a rather sober view: “…our opportunities and our power to influence events are very much limited.”

But he did emphasize partnership with the Commonwealth in the matter and the idea that India could serve to placate the Chinese and open up an avenue for resolution of the Korean situation, a possibility he thought would be much bettered by the arrival of KM Pannikar in Peking in May 1950. Clearly, Nehru realized that the international community would not be able to restrain China, if there were to be a military conflict on the Korean peninsula. The only way in which that scenario could have been avoided would have been to bring China under the aegis of the UN. Even before he could press on in this direction, on 25 June 1950, North Korean forces crossed the 38th Parallel into South Korea, marking the beginning of the Korean War.

Thereafter, the events of the summer of 1950 proceeded in very quick progression. The Truman administration proposed a resolution to the UN Security Council, brandishing the North Korean attack as an “act of aggression”. The UNSC met under the presidency of Sir B N Rau, an eminent Indian jurist and India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, who along with the British delegation was able to change the phrasing to “breach of peace”. India agreed to support the proposal and the resolution was subsequently adopted. Two days later, the US proposed a second resolution, asking for “assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security to the area”. Rau was unable to receive instructions and

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304 For a detailed study of the “uncertain” nature of this relationship vis-à-vis the Korean War, see Sergei Nikolaevich Goncharov, Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 393.
306 Kavalam M. Panikkar was a diplomat and historian specialized on China, whose book In Two Chinas: Memoirs of a Diplomat (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1955), 184, has an interesting account of the Korean War.
therefore, India abstained when the resolution went to vote. In North Korea at the time, Kim Il-Sung made public statements assuring his people that Nehru was backing him. This led to speculation amongst the western bloc about India’s neutral stance.

Therefore, even after the resolution had been adopted, US Ambassador Loy Henderson decided to approach Nehru for his support, while Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was approached in Washington, DC. The Americans justified their resolution by insisting that not stopping the aggression would damage the legitimacy of the UN; they were able to convince Nehru, who subsequently conceded to supporting the UNSC resolution. North Korea came down heavily on India, with national broadcasts calling her “a beggar in a bumper year, which has decided to live of its two masters, the United States of America and Britain” even though India had been distancing herself from South Korea all throughout. Nehru protested these allegations and explained Indian support for a state set up under the aegis of the UN, but faced criticism even on the home front for what was widely regarded as a volte-face on non-alignment. Questions were raised asking whether the support of UN Resolution on South Korea was “a direct contravention of the spirit of this non-alignment policy”. The Government of India responded by saying they were “opposed to any attempt to settle international disputes by resort to aggression” but this decision did not “involve any modification of their foreign policy”.

Immediately after the North Korean forces had crossed the 38th Parallel, President Truman had moved the Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait. In January 1950, the US Government had announced that it would not intervene in the event of an attack on the Taiwan Straits. Going back on that statement, President Truman issued a fresh statement linking the Formosa issue to that of the Korean War. The American

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311 “Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to Jawaharlal Nehru,” Subject File no. 59 (Washington), Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, 29 June 1950, NMML.
312 “Secretary General GS Bajpai to Indian Permanent Representative B N Rau, New Delhi,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. CJK 67-CJK/50, 29 June 1950, NAI.
313 “Report No.2 UNCOK - A brief resume of the work of the UNCOK from March 1st to 21st and other developments in Korea,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D2545/CJK-50, 1950, NAI.
314 “Question No. 589 to be answered in Parliament on 1st August 1950,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. 67/CJK/50, 1950, NAI.
315 “Secretary General GS Bajpai to Indian Permanent Representative B N Rau, New Delhi,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. CJK 67-CJK/50, 29 June 1950, NAI.
strategy was to signal to the Soviets by a way of a limited but overt military move that they intended to use force if necessary but that they were willing to leave room for negotiation. The inadvertent consequence of this move, though, was to draw China into what was now very clearly a confrontational situation. All along, India, and with great emphasis, Nehru had been calling upon the western powers to recognize the role that China had to play in this conflict, and in that direction, to consider decisively Chinese membership of the UN. Instead, the Americans had linked Korea with an issue as sensitive as Formosa. Expectedly, the government in Peking denounced this action as an act of aggression being committed against China, especially when the UN decided not to support the American action. Yet, the Chinese had made no military movement and this led to renewed sympathy for her cause amongst Asian states, who increasingly saw Truman’s manoeuvre as an act of aggression against China. Nehru was deeply annoyed at the American approach and said it was “exceedingly maladroit of the USA Government to mix up the Korean issue with Formosa, Indo-China” but that India would “like to treat them separately”\(^{317}\).

The US then put in a third and additional proposal at the UNSC, eventually adopted on 7 July 1950, calling for the formation of a Unified Command, with the American Commander of Forces, General Douglas MacArthur in charge. In effect, the Unified Command replaced the UNCOK. India was quick to announce no military help but sent a field ambulance unit\(^{318}\), the Indian Army’s Medical 60 Parachute Field Ambulance (60 PFA). Nehru placed great emphasis on this aspect of Indian policy: “There can be no question of our sending any troops to Korea even for patrol duty. If there is an intensification of the conflict in Korea, this will be a tragedy. But there will be no reason why we will change our policy.”\(^{319}\) In later years, when the ambulance unit was up for revision, Nehru reemphasized the humanitarian nature of India’s contribution, declining even in passing to make a commitment from India that foresaw continuing war in any way: “Are we going to send them for two years in the expectation of two years of war?” The entire time, Nehru was writing to Indian diplomats in China, the Soviet Union, the US and at the UN, reminding them of “the main objective of bringing

\(^{317}\) “Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru,” B. N. Rau Papers, 1st Instalment, 1 July 1950, NMML, 2-3.

\(^{318}\) Stueck says, “India whose contribution of troops would have been of great political significance, offered merely a field ambulance unit”, Stueck, Korean War, 72, (emphasis mine).

peace and security to the Korean people”, which he was afraid war-mindedness had made others forget. India’s approach to desecuritize the issue by sending a medical ambulance received criticism on the grounds that “India had sent no troops because a large part of the Indian troops were tied up in Kashmir in the dispute with Pakistan…”

As the great powers seemed no closer to a solution, India became more active in the pursuit of a solution. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, spoke of this in no ambiguous terms: “…the Great Powers instead of coming closer, are drifting apart. We, in India, for our part are aware of no compulsion to identify ourselves systematically, with either or any of the different groups. On the contrary, we consider it of paramount importance that the distance between them should be narrowed down. We believe that our conduct should conduce to that end…”

Nehru appealed to Stalin to end the war, and received a response, leading to speculation in the western press that Nehru was suited for the task of global mediator: “What is needed in Korea is a new mediator of world stature and repute. The one who measures up to that standard is Pandit Nehru.” The MEA had “no special suggestions at present for unifying Korea” and considered it “a forlorn business”, but saw this more as an excellent opportunity for the UN to assert itself.

Accordingly, India sent through Rau a proposal for a committee of non-permanent members that would take into consideration all resolutions on Korea so far made. However, both sides denounced the plan, saying it would lead to a delay in the resolution of the Korean problem, and that only most interested parties should be involved in situation as it stood. Although unsuccessful, the Indian proposal brought to the fore the militaristic positions taken by both camps. As a newspaper article put it, “It is impossible at any time and in any circumstances to have peace in and around

320 “Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru, Letter of 27 August 1950” B. N. Rau Papers, 1st Instalment, 27 August 1950, NAMML. He also goes on to say, “Some of the speeches delivered in the Security Council by Austin or Jebb seem from here to be just pompous and silly nonsense.”
321 “India’s Stand on Korea,” MEA File No D4492/51-AMS – Annual Political Report from the Embassy of India, Washington D.C. for 1951, 31 December 1951, NAI.
322 Second Session, Plenary Meetings, Volume 1, General Assembly Official Records (GAOR), 134, 137-138.
324 Ibid.n2.
325 “Reply to Gopal Menon (Indian Delegation to the UN) from KPS Menon (FS),” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D-9632-CJK/50, NAI. “Our fears that if the UN troops precipitately cross the 38th Parallel, China might intervene, and the war might spread, seem to be coming true.”
326 “Correspondence with Nehru,” Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, 10 August 1950, NAMML.
Korea without the cooperation of her two powerful neighbours, China and the Soviet Union. On this premise, Pandit Nehru based his mediation proposal for the admission of China to the UN Security Council. Although Nehru's overtures were rejected, they did at least clarify the strength and weakness of the Russian and American positions.  

India had grasped the entry of the Cold War into the Korean problem, and as Nehru said in August 1950, “the fate of the world seems to hang in regard to war and peace by a thin thread which might be cut down by a sword or blown off by a gun.”

On 15 September, General MacArthur staged the first of the now famous Inchon landings. The UN troops drove the North Koreans back into North Korea, but didn’t appear to be stopping at the 38th Parallel. China considered any crossing of the line an aggression on Chinese authority, and issued warnings to that effect. Two more events seem to have convinced China of the need for intervention: the first was General MacArthur’s visit to Formosa, and his announcement with Chiang Kai Shek regarding joint defence of the island; the second was the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) episode, when General MacArthur had said in a letter that the US “must retain control of Formosa at any cost” and had warned against “defeatism in the Pacific”. The US distanced itself from this statement immediately, and President Truman issued strong warnings to General MacArthur about retracting it. However, the episode had already created misgivings about American ambitions in the Pacific, and the Chinese drew their own conclusions from it; having announced in July 1950 their intention of retaking Formosa, they now found themselves in direct conflict with the Americans.

Nehru was at this time alarmed at the prospect of China entering the war and sought to warn the world at large, and the Americans in particular that this was set to happen. His thinking was reinforced by Pannikar’s regular telegrams from Peking that were stressing that China would intervene. On 26 September 1950, Pannikar sent an urgent

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331 Mao had already spoken of “the possibility that the US government may send troops to occupy some of the coastal cities and fight us directly. We should continue to prepare for this now so as to avoid being taken by surprise if it really occurs.” “The Present Situation and the Party's Task in 1949,” *Mao Zedong Junshi Wenxuan (Selected Military Papers of Mao Zedong)* (Beijing: Soldiers’ Press, 1981) 328-29, quoted in Chen Jian, “The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China’s Entry into the Korean War” (Working Paper No. 1, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., 1992).
telegram to Nehru alerting him to the possibilities of Chinese intervention. Nehru then addressed a letter to Chou En Lai pleading for restraint. Finally, on 3 October 1950, Chou En Lai called for Pannikar and told him in no uncertain terms that “US troops are going to cross the 38th Parallel in an attempt to extend the war” and that in that eventuality, China would intervene. Chou En Lai and Pannikar then discussed the crossing over of some troops into North Korean territory, and Chou indicated his view that the US government was unreliable, referring to the need to “localize” the conflict. Pannikar reassured Chou that the Indian government was doing whatever it could, and that Rau had read out in the General Assembly Chou’s Report of 1 October 1950. Pannikar concluded by saying, “Our government is doing its best to exert pressure” but went on to ask if by “localization”, the Chinese meant confining the armed conflict south of the 38th Parallel or if they meant a complete halt to the Korean armed conflict. Chou En Lai clarified this point: “The Korean armed conflict ought to stop immediately, and foreign troops ought to be withdrawn [from Korea]. This will be advantageous to peace in the East. Our idea for localizing the Korean incident is just to make efforts to keep the aggression of US troops from expanding into an incident of worldwide dimensions.” Pannikar took this as a formal policy declaration and relayed the message to Nehru, through whom he hoped it would reach the British, and the Americans. In hindsight, he realized that “Eden endorsed those views but the Americans had nothing but contempt for Chou's warning and my assessment.” This might not have been completely true, as the record now shows that indeed, Loy Henderson, then US Ambassador in Delhi approached GS Bajpai regarding the possibility of exploring all avenues for cessation of hostilities including him personally meeting with and talking to the Chinese Communist Ambassador, a proposal that shocked Bajpai, who relayed it to Nehru, who in turn suggested the Government of India could act as a conduit.

On 8 October, a UN offensive was launched north of the 38th Parallel. Two days later, the Chinese Communist Ambassador relayed to Henderson, through Government of

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334 Ibid.
336 “Telegram from Loy Henderson to Secretary of State, October 6, 1950, 1 pm from New Delhi,” FRUS, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, 1950, 889-890.
337 “Telegram from Loy Henderson to Secretary of State, October 7, 1950, 1 pm from New Delhi,” FRUS, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, 901-902.
India that it was not a good idea for the US and China to have informal talks pending formal relations between the two countries; as a result, the Indian Government immediately distanced itself from this process. By 22 October, the Chinese were attacking South Korean and UN forces. A US-sponsored resolution in the UNSC asked China to withdraw its forces, but India proposed a counter-proposal with British support asking a Chinese representative to present their position to the Security Council. The proposal passed, but was disregarded by the Chinese who continued to invest heavily in the war. As a result, the US then sponsored a resolution asking for the UNSC to brand China an aggressor; the proposal was vetoed by the USSR, while India abstained at voting, saying it “was unrealistic to so accuse a state not bound by the United Nations charter.” Once the General Assembly reopened, without the fear of a Soviet veto and with the confidence of military advancements on ground, the question being asked was whether the UN force should press ahead and achieve the unification of Korea by the use of force. At this time, the British delegation put forth a proposal suggesting the occupation of the entire peninsula by UN forces, and the establishment of the UNCURK to facilitate that objective. Nehru was in complete opposition to this idea, and instead of adopting a “flamboyant attitude”, stressed “the temper of the approach”. He proposed a sub-committee to move towards a ceasefire and withdrawal of all foreign forces. Although the Indian proposal evoked widespread Third World support, the western bloc voted against it. This, however, did not stop Nehru who wrote to V K Krishna Menon saying, “No question of prestige would deter me from taking a step which might help in [the] preservation of peace.”

Accordingly, India took two initiatives – the first was to put up a draft proposal demanding the peaceful settlement of all East Asian issues. The Americans, who refused to discuss anything until the fighting in Korea had stopped, immediately shot

338 “Telegram from Loy Henderson to Secretary of State, October 10, 1950, 1 pm from New Delhi,” FRUS, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, 920.
339 UNSC Fifth Year No. 62 520th Meeting, New York, 8 November 1950, 3-10, quoted in Barnes, U.S., the U.N. and the Korean War, 300.
340 UNSC Fifth Year Number 72, 530th Meeting, New York, 30 November 1950, quoted in ibid., 22-24.
344 Fifth Session, First Committee, 346-350th Meetings, New York, 30 September- 3 October 1950, GAOR.
345 For a detailed exposition of this process, see Barnes, “Between the Blocs,” 263-286.
this down. The second initiative from the Indian side was to propose a ceasefire, to be monitored by a Ceasefire Committee, which eventually came to consist of Rau as its Chairman and Nasrollah Entezam (Iran) and Lester Pearson (Canada) as the other members and made provisions for negotiations on Korea and Taiwan right after the cessation of hostilities. Rau said at the Ceasefire Committee that negotiations on Taiwan and Chinese representation at the UN would take place once the ceasefire had been achieved, which the US supported, followed by the Commonwealth members, followed by the adoption of the resolution. Sadly, the Indian proposal was rejected by Peking, leading to a worsening of the military situation and in the face of escalation, the US successfully asked for China to be branded aggressor and for the imposition of sanctions against her.

Particularly significant here was not whether Indian proposals had been successful at all, but that they had bought precious time in which American cries for war had somewhat subsided. Nehru disagreed with the American attitude and tried to mediate through Attlee, writing to him to say that any sort of confrontational attitude towards China “does not disable China but merely antagonises her.” He also stressed the divergence of Asian views on the matter, saying, “Asian sentiment does not like much that China has done but it is strongly critical of American attitude during this great crisis.” India was aware that the Chinese response to this sort of militaristic attitude would be to retaliate, and Nehru referred to a message from China, received by the Indian Embassy in Peking that said, “war and truce go ill together.” Nehru differentiated between the American people who is his view “undoubtedly want peace” and the Pentagon, for whom “the settlement in Korea immediately brings up the question of Formosa and Chinese recognition in the UN”. India, Burma, Indonesia and other Asian countries did not support the US resolution, which they thought isolated China even further and would lead to a deadlock, as the UN could not possibly enter into negotiations with a state that it had branded aggressor. Nehru lamented this

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348 See, Barnes, “Between the Blocks,” 263-286.
349 Pandit says that the ceasefire committee was considered unsuccessful; see Pandit, The Scope of Happiness, 258.
350 Both Barnes, “Between the Blocs,” and Stueck, Korean War, 152, 163-4 make the point that although Nehru was unable to stop the American resolution from going forward, India amongst other members helped to stall the war cries against China from the US for retaliation.
352 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 2 July 1952, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol.18, 549, Quoting from Chang Han-Fu, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Central People’s Government of the Republic of China.
development, saying that Indian efforts were concentrated on bringing the two parties together to reach a truce.\(^354\) He repeatedly warned against adopting an attitude towards China in haste, saying in January 1951, “There has been an aggression in Korea, but the Chinese Government took no action at all until the 38th parallel had been crossed. They told us very frankly that they would consider this a threat to their security in Manchuria. Remember that all invasions of China have taken place through Korea and the Chinese were concerned about their big industries in the north.”\(^355\) This situation continued until the middle of the year, when Nehru wrote to Rau saying that there was no positive proposal India could make at the time\(^356\), but he was most concerned about the prospect of a full-fledged war\(^357\). Nehru continued to exercise his position within the Commonwealth, pleading to them in January 1951 at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ Conference that it was important for the Commonwealth to follow a policy independent of the US and that not doing so would involve them in war\(^358\).

In the same week, President Truman relieved General MacArthur of all his duties, finding him unable to back UN-US policies, and replaced him with Lieutenant General Mathew B. Ridgway\(^359\). This proved to be a fortuitous turn of events, as Gen. Ridgeway proved willing to end the war, and made proposals to Kim Il-Sung and the Commander of the Chinese Communist forces General Peng Tuh-huai regarding “agreement on armistice terms”\(^360\). After some negotiation, the talks at Kaesong started in July 1951 and eventually moved to Panmunjom\(^361\). They proved to be more difficult than first anticipated, initially on the question of the ceasefire line, and later, on the question of the Prisoners of War. By mid-August, the talks were continuing “without producing any results” and “the question at issue [was] the ceasefire line”, with the UN Commanders wanting “more or less, the present line, which in some places [went] beyond the 38th

\(^{354}\)”Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru,” B. N. Rau Papers, 1st Instalment, 1 July 1950, NMML, 2-3.


\(^{356}\)Nehru says. “It is no good our asking China to do this or that.” “Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru,” B. N. Rau Papers, 1st Instalment, 17 April 1951, NMML.


\(^{358}\)Sarvepalli Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography (New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 2004), 134.


parallel”, unacceptable to the Chinese and the North Koreans who wanted “to have the 38th parallel as the ceasefire line”. However, North Korea suspended the talks on 23 August 1951 over the alleged violation of the neutral zone by American troops. By September, the ceasefire talks had practically ended, with little chance of resumption, although the US had made a proposal to that effect on 6 September 1951. Therefore, the Indian effort at this moment was to “keep America out of an international conflict because her temper” was “both uncompromising and uninformed.” Yet, Indian proposals at this time were evoking “little comment or enthusiasm”.

Anti-Indian bias was pervasive within the US. The New York Times wrote in August 1951 that “Nehru’s attention was primarily turned on a local, national and intensely personal question Kashmir”, that his statesmanship was not inspiring people and nations to do things but to leave them undone... The British held a more charitable view that Nehru brought “to the surface, as no one else in Asia can, the suspicions of his continent.” For their part, the Indians were deeply annoyed at the disregard with which the western bloc had treated their assessments and advice: “The advice of the GOI to halt at the 38th parallel and endeavour to seek a peaceful solution of the dispute was resented and went unheeded. Furthermore, India was accused to an equivocal stand on the matter and even of appeasement of the North Korean aggressors. Later, when China intervened, only grudgingly was recognition given to India’s earlier warnings”, said a diplomatic cable while rounding up the events of 1951. There were no major initiatives from the Indian side, until the end of 1951, when Indian consular reports from the US detected a shift towards conciliation in the Korean War for two main reasons – the first was economic, with the fear of inflation looming large over the American public; the second was that the fear that the Korean War would turn into

362 “Letter to Chief Ministers,” 19 August 1951, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 16, Part 2, 700-707; Also see [Cover page missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No.25 (6)/51, PMS, NAI; Also see, G. Parthasarathi ed. Jawaharlal Nehru, Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964 vol.1, 19 August 1951.
363 See [Cover page missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No. 25 (6)/51, PMS, NAI.
365 Ibid.
366 “Summary of the Fortnightly Report for the Period Ending September 15, 1951 from Washington,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. F-34-4/51/AMS, NAI. The report says, “the small man in Government here is probably not averse to making and administering his own foreign relations.”
367 Quote from “The Lost Leader,” New York Times, 28 August 1951 “...His statesmanship is not inspiring people and nations to do things but only to leave them undone. How the mighty have fallen!”; see Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, 134, in the chapter titled “The Korean Settlement,” in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, 137.
368 Quote from “Nehru Idealist or Appeaser?” The Economist, 28 April 1951; see ibid., 136.
369 Annual Political Report from the Embassy of India, Washington D.C. for 1951, Section titled ‘India’s Stand on Korea’ Ministry of External Affairs File No. D4492/51-AMS, NAI.
protracted conflict. Despite these fears, American defence preparedness continued unabated\textsuperscript{370}, and the Chinese side also remained averse to negotiation especially after January 1952, when the UN admitted to having inadvertently bombed Kaesong because of human error\textsuperscript{371}.

For the rest of the year, the big issue was that of the repatriation of the Prisoners of War, which was effectively stalling the armistice negotiations\textsuperscript{372}. The two sides disagreed on two fronts: the first was the number of prisoners on each side’s list that differed considerably; the second was the principle of non-forceful or voluntary repatriation, where only those prisoners who were willing to return to their homelands would, advocated by the UN as against the Chinese demand for an exchange of prisoners on an ‘all-for-all’ basis. This matter was further complicated when a screening by the UN Command revealed that only 73,000 out of 1,70,000 prisoners wanted to return home. The discrepancy of the American PsOW on both lists became even more of a political issue, when it was learnt that the British PsOW numbered the same on both lists, possibly due to British recognition of the PRC\textsuperscript{373}. Then again, it was also suggested that perhaps the list “may have been deliberately “cooked” so as to give American [sic] that impression.”\textsuperscript{374} In any case, when the Indian Embassy in Peking wrote to Nehru suggesting that a compromise number of 1,00,000 prisoners might be fixed as so to solve this issue, Nehru replied saying that there was no logic in fixing an arbitrary number\textsuperscript{375}.

During the middle months of 1952, the Chinese were offered three proposals, all of which they rejected. The first was a US-sponsored proposal asking China to accept the principle of non-forceful repatriation; India did not offer her support for this proposal, and instead along with her Commonwealth partners - Britain and Canada - decided to

\textsuperscript{373} “Summary of the Fortnightly Report for the Period Ending 31\textsuperscript{st} December, 1951 from Washington,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. F-34-4/51/AMS, NAI.
\textsuperscript{374} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{375} Gopal, \textit{Jawaharlal Nehru}, 134.
put in her own proposal suggesting the creation of a commission that would take charge of all the PsOW after the armistice had been signed to decide over time their final disposition. Krishna Menon also suggested a substantial role for the neutral countries – Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and Poland were to be members with a fifth country that would serve as umpire. The US did not support the Indian position, even though the Commonwealth had supported it. US Secretary of State Dean Acheson offered the explanation that this would leave the fate of the prisoners undecided and was therefore unacceptable to the US. Menon, therefore, reworked his proposal incorporating American demands saying that willing prisoners would be repatriated immediately and that over the following 90 days, representatives of the belligerent countries would then be permitted to try to persuade non-repatriate prisoners to return home; if unwilling prisoners remained, their fate would be discussed at the political conference on Korea for a further 90 days; if still no decision could be reached the UN would decide their final disposition. Acheson harboured suspicions on why the Indians were being so provocative and dismissed the Indian plan out-of-hand, although American, and international opinion was considering it very seriously.

While Acheson was campaigning for his 21-power draft resolution, India submitted her draft proposal on 19 November 1952, with Nehru insisting that India follow what he considered “the right path”, that of not appeasing either side. The Americans showed deep disdain for what they saw as the impatience of Nehru who had been so patient with China. They were also deeply concerned about the nexus between Britain, India and China, with France, New Zealand and Australia supporting them. Acheson was to vote against the adoption of the resolution, but didn’t as in a turn of events, the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Vyshinsky condemned the Indian resolution in absolute terms, accused Indians of adopting the American viewpoint on non-forceful repatriation, of being at best “dreamers and idealists” or at worst, “instruments of horrible American

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377 See Barnes, “Between the Blocs,” 263-286.
381 “Nehru-Pandit Correspondence,” Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, Subject File No.47, 18 November 1952, *NMML.*
The Soviet attack on the Indian proposal paved a way for America through the mess she found herself in, especially with regard to her allies in the western bloc. By suggesting that the differences between the Indian and American proposals were “linguistic rather than substantive,” Acheson was able to support the Indian proposal in the belief that it would not see the light of day, given Communist opposition. But the manipulation of the circumstances was evident to all, with Sir Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Minister making a statement on 22 November 1952 announcing Britain’s backing of the Indian plan. The Americans responded to what they saw as a grouping together between the nations of the Commonwealth by defining the western hemisphere as being “as that part of the North and South American continents south of the Canadian border.” But the importance of the Indian resolution was not lost on Chester Bowles, the American Ambassador in New Delhi, who said Nehru had gone an “extraordinarily long distance” in opposition to the Russians and Chinese on an “issue of crucial importance.”

Nehru was dismayed by American criticism, but guarded against taking sides, thus becoming “arenas of warfare.” Rather, he saw an opportunity “for the United Nations to justify itself and help to recover the atmosphere of peace.” As for India’s role in bringing about a peaceful solution, he spoke soberly, saying, “If our good faith in trying for a peaceful settlement is not appreciated, then, of course, it becomes difficult for us to take any step.” The Americans were using Nehru as a conduit to China, discussing in earlier months how “it might have some effect on the Communists”, “it could do little harm” “and if the approach is made and fails, it would help bring home to Nehru Communist intransigence and accelerate the process of his education in regard to the East-West struggle.” On the other hand, India was in a precarious position vis-à-vis China and Nehru wrote to the Indian Ambassador in Peking expressing concern at “the
repeated reference to Indian Resolution on Korea as being the parent of evil.” He thought Krishna Menon had placed too much emphasis on the Commonwealth, thus inevitably distancing India from China, a position that she had achieved and consolidated from the early years, and which Nehru was unwilling to squander.

Nehru was also aware that China’s own position on the proposal had changed in an understated but definite way, possibly under Soviet influence. A day before the resolution was being put to vote, he wrote to Sir G S Bajpai, “We have got rather entangled in this matter and it is not very easy to disentangle ourselves. We have little choice left at this stage except to go ahead with it, although it is clear that China does not accept it. We were certainly given the impression, without any commitment, that China was not opposed to it. Later, possibly due to Soviet pressure they expressed themselves strongly against it.” Although the resolution was passed on 3 December 1952 in the absence of Soviet support, the Chinese rejected its terms shortly after.

However, once the resolution had been adopted, Nehru gained confidence in the Indian move, deciding that the “warlike trend [was] checked by our resolution” and that it was clear that “China was much influenced by Soviet pressure in this matter. We have maintained an attitude of friendliness with China in spite of what they have said. But, with the friendliness is also a firmness. They do not appreciate weakness and we intend showing none.”

At this juncture, there were a number of factors that had directly influenced the Indian engagement with the Korean War, and with the course of the armistice negotiations. The first was the incumbency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had won the Presidential race in 1952 by campaigning on the promise to fight ‘Communism, Korea and Corruption’, otherwise known as the K1C2 formula. Eisenhower was a five-star general and had been the Supreme Commander of the NATO in the past. He had won by a

391 Cable to N Raghavan,” 25 January 1953, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 21, 449.
392 The Americans also thought this had formed some sort of coalition – “We cannot safely assume this “coalition” has been dissolved nor that it may not again attempt assume further initiative.” “320/12–652: Telegram The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Department of State New York, December 6, 1952—6:27 p. m.,” FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XV, Part 1, Korea (in two parts), ed. Keefer, Document 360.
395 Nehru had misgivings about the process, but it met with some success, see Barnes, “Between the Blocs,” 23-24.
landslide victory against Adlai Stevenson, who had adopted a non-interventionist attitude, whereas Eisenhower had promised to personally go to Korea to end the war. Nehru saw his election to office as having “rather weighted the scales against peace”\(^{398}\), particularly given Eisenhower’s military background and the memory of MacArthur’s approach towards the Korean problem. Therefore, he pushed ahead vigorously trying to achieve a political resolution to the deadlock on the question of the Prisoners of War, so as to prevent escalation on the military front\(^{399}\).

The second factor to India’s advantage was the number of influential Indians at the helm of affairs in the UN. Through 1952, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit continued to be Head of the Indian delegation to the UN, but was in 1953, elected the first woman President of the UN General Assembly at its 62\(^{nd}\) session\(^{400}\). Rajeshwar Dayal had replaced B N Rau as India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, and last and most important previously India’s High Commissioner to the UK, Krishna Menon arrived in New York with the special assignment of handling the Korean problem\(^{401}\). However, no initiative seemed possible from the Indian camp as the belligerents seemed unwilling to compromise on any front\(^{402}\). Nevertheless, these changes prepared a strong Indian contingent to deal with the imminent Soviet peace offensive.

The third factor was the death of Stalin in March 1953, which brought to the fore the Soviet desire to ease Cold War tensions and changed the Soviet stand on the Korean War\(^{403}\). Indeed, the peace offensive announced at Stalin’s funeral began with the Korean War\(^{404}\). The Chinese, who realized that they would make no substantial progress on either Taiwan or their membership of the UN as long as those issues continued to be


\(^{399}\) “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, New Delhi, 21 May 1953—11:30 a. m.,” *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Volume XV, Part 1, Korea (in two parts), ed. Keefer, Document 537.

\(^{400}\) “Nehru-Pandit Correspondence,” Pandit Papers, 1\(^{st}\) Instalment, Subject File No.47, 12 October 1952, NMML.


\(^{402}\) “Interview with Mr. Lester Pearson, President of the UN General Assembly, New York,” Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit Papers, 2\(^{nd}\) Instalment, Subject File No.4, 25 February 1953, NMML.


\(^{404}\) The ‘Peace Offensive’ was originally a Stalinist concept, the phrasing was later appropriated by Khrushchev; for the effect it had on Sino-Soviet relations, see Odd Arne Westad, *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 22-26.
tied down with the problem of Korea, mirrored this attitude\textsuperscript{405}. The Chinese then made two overtures – the first was to accept an offer from the UN to discuss the fate of sick and wounded prisoners. The second was Zhou-En-Lai’s radio announcement on 30 March 1953, which was clearly based on the Indian Resolution in that it recognized ‘non-repatriated prisoners’, and proposed they be taken to a neutral country for six months, in which time they could be persuaded to return to their homelands, or their collective fate would be decided by the post-armistice political conference on Korea\textsuperscript{406}.

Nehru saw these developments as amounting to a large concession from the Communists and instructed Menon to pursue a draft resolution to that effect. The Polish delegation at this time proposed an immediate cease-fire and the implementation of Zhou En-lai’s proposal\textsuperscript{407}. India then submitted a more moderate version of that proposal, which the US followed up with its own draft resolution noting the recent agreement on the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners, expressing its support for an early armistice, and adjourning the General Assembly until an armistice had been signed or developments required discussion. The Indian and Americans draft resolutions were merged and the resultant resolution was sponsored by Brazil and was passed with unanimous support\textsuperscript{408}. The passing of this resolution marked a historic turning point on Korea, as it was the first time a resolution had been unanimously passed and because it left the fate of Korea in the hands of the negotiators at Panmunjom, thus vastly reducing the effect of great power politics as played out in a US-dominated UN system\textsuperscript{409}. The Indian contribution to this effort was so fundamental that for the first time, it was acknowledged by both sides\textsuperscript{410}. Nehru was jubilant, but cautious, and saw India’s role as the triumph of her non-aligned politics: “The turn that international events have taken has brought India into the picture and cast a heavy responsibility upon her. The independent policy that we have pursued and our constant attempts to remain friendly

\textsuperscript{407} Seventh Session, First Committee, 594th Meeting, New York, 9 April 1953, GAOR, 582.
\textsuperscript{408} Seventh Session, First Committee, 602nd-603rd Meetings, New York, 15-16 April 1953, GAOR, 637-648. Barnes has a thorough explanation of the various viewpoints and historiography of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement; see Barnes, US, the UN and the Korean War, 31-32, 31-32nn55——57.
\textsuperscript{409} “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, New Delhi, 22 May 1953,” FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XV, Part 1, Korea (in two parts), ed. Keeler, Document 529.
with all countries have borne fruit. The Great Powers look upon us with respect and realize that what we say will be listened to by many. Hence, they have to listen to it also... In the Korean deadlock, attempts are made on both sides to utilize India's services to help resolve it.”\(^ {411}\) Soon after, the Communist side proposed the setting up of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) consisting of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland and an umpire nation as members\(^ {412}\). The Korean Armistice Agreement was finally signed on 27 July 1953, in what Nehru called ‘the outbreak of peace’\(^ {413}\).

In late June 1953, when both sides had all but reached a peaceful settlement, Rhee unilaterally released 25,000 anti-Communist North Korean PsOW, almost derailing the entire process. Nehru was aghast and reiterated that it was “this deliberate shutting of eyes to the reality of the new Chinese Republic that has led to many subsequent disasters.”\(^ {414}\) Rhee and South Korean Foreign Minister Pyun retorted by making vicious statements casting doubts on India’s neutrality, which they continued to make over the next year. India had associated herself so closely with the objective of securing a truce that Nehru decided to participate in the NNRC despite Rhee’s attacks. In this assessment, he was particularly motivated by discussions he had had with the US Secretary of State, who had warned him early on in May that “if the armistice negotiations collapsed, the United States would probably make a stronger rather than a lesser military exertion, and that this might well extend the area of conflict”\(^ {415}\). Nehru’s response was to think in terms of the PsOW, who would be left in the hands of the UNGA if the armistice failed, leading to a problematic situation because China was not yet a member of the UN\(^ {416}\). He was also certain that China would on no account “submit to coercion or threat.”\(^ {417}\) Yet again, he thought Indian involvement would provide an avenue for compromise and conciliation, but was anxious to keep India out of any place...
where she was not wanted\textsuperscript{418}. He was especially keen to avoid any military commitments on India’s part, emphasizing that “India’s defence forces [had] been organized essentially for home defence and not for service in distant theatres of war.”\textsuperscript{419} Nevertheless, India sent a brigade-sized contingent called the Custodian Force of India (CFI), which was to hold prisoners and facilitate their repatriation under the leadership of Lt. Gen. Thimmayya to Korea\textsuperscript{420}. Nehru continued to speak of India’s special role as a balancing factor, “a neutral among neutrals”, as also the Chairman and Executive Agent of the Commission\textsuperscript{421}.

Following the signing of the armistice agreement, the issue of India’s membership of the NNRC became intertwined with her participation in the political conference to decide the fate of Korea. In the run up to the armistice, India’s participation in both processes was being debated within the US administration. Early reports from Gen. Clark, the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command, writing to the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, indicated that India’s participation in the NNRC was considered undesirable, as her neutrality was not “as well defined as in the case of Mexico”\textsuperscript{422}. Gen. Clark noted his reservations saying that India was neither objective nor completely neutral\textsuperscript{423}. Yet, Robert Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State and Political Adviser for the Armistice Negotiations, was of the belief that an armistice would only be obtained if the US adhered “as closely as possible to the Indian General Assembly resolution”\textsuperscript{424}. Nehru was aware of these conflicting perspectives on India’s place in the process, remarking that American statements were often contradictory and that “there appears to

\textsuperscript{418} Krishna Menon at the UN took a more assertive view on India’s membership of the NNRC, which Nehru found presumptuous; see, Jawaharlal Nehru, “Correspondence in 1953 as President of the UN General Assembly, Letter from Nehru,” Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, 26 October1953, NMML, 8.

\textsuperscript{419} Nehru’s statements, See Frank Moraes, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, 2nd ed., (Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2008), 469-470; For India’s reply to the UN request, see Reports of the UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, General Assembly A/C.1/734, 17 November 1952, Cordier Collection, Box 132, UN Files, Subject Files, Asia – 1. Cablegram dated 29 July 1950 from the Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of India to the Secretary General in Reply to the Secretary General's Cablegram of 14 July 1950 (8/1619) concerning the Security Council Resolution of 25 and 27 June and 7 July 1950 (S/1501, S/1511, S/1588).

\textsuperscript{420} For the official history of the CFI, see Nandan Prasad, History of the Custodian Force (India) in Korea, 1953-54, (New Delhi: Historical Section, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 1976). The Indians named the DMZ camp they stayed in ‘Hind Nagar (Indian City)’ and the other camp, which housed all members from other countries ‘Shanti Nagar’ (City of Peace).

\textsuperscript{421} “Publicity Arrangements for the NNRC,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. 35/48 –XPP/53, NAI. — India’s functions included: 1) Custody of the prisoners of war and the running of camps (Sole Indian responsibility), 2) Supervision of the explanations and interviews as well as observations of these by the opposite side (Commission’s responsibility); and 3) Red Cross Services for the Prisoners of War (Indian responsibility).


be no constant foreign policy in the US. Even between President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles, there does not appear to be community of thought.”

But he was even more concerned when the US administration questioned the neutrality of the NNRC and by the end of the year, Nehru was regretting India’s membership of the NNRC. Krishna Menon insisted that there would have been no armistice without India’s involvement, but Nehru disagreed, saying it was really up to the belligerents to reach a compromise, a situation in which India had a very limited role to play; he also considered it “beneath India’s dignity to go to another Asian country” where India was “not wanted, and where the head of the country would not let us land on its soil”

Meanwhile, the other members of the NNRC were also finding it difficult to cooperate with Rhee, whose statements were getting increasingly bellicose and who had denounced the CFI as “policemen turned robbers” and had threatened to move troops into the DMZ to halt “illegal screening of anti-Communist prisoners by Indian custodial troops” while repeatedly describing the Indian interviews and screening as “anti-Communist prisoners sent to their death by pro-Communist Indian forces”. Rhee had written to the United Nations Command with a thinly veiled threat speaking of “a clash of a serious nature between the Communist or pro-Communist Indians and the anti-Communist Koreans”.

In light of these statements, India was anxious for the safety of her troops and Rajeshwar Dayal reported to the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold India’s intention to withdraw troops if they were unable to function in impartial circumstances. As Nehru put it, “Indian troops are not going to Korea to fight anybody.” Hammarskjold wrote to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit urging that “Thimmayya should not under any circumstances leave Panmunjom” and that “the Commission

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426 Rhee had not allowed Indian troops to land on South Korea soil so they had had to be airlifted to the DMZ. Jawaharlal Nehru, “Nehru to Pandit,” Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, 28 December 1953, NMML, 19-23.
should remain in being whatever happens.” Krishna Menon and Rajeshwar Dayal met with Arthur Dean, the US President’s Envoy on Korea, and repeated this sentiment, but Dean saw the meeting as an Indian attempt at gaining a seat at the political conference on Korea. Indeed, India’s difficulties in functioning on the NNRC became increasingly intertwined with her participation at the political conference on Korea. President Rhee was exerting pressure on the Americans to exclude India from the talks insisting that “the democratic side must speak with a single voice.” Henry Cabot Lodge, US Ambassador to the UN told Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit that America would be less opposed to Indian membership in the Political Conference on Korea if Krishna Menon were replaced with General Thimayya, a suggestion Nehru considered an affront to the Indian delegation and an ill-advised political move. He reacted by saying there had been “too many generals in the past concerned with Korean matters and too little political control.” The Canadian High Commissioner to India, Escott Reid wrote to Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson saying it was highly unlikely that India would send a general to a Korean political conference.”

Quite to the contrary, US Secretary of State Dulles thought India should be excluded from the conference given she had deliberately chosen to be neutral, even acting as the Chairman of the NNRC, and that her exclusion could be offset by American support for Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit for President of the UNGA, a policy Eisenhower agreed to.

By American estimation, this position ran contrary to the general mood of the Assembly; it was likely that Britain and Canada would propose Indian participation, but India had said she would not “agitate or canvass for membership.” Likewise, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand did sponsor a proposal, but the US persisted in a campaign against Indian participation, possibly because of a threat by Rhee to boycott the conference if India attended. US Ambassador to India, George V. Allen urged

432 “Dag Hammarskjold to Pandit,” Pandit Papers, 1st Instalment, NMML.
436 Ibid.
Nehru to voluntarily withdraw from participation in the conference, saying the US’s “genuine objective, as that of India, was to achieve success of conference, whether our views as to how this might best be achieved were similar or not”\textsuperscript{440}.

Nehru took strong objection to American disdain of India’s role saying, “A strong policy these days...apparently means going about looking ferocious and telling everybody we will punish them if they don’t behave as we like. That may be good at a public meeting, but it represents great immaturity. Mature nations, as I think we are, do not behave this way.”\textsuperscript{441} Nehru then spoke of America’s unilateralism as the beginning of the end of the United Nations; he said, “It would be perverse if any country tried to destroy the United Nations. That country would suffer more than the organization if it left or sought to disrupt it. One can't run away from problems. The UN, with all its failings, is a great world organization with the seeds of the hope of peace.”\textsuperscript{442} Ten days later, this statement was followed up by Krishna Menon who presented a statement in the general debate at the UN General Assembly, where he spoke of two issues mainly – the first was that of the admission of China into the UN, especially in the context of the Korean War; he declared, “We do not look upon the United Nations as an exclusive body”; second, he spoke of India’s participation in the political conference on Korea under the heading ‘Asian Representation’ and spoke about the lack of representation of Asia\textsuperscript{443}. Subtly but surely, India had presented her case as the question of Asian representation, and as a question of the credibility of the UN. Although Nehru had said to Allen that he was confident the US Government was not trying to “do GOI down”, he wrote to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit that “nothing would please the US more than to have an opportunity of tripping India up.”\textsuperscript{444}

Nehru was also quite certain that the American attempt to appear “reasonable and open to conviction” was a superficial one and so, India continued to disregard South Korean


\textsuperscript{442} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{444} “Correspondence in 1953 as President of the UN General Assembly, 'Letter of 26 October 1953,'” Pandit Papers, 1\textdegree Instalment, 26 October 1953, \textit{NMML}, 8.
or American criticism of her policies. Instead, Nehru made frequent statements regarding the political necessities of the Korean situation that warranted India’s troop presence in a foreign country, through foreign policy pronouncements, as also in statements to the troops themselves. He also personally corresponded with Gen. Thimmayya until the CFI was shipped out from Korea in five stages. In early 1954, Gen. Thimmayya submitted his report to the UN General Assembly. By mid-March, the Indian troops had left Korea, and had brought back with them 88 PsOW who had elected to go to India. The Indian Ambulance Unit that had served in Korea since December 1950 was awarded the highest commendations, with the unit Commander Lt. Col. Rangaraj being awarded the Maha Vir Chakra. Eisenhower wrote to Nehru to thank him for Gen. Thimmayya’s and Maj. Gen. Thorat’s alleviation of PsOW’s feelings of anxiety and offered his highest commendations for the troops and officers of the Indian army. Krishna Menon took a critical view of the General saying, “Thimmayya appeared to take too much the American view” and the success of the NNRC saying that “ultimately…didn’t complete its tasks because a whole lot of prisoners went to Formosa, which they shouldn’t have done.” India’s role in Korea had come to an end, with no opportunity to participate in the political conference, but nevertheless with an emphasis on the use of political means to achieve political ends.

“The Korean War represented a significant moment in the development of non-alignment as a critique of security because that critique was simultaneously mounted against two

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445 “South Korean delegation is expected to make vicious speech. Krishna Menon proposes not to take any notice of it.” See “Indian Delegation to the UN to Foreign Secretary, India,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D-5832-FEA/54, NAI.
447 “Message to Indian Soldiers in Korea, 6 November 1953,” in ibid., 513-514.
451 The Maha Vir Chakra is the second highest military decoration in India and is awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry. [Cover page missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No. C/551(4)/64-KS], NAI, (Appendix B).
453 Krishna Menon, quoted in Michael Brecher, India and World Politics: Krishna Menon’s View of the World (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968), 41-42.
wars – the Korean War and the Cold War. In the previous section of the chapter, I’ve retold the events of the Korean War from India’s perspective; in this section, I will discuss the ways in which this critique developed alongside the events.

In aiming for the resolution of the war, Nehru constantly drew attention to the military nature of the governments involved. In defining non-alignment, Nehru had said, “When we say our policy is one of non-alignment, obviously we mean non-alignment with military blocs.” In reading such statements, the emphasis has always been on the question of blocs, but it is worthwhile to note – and it becomes very clear in India’s approach to the Korean War that the emphasis was equally on the military nature of those blocs. Therefore, said Nehru, “…the slightest deviation from our policy of non-alignment and avoidance of military pacts would be a disaster beyond repair.” Nehru went on to identify the governments involved in the Korean War as “more or less military governments,” and highlighted the distinction between political objectives on the one hand and military objectives on the other - “even eminent statesmen get mixed up in solving the problem between realising the objective they are aiming at and victory in war. The two are not necessarily synonymous and past history shows that they are not.” Therefore, Nehru was cautious about overstating the importance of the armistice agreement because he realized that the armistice had only ended the Korean War, but that peace would not be completely secured until the future of Korea and its people had been decided. As Krishna Menon said in a statement at the General Assembly, “the fact remains that this armistice is an uneasy one; and it is our concern to convert the armistice into a permanent peace.” In order to secure the conditions for such peace to prevail, Nehru applied India’s strength to the question of the Prisoners of War, which he saw as significant in bringing to a close the first formal confrontation between the US and China by political means, in order to at least temporarily desecuritize a discourse that has remained securitised long after the Cold War has ended.

Nehru attempted to disconnect the international relations of Asia, and of India, from the political imagination of the time that had become saturated with ideas of security. By

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458 Krishna Menon Speech, 492nd Plenary Meeting Wednesday, 6 October 1954, at 3 p.m. New York
repeatedly making statements emphasizing the poverty of Cold War political discourse, he critiqued the centrality of security in it. Thus, India developed non-alignment not only as a neutral position, but used that position to put into effect a political discourse devoid of a preoccupation with security. As Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit put it, “India’s chosen role demands that she exerts herself in whatever capacity offers itself in the interests of peace. Her neutrality itself implies involvement in its cause.” 459 The role of the Indian Army, the Field Ambulance Unit, the Custodian Force of India, all point to India’s substantial contribution as part of this political project of restoring normal conditions in Korea, especially given that these were all unarmed forces. In Krishna Menon’s words, “an unarmed army is today dealing with a situation in a way which is not only glorious from their point of view, but full of lessons for others who have to resolve political problems.” 460

Non-alignment during the Korean War was more than a discourse of security because Nehru located India, China, Korea and Japan within a political framework when he said “The mind of Asia immediately turns to wherever it is being suppressed.” 461 By historicizing the nation-state outside of its national boundaries, he made possible a move from a securitized discourse of nationalism to a politicized discourse of internationalism. He attempted to structure Asia’s international relations outside the framework of security, where it was able to escape not only its own historical victimhood but also the West’s historical preoccupation with security. Nehru said, “…this new Asia has a special duty cast upon her and ought not to allow herself to be pushed into wrong courses by the folly or the ambition of others.” 462 By attempting this move, Nehru also sought to distance Asia from the West’s security-centric ordering of the state; he said, “Asia is a more distant continent; it is a troublesome place; it is a mysterious place; it is an unknown place. So their outlook becomes governed much more by Europe's problems than by Asia's problems.” 463 Nehru’s estimation of the West’s approach to problems in Asia is borne out by statements made during the Korean War itself, such as one by Eisenhower where he said that the war should be

459 Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, “India’s Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs 34, 3 (1956): 435.
“Asians against Asians” with American “support for freedom.” Nehru understood that Asia and Europe were two strands within which history could be understood but that the interface between them was deeply political; in the event of any disagreement, he was wary of the West’s propensity to “press a political solution through military means.”

However, in pursuing these objectives, there was also a critique of the political means used to achieve political ends. Nehru said, “Our object is to stop the drift towards war and not to put either China or the USA in the wrong.” In pursuit of peace, Nehru did not want inadvertently to aggravate adversaries and encourage war mongering amongst them saying that it was “bad politics at any time to try to humiliate even an enemy. To do so at the cost of war would be tragedy.” India’s basic approach was that peace could not be promoted by relying on power; on the contrary, the emphasis on power might become a threat to peace. Indeed, Appadorai argues that this approach was “supplementary to the one based on power” because those who adopt it emphasize negotiation such as the truces in Korea and Indo-China. This was in direct contradiction to the American position, particularly promoted by the likes of Dean Acheson who had spoken of “negotiating from situations of strength”. Nehru criticised this attitude in plain terms, saying, “The Americans can apparently only think in military terms now and forget that human beings have to be handled differently.”

India’s involvement in the Korean War made non-alignment slightly more credible and affected her relations with the Western bloc. India-US relations improved in contrast to US relations with Russia and China. The western bloc continued to suspect “probably a good deal of oriental manoeuvring between Chinese Communist and Soviets, especially in regard to Korea.” However, the attitude towards India softened particularly under

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465 Nehru quoted in A Appadorai, National Interest and India’s Foreign Policy, (New Delhi: Kalinga Publications, 1992), 51, 153.
467 “Cable to K M Panikkar,” 23 January 1951, in ibid., 493.
468 Appadorai, National Interest, 153, 12.
469 Ibid., 12.
the influence of progressive diplomats such as Chester Bowles who adopted a different view towards India and at the height of the Korean War, claiming that “the success or failure of the effort being made in India and other Asian countries to create an alternative to Communism in Asia may mark one of those historic turning points which determine the flow of events for many generations.”

Even Dulles who had once said of non-alignment, “Those who are not with us, are against us,” tempered his stand with remarking, “India is neutralist in the sense that it has not joined up in any of the collective security organisation...We don't quarrel with the Indian decision. India is not neutral in the sense that it is indifferent to the threat of communism.”

Nehru’s relations with China were also more tempered as he witnessed upfront Chinese foreign policy decision-making during the Korean War. A Peking Radio broadcast that criticized “India’s posing as voice of Asia”, shocked Nehru and he sought to respond in no uncertain terms. Nehru faced criticism in Parliament on grounds of abandoning India’s non-aligned position by being too fervent in his support for China; he responded by saying that he was on his country’s side and no one else’s. Yet, he sought to integrate both the Soviet Union and China into the UN, saying that without their inclusion, the UN “inevitably drift towards being an agent for war or preparations for war.” Stalinist Russia also warmed up to the idea of non-aligned India somewhat, a prospect that they only fully explored in the years after the death of Stalin.

Most importantly, India sought to build a relationship with Korea by recognizing and repeatedly emphasizing Korean sovereignty. In 1950, just at the start of the war, Indian officials serving on the UNTCOK had reported to New Delhi the divergence of views between the Indian and western positions, saying that the western bloc believed that “the people of Korea have no experience of the liberal and democratic processes” while the Indians did “not share this view as we feel that if the United Nations is called upon to make some vast sacrifices, they must be for the vindication of certain principles and for the establishment of a decent new order.” They continued to report on this matter, “Many others, however, feel that India does not fully realize the nature of the North

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474 See Gundevia, *Outside the Archives*, 93, 344-345.
477 See Gundevia, *Outside the Archives*, 93, 344-345.
Korean regime and the menace of communism.\(^479\) Once the war was well in full swing, Indian Embassy reports from the US wrote to New Delhi about the American attitude towards Koreans as being “comparatively ill-equipped and under-nourished ‘oriental’ hordes.”\(^480\) On the contrary, the Indian Parliament had unanimously voted in favour of the Government of India’s support to the UN Security Council’s actions for peace in Korea, while noting in the words of Nehru, “The future of Korea must be decided entirely by the Koreans themselves.”\(^481\) Nehru unequivocally refused to treat Korea as a site of war but reminded domestic as well as international audiences of her past as a nation and her future as a nation-state\(^482\). This view was accompanied by a sober assessment of India’s role in bringing the war to a close, emphasizing the political as also dispassionate means India had used. In responding to a question regarding the success of India’s policy, he said, “Perhaps the quiet and undramatic policy that we have been pursuing on behalf of India has borne some fruit” and added that India’s job had been “delicate, difficult, embarrassing....”\(^483\).

Thus, India’s non-aligned position allowed her to successfully use the United Nations as a vehicle for mediatory diplomacy but also at each step in the process, to draw attention to the securitising discourse that had to be overcome in order for peace to be achieved. Nehru made important distinctions between war and peace, politics and security and means and ends in order to shape this discourse. Representatives of the Government of India and forces of the Indian Army in particular contributed substantially in this effort. At this stage, non-alignment was unambiguous and categorical in the critical stance it adopted towards security. Even though the events of the Korean War lasted over four years, the consistency in the discourse is remarkable. KPS Menon had referred in his report to the pithy observation that “the 38\(^{th}\) parallel has become part of the long border line between the American and Soviet spheres around the globe”\(^484\); non-aligned India remained outside both those spheres and sought to dismantle their influence on

\(^{479}\) “From Anup Singh to KPS Menon,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D12/05-CJK/50, 1950, NAI.


\(^{482}\) “Germ Warfare in Korea,” 27 November 1952, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 19, 439-440, In response to a question in Parliament regarding possible germ warfare in Korea and the need to send Indian scientists to ascertain the facts, Nehru replied saying, “No Sir. This is a foreign country and the Government of India does not function in territories outside India.”


\(^{484}\) See “Statement of Mr. KPS Menon, Chairman of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, as the Interim Committee, On 19 February 1948,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D8714-CJK/50, 1950, NAI.
international politics. In the following few years, Nehru reacted equally strongly towards the crises in Indo-China and the Suez Canal. However, the discourse took a different turn in response to the Hungarian Revolution. That shift in direction is discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 5

_The Fog of War_

India, The Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution (1956)

In the opening chapters, I have suggested that the critique of security in non-alignment was modernist and statist. The previous chapter has discussed non-alignment’s conceptualization of modernity and the critique of security that stems from it. In this chapter, I discuss the centrality of the state to non-alignment. Although elements of critique, discourse and practice are present throughout all the cases under study, I will also suggest that the two events discussed here constitute a moment where non-alignment was more a discourse of security than a critique of it. The chapter is divided into four parts - in the first, I discuss the theorization of the state in non-alignment; in the second and third parts, I discuss the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution and India’s responses to both events; in the fourth part, I discuss the two events in conjunction, as the historical circumstances of political practice. A number of factors provoked the shift from critique to discourse; although realist theories of International Relations are likely to suggest that this lapse was inevitable in the larger system, I’m more interested in what specificities of a particular historical context are likely to induce these shifts. In studying those more closely, it might be possible to anticipate the limits of the politics imagined within non-alignment.

The critique of security in non-alignment was concerned with the state in two ways – first, the state was the vehicle of politics, one that made moves away from security-saturated discourses possible; second, the non-aligned position was one of critically considering the system of states as the location of the balance of power. Thus, the critique of security was produced on the individual level, and applied at the systemic level; it was aimed at the Indian state as well as the system of states it occupied. This two-step process made the state a very central element of non-alignment and of its critique of security. Previously, I have suggested that non-alignment was built on a critique of the received notion of the ‘nation-state’ and on the conceptualization of the ‘international’. In what might be called Nehru’s theory of the state, the emphasis was on understanding the state as a unit of the international and in animating that relationship in
a way that reimagined and remade the State. This conceptualization was in part a response to the structure of the state system in the Cold War period, and so, non-alignment was conceptualized as a turning away from that deeply securitized structure and instead, remaking the State as an arena of politics. This movement was to some extent evident in India’s approach to the problem of the Korean War.

Although the nation-state as a concept was critiqued and remade through its interface with the international, this theorization had at least two shortcomings. First, non-alignment assumed continuity between nationalism and sovereignty with the state in the foreground. In fact, these processes constituted a two-part process, which was concerned with the establishment of the state and with its consolidation. For Nehru, the relation between nationalism and the state was quite evidently one where the former led to the latter. In anti-colonial movements, the arrival of modernity was often equated with the establishment of the state and Nehru certainly applied that model to India. However, this theorization didn’t account for movements that aimed to displace the state. By drawing a straight line from nationalist aspirations to the establishment of the state, and to the consolidation of its sovereignty, non-alignment precluded the possibility that these three trajectories might come into conflict with one another. By neglecting these possibilities, non-alignment neglected a deep theorization of the state. Instead, both understandings – of nationalism and sovereignty – relied very heavily on their provenance in anti-colonial thought. So, nationalism in non-alignment was primarily anti-colonial nationalism; sovereignty was the bulwark of the postcolonial state against the forces of imperialism, old and new.

By thinking the state in these terms, Nehru broke away from Gandhi whose political thought was premised on an exhaustive theoretical engagement with nationalism and the state, especially when it rejected them as essentially self-destructive. Nehru’s insistence that it was possible to rescue the state from itself was built on the assumption that the state could act as a conduit for moral force. This moral force, as discussed in the opening chapters, was to be secured through the development of the international as an arena for politics. Yet, the second shortcoming of this theorisation of the state was the conflation in non-alignment between the existent system of states, the concept of the international and internationalism as the force of an idea. This overlap is evident in Nehru’s reading of the politics of the Soviet Union as primarily anti-colonial and
subsequently internationalist. Although the origins of socialist thought were anti-colonial and the expansion of that thought into the socialist system of states was internationalist, the methods and objectives of that movement were drastically different from those of non-aligned India.

The anti-imperial character of Marxist struggle deeply influenced Nehru, and on attending the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Bolshevik Revolution in Moscow in 1927, he was quite clearly impressed by Russia’s domestic advancement, remarking that “Russia, an outcaste like ourselves from nations and much and often erring in many respects, stands today as the greatest opponent of imperialism.” Tagore had once remarked that Russia had raised the seat for the dispossessed. Similarly, Nehru seemed in his assessment of Soviet Russia so convinced of the anticolonial discourse within Marxism that he evaded the question of methods to some extent, remarking to Pineau that even though the purges of the 1930s had left the political leadership in India disillusioned about Soviet Russia, it was wise to “not mix up social and economic philosophy and communist methods.” Thus, Nehru selectively analysed the politics of Soviet Russia. Although Nehru differentiated between Russian nationalism and world socialism, both directed from Moscow, he explained away the inconsistencies that arose as those two processes became fused with each other. As the Indian response to the Hungarian Revolution shows us, this proved to be a blind spot in his approach to world politics.

As I will discuss further in the third section, the mutual visits of leaders from both countries to each other’s in 1955 and Soviet Russia’s not unenthusiastic response to the Bandung Conference of the same year might have led Nehru to believe that the socialist bloc was making a move from the socialist international to a post-ideological concept of the international as put forward by non-aligned India. If they had participated in this post-ideological process, the Soviets would have had to eschew the use of force against reformist nationalists within the Warsaw Pact countries. Indeed, it is clear that Nehru believed that neither would the Soviets send troops to Hungary nor would Eden and others put troops in Egypt, against the wishes of the local populations. On both

489 For a comprehensive discussion of this, see Paul F. Power, “Indian Foreign Policy: The Age of Nehru”, *The Review of Politics* 26, 2 (1964): 268-269.
accounts, Nehru was proven wrong. It is interesting to note that both estimates stemmed from his belief that the time for colonialism of any kind was past. In this view, he was probably influenced by the wave of decolonization that was running through Asia and Africa at the time. Evidently, he was also more concerned with the exigencies of the Cold War, as India had experienced in the recently concluded armistice negotiations of the Korean War. By throwing these assumptions within non-alignment into question, the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution produced an intense historical moment that challenged the configuration of non-alignment as a critique of security.

Indeed, Nehru’s theory of the state was based on the assumption that the state could negotiate its presence in the international system in political terms and that although dissent was an integral part of that politics, the use of force wasn’t, and could easily be replaced with diplomacy. Therefore, the Suez Canal Crisis invoked a predictable response from the Indian state, and particularly from Nehru who denounced British and French aggression towards Egypt. Yet, India’s defence of Egypt was played out in many parts that did not all reflect the critique of security so evident in the Korean case. For instance, Nehru advised Nasser against an appeal to the United Nations until the last phase of the crisis but when eventually the UN did get involved, India sent troops to the emergency force it constituted, in what was India’s first deployment of troops abroad. Thus, in itself, India’s response to the Suez Canal Crisis marks a move away from the early days of non-alignment when Nehru relied exclusively on Indian diplomacy and emphasized the necessity of the UN.

India’s response to the Hungarian Revolution indicated a move even further away from the critical position of the early 1950s. Nehru’s statements from the initial days of the revolution were met with accusations of ‘Bulganisation’. Eventually, the reactions became even more ambiguous as Nehru vacillated between criticizing the use of force by the Soviets and pleading ignorance about conditions in Budapest490. Various memoirs of diplomats from the time are across the board puzzled by Nehru’s lackadaisical reaction to the Hungarian Revolution. Unlike the Korean War, where India’s approach to the crisis has received limited attention, the events of 1956 have been discussed somewhat more widely, particularly because the Hungarian Revolution

is regarded as the first failure of Nehru’s non-alignment, lending a severe blow to his prestige in the international arena, eventually damaged by the events of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. Some commentators have called the Suez Canal Crisis “the first international test of non-alignment” and focus on the contrast between Hungary and Nehru’s response to the Suez Canal Crisis, which as expected was unequivocal. Instead, the approach that I’ve taken in this chapter is to discuss the two events in the continuities they represent, as parts of a single historical moment. Crucially, in both Egypt and Hungary, Nehru used narratives of sovereignty in contradictory ways. During the Suez Canal Crisis, Nehru invoked Egypt’s sovereignty constantly, even while explaining India’s actions in the later stages of the conflict. In the case of Hungary, on the other hand, both parties justified their actions in the name of protecting Hungarian sovereignty; this presented non-aligned India with an unprecedented challenge, one that she responded to belatedly and inadequately. Therefore, I suggest in this chapter that 1956 can be read as a moment where it is evident that the theorization of the state within non-alignment was weak, and that it didn’t account for systemic shocks such as those strongly felt in the wake of the Hungarian Revolution. As the critique of security was conducted in the perspective of the state, this weakness in theorizing the state reflected on the critique of security too. In this phase, non-alignment resembled more closely a discourse of security rather than a critique of it because it became implicit in the move away from politics and towards security. This chapter voices some of the practical limitations of this approach that can be observed in both the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution, and in their simultaneous occurrence.

The Suez Canal Crisis

Gamal Abdul Nasser came to power in Egypt in November 1954. The British, under Anthony Eden’s leadership saw this development as inimical to their interests and saw Nasser, as “a threat to be addressed, not appeased”, an “Asiatic Mussolini” while

491 Gopal is in contrast with Gundevia who more rightly refers to the Korean War as the first international test. See Sarvepalli Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats: The Collected Essays, ed. Srinath Raghavan (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2013) 228; Y. D. Gundevia, Outside the Archives (Hyderabad: Sangam Books, 1987), 445.
constantly comparing him to Hitler\textsuperscript{494}. The French, under the leadership of Guy Mollet, saw Nasser’s Arab nationalism as a threat to their interests in Africa, particularly in Algeria\textsuperscript{495}. India, on the other hand, saw in “the wise leadership of President Nasser” an opportunity to establish wider and friendlier relations with West Asia\textsuperscript{496}. In February 1955, Turkey had signed a defence pact with Pakistan, a treaty that subsequently expanded to also include Iran, Iraq and the United Kingdom and which came to be known as the Baghdad Pact. Nehru, then on a visit to Cairo, made a statement saying, “We must think not in terms of war but prepare for peace. If the world is foolish enough to have war, I wonder what good alliances can be.”\textsuperscript{497} On 16 February 1955, Egypt and India issued a joint communiqué denouncing military alliances\textsuperscript{498}. Subsequently, in the run-up to, during and after the Bandung Conference, India’s ties with Egypt were consolidated in a series of moves. When Nehru stopped in Cairo on his return from Europe, India and Egypt issued a statement lauding the “existence of an identity of views on major international issues”\textsuperscript{499}.

For her part, Egypt seemed to have accepted these Indian overtures because amongst other reasons, India hadn’t called Neguib’s rule a coup d’etat\textsuperscript{500}. On 6 April 1955, India and Egypt had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, which emphasized “a spirit of brotherliness” in the diplomatic relations between the states\textsuperscript{501}. Later that month, Nasser made two stops at New Delhi to meet Nehru – one on the way to Bandung and then again on his return. At their first meeting on 12 April 1955, Nasser spoke to Nehru at length about the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly that the “Gaza strip was totally indefensible” and that “ever since Ben Gurion’s come back, Israel had


\textsuperscript{495} Judt, Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945, 294-295

\textsuperscript{496} Jawaharlal Nehru, quoted in Nicolas Blarel, The Evolution of India’s Israel Policy: Continuity, Change, and Compromise Since 1922, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 2014), 472.

\textsuperscript{497} Jawaharlal Nehru, “Addressing a Press Conference in Cairo on 16 February”, in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 28, eds., Sarvepalli Gopal, Ravinder Kumar, HY Sharada Prasad (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund), 216n4.


\textsuperscript{499} “Visit of the PM to Cairo on his Way Back to India from the European Tour - Joint Statement Issued on the Occasion by the PMs of India and Egypt”, Ministry of External Affairs File No. F 4(75)-AWT/55, National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi, India.

\textsuperscript{500} Brecher, India and World Politics, 63

\textsuperscript{501} The treaty was signed by Mahmoud Fawzi on the Egyptian side and the new Indian Ambassador Nawab Ali Yavar Jung Bahadur. For the full text of the treaty see Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Treaty of Friendship Between the Union of India and the Republic of Egypt, 1955, Commonwealth Legal Information Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, India Databases, 1955.
become more and more aggressive.”

On his return trip, Nasser referred once again to “the difficulties in the Arab countries”, and talked about a defence pact between Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Nehru did not find this idea useful and sought to remind Nasser that in “the unfortunate event of a war with Israel, the burden would fall on Egypt. Saudi Arabia did not even have a common frontier with Israel. Syria would do little.” It is evident that Nehru tried to steer Nasser away from the idea of defence pacts and towards the non-aligned countries, possibly because he thought of the group led by Nasser as “a small military group, with the support of the army… a good group, honest and seeking the welfare of Egypt” and of Nasser as “a good man and trying his best to face and overcome these evils.”

In this assessment, Nehru was influenced by his own observations of the negotiations over the Suez Canal, to which he referred periodically as an issue of international significance. But also he had been receiving news from Apa Pant about the centrality of Egypt to the entire African continent either virtue of her location and through the practice of Islam that gave her a special bond with the countries of Mediterranean, Equatorial and West Africa. Pant reminded Nehru that until very recently “Egypt had her face turned towards Europe and European civilization” but that through the revolution Egypt had “burst into the consciousness of Africa”. When Ali Yavar Jung took over from Apa Pant in 1955, he wrote to Nehru warning him of rising anti-Indian sentiment in West Asia; Nehru identified this line of propaganda as the idea that India was “pro-communist” and that India was “trying to develop into a strong dominant power”. Nehru sought to neutralize this anti-Indian sentiment and to build closer ties with West Asia by encouraging Egypt to accept non-alignment and by following a resolute policy towards Israel, one that specifically denied any connection between the

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503 Ibid.
505 Ibid., n2.
507 Apa Pant was India’s first Commissioner to East and Central Africa and served there from 1948 to 1955. See Apa Pant, A Moment in Time (India: Orient Longman, 1974); and Apa Pant, Undiplomatic Incidents (Bombay: Orient Longman Limited, 1987).
508 For a detailed description of the historical context of the new political momentum in Egypt, see “General Note on Certain Problems of Africa”, Ministry of External Affairs File No. F-39/9/55-AFR II, National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi, India.
questions of Israel-Palestine and that of the ill treatment of Jews by Hitler. Nehru also noted that there was “a great deal of sympathy in Europe and America for the Jews” but “that had nothing to do with the present situation.” Nehru had even conceded, albeit reluctantly to the Arab demand to not include Israel in the Bandung Conference. All in all, by the end of 1955, Nehru had distanced himself from the Western position on Israel, had consolidated India’s efforts to encourage secular Arab nationalism in West Asia and had recognized Nasser as a significant partner in the process.

At Bandung, Nehru had sought to further integrate Egypt with the other Third World nations, including Yugoslavia. Thus, when Tito invited Nehru and Nasser to his retreat in Brioni on the Adriatic Sea, the three undertook a series of discussions and announced a set of “principles that should govern international relations’ on 18 July 1956. The United States had paid close attention to the Bandung Conference, and was now witnessing the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement, particularly the part of the joint statement “expressly disassociating Egypt from any dependence on the West”.

Although Egypt and the US had entered into talks in November 1955 on American financing for the Aswan Dam to be constructed on the Nile, the US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles withdrew any offer of assistance on 19 July 1955, possibly in response to the statement issued by the three non-aligned leaders the previous day, but also as a cumulative effect of other happenings in Egypt, such as the finalisation of an arms deal with communist Czechoslovakia in 1955 and Egypt’s recognition of communist China in May 1956. Additionally, the Indian Ambassador Ali Yavar Jung was certain that the American offer had been a mere counterfoil to an earlier Soviet offer for assistance, but once the Soviets withdrew their offer in June 1956, the Americans were looking for a pretext to withdraw theirs too.

510 For an excellent treatment of the consequences of the Suez Canal Crisis on India-Israel relations, see Blarel, 511 Evolution of India’s Israel Policy, 472.
512 “Cable to Ali Yavar Jung” in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 28, eds., Sarvepalli Gopal, Ravinder Kumar, HY Sharada Prasad, (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund), 229
513 “Nehru’s Note,” Nehru Papers, 19 December 1954, NMML, quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 228.
514 Rahman also makes the assessment that the move from neutralism to non-alignment took place during Nasser’s time and that he was able to identify Arab nationalism with Arab non-alignment, a possibility that Nehru grasped quite quickly. See Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 123-124
516 Judt, Postwar, 295
517 Egypt also withdrew recognition from Nationalist China; Al Gumhouria explicitly said that in undertaking this action, “Gamal Abdul Nasser put Eden’s noose around Eden’s own neck”. See Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 127.
518 Jung had this information from the Soviet Ambassador Kiselev; see “Cable to Ali Yavar Jung”, 27 July 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 319-320n2,5.
At the end of the meeting of the non-aligned leaders, Nehru and Nasser flew back to Cairo on the same day; en route from Brioni to Cairo, Nasser showed Nehru the text of Dulles’s speech announcing the withdrawal of assistance for building the Aswan Dam, in which the Americans had pointed to doubts about Egypt’s economic climate\(^{518}\), to which Nehru said, “These people, how arrogant they are.”\(^{519}\) When they arrived in Cairo, Nehru and Nasser continued to hold talks for the next couple of days before Nehru left for India on the afternoon of 21 July 1956. During these Nehru-Nasser talks in Cairo, Nasser informed Nehru that he had decided to give up the Aswan Dam project\(^{520}\), and was encouraged in this line of thought by Nehru, particularly as Nehru thought the Arab-Israeli tension was dissipating as at Brioni, the leaders had received an informal message from Ben-Gurion saying that Israel had erred in leaning on the Western powers and had realized that “they were of Asia and must look to Asia”\(^{521}\).

Nasser first reacted to the withdrawal of American assistance in forceful rhetoric, “May you choke with rage...We Egyptians will not allow any colonizer or despot to dominate us...We shall yield neither to force nor to the dollar”\(^{522}\). Following this, on 26 July 1956, at the third anniversary celebrations of the Egyptian Revolution at Alexandria Square in Cairo, Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal, adding, “We shall rely on our own strength, our own muscle, our own funds”\(^{523}\). Jung wrote to Nehru saying this was a calculated response intended to reclaim credibility in Egypt’s economic strength and assuage Egyptian and Arab public opinion. Nehru responded by saying that the manner in which the British and the Americans had behaved was “very discourteous and almost contemptuous”\(^{524}\) but also relayed his surprise to Nasser, “I learnt of your decision about Suez Canal. As this had not been mentioned by you in the course of our talks at Brioni and Cairo, I thought that decision must have been taken after I left

\(^{518}\) “Background Note for Indian Missions”, 31 July 1956, \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 324.


\(^{521}\) “Nehru's Note,” Nehru Papers, 9 September 1958, \textit{Nehru Memorial Museum and Library}, New Delhi, India, 228-729n3


\(^{523}\) “Background Note for Indian Missions”, 31 July 1956, \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 324.

\(^{524}\) Ibid., 331.
Cairo. It was learnt later that Nasser had taken the decision after Nehru’s departure, on the evening of 21 July.

There had been no discussion about the canal at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ Conference held in the first half of the year; Nehru was keen on avoiding the impression that the matter had been discussed at Brioni or that Nasser’s actions had Nehru’s backing. Thus, Nehru sought to distance India from Nasser’s decision by emphasizing that he had no inkling of it and that in the event of a flare-up, India would remain non-aligned. Nehru wrote to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit saying that there was “no reference whatever to Suez Canal during talks with Marshal Tito and Nasser at Brioni or later during my talks with Egyptians Ministers in Cairo.” Nehru also wrote to the Great Powers, the Colombo Powers and Tito to say he had no prior intimation of this plan. Tito replied saying the issue “although very serious is not so dramatic” and it was “possible to act towards both sides with a quietening effect.”

Nehru later wrote to Tito to say that Yugoslavia must not seem too partial in their support of the Egyptian position and Tito replied saying the press had been reigned in. Nehru also sent detailed instructions to Ali Yavar Jung to say “we as an Asian country…should not appear to line up with Egypt and other countries sympathetic to Egypt just as we will not line up against Egypt with powers hostile to her.” Nehru also disagreed with the anti-western stand taken by Rajagopalachari who had written to Nehru “The question here is not the Cold War but the freedom of Asiatic States to self-rule”, further suggesting a declaration by all the Bandung countries clearly expressing their support for Egypt.

In a subsequent cable, Nehru conveyed to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit the reassurance he had received from Nasser that the nationalization “does not in any way or to any extent

526 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 159.
527 Nehru was right to have these fears, as later it came to light that Eden was confused and thought Nehru had supported Nasser’s actions. See Iverach McDonald, A Man of the Times (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976), 144, 10n.
528 “Cable to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit”, 28 July 1956, in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 321.
529 Nehru repeats the message to SWRD Bandarnaike and also to Tito sent the same day, see SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 322,323.
530 Ibid. 323n2
531 “Message to Josip Broz Tito”, 5 August 1956, in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 340n2. Rajeshwar Dayal, who was the Indian Ambassador in Belgrade, had reported that the press had uncritically backed Egypt.
affect the international commitment of Egypt”\footnote{Nasser had also told Nehru that he would honour “all international obligations and both the Convention of 1888 and the assurance given in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954.” “Cable to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit,” 2 August 1956, in \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 325-326.} but also that in his view “the Egyptian Government [was] undertaking more than it can manage and [was] being pushed by some extreme elements.”\footnote{Sarvepalli Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, vol. 2, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), 278.} Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit replied alerting Nehru to the British Commonwealth Secretary Douglas-Home’s talk of “the impossibility of allowing a gangster to remain in complete control” of the Suez Canal and “emphasized that Egypt could, if this action was not firmly curbed, destroy Western prestige and cripple UK economy in a matter of weeks.”\footnote{“Cable to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit,” 27 July 1956, \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 318-319n5.} As expected, the British and the French had taken a less than charitable view of the situation. Christian Pineau called the nationalization an “act of plunder”; Anthony Eden spoke of “precautionary measures of a military nature”; Selwyn Lloyd went to the extent of saying that “the Government would be failing in its duties if it did not take precautionary measures”; Guy Mollet denounced Nasser as a “would-be dictator”, “imitator of Hitler” and said the allies would “launch an energetic and severe riposte” to Nasser’s actions\footnote{“Cabinet Meeting on the Suez Crisis”, 4 August 1956, in \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 332n2,3.}. In these circumstances, Nehru made the point that India’s objective was to “prevent hostilities and to have a peaceful settlement which would ensure the use of the Canal as before”, adding that any “restriction of traffic through the canal or blockade or imposition of higher tolls would have harmful results and might even prejudice the progress of the Second Five Year Plan”\footnote{India had Soviet-style five-year plans; ibid.}. In a detailed statement that he presented to the Lok Sabha on 31 July 1956, Nehru repeated his stand that during his visit to Egypt and to Brioni, there had been no talk of the nationalization of the canal or any other aspect of Anglo-Egyptian relations. Most importantly, he in no uncertain measure distinguished India’s position on the matter saying, “The way Egypt took hold of the Suez Canal was not our way. We follow a different way, but who am I to criticise others? If they had followed a different way, so many difficulties would not have arisen, but they had a right to follow their own methods”\footnote{All through the crisis, India maintained that Egypt was competent to nationalize the Suez Canal but should have done so in “the normal way of international expropriation.” See Lok Sabha Statement, 31 July 1956, in Dutt, \textit{With Nehru in the Foreign Office}, 160. See a copy of Menon’s statement at the Conference in U.S. Department of State, \textit{FRUS}, 1955–1957, Suez Crisis, July 26–December 31, 1956, vol. 16 (Washington: G.P.O., 1956), 159-78}. Subsequently, Nasser and Nehru exchanged a multitude of messages discussing a solution to this issue – Nasser complained that the threat of force was being employed against Egypt because they
were “comparatively weak and an oriental people” but he also spoke of his willingness for a conciliatory approach. Douglas-Home had asked Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit if India would agree to and enforce implementation of international control of the canal. Nehru replied saying that it should not be difficult for Suez to remain an international waterway as Nasser had assured it but that in any circumstance, the use of force was wrong.

Immediately after the nationalization of the canal, Eisenhower had suggested to Eden a conference of the canal users to be held in London, therefore called the London Conference. Eden accepted the idea but wanted to limit the numbers of attendees but Eisenhower insisted that the conference be as inclusive as possible, in order to placate those supporting Egypt. Nehru supported this view, and encouraged the British to invite Yugoslavia, Burma, Poland and Saudi Arabia although they weren’t eventually included. When Nasser showed resistance Nehru first proposed a conference of “interested international parties” hosted by Egypt. Yet, Nasser was opposed to the idea of the conference on the whole and wanted to take the issue to the UN. In fact, he wrote to Nehru proposing a plan saying Egypt would boycott the London Conference and instead, ask for all waterways to be placed under the UN, negotiate a fresh treaty guaranteeing the security of the Suez Canal and freedom of navigation and that this treaty would be registered with the UN. Nehru strongly advised against taking the issue to the UN, saying, “In the present state of the world, the alignment of forces there may not be favourable. Further, it can also lead to the interpretation of a prior acceptance of international control. It is wiser to be cautious about bringing in the UN just now.”

Thereafter, Nehru tried through Ali Yavar Jung to convince Nasser to at least jointly hold a conference with Britain in order to show that Egypt was “not

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541 “Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to Nehru,” Nehru Papers, 1 August 1956, NMML.
542 “Nehru to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit”, Nehru Papers, 2 August 1956, NMML.
544 For correspondence on participation of Yugoslavia, see “Message to Josip Broz Tito, 5 August 1956,” in SWJN-SS, vol. 34, 340n3 in which Rajeshwar Dayal conveys the laments of Koca Popovic, the Yugoslav Secretary for Foreign Affairs saying that the conference was “designed to ensure majority decision for Anglo-French position”. For correspondence on exclusion of Indonesia, see “Nehru to Ali Sastroamidjojo, 6 August 1956,” in SWJN-SS, vol. 34, 341, where Nehru says “in any event there can be no settlement without Egypt.”
545 “Message to Nasser,” Nehru Papers, 2 August 1956, NMML.
547 Haykal, The Cairo Documents, 282.
adopting a non possumus attitude but made a constructive approach.” 549. Ali Yavar Jung, having pressed the case, reported to Nehru that the Egyptian Cabinet was “against association with Britain” 550. In these circumstances, Nehru convinced Nasser to not boycott the conference entirely and send some manner of representation, which Nasser agreed to, eventually sending Ali Sabri along with Krishna Menon, the Indian representative to the London Conference 551.

Nehru then corresponded with Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to ensure that India’s attendance of the conference would not be tantamount to committing herself to the principles set out in the three-power communiqué 552. Nehru wrote to Eden saying India would only attend if she were assured of it and that the whole approach to the conference could have been different, that Egypt should have been invited to host the conference and included in it 553. Nehru also wrote to Nasser reiterating India’s non-aligned position that she would not “support any unilateral action or any group of nations” 554. Nehru repeatedly wrote to the British saying that Egypt was likely to attend the conference and participate in negotiations if no prior conditions or commitments were placed on her. He also wrote to Eden to ensure that no force would be used against Egypt while negotiations were being carried forth at the conference emphasizing that “If however force and coercive tactics are used, then the consequences all over Asia and in North Africa will be far-reaching” 555. Eden replied saying, “We have no intention whatsoever of trying to coerce the conference by military threat or action” 556. Nehru then wrote to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit relaying Eden’s message that the London Conference had nothing to do with the Aswan Dam and was only concerned with putting the Suez Canal under an international authority 557, that this was “not satisfactory” but that India had decided to attend the Conference all the same 558. Nehru was at first of the opinion that “Egypt should have been consulted and invited to sponsor the conference” 559 but later

550 Ibid.
551 Gundevia, Outside the Archives, 175-176.
552 “Cable to Ali Yavar Jung,” 7 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 342-343n3.
554 “Nehru to Nasser, 5 August 1956, MEA Files” quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 234.
556 “Statement in Parliament,” 8 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 351n5
557 “Cable to Ali Yavar Jung,” 7 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 342-343n4; Eden had also assured Nehru that participation in the London Conference would not imply acceptance of British demand for an international authority, see “Eden to Nehru - 7 August 1956, MEA Files,” quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 234
559 “Message to U Ba Swe,” 7 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 346-347.
thought that Indian “attendance could prove a check on the policy of intimidation”. This was particularly crucial as Eisenhower had decided against attending in person as “Nehru would probably not be there personally, but only Krishna Menon”\(^{560}\). Chou-En Lai sent a message to Nehru through R K Nehru, the Indian Ambassador in China to say that India was in a “key position” and that being a Commonwealth country, India could exercise influence on Britain\(^{561}\). The Soviets sent a message to Nehru through KPS Menon, the Indian Ambassador in the USSR to say that the “stand taken by India was absolutely correct” and would have the support of the Soviet Government\(^{562}\). Nehru considered the Suez Canal Conference “the most important conference that Independent India would be attending”\(^{563}\).

On 8 August, Nehru made a statement in the Lok Sabha announcing that India would attend the London Conference, Krishna Menon would go as leader of the Indian delegation and that threats of force did not “belong to this age” and therefore that India had declined participation “in any arrangements for war preparations or sanctions or any step which challenged the sovereign rights of Egypt”\(^{564}\). He also expressed his growing anxiety stressing that India was “a principal user of this waterway” and not a “disinterested party” and that indeed, India was “passionately interested in averting a conflict”\(^{565}\). On the same day, Eden yet again called Nasser a dictator in a public broadcast saying “With dictators, you always have to pay a higher price later on for their appetites grow with food.” Nehru dismayed at this belligerence, said it was “in bad taste and was in addition, bad politics.”\(^{566}\) In response to Nehru’s complaints, Eden replied saying he was disappointed “at the manner in which the balance has been struck in India between Egypt and the Western Powers” and “it would seem hardly surprising that we should be concerned at a man with this record having his thumb on our windpipe”\(^{567}\). Dulles also wrote first to Menon, who relayed the message to Nehru that “the question of Suez was not only one of legal rights but of distrust of Nasser because


\(^{561}\) “Cable to RK Nehru,” 7 August 1956, \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 348n1. RK Nehru had met Chou-En Lai to explain the Indian position on 4 August 1956.

\(^{562}\) From a copy of the Soviet draft reply to the invitation of the London Conference, KPS Menon reported to Nehru that this was a “spirited defence of Egypt’s action and vehement denunciation of reaction of Western Powers.” See “Message to Dimitri Shepilov,” 7 August 1956, \textit{SWJN}, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 345n3.

\(^{563}\) Nehru’s note to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, quoted in Dutt, \textit{With Nehru in the Foreign Office}, 163.


\(^{565}\) ibid.


of his gigantic ambitions and his attitude and policies. As expected, Nasser retorted on 12 August denouncing Anglo-French military preparations and proposing a conference of all Constantinople Convention signatories and 45 countries that had been using the Suez Canal in 1955. Nehru tried to temper this conflict by immediately writing to Ali Yavar Jung asking him to convey to Nasser, “our [Indian] policy under Gandhiji’s leadership was to be firm on principles but at the same time conciliatory in approach.”

A parallel crisis erupted in India at this time with sections of public opinion led by C Rajagopalachari demanding India’s withdrawal from the Commonwealth, calling it an “odious hypocrisy” and “not a reality”, but an “instrument of aggression”. Nehru stemmed these debates saying they were “from every point of view very undesirable”, placing emphasis on India’s role in mediating between the conflicting parties. Nehru wrote, “This is by far the most difficult and dangerous situation in international affairs we have faced since independence. I do not think we can do very much, but it is just possible that we might stop the rot. Probably we shall end by displeasing our friends on both sides.” Evidently, Nehru was much alarmed by the aggressive attitudes adopted by both sides and was acutely aware that India’s non-aligned position exposed her to the possibility of isolation in the event of a conflagration. He was also aware of how crucial the success of the London Conference was, remarking on 12 August 1956 “The next week or ten days will indicate which way the world goes, towards conflict or away from it.” He revisited this anxiety in his Independence Day speech delivered on 15 August 1956 saying, “the conference must

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568 “Cable to GL Mehta,” 10 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 360nn4-7.
569 For details of what these preparations were, see Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 160-161.
571 Ibid.
572 Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 165.
574 Sarvepalli Gopal says “Nehru was not only among the first creators of the new Commonwealth, he was also in its first major crisis, its savior,” see Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, 304. Yet, it is also significant to note that withdrawing from the Commonwealth would have also placed an additional financial strain on India’s already imperiled economy in light of the crisis, see Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 145.
575 In this, no doubt, he was encouraged by the correspondence he received from other sections of the British public, who expressed varying degrees of regret at Eden’s policies. See, for instance, Gopal, ‘Philip Noel-Baker to Nehru,’ Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 285-286.
not fail. To Nehru, the Suez Canal Crisis was a strong indication of the “progressive elimination of British and French influence in Asia and Africa.”

In these circumstances, the London Conference was held from 16-23 August 1956. Nehru’s instructions to Krishna Menon were that the Indian position must be respectful of Egypt’s sovereign rights and seek guarantees of uninterrupted navigation through the Canal for all nations in accordance with the 1888 Convention. Menon had stopped in Cairo en route to London, where he met Nasser and reported back to Nehru saying that he was “unyielding on issues such as international control.” Menon also said he had argued the case for Egyptian sovereignty in talks with the Great Powers, but had been embarrassed by the Soviets taking a similar line. But Nehru had kept a line of communication open with the Americans, by encouraging G L Mehta, the Indian Ambassador in the US to talk to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. On the basis of these talks, Nehru was certain that the Americans would not allow the British and the French to use force against Egypt, and so he pressed Krishna Menon to take the middle path at the conference and not antagonize either side.

At the Conference, two proposals came into prominence – the first was the Menon Proposal that recommended a consultative body of user interests - deliberative, consultative, liaison functions, suitable international status with annual reports transmitted to the UN by Egypt. Eden thought the Indian delegation was speaking on behalf of Egypt, and so rejected the proposal; Nasser also rejected its terms as it included some form of international management of the Canal. The alternative was a US-led draft proposing that a convention would be negotiated with Egypt providing for the creation of a Suez Canal Board for operating, maintaining and developing the Canal. This proposal, informally knows as the Dulles Plan received the support of 18 states in all and it was decided that representatives from Australia, Iran, Ethiopia, Sweden and the US would arrive in Cairo under the chairmanship of Robert Menzies, the Australian Prime Minister to explain the proposals to Nasser. The proposal also said that disputes were to be settled by an Arbitral Commission, with safeguards against violations.

577 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 163-164.
579 Krishna Menon’s telegram to Nehru, MEA Files 15 August 1956, quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 235
580 Ibid.
Meanwhile, Menon wrote to Jung and Nehru saying that the Indian proposals had “proved ineffective” and complaining that Nasser had to budge, as the Dulles Plan already “held the field” and the pivot would shift to the US if India did not come up with a suitable plan. Jung wrote back saying that Nasser wanted to meet with Menon before meeting Menzies. Nehru wrote to Jung saying this might appear as an attempt at Indian interference in the US-led initiative, but asked Menon to stop in Cairo on his return from London, but only after Menzies had departed. Nehru also asked Menon to come up with a more “constructive scheme”. When it came to the counting of hands, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union disagreed with the provisions of the Dulles Plan. Yet, the 18 powers that had supported it decided to send the representatives to Cairo anyway. Menon threatened to walk out of the Conference but Nehru dissuaded him, saying that would mean giving the conference too much importance. Simultaneously, the British High Commissioner to India Malcolm MacDonald met with Nehru to convince him to support the Dulles Plan and the Menzies Mission. Nehru refused to press Nasser on the Dulles Plan, said Nasser couldn’t undo the nationalization, that the London Conference had not made any negotiated settlement possible and that it was impossible to impose a solution on Egypt.

The Menzies Mission arrived in Cairo from 3-9 September 1956 to convince Nasser of the need for international management of the canal. Nehru supported the spirit of the mission saying, “Any attempt at reconciliation deserves Indian support.” Nasser rejected these proposals, wrote to Nehru asking for his support to take the matter to the UN Security Council and for his influence in negotiating the terms of the freedom of navigation to Canal users. Nehru replied resisting involvement of the UN, instead advised Nasser to focus on general terms for any offer, but no specific proposals. Nehru also wrote to Eisenhower and Eden asking them to reconsider their plans in light

582 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 21 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 370n2.
583 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 27 August 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 34, 375n3.
584 Ibid., n5
585 Ibid.
586 “Nehru to Menon, 21 August 1956, MEA Files,” quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 235-236.
587 “Nehru to Menon, 22/23 August 1956 MEA Files,” quoted in ibid., 236.
588 Ibid., 236.
589 Rahman thinks this was Menon’s call, see Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 138. But it was actually Nehru who didn’t want to appear to be undercutting any efforts not led by India, “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” in SWJN-SS, vol. 34, 375n5.
590 Tito agreed with this stand and thought Egypt was in a difficult position, according to reports from Rajeshwar Dayal, the Ambassador in Belgrade; see Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 236.
of the Egyptian position. Yet, on 9 September, Dulles proposed the creation of a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA), an international consortium of the world’s leading maritime nations. On 12 September, Eden announced his support for the SCUA and said that Britain and France along with the US would go ahead with the proposal despite Egypt’s protests, adding much to Nehru’s consternation that “Governments must be free to take whatever steps are open to them…” Nehru criticized these actions in a Lok Sabha speech made on 13 September 1956, saying “the action proposed is not the result of agreement, cooperation or consent, but is to be taken unilaterally, and thus is in the nature of an imposed decision” and implored both Eden and Eisenhower to accept the Egyptian proposal and not withdraw pilots from the Suez Canal, an act that “appeared to close the door to further negotiations.” India then sent her own pilots via the port authorities to work in the Suez, but Nehru categorically refused to supply Egypt with arms fearing that it might compromise India’s non-aligned position: “For us to supply arms to the Egyptian government at this stage would naturally be greatly resented by the United Kingdom and other Western governments and make them feel that we are supporting Egypt one hundred per cent in peace and war. Our capacity for playing a mediating role would disappear.” Instead, Nehru now advised Nasser to approach the UN Security Council. In this, he was supported by the Soviets.

On 14 September, Nehru sent out simultaneous correspondence to Eden, Lloyd and Dulles asking the former two for an emergency meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers and the latter to exercise American influence to stop British troops from landing in Egypt. Dulles replied saying that “while the US would not support any disregard of Egypt's rights, it was not clear what precisely these rights were.” Nehru also seemed to privately believe that Britain wouldn’t put troops anywhere and in this he seemed to still rely on his assessment of Eden from the latter’s visit to India in 1955 and his tempering influence at the Geneva Conference on Indo-China. Indeed, the

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591 Nasser had repeatedly sent messages through Ali Yavar Jung to say that Eden must be convinced to take a flexible position before he committed himself in Parliament; see ibid., 235-236.
593 Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 139.
594 Nehru, “Nehru to Foreign Secretary,” Nehru Papers, 17 September 1956, NMML.
597 Krishna Menon believed that it was difficult therefore to convince Nehru of the urgency of the matter. See Brecher, India & World Politics, 65-66.
community of thought between Eden and Nehru had moved Pineau to remark that he considered Eden “une sorts de Nehru brittanique, en plus fragile”.

Britain and France took the matter to the Security Council on 23 September 1956. Egypt filed a counter-complaint on 24 September 1956, and was informed by Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold that the matter would be heard on 5 October 1956. Nehru, who was sceptical of progress through the UN said, “Our own experience of the Security Council has not been happy”. Yet, he expected to stretch out the situation for as long as possible, evading conflict. Yugoslavia, who was a member of the UNSC succeeded in getting an adjournment, citing Menon’s continued efforts in Cairo and London towards achieving a settlement. Nehru, meanwhile, continued to urge Eisenhower, Eden and the Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka and Indonesia to consider the Egyptian proposals. G L Mehta wrote to Nehru saying that in his conversations with Dulles, the latter had said he did not understand the Egyptian proposals, and that the American proposal for the SCUA was the “only available alternative to war”. Nehru then wrote strongly worded letters to Eden, Lloyd and Dulles, repeating that the “repercussions on Asia as a whole of the use of force or steps that appear or are in effect suppression of Egyptian authority without consent are very grave.”.

Menon then introduced his new formula that was a modified version of his earlier proposal and suggested Egypt enter into an agreement for cooperation with a Users’ Association and regular joint sessions of the Egyptian Board and the Users’ Association could be held to discuss all matters concerning the canal, with UN advisors supervising the three main sectors of operation. Both Eden and Lloyd expressed their dissatisfaction at this plan but Menon told Nehru that only “methodological problems” remained and that it was only necessary to convince Nasser. However, the British High Commissioner Malcolm MacDonald disabused Nehru of this notion by saying this plan was unacceptable to the British as it left Egypt with “unfettered control.

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598 Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 228-229.
603 Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 241-242.
of the Suez’. Nehru in his reply to Eden continued to emphasize negotiation. The Foreign Ministers of Britain, France and Egypt then began private talks in New York, at which Krishna Menon was present in a mediatory role. Nehru thought the Suez Canal Crisis had passed over; in a speech in Calcutta on 21 October, he highlighted India’s role in bringing it to a close. The Foreign Ministers meeting in New York then decided to meet for a second round of talks in Geneva on 29 October 1956. But before those talks could take place, on 29 October, Israel launched attacks on Egyptian soil.

In response, Britain and France first issued an ultimatum to Israel and Egypt “to stop all warlike action by land, sea and air forthwith and to withdraw their military forces to a distance of 10 miles from the Suez Canal.” They also asked Egypt to allow Anglo-French forces to be stationed at Port Said, Ismailia and Suez, a demand Egypt declined. British and French forces then began attacking Egyptian airfields on 31 October. Nehru was shocked and aggravated by this “dastardly action” and undertook a number of measures in order to effectively mediate. First, Nehru assured Nasser of India’s full support to Egypt and called the actions of the British and the French “a reversal of history”; second, he asked Yugoslavia and other Bandung countries to join in the public condemnation of the aggressors, saying “the countries that were associated at Bandung have a special responsibility in this matter” and that “no country in Asia or Africa, which has recently achieved freedom, can possibly tolerate this reversal; third, he called on Hammarskjold to ensure that the procedures of the UN were swifter than those of invasion and aggression against Egypt and that “argument that this invasion is meant to protect Canal and to ensure free traffic has no force as first result of this invasion is for this traffic to cease”; and fourth and most importantly, he turned to the US for support and intervention in the cause of peace, writing to Dulles, “the whole future of the relations between Europe and Asia hangs in the balance.”

606 “Nehru’s note on interview with British High Commissioner, 1 October 1956,” quoted in ibid., 242-243.
607 “Nehru to Eden, 4 October 1956, MEA,” quoted in ibid., 242-243.
608 The Americans thought they should talk directly with the Egyptians but were glad to have Indian efforts pitched in. See, “Letter From the Acting Secretary of State to the President1 (#fn1) Washington, October 10, 1956,” FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XVI, Suez Crisis, ed.Noring, Document 323.
609 “Message to Dwight D. Eisenhower,” 31 October 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 421n3. Also see Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 163.
611 Ibid.
The Soviets at this time first threatened intervention and then proposed joint US-Soviet intervention and then wanted to send volunteers to Egypt. Nehru was against all these measures and chose to let the UN take up this matter now that it was involved. Arthur Lall, the Indian representative and Omar Loutfi, the Egyptian Ambassador went to see Henry Cabot Lodge to ask the US to interdict British-French-Israeli action against Egypt\textsuperscript{615}. The UNSC met on 31 October, but both Soviet and American proposals were vetoed by Britain and France. The Americans were enraged by the actions of their allies and found themselves “in strange company fighting for peace”\textsuperscript{616}. They also issued statements saying they had not been informed of any phase of these actions in advance and that there would be no US involvement in these hostilities\textsuperscript{617}. Hammarskjold sent a message to the British saying they were “completely flouting UN Charter”. Nehru’s note to Eden lays out India’s position clearly\textsuperscript{618}. “For us in India and I believe in many other countries of Asia and elsewhere, this is a reversion to a previous and unfortunate period of history when decisions were imposed by force of arms by Western Powers on Asian countries. We had thought these methods were out of date and could not possibly be used in the modern age. The whole purpose of the UN is undermined and the freedom of nations imperilled, if armed might is to decide issues between nations…unless these wrong courses are halted, the future appears to me to be dark indeed.” MacDonald conveyed to the Foreign Office his impression that Nehru was “not unfriendly and expressed his views more in sorrow than in anger”\textsuperscript{619}.

After initial setbacks at the UN Security Council, India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Arthur Lall and Egyptian delegate Omar Loutfi decided to take the matter up in the General Assembly (in the absence of the veto)\textsuperscript{620}. So, on 2 November 1956, the UN General Assembly met and passed a US-sponsored resolution under the Uniting for Peace formula that urged immediate ceasefire and asked all sides to withdraw behind


\textsuperscript{616} National Security Council, A Documentary on Egypt-Israel Disturbances, Central Intelligence Agency, ARC646996/LI 263 398, –1957, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), United States of America.

\textsuperscript{617} Eden should have tried “to save something from the wreck, by going for the Indian compromise proposals or something like them.” William Hayter, ‘Eden on Suez: The Cost of Force’, The Observer, London, February 28, 1960, quoted in Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 24.


\textsuperscript{619} “British High Commissioner after interview with Nehru, Foreign Office 371/121785 PRO,” quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 243.

\textsuperscript{620} Interview with Arthur Lall, United Nations Oral History Project, 27 June 1990. Lall speaks at length about India-Egyptian cooperation on the resolution of the crisis saying Senior Advisor and Cabinet Minister Ali Sabry was “in our meeting room every morning at 8 o’clock”; Lall also says that this idea of taking the issue to the UNGA under the United For Peace Resolution was his and Josua Brilej’s (Yugoslavian Representative).
the armistice lines. The Americans and Canadians were now referring to the possibility of “the Eisenhower-Nehru formula” and Eisenhower was ready and eager to meet with Nehru, “just the two of them because he thought they came closer [than anyone else] to commanding the respect of the world.” Egypt said she would accept the ceasefire if Israel did likewise. On 4 November 1956, Lall moved a 19-member Asian-African resolution saying that not all parties had agreed to the ceasefire or withdrawn their forces and urged full compliance. On the same day, a large majority passed a resolution moved by Canada, Columbia and Norway that provided for the first UN peacekeeping force that would supervise cessation of hostilities. This is how the United Nations Emergency Force I (UNEF 1), to which India was a prominent contributor, came into existence. On 5 November 1956, Egypt accepted the ceasefire and Menon arrived in New York to apply renewed pressure on Britain and France. The Germans also conveyed to Nehru through GL Mehta that they thought the aggression had been unnecessary. Bulganin wrote to Nehru saying the “voice of India against the aggression could play an outstanding part.” In his response, Nehru wondered whether it was possible “to rescue peace from the fog of war.”

Bulganin had also written letters to Eden, Mollet and Ben Guiron saying the Soviets were “determined to crush the aggression by use of force and to restore peace”; these also came into public view on the same day. This combination of factors led to Eden announcing ceasefire on 6 November 1956. Nehru and Eisenhower exchanged sustained correspondence during this period. Eisenhower had impressed upon Nehru the “need to exert the greatest possible restraint lest this situation radically deteriorate.” Nehru responded in kind saying, “any step which might expand the sphere of military

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621 The US had urgently undertaken the task of proposing a moderate formula as they thought that most of the nations in Asia and Africa had a dim view of Britain, France or Israel and so a Soviet proposal for severe and immediate punishment would take root unless an alternative plan was made available. See, “Memorandum by the President1 (#fn1) Washington, November 1, 1956,” FRUS , 1955–1957, Volume XVI, Suez Crisis, ed. Noring, Document 461.
624 Lall had earlier suggested that there was no need to create a new organization but that they should use the UN Truce Supervision Organization; See, Interview with Arthur Lall, 1990.
625 “GL Mehta to S Dutt – About meeting with German Amb Heinz I Krekeler,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. X-4564/AMS-56, National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi, India.
627 Ibid.
628 For the President’s views on the matter, see Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years: Mandate for Change 1953-56 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963), 83.
operations and lead to world war would be a crime against humanity and must be avoided”630. Nehru knew that the Egyptian military resistance was dwindling and that “Nasser proposed to lay down his life fighting”631.

The onus was now on India to send troops to the UNEF because the resolution had stipulated against drawing troops from any of the five permanent members632. The Canadians had offered to send troops but had a hard time convincing Nasser that Egyptian people could “distinguish between The Queen’s Own from West Surrey and The Queen’s Own from Calgary”633. This was further complicated by Canada’s membership of the NATO. Pearson and Hammarskjold both requested India for troops, but Nehru waited for the Egyptian Government’s unqualified invitation for India participation634. Nehru hesitated at first, expressing to Krishna Menon that India was “always reluctant to send Indian troops abroad”635. Yet, Rajwade, the Indian Charge D’Affairs in Cairo wrote to Nehru saying Nasser had refused to reopen the waterway as long as British and French occupation of Port Said continued and that Nasser “would not accept anything limiting his sovereignty”636. On 9 November, Israel and Britain said they would withdraw their troops once the UNEF had arrived and was ready to discharge its task637. Thus, the composition of the UNEF took on an urgent character. The British asked India “to come in heavily and assist in bringing about a speedy settlement”638. The Indian Contingent for the Suez left on 15 November 1956; in his farewell speech, Nehru reminded them to act “with credit to India and her gallant army”639.

Nehru also emphasized the conditions on which India had agreed to send troops to the UNEF in a speech to the Lok Sabha on 19 November 1956. He said, “I want to make it perfectly clear on what conditions we sent these forces to join the United Nations Force. First of all, we made it clear that it was only if the Government of Egypt agreed that we

631 “Telegram from Indian CDA Rajwade to FS, 6 November 1956,” quoted in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 287.
632 Lall also says that the Egyptians were very keen on the force having a low profile and not coming across as an occupation force; says the Indians were the largest contributors by far. See Interview with Arthur Lall, 1990.
634 Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, 303. Also Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 286-287.
637 Ibid., n2
639 “Indian Contingent for Egypt,” 15 November 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 444. A minor controversy erupted at this time when Md Fawzi insisted that Indian troops would not be welcome in Egypt because “no close friends or foes” would form part of the UNEF but was overruled by Nasser who said the Egyptian public should not think of Indian forces as an occupying force; “Indian Amb telegram from Cairo 12 November 1956,” quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 245.
would send them; secondly, they were not to be considered in any sense a continuing force continuing the activities of the Anglo-French forces, but an entirely separate thing; thirdly, that the Anglo-French forces should be withdrawn; fourthly, that the United Nations Force should function to protect the old armistice line between Israel and Egypt; and finally, that it would be a temporary affair. We are not prepared to agree to our forces or any force remaining there indefinitely. It was on these conditions, which were accepted, that these forces were sent there."

The UNEF was placed first along the Suez Canal sector and then along the demarcation line in the Gaza area and the on the Egyptian side of the international frontier in the Sinai Peninsula. The force was commanded by two Indians in both its phases, UNEF-I and UNEF-II, Lt Gen PS Gyani commanded it between December 1959 and January 1964 and later, Maj Gen Indar Jit Rikhye took over between January 1966 and June 1967. The force consisted of troops from eight countries – India, Indonesia, Colombia, Yugoslavia and the four Scandinavian countries, and was therefore mostly either non-aligned or neutral in character. At the request of the Canadians, Nehru pressed for Canadian force contribution to the UNEF citing Canadian protests in the UN, cancellation of an aircraft deal with Israel, and saying that Norway and Denmark were also in the NATO.

Nasser first agreed to a Canadian ambulance corps and air supplies, but Nehru pressed for a contingent to be placed with the UNEF, to which Nasser finally agreed.

An issue on which Nasser did not agree to Nehru’s requests was the question of the deportation of British, French and Jewish people from Egypt. Nehru was disappointed and expected Nasser “to create a feeling of generosity which again results in a change in one's own favour”. He was also aware that the British and French now just wanted to avoid further humiliation. He summed up his assessment of the situation in his fortnightly letter to the Chief Ministers: “The … Anglo-French action in Egypt… was supposed to lead to a re-establishment of British influence over Western Asia and of French influence in Northern Africa and especially Algeria. In the result, it is President Nasser who has come out of it with greater strength and far greater prestige, and both

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640 Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 159.
642 Pearson’s correspondence with Nehru, quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 246-247.
643 For Krishna Menon’s advice to the Canadians, see Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 185.
645 Jawaharlal Nehru, “Nehru to Tito,” Nehru Papers, 2 December 56, NMML, quoted in Gopal, Imperialists, Nationalists, Democrats, 247.
the UK and France have suffered tremendously in their prestige, apart from the great losses that they sustained."\(^{646}\)

India’s relations with the US that had suffered as a result of the high visibility of the Bandung Conference regained some vitality. When Dulles had visited India in March 1956, Nehru had said “The most that we can expect out of his visit here is that he has got some idea into his rather closed head as to what we feel about various things”\(^{647}\). Likewise, in June of the same year, Dulles had criticised non-alignment as “immoral and short-sighted”\(^{648}\). In fact, during the early stages of the crisis, Indian Embassy reports from the US suggested that “the Americans seem to be prepared to support the UK to the very end if need be”\(^{649}\) and that “no sympathy can be foreseen for the Egyptian point of view”\(^{650}\). But, the unilateral and covert action taken by the British and French had alienated the Americans and they found themselves holding the same view as India’s. When in December that year, Nehru met Dulles during a visit to the US, they agreed that the failure to consult other powers, but also “the use of force as an instrument of national policy” had constituted their primary objections to the aggression against Egypt\(^{651}\). The Soviet policy, on the other hand, had pushed the case for intervention captured in Bulganin’s stance of ‘we have got rockets’\(^{652}\). Nehru found it rather difficult to align the Indian position with that of the Soviet line of thinking. Indeed, that influenced, and was influenced by the simultaneous events of the Hungarian Revolution.

The Hungarian Revolution

Relations between New Delhi and Moscow in the first decade after Indian independence can be divided into a Stalinist and post-Stalinist period\(^{653}\). Up to Stalin’s death in 1953,


\(^{647}\) “Nehru to Padma Madhu Naidu, 10 March 1956,” quoted in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol.2, 274, n9.

\(^{648}\) Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 276n15.

\(^{649}\) Fortnightly report from the Consul-General New York for the Period Ending 15 October 1951,” Ministry of External Affairs File No E 34-4/51/AMS, 30 October 1951, NAI.

\(^{650}\) “Summary of the political report for the month Ending 15 November 1951 from the Embassy of India, Washington,” Ministry of External Affairs File No E 34-4/51/AMS, 30 November 1951, NAI.


\(^{652}\) Brecher, India and World Politics, 71.

\(^{653}\) For interesting new material, see Andreas Hilger, “The Soviet Union and India: The Years of Late Stalinism,” in Indo-Soviet Relations during the Cold War: New Russian and German Evidence ed. Andreas Hilger et al. (Zurich: Parallel History Project on Cooperative Security, 2009), and for a contemporary perspective from the Indian side, see K. P. S. Menon, The Flying Troika: Extracts from a Diary (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).
the view from Moscow was to consider India an imperial outpost, and the Gandhi-Nehru political lineage a dynastic one. In the Indian view, it was considered significant to cultivate Soviet support of independent India, especially in international affairs. Yet, Indian political leadership was held back by a refusal to communism on the whole, and anxiety that the activities of Indian communists were being directed from Moscow. However, with India’s involvement in the diffusion of the Korean War’s Prisoners of War crisis, the Soviets turned their attention to India in a new light. This policy fell in line with increased Soviet engagement of the Third World as it began in 1952. After an initial period of dismissiveness, by Khrushchev’s own admission, Stalin and the others began to change their mind after the initial declaration from Bandung. By 1954, KPS Menon, the Indian Ambassador in Moscow was of the view that the situation was “extremely favourable to us” because Stalin’s successors were to “discard his dim view of India”, particularly as newly decolonized states were swinging towards American support but India had declared herself non-aligned.

This opening up of relations also extended to the Soviet Union’s attitude towards Yugoslavia. This was a particularly important relationship for India at this juncture. Nehru relied to some extent on Tito’s consul for his interactions with the Soviet Union. Tito, on the other hand, relied on Nehru’s good offices to cultivate a stronger relationship with China. Both India and Yugoslavia entered into a period of cooperation at this time, with mutual state visits. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit travelled to Belgrade in 1954 to discuss with Marshal Tito, amongst other issues, the expansionist character of Soviet communism. Tito replied saying expansionism was inherent to communism, but that it was the US that posed a real threat. Nehru knew that Tito had been expelled from the Cominform in 1948 and had developed relations with the West, but he was

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655 Power, “Indian Foreign Policy”, 272.
656 This is not the Bandung Declaration of 1955 but one issued by Nehru, Sukarno and Zhou En Lai. Stalin said, “Not a bad declaration. If they had presented it to us, we would have been glad to sign it.” See, Stalin, quoted in “India,” Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev: Statesman, 1953-1964, vol. 3, ed., Sergei Khrushchev (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 725.
657 Westad says that to Khrushchev and Bulganin amongst others “the Boss’s Third World policy seemed self-defeating”, see Westad, The Global Cold War, 67.
659 P.N. Kaul’s assessment “the US was “picking off one weak or compliant Asian State after another and hitching it to its wagon”, quoted in Vojtech Mastny, “The Soviet Union’s Partnership with India”, Journal of Cold War Studies, 12 (3): 50-90.
particularly impressed that Tito had done so without compromising his particular strand of socialism. Yugoslavia under Tito, had signed up neither to the Marshall Plan nor to the Warsaw Pact. Thus, Nehru saw in Tito a useful European partner in international politics.\textsuperscript{660}

In 1955, Khrushchev reached out to both Tito and Nehru in order to reverse somewhat Stalin’s policy towards those outside the socialist bloc. Indeed, 1955 turned out to be a crucial year for many reasons, with two international conferences were held on both sides of the North-South divide. Nehru attended the Bandung Conference of Asian and African Cooperation and played a significant part in the drafting of the Bandung Declaration that emphasized peaceful coexistence, keeping out of the two camps and the social and economic progress of the newly decolonized countries. The Russians saw Bandung as a positive step, away from the Western bloc. Editorials in Pravda during the conference said, “the peoples of Asia and Africa are on the eve of an important political event” and one in Izvestia summing up the conference said, “Bandong was a sign of our age”.\textsuperscript{661} The Pravda summed up the Soviet official response which was “The people of the Soviet Union have complete understanding for the struggle of the Asian and African countries against all forms of colonial rule, for political and economic interdependence.”\textsuperscript{662}

Nehru travelled to Moscow in June 1955, and was impressed by the “intense urge for peace’ he witnessed.\textsuperscript{663} On this visit, Nehru and Khrushchev discussed a host of issues that had hindered India-Russia relations, including the place of Indian communists, and Soviet support on the problems of Goa and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{664} The international climate was suitable for peace, a view cemented by the meeting of the leaders of the two blocs in July 1955 at the Four Power Conference in Geneva. The favourable view of Bandung taken by the Soviets continued after this conference too, with Moscow issuing

\textsuperscript{660} Mišković says Nehru saw in Tito “a competent consultant”, in Mišković, “Between Idealism and Pragmatism”, 250.

\textsuperscript{661} These responses were noted with satisfaction in an Indian Embassy Report from Moscow. “Reactions in the Soviet Press Over the Bandung Conference”, Ministry of External Affairs File No. D 886/AAC-55, 31 May 1955, NAI.

\textsuperscript{662} “Pravda, 14, 26 and 30 April 1955,” quoted in Zafar Imam, “Soviet View of Non-Alignment”, \textit{International Studies}, 20 (1/2): 445-469. This view had changed in less than a decade. “It is abundantly clear that it (the NAM) can no longer persuade the Soviet Union to give its support or to involve itself merely by highlighting the colonial exploitation of the past or by complaining constantly on the non-conducive nature of world politics”. See “Central Committee Reports to the 22nd, 23rd, 24th Congresses of the CPSU 1961-1971,” quoted in ibid., 468

\textsuperscript{663} Speech in Dynamo stadium in Moscow on 21 June 1955 quoted in Dutt, \textit{With Nehru in the Foreign Office}, 193.

\textsuperscript{664} Ibid.,197-198
statements saying, “You are following your own road”\textsuperscript{665}. Nehru welcomed this assessment but did not invite the Soviet Union into this Asian-African collective, unlike other leaders who swept away by this unexpected show of solidarity from the Soviets declared that Russia had always been “more Asian than European”\textsuperscript{666}.

Later that year, the two Russian leaders travelled through South Asia, spending a significant amount of time in India. Nehru thought Bulganin and Khrushchev trip to India was a “historic event…because of its political aspect and the possible consequences” that would follow from it\textsuperscript{667}. Khrushchev liked Nehru’s anti-colonialism and socialist disposition and expressed Soviet support for economic and military cooperation with the Third World in general, and India in particular\textsuperscript{668}. In public speeches, the Soviet leaders went as far as calling India “an ally”\textsuperscript{669}. Nehru’s high regard for Eisenhower led him to distance India from this language of alliances, emphasizing that Indo-Soviet cooperation was not directed against any other country\textsuperscript{670}. It is interesting to note that the growing relationship was cast in contradictory terms in Moscow and in Delhi. While Nehru attempted to hold on to the gains India had made in Indo-US relations, Khrushchev justified these moves to the CPSU as a strategic balancing of American interest in the Third World and sought to remind his audience of the Leninist prediction that the East would emerge as a “new, powerful factor in international relations”\textsuperscript{671}.

On the eve of 1956, the Indian establishment seemed to believe that in the event of an emergency, “the Russians would give us anything.”\textsuperscript{672} Then came Khrushchev’s CPSU speech of February 1956, in which he made references to further democratisation in the Soviet Union’s relations with her satellite states, and to the new doctrine of ‘peaceful co-existence’. Nehru was careful to distinguish the Soviet concept from Indian Panchsheel, which he saw as more positively constituted. Nehru also thought “even the

\textsuperscript{667} “Summary record of a talk between Prime Minister of India and Mr NA Bulganin and Mr NS Khrushchev at the Prime Minister’s House,” Subimal Dutt papers, December 12, 1955, Subject File No. 17, \textit{Nehru Memorial Museum and Library}, New Delhi, India; and “Note by the Prime Minister on the Visit of the Soviet Leaders to India,” undated, Subimal Dutt papers, Subject File No. 17, NMML (emphasis mine).
\textsuperscript{668} Westad, \textit{The Global Cold War}, 67.
\textsuperscript{669} Escott Reid, \textit{Envoy to Nehru} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 139.
\textsuperscript{670} Ibid. 134-136.
\textsuperscript{671} Ibid., 68.
In particular, Poland and Hungary were showing reformist tendencies in the wake of democratized narratives emerging from the Soviet Union. The Stalinist leader, Rakosi who had ruled Hungary with an iron hand fled and Imre Nagy a former Prime Minister was rehabilitated to the Communist Party on 13 October 1956. The workers and students in Hungary had been putting forth various demands for reform. The main events of the revolution lasted for a little over two weeks, beginning 23 October 1956, when a student delegation led a protest to the offices of Radio Free Europe against the Hungarian People’s Republic and Soviet influence on Hungary. During the protest, the Hungarian Security Force, the AVH fired upon the demonstrators and killed a student. This proved to ignite the uprising, which also then included workers. On 26 October, Nagy supported the uprising’s demand that Soviet forces be all withdrawn from Hungary by 1 January 1957.

It is at this time, on 25 October 1956, that Nehru made his first public statement regarding the uprisings in Poland and Hungary, which he referred to as a “nationalist upsurge” and “a feeling that they themselves are going to fashion their policies and not necessarily others.” This is a most important statement because it indicates Nehru’s reading of the revolution as being of a “nationalist” persuasion. Indeed, he did not want to “interfere in any way even by expressing an opinion on the internal affairs of these countries.” The Indian stand on the issue began to draw criticism at this stage, both domestic and international, in response to a remark by Krishna Menon that the riots could be compared to the situations in Bombay and Ahmedabad.

674 Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 147.
678 Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 148-149.
679 Krishna Menon had made a speech saying this was like the riots in Ahmedabad. Kamath said the implication of Menon's statement was “more or less that Hungary is a province of the Soviet empire”; see Escott Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 111.
The Soviets then installed Janos Kadar as the First Secretary of the Communist Party in Hungary, and started firing at protestors in Budapest’s main squares, causing heavy fighting that lasted between 26 and 30 October. On 27 October, Britain, France and the US called for an emergency meeting of the UNSC to discuss the situation in Hungary, at which time the Soviets continued to increase troop deployment into Budapest. On 28 October, international condemnation and pressure was reported from the meeting of the Security Council. However, the Chief Soviet Representative at the UN, Arkadi Sobolev made a statement saying the Hungarian revolt was an “uprising of criminal Fascist elements” against the legitimate Hungarian Government. In support, Janos Kadar made another statement saying the “counter-revolution had been crushed”. The UNSC voted against the Soviets by 9 to 1, with Yugoslavia abstaining on the grounds of non-interference in Hungarian affairs, but opposition to the use of force. Nehru refused to align himself with this initiative of the US. The discontent against the Soviets in Hungary continued to grow as the newspaper Seczebad said on 29 October that Hungarians felt “deeply wounded and insulted” when the Soviets had alleged that British and American imperialists had instigated the uprising.

On 30 October, called “the most hopeful day in the Hungarian revolution”, Imre Nagy announced the set-up of a new coalition in Budapest, appealed to the Soviets to withdraw their troops and announced free elections. Janos Kadar agreed to all of the above, citing a Soviet statement that the troops of one Warsaw Pact country would be in the other only with the approval of the host country. The Soviets then announced on 30 October that they would agree to talks with Imre Nagy regarding the withdrawal of their troops from Budapest. Nehru continued to remain silent on the matter, focussing his condemnation on the Suez situation instead, although concerns were being expressed on what looked like his partisan approach to these situations of international crisis playing out in parallel. The Americans, certain that Nehru was in the wrong and in time would come to that realization, began to discuss Nehru’s imminent pro-West

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680 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 175
681 Ibid., 176.
682 “Telegram from MEA to Indian Embassy in DC, 30 October 56,” in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 291n1
683 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 175.
684 Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 145.
685 Ibid., 153.
686 Indeed, some of the criticism came from within the MEA, with Dutt and Reid sharing their concerns, see ibid.
sentiment that “we would want to nurture and promote”, while finding him a “face-saving device”.

In Delhi, the Suez Crisis took precedence over the situation in Hungary, which to Nehru seemed opaque and in any case, to be resolving itself. India didn’t have a full ambassador in Budapest at the time of the events, but M M Rahman, the Charge D’Affaires continued to send detailed reports, which reached New Delhi belatedly. In the absence of full information, Nehru delayed taking a stand condemnatory of Soviet action. The Indian government was clearly “firm in its belief that when the Soviets announced withdrawal of their troops, they in fact intended to withdraw completely.”

In fact, Nehru seemed completely taken aback by this return to Stalinist policies that went against the grain of what the new Soviet line seemed to be, especially as Soviet actions in Hungary ran contradictory to the Soviet denunciation of the crisis in Egypt.

The Indian policy on this issue was to stress the futility of condemnation and the complicated nature of the situation, although Nehru did refer to the situation as a “civil conflict”. On the contrary, as Hungary and the Soviet Union began to hold talks on Hungary’s withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, the Americans hailed these developments as the “dawn of a new day” in Eastern Europe.

However, the Soviet assessment of the situation changed once the news of the tripartite aggression against Egypt filtered through the rest of the world. Khrushchev announced that the “English and the French are in a real mess over Egypt”. Combined with fears

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688 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 177. See the UN Secretary General’s assessment of the order of things: “If you disregard all other aspects and look at the time sequence, I think it is perfectly clear to you that Suez had a time priority on the thinking and on the policy making of the main body in the UN.” Dag Hammarskjold, quoted in Henry P. Van Dusen, Dag Hammarskjöld: The Statesman and His Faith (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 141-142.
690 In a comprehensively analytical note, Rahman lists the following factors as “instrumental in filling the powder keg”: a) Economic deterioration, b) The reign of the Stalinists, c) The rehabilitation, d) Soviet troops, e) Titoism. See “Note from Rahman to the Foreign Secretary, MEA India,” The Hungarian Revolution 1956 – Documents, Volume I, Part I, Ministry of External Affairs Archives, 12.
691 Ibid.
692 László Borhi, Hungary in the Cold War 1945-1956: Between the United States and the Soviet Union (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 298n181. However, Borhi wrongly lists the Indian Ambassador in Moscow as being ‘Krishna Menon’, when it was in actuality KPS Menon.
693 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 178.
694 Ibid., 178-179; See Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 37, on how Nehru termed the Hungarian Revolution a “civil war” in his speech on 28 October, and then again on 9 November.
695 Bekes, “1956 Hungarian Revolution and World Politics”. Bekes neglects to mention Indian diplomacy at the UN, even in the section titled ‘The United Nations and the Third World’.
that the Hungarian situation would cause ripples elsewhere in the Soviet Union, they decided not to withdraw the troops but to address the broader crisis in the relations with people’s democracies of the Soviet Union and also discuss the movement and status of Soviet troops\(^{697}\). Clearly deciding that political solutions wouldn’t work, the Soviets sent armoured forces back to Budapest in greatly strengthened numbers. On noticing this turn of the tide, Nagy protested to the Soviet representative in Budapest, informed him that Hungary was leaving the Warsaw Pact and turned to the UN to appeal for help to Hungary in protecting her neutrality\(^ {698}\). The following day, Janos Kadar went over to Moscow as reports started flowing in from Hungary saying the border with Austria had been cordoned off by Soviet troops who had arrived in reinforced and large numbers.

At this point, Nehru was yet to make a statement condemning Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising, much to the consternation of the West\(^ {699}\) and disappointment of his own diplomatic corps\(^ {700}\). Nehru responded by asking KPS Menon to convey to the Soviet leadership that their actions were unacceptable. On 3 November 1956, Kadar returned to Budapest with even more reinforcements\(^ {701}\). Meanwhile, Chou En Lai met with the Hungarian Ambassador to China Agoston Szkladan to ask if Hungary wanted to withdraw from socialism, to which the latter said that the vast majority did not agree with Nagy’s policies\(^ {702}\). Isolated as such by Soviet interference in Budapest, Nagy fled and sought asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy. On 4 November, Nagy appealed for help from inside the Yugoslav Embassy as Soviet troops moved to crush the revolution in Budapest, succeeded and installed a new government under the leadership of Janos Kadar, who they had previously installed as the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Hungary. Nehru, now increasingly outraged by events, sent another telegram to Moscow to say that Soviet suppression had to stop, “not only because they appear to be violation of Panchsheel which so many countries have loudly proclaimed but also


\(^{698}\) Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 153.

\(^{699}\) Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 41:

\(^{700}\) Reid says N.R. Pillai sent Nehru a memo warning him against applying double standards to the cases of Suez and Hungary. See Reid, Envoy to Nehru, 154.


because they have adverse effect on Egyptian situation.” Nehru’s instructions to Arthur Lall, India’s Permanent Representative and Ambassador at the UN, were to support the right of Hungarian people “to decide for themselves without external intervention or pressure” but in the absence of “full facts”, to avoid condemnation of the Soviet Union.

When the UN General Assembly met on 4 November for an Emergency Session, the house passed a US-sponsored resolution condemned the use of Soviet military forces in Hungary and requesting the Secretary General to investigate and observe the military situation through his representatives. India abstained, much to the shock of Western countries, in particular the Canadians who failed to see why India would take such a strong view against the actions in Egypt but not in Hungary. Subimal Dutt, who was then the Foreign Secretary, writes in his account of events that although the instructions had been sent to Arthur Lall, he had not yet received them when voting on the resolution began, and as Krishna Menon had not yet arrived in New York, Lall considered it best to abstain, given heavy condemnation of the Soviets in the resolution. Nehru explained this vote to G L Mehta, the Indian Ambassador in the US saying, “it seemed to us unwise to interfere when a settlement like Poland appeared likely.” Mohan Singh Mehta, the Indian Ambassador in Austria had conveyed to the MEA information received from Budapest that “1000 Soviet tanks, phosphorus and incendiaries” were being used to suppress the rebellion, to which the Foreign Secretary replied saying that Nehru had conveyed his grave concern to the Soviet Government through the Indian Ambassador in Moscow.

On the same day, the Chinese came out in support of the Soviets, with Mao Zedong seeing no reason for troop withdrawal and Chou En Lai reminding the Soviets that

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703 “Cable to KPS Menon,” 4 November 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 455.
704 Ibid.
705 Second Emergency Special Session of the UNGA - 1004-E.S.(II) ; also see ibid., n3.3
706 “A cynical and shameful betrayal of the moral unity of the Commonwealth and indeed of all free nations”. James Eayrs, quoted in Escott Reid, Envoy to Nehru, p.162-163
707 Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 179-180. However, Krishna Menon’s statement at the UNGA clearly states that India “abstained because we agreed with some parts of it but did not agree with others”, see “Statement by Krishna Menon at the UNGA on November 8, 1956,” The Hungarian Revolution 1956 – Documents, Volume I, Part II, Ministry of External Affairs Archives, New Delhi, India, 141-145.
Americans had their troops in different countries too.\(^{710}\) It became clear now that Nehru’s support was essential in bringing the situation in Hungary to any sort of peaceful resolution as “no one else could speak for the whole of Asia”\(^{711}\) and because the Hungarians were themselves “asking India to intervene and our Prime Minister to come out and bring peace”\(^{712}\). The Americans considered enlisting Nehru’s support in the problem of Hungary, but thought that Nehru was either supportive of the Soviets or did not have a fully considered policy on the matter yet\(^{713}\). This changed somewhat with Nehru’s speech at the UNESCO General Conference held on 5 November 1956. Nehru took the opportunity to speak out against the situations in Egypt and Hungary, but also made pointed criticism directed at the Soviet Union by referring to countries that subscribed to the Panchsheel saying, “those five principles are also mere words without meaning to some countries who claim the right of deciding problems by superior might”\(^{714}\). Naturally, this charged could not have been levelled at France, Britain or Israel\(^{715}\).

Thus, for the first time since the beginning of the revolution, Nehru decried in no uncertain terms the actions of the Soviets\(^{716}\). Jayaprakash Narayan had called upon Nehru to “speak out” or “be held guilty of abetting enslavement of a brave people by a new imperialism more dangerous than the old because it masquerades as revolutionary”\(^{717}\). Once Nehru made this statement, the Americans, particularly Eisenhower began to court his support\(^{718}\). The US and India were already cooperating on the resolution of the Suez Canal Crisis\(^{719}\). It was now left to Eisenhower to convince

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\(^{711}\) Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 157.


\(^{713}\) Brought on by Lal’s comment that he did not know why his country had abstained in the 4 November vote; see “Notes on the 44th Meeting of Special Committee on Soviet and Related Problems, Washington, November 6, 1956,” *FRUS, 1955-1957, Eastern Europe*, eds. Keefer, Landa and Shaloff, Document 171, 103n11

\(^{714}\) *Paths To Peace: India’s Voices in UNESCO, 64 years of UNESCO-India Co-operation* (New Delhi: UNESCO, 2009), 16-17.

\(^{715}\) Reid points out how this statement provided him with some temporary satisfaction, although Nehru continued to insist that there was a “dispute about the facts” in a meeting later that day. See Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 158-159.

\(^{716}\) Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, vol. 2, 292.

\(^{717}\) Ibid.

\(^{718}\) As Reid puts it, “The United States and India were now the only great powers with clean hands. Only Eisenhower and Nehru could speak for the conscience of mankind.” Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 157.

\(^{719}\) Reid alludes to the closeness of the relationship: “Nehru's willingness to receive advice from Eisenhower had been greatly increased by Eisenhower's forthright opposition to the aggression of Britain, France and Israel against Egypt.” Reid, *Hungary and Suez 1956*, 20.
Nehru to extend that cooperation to Hungary as well\[^{20}\]. This he did by referring to Nehru’s speech in his first direct communication with Nehru over Hungary on 6 November 1956 saying that it was their duty “to make it clear that leaders of free and democratic countries cannot remain silent in the face of such terrifying pressures upon our fellow beings”\[^{21}\]. The US administration had decided that if they wanted to accomplish something they had to “get Nehru a little fired up”\[^{22}\]. The consensus between the US and Canada seemed to have been that given Eisenhower’s fierce opposition of the French-British action in Egypt despite them being US allies, an American account of the situation in Hungary would seem impartial to Nehru\[^{23}\]. Given that US Ambassador to India John Sherman Cooper had left India in April 1956 and Ellsworth Bunker had not yet been appointed to succeed him, the position of Escott Reid, the Canadian High Commissioner to India became significantly more crucial to these exchanges\[^{24}\].

On 6 November, Bulganin also sent messages regarding the situation in Suez to Eisenhower, Eden, Mollet and Nehru. The correspondence between Nehru and Bulganin at this juncture convinced Nehru to some extent of the Soviet line and he began to refer to the situation in Hungary as a “civil conflict” with “mutual killings”\[^{25}\]. Nehru also replied to Eisenhower’s message conveying to him a summary of Bulganin’s report about the situation in Hungary and agreeing nevertheless that “armed intervention of any country in another is highly objectionable and that people in every country must be free to choose their own governments without interference of others.”\[^{26}\] On the day that Nehru sent this letter, Soviet troops took over the city of Budapest and installed a new government under the leadership of Janos Kadar. During this period, the Americans were convinced that Nehru had been brainwashed by the Soviets, especially as Nehru referred to the situation in Hungary as being “obscure”\[^{27}\]. Eisenhower was convinced


\[^{21}\] Ibid., n3; Reid, *Hungary and Suez* 1956, 57.

\[^{22}\] “Memorandum of Telephone Conversations With the President, November 9, 1956,” *FRUS*, 1955–1957, Volume XXV, Eastern Europe, eds. Keefer, Landa and Shaloff, Document 178

\[^{23}\] Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 161. Canada had no mission in Budapest and Rahman’s own reports were arriving at a week’s delay


\[^{25}\] Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 166-167.


that “Nehru seemed to be falling for the Moscow line – buying their entire bill of goods”.728

After what was being referred to as Nehru’s Bulganisation, the West dove into a state of panic. This crisis of confidence was further complicated by India’s voting on the three resolutions of 8 and 9 November at the UN General Assembly.729 India voted against the first resolution sponsored by Italy, Ireland, Pakistan, Peru and Cuba, which came to be known as the Five Power Resolution, because it called for elections to be held in Hungary under the auspices of the UN.730 On a second resolution sponsored by the US condemning Soviet actions in Hungary, India abstained.731 India voted in support of a third resolution sponsored by Austria, calling for increased aid to Hungary.732

The West was shocked that India had been the only non-communist country to abstain in the vote on the US-sponsored resolution. However, it was clear why India had voted against UN-supervised elections in Hungary, as this was different from a “fact-finding team” which Nehru opposed on the grounds that if today they were allowed in Hungary, tomorrow they would want to go into Kashmir.733 Indeed, Nehru considered this proposal “not only unconstitutional but dangerous precedent for other countries”, but sought to explain that the procedure of voting meant that even thought India criticised Soviet actions, she had had to vote on the operative part of the resolution, which concerned itself foremost with UN-supervised elections.734 Indeed, Nehru also spoke of the distortion of what India had done and that by way of exaggerating India’s stand on

728 Ibid.
729 These were UNGA Resolution Nos. 1005-(ES II), 1006-(ES II) and 1007-(ES II).
730 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon, 11 November 1956” in SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 459n2; Brecher is of the view that “On the contrary, when India opposed the proposal to send UN observers and the call for a UN-controlled election in Hungary, it was clear that Delhi wanted to avoid a precedent for Kashmir.” He also says that Nehru’s instructions to Menon were that he should abstain, but that Menon voted against it, see Michael Brecher, Nehru: A Political Biography (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 573; Subimal Dutt says no instructions were sent to Menon and that he acted of his own accord, see Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 181.
731 Escott Reid refers to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit’s account of Nehru’s telephone conversation with Menon that says Nehru told Menon he should use his own discretion. Reid also discusses Nehru’s Principal Private Secretary Mathai’s allegation that Nehru had sent Menon a telegram instructing Krishna Menon to abstain in the vote on the resolution and that Menon claimed that the telegram had arrived too late but that this was a lie. See Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 106.
732 Berkes/Bedi are of the view that “The total absence of recriminatory clauses in either the preamble or the operative sections of the Austrian resolution was clearly the consideration which won India’s support.” See Ross N. Berkes and Mohinder S. Bedi, The Diplomacy of India: Indian Foreign Policy in the United Nations (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), 53.
the situation in Hungary, certain countries were attempting to shift attention away from the Suez Canal Crisis. Nevertheless, there was widespread criticism of the Indian vote in many countries, and not least in India, where Jayaprakash Narayan criticized Nehru’s double standards in a public meeting on 11 November in Bombay. The AICC too criticised the government’s actions considerably, and although Nehru publicly sought to explain away India’s votes in the General Assembly, he privately chided Menon for his votes against the resolutions, where India could have merely abstained. Nehru was also concerned about the response of the Hungarian people towards India’s attitude in the UN. Menon responded to Nehru’s concern and criticism by saying that to “do more would be to put ourselves in a sheer opportunist and somewhat dishonest position” and that what India had done “and should continue to do is to refuse to be made an instrument of power politics of either side and as things are here become part of Western propaganda and action to bring about a regime of choice by using the United Nations.” Krishna Menon maintained this stand even in later years, insisting that the Indian position was “that countries in the UN cannot be regarded as colonies” and that the UN cannot hold elections anywhere and that he resented the implication that this was about Kashmir.

On 11 November, things began to change as Tito made a statement saying that the second Soviet intervention was necessary in order to avoid counter-revolution and avert another World War. Nehru, who had been led by Tito’s appraisals of the situation in Budapest to a large extent, now began to diverge from that viewpoint and strengthened his criticism of the Soviets. On 13 November, Nehru said in a speech that he was critical of all military alliances as “instruments of increased war mentality”, implicitly also pointing to the Warsaw Pact, which in turn strengthened Nagy’s position of

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735 Ibid.
736 Reid, Hungary and Suez 1956, 84.
737 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 11 November 1956,” SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 459
739 “Menon’s telegram to Nehru, 11 November 1956,” in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 2, 294n11. A more elaborate justification can be found in Brecher, India and World Politics, 85-96.
740 Ibid., 294n13.
741 Brecher, India and World Politics, 53, 85.
742 Ibid., 90, 93-94.
wanting to withdraw from the pact and declare Hungary’s neutrality. On 14 November, the Colombo Powers’ Conference was held in Delhi. Nehru tried to explain the rationale behind India’s voting, placing emphasis on India’s non-condemnatory diplomacy at the UN. In the following two days, in correspondence to and from the Foreign Secretary, it was discussed whether it would be better for India to propose her own resolution in consultation with Asian and African countries so she didn’t have to vote against any resolution because of its condemnatory clauses – the draft Indian resolution prepared by the MEA did not name any specific country. On 16 November, Nehru made a speech in the Lok Sabha on the situation in Hungary declaring, “There was no immediate aggression in Hungary in the sense of something militarily happening as there was in the case of Egypt. It was really a continuing intervention of Soviet armies in Hungary based on the Warsaw Pact. The fact is that as subsequent events have shown, the Soviet armies were there against the wishes of the Hungarian people.”

Thereafter, on 17 November in a note to the Foreign Secretary, Nehru outlined India’s position, focussing on other issues such as deportations and observer teams. The main issue at this point was the proposed visit to assess the situation in Budapest of the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold and his team of observers. This visit had been proposed in the resolutions of 9 November but Janos Kadar, now the head of the government in Hungary had not agreed to it. India had made various attempts at mediation, but Kadar only agreed to allow the Secretary General to visit but not a team of UN observers and had agreed to meet with representatives of the UN in Rome to discuss the situation in Hungary and proposed aid packages. The same day, reports started coming in to Delhi from Budapest about the continued forced deportation of Hungarian youths. As the Soviets and Kadar had failed to comply with the General Assembly resolutions of 4 and 9 November asking for deportations to stop, on 19 November, Cuba moved a resolution in the General Assembly asking for these

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746 “16th November 1956 to FS; from FS,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. 15 (38) – UNI/56, *National Archives of India*, New Delhi, India.
750 Nehru’s response was “Rahman should maintain correct attitude and not intervene in any way in internal politics, though he can of course meet people if they wish to see him and report to us.” Ibid.
deportations to stop; Nehru asked Lall to make India’s position clear but to abstain during the vote; this resolution was adopted on 21 November.\(^{751}\)

These developments at the UN coincided with a foreign policy debate held in the Indian Parliament on 19 and 20 November, particularly focused on the situations in Egypt and Hungary.\(^{752}\) First, Nehru explained in detail the procedure of the voting on the 9 November resolutions at the UN, explaining that votes had been cast on each of the 9 individual paragraphs, of which the first five were preambular and the rest were operative. Nehru explained that India had abstained on the first five that dealt with condemnation of Soviet actions, but voted for the operative parts of the resolutions. He also explained to the house that India was “trying to get the Soviet forces withdrawn from Hungary. What was proposed in the resolution would come in the way of withdrawal and an attempt thereafter to intervene with armed forces would have led to a major conflict.”\(^{753}\) Thus, Nehru defended Krishna Menon’s vote by saying that it was “entirely in consonance with our general policy and instructions.”\(^{754}\) Nehru also went on to say that this resolution would have allowed future intervention in other countries on the pretext of elections.\(^{755}\) Yet, he criticised Soviet actions unequivocally by saying, “I have no doubt in my mind that [the] uprising in Hungary was popular and widespread and had the backing of vast majority of people there, including Hungarian army and even Communists.”\(^{756}\) Nehru came under fire from J B Kripalani, Ashok Mehta and HV Kamath who accused him of having applied a double standard.\(^{757}\) Nevertheless, the two-day debate in parliament was received well in the West, who called Nehru’s clear criticism of the Soviets an “open defiance,” even though Nehru argued that “the Soviet Government appeared unwilling to take any risk on the Hungarian border” in light of the “aggression in Egypt.”\(^{758}\) All in all, these two days marked the beginning of the “de-Bulganisation” of Nehru.\(^{759}\)

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\(^{752}\) Western countries followed Nehru’s speech with some interest, hoping that it would help decipher the second Soviet intervention. See Reid, *Hungary and Suez 1956*, 20-21.

\(^{753}\) Dutt, *With Nehru in the Foreign Office*, 182.


\(^{755}\) Ibid. Although he didn’t bring up Kashmir at all, A K Gopalan, a member of the Communist Party of India did.


\(^{760}\) Reid, *Envoy to Nehru*, 177.
At about the same time, relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union became more strained. Nagy had been seeking asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy and Tito had made a public speech criticising the first Soviet intervention (of October) but declaring the inevitability of the second one (of November). Tito had also declared Belgrade’s version as the “only road to socialism”, which Pravda said, “radically contradicts the Marxist-Leninist tenet that each country can have its own methods, forms and tempo of transition to Socialism” 761. Pravda also accused Tito of creating factions within the Soviets by dividing them between Stalinists and non-Stalinists, although KPS Menon had sent a similar assessment to Nehru once Molotov had taken over as Minister of Ideology 762. Nehru also disagreed with Tito’s assessment saying that “the first one is a catastrophe; the second one is an evil” 763 and so relied less and less on his consul in the days to come 764. Nehru and Krishna Menon agreed that India would maintain her position of non-interference in Hungarian internal matters and that it was “for the people of Hungary to decide what government they should have” 765.

On 21 November, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution urging Hungary to permit the entry of UN observers. Additionally, India co-sponsored a resolution along with Indonesia and Ceylon asking for the Secretary General to be allowed to visit Budapest 766. On 22 November 1956, Nehru wrote to Bulganin, Kadar and Tito urging them all to accept the clauses of the Indian resolution 767. Nehru urged Bulganin to let the Hungarian Government accept observers “in view of the grave allegations made which have powerfully influenced world opinion”, reassuring him that this would “in no way affect the sovereignty of Hungary” 768. Nehru also dispatched J N Khosla as his Special Representative to Budapest, which had so far only been served by the Rahman, asking Khosla to urge Kadar to accept the Secretary General’s visit as to not do so “would confirm reports about deportations and other recent happenings in Hungary” 769 along with possible “non-recognition of Hungarian representative” 770. Khosla did meet with Kadar, who felt the Russians would not like observers “without previously having

762 Ibid.
763 Mišković, “Between Idealism and Pragmatism”, 128.
765 Ibid.472-473
766 Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 168-170
770 Ibid., 484-485
sorted out at least some of the mess their troops have created and without dispersing bulk of over 500 tanks that still guard the streets, bridges and public buildings in Budapest.”

In his reply to Nehru, Kadar expressed the view that Soviet troops had “prevented open and unbridled fascist reaction” and that “the Soviet Union has given assistance”.

Although Tito had initially replied to Nehru saying Kadar was “an honest but helpless man”, the rift between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union began to grow after a secret meeting was held in Brioni between Khrushchev and Tito. The Soviets had tried to convince Tito of the need to suppress the counter-revolution for the safeguarding of socialism but Tito tried to negotiate the safety of Nagy. Khrushchev, however, demanded the extradition of Nagy, threatening that Yugoslavia would be considered counter-revolutionary in the absence of acquiescence to these demands. Tito however refused to withdraw the asylum granted to Nagy and was displeased that Khrushchev had tried to make Tito complicit in the Soviet action in Hungary by asking for a secret meeting at Brioni. Soon afterwards, Nagy left the Yugoslavian Embassy in Budapest, was detained, arrested by Soviet forces and deported to Romania. Nehru wrote to Tito saying Nagy’s arrest “was utterly wrong and a breach of international conventions.” Tito agreed that this was “most deplorable” and that it had happened despite assurances to the contrary from Kadar. Nehru agreed to support Yugoslavia’s protests in the UN against the Soviet abduction of Nagy. Sensing a loss of Indian support, the Soviets sent the Ambassador in Delhi to call upon Nehru to remind him of Soviet support to the question of Kashmir at the UN, in a form of “gentle blackmail.” Yet, Indian efforts at diplomatic solutions continued as Nehru wrote to Menon saying, “If war comes, it will come in spite of us”. Tito having turned against the Soviets, and with Rahman’s

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774 For details of Khrushchev’s and Malenko’s secret meeting with Tito in Brioni, see Mišković, “Between Idealism and Pragmatism”, 123-124.


776 Ibid. n6


779 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 2 December 1956, *SWJN*, 2nd ser., vol. 36, 557-558n5. Yugoslavia had indicated that diplomatic channels having failed, they would be “compelled to speak out in the UN”
incessant reports detailing the injustices imposed on the Hungarian population$, Nehru began to advise restraint all around, saying “we should try to avoid giving needless offence or aggravating a situation that is bad enough”$^{781}$.

In the next phase of diplomatic activity at the UN, two resolutions were passed on 4 and 12 December 1956. The first resolutions demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary; the second resolution declared that the presence of Soviet troops was violating the political independence of Hungary. Nehru and Krishna Menon widely debated India’s position on the resolutions in the UN that were demanding withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary$^{782}$. Eventually, when India abstained on both resolutions, Menon explained it in the General Assembly on 10 December saying, India’s “objection was to the use of Soviet forces in the Hungarian internal affairs” and that what had “happened in Hungary was a national uprising”$^{783}$. Nehru then defended Menon’s vote in a statement made to the Rajya Sabha on 13 December, saying that that India did not want to call for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary or from the East European states but wanted them to stop interfering in the internal affairs of Hungary, for which there was no justification$^{784}$. Menon was of the opinion that even though India was abstaining on the resolutions, “that this is an occasion when, independent of the resolution, we should express ourselves fully and critically about the Soviet Union.”$^{785}$ Nehru agreed with Menon saying that although the justification provided by the Soviets could be seen from their point of view, it was “certainly contrary to Panchsheel”$^{786}$. Yet, they both also agreed that the resolutions being presented in the General Assembly were meant to “draw everyone on one side or the other in the cold war by putting them in the position that you are for or against the Hungarian people” and that “a yes vote for the resolution as it stands is impossible with any sense of responsibility”$^{787}$. In his statement in the Rajya Sabha, Nehru described the revolution in Hungary in relation to India’s own independence movement using the language of “civil disobedience” and “passive resistance”$^{788}$. 

$^{780}$ “Cable to V K Krishna Menon”, 23 November 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 35, 481-482.
$^{781}$ “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 2 December 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 36, 557-558.
$^{782}$ For the correspondence, see SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 36, 562-567, 569-570.
$^{783}$ Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 184-185.
$^{784}$ Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 177.
$^{785}$ “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 3 December 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 36, 560.
$^{788}$ Rahman noted that the uprising was staged “by sullen protest rather than violence”; The Hungarian Revolution 1956 – Documents, Volume I, Part I, Ministry of External Affairs Archives, 16.
Between war and peace, between the atom and the Buddha"789

Nehru met with Chou-En Lai twice in December 1956. In both meetings, the leaders discussed the situation in Eastern Europe in detail. Chou-En Lai agreed that the situation in Hungary was difficult, but supported the Soviet viewpoint790. He also accused the Western powers of carrying out "subversive activities", and tried to convince Nehru that in Hungary “the government was weak and could not control the situation and therefore asked the USSR to come in under the Warsaw Treaty and that is the only way out of it”791. Nehru desisted this interpretation on all accounts, saying the Indian position was that Hungary had seen “a national uprising of the workers, students and the youth” and that it was organized “to get rid of foreign domination, namely that of the Soviet Union”792. He also added that “a great majority of Hungarians do not oppose Socialism but they want their own people to run the Government”793. Nehru also pressed Chou En-Lai to support the UN Secretary General’s visit to Budapest, to which the latter reluctantly agreed in the end794.

During the second round of talks, Nehru posed a question to Chou En-Lai asking, “Is it compulsory socialism?”795. This is a telling remark because it is directed at the crux of the matter – the difference between an ideological approach to politics and a non-aligned approach, which Nehru saw as necessarily post-ideological. A significant element of non-alignment from the Indian point of view was that by being non-aligned, states were lending themselves to political action. The states that were choosing to act from ideological bases were, also acting politically, but were always operating within a sphere circumscribed by the ideologies they subscribed to. As there existed multiple and conflicting ideologies, the political actions of these states caused them to come into conflict with other states, in the furtherance of their own ideological motives, and in defence of them. For Nehru, certain elements of socialism held great appeal, and he was

792 Ibid.
793 Ibid.
794 “Cable to V K Krishna Menon,” 2 December 1956, SWJN, 2nd ser., vol. 36, 557-558. Chou said he would ask the Chinese representative in Budapest Ho Te-Ching to enquire (presumably with Kadar)
keen to implement them in India. But the idea that socialism might be “compulsory” took away from its appeal to a great extent. Like Menon had said, “we don't by definition go there; affinity may take us there; that is the essence of non-alignment.” The essence of non-alignment was therefore, the exercise of sovereignty in the realm of political action.

The crises of 1956 are crucial to the study of non-alignment for this very reason. Nehru’s responses have been widely criticised as exposing the indefensibility of the Indian position. Studies of Suez/Hungary discuss the imbalance in the Indian approach to both crises. The analysis is that India took a staunchly anti-British/French/Israeli stand but not an equally forceful anti-Soviet stand, and that therefore, India was not equally condemnatory of both actions. The measure of India’s non-aligned position, therefore, is whether the Indian response to both highly securitized situations was similar. In other words, the measure of India’s non-aligned position is the extent to which she remained neutral between parties to the conflict, not to which extent she made political solutions possible once the conflict had heightened. In the case of Suez, India was clearly able to take both these steps, as discussed above. In the case of Hungary, the emphasis has been on India’s neutrality, which has been called into question and thus, the second phase of the approach where Indian diplomacy at the UN put a brake on bellicose resolutions has been somewhat ignored.

As discussed in the first section, the Nehruvian conceptualisation of non-alignment lacked a deep theorization of the state. This directly affected the understanding of the state as an international actor, especially as different states had different ideas of what constituted the international. This explains the delayed Indian response to the Soviet action in Hungary. It can be argued, therefore, that the delay was caused not by India abandoning the non-aligned position, but because of it. As Nehru repeatedly stressed, the Indian reaction was contingent on “full facts” – arguably, these involved not only what events were taking place in Hungary, but also what had led the Soviets to fall back into the Stalinist pattern of relations within the socialist bloc.

The initial reaction rooted in non-alignment certainly proved inadequate, yet, in latter phases, Indian diplomacy at the UN functioned in much the same way as it did in the

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case of the Suez Canal Crisis, or before that, in the case of the Korean War. Indeed, it is
significant to note here Indian protest to condemnation as a tactic. The Indian delegation
strongly believed that condemnation closed the door on negotiation, and that once the
door was shut, there would be no room for political action left, thus causing a highly
securitized situation. In this aspect, the parallels between Suez and Hungary are clear –
in the resolution of 24 November 1956, which asked the three powers to withdraw from
Egypt, the phrase “note with grave concern” was substituted with “note with regret”,
largely as a result of India’s diplomacy to that end working alongside Norway and the
United States.\textsuperscript{797} Immediately after the start of the Emergency Session of the General
Assembly, Arthur Lall spoke with indignation, but using the language of protest, not
condemnation, saying that in India’s view “a mockery was being made of the Charter,
and the organs of the United Nations were being affronted by aggression and
invasion.”\textsuperscript{798} Menon continued in this vein, saying “without any superlative…we regard
the action of Israel as an invasion of Egyptian territory, and the introduction of the
forces of the United Kingdom and France as an aggression without qualification.”\textsuperscript{799}

On Hungary, when the twenty-power resolution was introduced, while abstaining on it,
Krishna Menon squarely blamed the condemnatory clauses in it saying, “We believe
that resolutions that involve condemnation, which in their logical consequences, would
be followed up by a declaration of who is the aggressor and who is not, and would
thereby stultify the UN are not the elements that would assist in a solution.”\textsuperscript{800} When
the clauses were replaced with a more conciliatory approach in a version of the draft put
forward by the Asian bloc, it was defeated at voting, to which Menon said, “a
constructive step is impossible, if at the same time, a contrary step has been taken.”\textsuperscript{801}
Albeit, Menon continued to make speeches to asking for the UN to “place the
responsibility squarely where it lies”\textsuperscript{802} but that “a remedy to the Hungarian situation
cannot be found in throwing political stones at people who one does not like.”\textsuperscript{803}
Indeed, Krishna Menon made various statements saying India was “not neutral where

\textsuperscript{797} Menon said, “I want to point out that the sponsors of the draft resolution have pursued the paths of mediation, of
trying to solve a problem, and of moderation.” Official Records, Eleventh Session of the General Assembly, (1956-
1957), I, 307, quoted in Berkes and Bedi, Diplomacy of India, 43-44n16.
\textsuperscript{798} Official Records, General Assembly Emergency Session I, 1-10 November 1956, 31, quoted in ibid., 41n13.
\textsuperscript{799} Ibid., 41n14.
\textsuperscript{800} Ibid., 52n26.
\textsuperscript{801} Then India abstained on the 20-power resolution; Ibid., 55n28.
\textsuperscript{802} Ibid., 55n27.
\textsuperscript{803} Menon speaking on the resolution of Hungarian refugees; Ibid, 52-53.
human freedom is concerned”, but that India couldn’t “in any circumstances disregard the sovereign rights of members”, although India recognized “the right of the Hungarian people to choose the form of Government they desired” but “that the way to bring settlements of international problems was not to give ultimatums to other governments”.

In fact, Arthur Lall set out India’s position with regards to both crises in no uncertain terms saying India “avoided as a negative approach to the situation… any condemnation of those who acted in clear violation of the Charter and the UN” but that India had acted “not because we were in any doubt about what had occurred” but “because of our firm conviction that to let indignation dictate the Assembly's approaches would have been detrimental to the situation and might well have caused a stiffening of attitudes and a prolongation and even a worsening of that situation”. Indian representatives at the UN were making these statements partly as explanations for Indian votes on resolutions but also in response to thinly veiled allegations that India was not in reality, non-aligned, and that neither was a majority of the Afro-Asian group. The delegate from New Zealand remarked that while it was “expected that Member States outside the Soviet orbit would have been prepared to give equal priority, as suggested by the United States, to the two crises: to speak and act at least as sternly as they have shown themselves all too ready to speak and act against the UK and France…certain countries had shown no such disposition”. The neutral countries also found fault with countries “which on other occasions had stressed emphatically the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States [but] have seen no reason...to demonstrate this attitude of theirs with regard to recent events in Hungary”. Even the delegate of the nationalist Chinese delegation remarked, “several Asian delegations, delegations which ordinarily are in the forefront as regards all matters concerning human rights and self-determination found it necessary to abstain from the vote on that important occasion”

804 Berkes and Bedi, *Diplomacy of India*, 50-54.
805 Official Records, General Assembly, Emergency Session II, 4-10 November 1956, 44, quoted in ibid.
806 Quoting Nehru’s speech in parliament Menon says this. Official records, Eleventh Session of the General Assembly (1956-1957), I, 524, quoted in ibid., 104-105.
808 pp.49-50, Official Records, General Assembly, Emergency Session II, 4-10 November 1956, pp.8-24] Sir Leslie Munro, pp.8-24
and went on to ask, “whether these delegations of Asia and Africa mean to tell us that the principles of the Charter are good only for Asia and Africa, and not for Europe.”

In making this last observation, the delegate had touched upon an important aspect of non-alignment – not only that it had failed to account for populist movements that displaced the state, it had limited understanding of self-determination in the European context. Both Suez and Hungary had forced Nehru to rethink non-alignment outside of the Asian context - this required a realigning of political thought that had so far drawn only from a limited context, mostly that of India. Non-alignment had become quite incapable of exercising itself outside of the response structures of the familiar. In the case of Suez, the terms of engagement were still known, as these were democracies engaging in colonial action against an increasingly nationalist, and non-aligned, state. In the case of Hungary, it was doubly confounding, as Nehru had no sustained views on communism. In February 1950, Nehru said, “India does think that international Communism is aggressive, partly because of communist philosophy and partly because communism is very much Slavism.”

By April 1950, he was saying that “more and more” the Soviet Union was following a nationalistic expansionist policy. Yet, it isn’t clear what his understanding was of the relation between competing nationalisms, or indeed between nationalism and communism. As suggested above, it seems in the Indian view, nationalism was foremost anticolonial in nature, and as organized socialism had shared the same provenance, there was to some extent an equation of the two.

Thus, in a statement from 1951, Nehru had spoken as he always did of “the rising tide of nationalism not only in our own country but also in various other parts of Asia and Africa”, which he had identified as “those remaining areas of the world where the natural urge of nationalism has not yet been satisfied.”

In this statement, as in many others, Nehru failed to address the question of European nationalism. In March 1956, he had told Dulles that the Soviet desire to increase their domain had diminished. This points to the renewed ties between India and the Soviet Union, and to Nehru’s

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810 T F Tsiang, the head of the increasingly isolated Nationalist Chinese delegations, quoted in ibid.
811 Noorani, “Nehru and the cold wars”.
812 Nehru, Interview to Sulzberger of The New York Times, reprinted the Times of India, 27 April 1950, quoted in Noorani, “Nehru and the Cold Wars.”
assessment of the post-Stalinist phase of Soviet foreign relations, but possibly also to his belief that the Soviets would now enter a new period of internationalism. This in turn could have resulted from his view of the limited uses of Marxism as a historical lens and of communism as a political one. Nehru was influenced by Marxism but by no means entirely convinced of it, and thinking that the Socialist bloc was now entering an inevitable phase of increased integration with the rest of the world, he decided to extend relations with the USSR bilaterally, but also at the UN, so as to facilitate wider involvement with the international community and end the isolation that in his view increased the mentality of the Cold War.

Therefore, although Nehru was hesitant for Nasser to take the matter of Suez to the UN, he was keen that the Secretary General should visit Budapest. In fact, it was the Americans who were considering whether it would even be useful for Hammarskjold to go, that in the case of Suez, he “was dealing with decent people subjected to political opinion pressures” but that in the case of the Soviet Union it might not be wise to lean on him. On the contrary, the Communist bloc decided that Hungary could not be compared with the British and French invasion in Egypt and that the non-aligned had vested interests. Chou En-Lai asked Kadar to be wary of too much Indian influence, saying, “Don’t fall into the Indians’ trap. Don’t hurry the elections” as he thought Indians wanted the “nature of power in Hungary to change”. Indeed, Chou took a rather strange view of Nehru telling Kadar in 1957 that one could either ignore Nehru or present to him carefully prepared cases and that Hungary’s expulsion from UN on account of not holding democratic elections didn’t matter as “China exists pretty well outside the UN, and then at least we could keep each other company”. Thus, Nehru’s efforts to extend the mark of the UN to the socialist bloc met with resistance from all sides.

However, for Indian diplomacy at this stage, the UN became an indispensable platform. Between the anti-colonial momentum generated by the events of the Suez Canal Crisis

815 See Power, “Indian Foreign Policy”, 257-286.
819 Bekes, Byrne and Rainer, 1956 Hungarian Revolution, 501.
and the anti-Cold War sentiments of the Hungarian Revolution, the UN became for India, the instrument and the “chief institutional theatre”\textsuperscript{820} of other contests too – such as the ones between the First, Second and Third Worlds. During the Hungarian Revolution, the UN was the vehicle through which aggrieved parties thought Nehru would exercise his “moral authority”, his “consequent attitude to justice”\textsuperscript{821}, and his “peace policy based on this moral position”\textsuperscript{822}. This was in part due to Nehru’s own stature as a statesman, long considered “the only Asiatic equivalent to Stalin”\textsuperscript{823} and in part “due to the friendship of the people of India and the Soviet Union”\textsuperscript{824}. This was when the Americans were still thinking of the situation in Hungary in Cold War terms, wanting to prevent “needless self-slaughter because we need that type of courage alive behind the Iron Curtain”\textsuperscript{825}.

The approach taken by Nehru once both the crises had abated somewhat was rather different. By the end of both crises, Nehru spoke of how all the aggressors - the Soviet Union, England and France (no mention of Israel) – were “trying desperately to find a way out without complete loss of dignity” and that preventing “them from finding a way out…might to a desperation and even war”\textsuperscript{826}. He invoked Gandhi in saying he “always left a door open in this way, without ever sacrificing his principles”, and thus urged the international community to make it easy for the Soviet Union to withdraw troops from Hungary; if not, “then process of withdrawal will be delayed, the crisis will continue and war may well result and come in the way of what we want to do”\textsuperscript{827}.

An important Indian contribution to diplomacy at the UN, and in the move towards more politicized processes, was the renunciation of condemnation as a tactic, not only because it did not achieve any results, but also because it was considered “unpolitical”; as Krishna Menon put it, “to think that the withdrawal of Soviet forces could be

\textsuperscript{827} Ibid.
brought about merely as a result of what is called an organisation of votes.”\textsuperscript{828} Indeed, Nehru considered the two contradictory, saying, “Are we going to satisfy ourselves by a strong denunciation or condemnation, or are we to have some constructive approach to the problem.”\textsuperscript{829} This understanding within the Indian delegation harked back to negotiations on the Korean armistice; it was that “a group of like-minded powers making up their minds beforehand in order to bargain with powers of unlike minds” was not politics, because a preconceived position was usually entrenched in a securitized discourse, so it was important for the UN to become an arena of contestation, not mere organization – “a palaver, a discussion, a conference in the real sense of the term.”\textsuperscript{830}

India’s diplomatic efforts to end the impasse on Hungary were recognized by Hungarians whose future Prime Minister Arpad Goncz declared that during the revolution “the Indian Embassy in Budapest became the Embassy of the Revolution.”\textsuperscript{831} Yet, at the time, nothing “caused so much misunderstanding… regarding India’s foreign policy than her attitude towards the Hungarian Revolution.”\textsuperscript{832} Nehru’s objectivity was questioned from within the establishment by his own Foreign Secretary Subimal Dutt,\textsuperscript{833} in Parliament by socialists such as J B Kripalani,\textsuperscript{834} and by an international community of people who were disappointed in him.\textsuperscript{835} Yet, a slightly more charitable reading of the situation suggested that Nehru thought a hot war was about to commence and decided to cool tempers and not allow American intervention in Hungary.\textsuperscript{836} Indeed, with American support during the Suez Canal Crisis, and Soviet rapprochement of 1955, Nehru came very close to achieving what he saw for non-aligned India, “the idea that it would be one of few areas of great power agreement.”\textsuperscript{837} The Soviets were also aware that the US having distanced itself from the Suez debacle and the Soviets

\textsuperscript{828} Krishna Menon quoted in Berkes and Bedi, Diplomacy of India, 59.


\textsuperscript{833} KPS Menon quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 169.

\textsuperscript{834} Dutt Diaries, entries from 4th to 11th November, quoted in Krishnan Srinivasan, Diplomatic Channels, 77.

\textsuperscript{835} Kripalani, “For Principled Neutrality”, 50. “Peaceful coexistence in such cases will be that of the lamb with lion, when the lamb is safe in its belly.”

\textsuperscript{836} Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol.2, 295. “A government may follow a broad line of policy, but usually its policy is the resultant of various pulls and urges. Sometimes one pull is greater than the other.” Nehru’s note to Siquerios, the Mexican mural artist, 14 November 1956.

suppressing Hungary had increased American prestige in the Third World. Thus, vis-à-vis India, they adopted appeasement as a policy, initially by expressing unequivocal support, with Bulganin telling Nehru in 1957, “Neither Pakistan nor any other power can come in the way of our friendship.” Eisenhower was of a similar opinion, writing to Eden that “the peoples of the Near East and of North Africa, and to some extent, all of Asia and all of Africa, would be consolidated against the West to some degree which, I fear, could not be overcome in a generation and perhaps, not even in a century, particularly having in mind the capacity of the Russians to make mischief.”

Ironically, in the immediate aftermath of the crises of 1956, both superpowers took a conciliatory attitude towards India, embarrassed by their own actions or those of their allies.

This inadvertent gain for India points to the two-fold nature of non-alignment – its potential uses for pursuing national interests and its form as an approach within international relations, to politics and security. On the first count, India stood neither to gain nor to lose – her prestige was increased by her support to Egypt, but tarnished by her perceived blindness to Hungary. On the question of international relations, both Suez and Hungary altered the critical path that non-alignment had taken so far, as India became involved in peacekeeping and the supply of arms in a conflict. Nehru wanted to exercise restraint on the British, the French and the Soviets by refusing to condemn them; it worked to some extent in the one instance, but definitely not in the other. Yet, the Indian assault on the balance of power politics that gave rise to these situations continued unabated. As Menon put it, “in the particular circumstances that obtain, there are different alliances ranged one against the other and a policy of balance of power which is rapidly pushing this world into a state of war.” Nehru was equally keen to maintain India’s position; he said, “I am very much concerned with maintaining the peace of the world, but I am equally concerned with our acting rightly and in conformity with the principles we have proclaimed.”

This continued long after the actual end of the Hungarian Revolution – the execution of Imre Nagy by the Soviets.

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838 “Third World Reaction to Hungary and Suez 1956,” 61-64.
839 Dutt Diaries, 3 June 1957, quoted in Krishnan Srinivasan, Diplomatic Channels, 85.
840 Westad, The Global Cold War, 125-126n25
843 Nehru refused to raise the status of diplomatic representation to embassy level until December 1959, see Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 187.
in 1958 angered Nehru deeply who thought it would be difficult for the Soviets “to outlive this black mark” and that it “was a cold-blooded act done no doubt after full consideration”, one that “puts an end to the idea of real peace in our generation.” He also criticised China saying that her attitude was even worse especially as he knew Chou En-Lai had always held it against Tito that Yugoslavia had given Nagy asylum. All through these crises, non-aligned India was critical of the use of superior might and the extension of colonialism and the Cold War into Egypt and Hungary, so a strong element of the critique of security is visible in India’s parallel stands on both issues. Nevertheless, by discouraging Nasser from taking the issue to the UN, and by belatedly addressing Soviet suppression of the revolt in Hungary, India became implicit in the new and continued aggression that marked both situations. Eventually, Indian diplomatic efforts recovered lost ground on the two problems, successfully using the UN as an instrument for political action in the case of Egypt, and attempting the same in the case of Hungary. Yet, on Suez, India’s contribution to the UNEF marked a new phased in her involvement with the UN through peacekeeping, further accentuated by her considering arms supply to both Egypt and Hungary. These developments were new, and only three years before, in Korea, Nehru had declared that India would not send troops abroad, then that they would not be armed, then again that India would not send arms. By 1956, all these positions had been abandoned, making it a key moment when India became involved in a discourse of security, albeit with critical elements in it. Indian involvement in armed peacekeeping or the use of force in foreign territories was now a question to be considered on an individual basis, not to be outright dismissed as contrary to non-alignment. Some conceptual weaknesses in non-alignment had also been exposed, and it was evident that certain aspects needed to be recast, particularly in relation to drawing overly only from the experiences of Asia. Indeed, this became the central question in the 1960s, with the eruption of the Congo crisis.

845 Ibid.
846 Chou says China was displeased with Tito for giving Nagy political asylum: “We would only give moral support but no political asylum. Of course, we will not say this openly for that will make matters worse”. Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, 186.
Chapter 6

‘Security for Whom?’

India and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1963

In the previous two chapters, I have discussed the possibilities for political action imagined through non-alignment and the difficulties of practicing non-aligned politics. Many of the issues that sprung up during the Korean War, the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution all came together in an intensified episode that unfolded over three years in the newly independent Congo. In this chapter, I discuss this fourth event where Indian non-alignment directly influenced the structure of security and the form of international politics. I will argue that after going through phases in which it was mainly critical, and then discursive, in this third phase, non-alignment began to strongly resemble a practice of security. The unusual circumstances in which this phase developed are discussed in this chapter.

The chapter is written in three parts. In the first, I suggest that the case of the Congo crisis is especially significant in understanding the limitations within non-alignment coupled with India’s increased integration into the UN. Although not much attention has been paid to India’s involvement in the Congo crisis, there are some excellent accounts from the period, four of which have been written by Indian diplomats who served in Leopoldville at the time. Secondary accounts are centered on Nehru’s outlook on the issue. These accounts and archival sources are used to write the second part, where I discuss the crisis in the Congo as it unfolded, particularly as seen from India. In the third and concluding part, I discuss the questions pushed forward by the unfolding of the crisis, particularly in relation to India’s approach to international politics.

The African Context

As discussed in the chapter on the Korean War, Nehru’s understanding of Asian history, and his consequent emphasis on Asian modernity was quite precise, and had developed over the course of his involvement in the Indian nationalist movement. Indeed, as discussed in the opening chapters, Nehru perceived Asia sociologically, as a region of the world with a large population, and therefore as essentially full of underdeveloped potential. In order to exploit that potential, Nehru’s narratives of Asia were always laced with futurity, and he sought continuously to remind Asians and the rest of the world that Asia’s greatness would become possible and evident in the time that was yet to come. In turn, these views informed his ideas of the Asian century, and so within non-alignment, ideas of Asia were always simultaneously geographical and temporal, and in both senses, deeply political.

These political ideas then informed non-alignment as an approach to the problems of the Korean War and that of the decolonization of Indo-China, for these were specifically Asian problems, rooted in Asian contexts. By the 1950s, as crises such as that of the Suez Canal and the Hungarian Revolution erupted onto the international scene, non-alignment had to adapt to understand and respond to contexts other than the much more familiar Asian one. As discussed in the previous chapter, this proved to be somewhat of a challenge. Through the 40s and 50s, the theatre of politics had shifted, and acquired an even more global character. Certainly, some of the themes were recurrent through these decades, and through these crises: anti-colonial nationalism, decolonization and the Cold War remained firmly in the foreground. But each process of decolonization had its historical specificities, each anti-colonial movement was distinct, and the Cold War affected every situation differently, with an altering balance of power between the two superpowers. All these processes influenced, and were influenced by the locations where they unfolded. By the 1960s, as decolonization increasingly spread to Africa, it became evident that in order to respond to these changes, Indian non-alignment would have to reinvent itself to a large extent. Non-aligned India’s response to the crisis in the Congo is an excellent example of how this reinvention did and did not take place. India’s approach to the crisis has two main characteristics – first, the silence within Indian non-alignment on the question of race, and second, the centrality of the United Nations to India’s response to crises in Africa in general, and the Congo in particular. I will suggest that these two characteristics are fundamentally correlated and discuss how this correlation characterized the last phase of non-alignment in the Nehru years.
In the first chapter, I have discussed at length the ideas of pan-Asianism that were prevalent in early-twentieth century Asia. Simultaneously, the cause of pan-Africanism had also begun to gain currency. The first Pan-African Congress had been held in London in 1900, and subsequent congresses were held in Paris, New York, Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala. Unsurprisingly, the congresses were most concerned with the decolonization of African countries and with the end of racial discrimination against black people around the world. Prominent advocates of African identity included intellectuals such as W.E.B Du Bois and Frantz Fanon and leaders such as Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. The Pan-African Congresses led to the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), set up in Addis Ababa in 1963. Thus, 1900 to 1963 represents a long and significant period in the development of African identity along the lines of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and the end of racial discrimination. This period of intellectual ferment and the enunciation of an African identity coincided with decolonization in Asia and the emergence of Asian-African relations on the basis of these shared concerns. These two movements developed in parallel, and some colonies gained independence before others, but were all brought together at the first Asian-African Conference held at Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. Although the crosscurrents of Asia-Africa cooperation and solidarity were in force even before, Bandung held special significance as the high water mark of solidarities forged on various lines. In India, Bandung was seen as a sort of “coloured United Nations”, where the leaders of the Asian-African peoples “pledged themselves to use their full moral influence to guard against the danger of falling victim to the same evil [of racialism] in their struggle to eradicate it.”

Indeed, not only was Bandung the site of Asia-Africa relations but was also where the idea of the Third World developed beyond its local confines to its most visibly internationalist form. The Third World, which had so far spread as an idea, morphed

849 The OAU was eventually replaced by the African Union in 2002.
850 For an interesting study of how these connections were forged, see Penny M. Von Eschen, Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957 (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 259.
into an ideological movement at Bandung. In the previous chapter, I have discussed the reactions of the superpowers to this movement. The Soviet Union began to accommodate the ideology of the Third World in the hope that its turn leftward would bring this vast collective of nations closer into the Soviet sphere of influence. For this reason, the Americans were less than enthusiastic about this congregation, and also because the question of race had occupied center stage at Bandung, especially amongst African nations. With race being a significant issue within the US in the 1950s, the Americans looked at Bandung with some trepidation. India actively participated in the conference, and Nehru in his speech was forthright in his disapproval of the idea of blocs, and of defense pacts based on those blocs. Nehru also spoke of “the moral force of Asia and Africa”, without once referring to the Third World. In fact, Nehru had always spoken out against the idea of a third bloc, and so had Krishna Menon, who was also in attendance as part of the Indian delegation. Menon’s chosen phrase instead was “an arena of peace” as he considered the third bloc “a foolish idea” as “a Third Bloc to be effective must have at least two and a half times the power of one bloc!”

It is important to note the Indian position on the possibility of a third bloc as an ideologically motivated formation because as discussed in the opening chapters, Nehru’s idea of being non-aligned was based on an idea of a post-ideological world. As host of the conference, President Sukarno of Indonesia referred in his opening speech of the need to mobilize “all the spiritual, all the moral, all the political strength of Asia and Africa”. Clearly, for the Asian participants, the emphasis was on the collective strength of the voices of the peoples of Asia and Africa in world politics and not particularly on Asian or African representation at the conference.

856 For the most eloquent description of this, see Richard Wright, The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1956), 245.
Nehru in particular, addressed the question of race in broad sweep, usually in the context of Empire, but not as a subject in itself. Especially with respect to Africa, his silence on an issue so central to contemporary politics is interesting. After all, it was the experience of racialism in South Africa that had ignited Gandhian politics, which in turn had animated Indian anti-colonialism. Indeed, Gandhi had deeply considered questions of race, of discrimination based on race, and of the colonial subjugation of certain races. His response to that condition, and his refusal of violence pitted him against Frantz Fanon\textsuperscript{862}. Race was an inescapable condition for Gandhi dealing with Africa under colonial rule, and he addressed it by advocating non-violent protest, a form of resistance he later brought to the public life of colonial India\textsuperscript{863}. Thus, it is interesting to note Nehru’s divergence from Gandhi’s consideration of race as an essential element to understanding African anti-colonialism. Yet, the absence of race as a trope in Nehru’s writing can be traced to a slightly different source of political thought. As also discussed in the opening chapters, Nehru’s ideas of the international, and of internationalism were profoundly influenced by Tagore’s ideas of cosmopolitanism. Unlike Gandhi’s ideas of anti-colonial politics in which the state was abjured once independence had been achieved, Tagore’s cosmopolitanism remained relevant even in the presence of the state, and in the period after successful decolonization. In fact, Nehru sought to place the state at the center of those processes, as the nurturing of links between peoples of different parts of the world, particularly in the colonies was an ongoing project, one that had had tremendous successes despite many difficulties.

As some colonies achieved independence before others, and others were negotiating the last stages of their freedom from colonial rule, these networks became even more important. Former colonies sought to support the colonies that remained and to institutionalize some of these relations that had previously had a somewhat subterranean quality to them, forged in spite of and within more visible imperial networks. A significant development in the later stages of decolonization was the rise of colored cosmopolitanism, which brought an added element of race relations to the existing anti-


\textsuperscript{863} For the two phases in which these ideas developed, see Ramachandra Guha, \textit{Gandhi Before India} (New Delhi: Penguin, 2013), 688, and \textit{India After Gandhi: The History of the World’s Largest Democracy} (London, Basingstoke and Oxford: Macmillan, 1998), 960.
colonial conversations taking place around the world. Despite ideological differences that later surfaced within this loose collective, newly emergent states rejected overtly Western models of nationalist politics. Indeed, it is surprising how deeply invested many of these states were in an international sphere even before they gained independence. In fact, the 1950s and 1960s are precisely that period, in which organized peoples around the world were moving between being colonies, nation-states and members of the international system of states. As they were negotiating these different identities, and the dangers of the Cold War, these states relied on each other at fora such as the Bandung Conference to reclaim and reinvent their identities and to base their politics off of these. These movements relied rather heavily on the essentialist narratives of pan-Asianism or pan-Africanism but also on the divide between the East and the West, and on the denunciation of the West.

For Nehru, this was politically unacceptable. The suggestion that any idea be denounced merely on the basis of its geographical origins rode roughshod over Nehruvian non-alignment, which was specifically tailored to accommodate seemingly contradicting concepts no matter their provenance. Whether it was the Empire and the colonies, or the two blocs of the Cold War, Nehru’s idea of India’s role in international politics was to mediate between conflicting positions by belonging to neither. In Nehru’s image of the Indian future, India would recover her identity not by subscribing to exclusivist ideas of race, region or religion, but by integrating into the international as a sovereign state. Thus, in non-alignment, the identity of India was always cast in a modernist mould. This idea had limited purchase in the African context, where reflections on race continued to dominate social and political discourse. Nehru was aware of these differences, such as existed not only between nations in Africa and Asia, but also between Asian nations. In the 1930s, he had pointed to the specific needs of the African nations saying, “the people of Africa deserve our special attention.” At the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in 1947, Nehru pressed this issue further and declared India understood “the value of freedom not only for ourselves but for all

864 Slate’s phrase; for an excellent study of these processes between India and the United States, see Nico Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 344.
others” and that she “stood for the freedom of all people in Asia, Africa or elsewhere. This message was relayed through James Beauttah to the Kenyan African Union, and indeed to all of Africa. Thus, Africa remained at the forefront of India’s calls for decolonization, and so, in the 1960s, when parts of Africa became independent of colonial rule, India applauded these developments.

Yet, Nehru distanced himself from the rest of African politics, particularly in its local forms. Nehru’s interest in African politics was cursory and even though India shared good relations with many African states, her main interest in African affairs stemmed from decolonization and from the large population of Indians in Africa, although this sometimes undercut Indian influence on decolonization diplomacy. This situation was complicated by the resistance of the colonial powers exercising control in African states towards India; they considered “Indian penetration” dangerous and held the view that “wherever the Indian plants himself in Africa, he breeds immorality.” In response to the non-white conference held at Bandung, the Belgians had spoken of their fears regarding “Asiatic penetration into the Congo.” As discussed in the previous chapter, even when India sent troops to Suez in 1956, she did so reluctantly and under the aegis of the UN. Indeed, Nehru considered African affairs “beyond the area of his responsibility.”

Much of this changed with the swiftly deepening crisis in the Congo. A Belgian colony until it gained independence in June 1960, the Congo was a vast country rich in mineral resources. With independence, and no strong political power in control, the Congo fell back almost immediately into the hands of a meddling Belgian presence. This was further complicated by the secession of the Katanga region and a situation not dissimilar to civil war. Nehru wrote to his Chief Ministers barely a month after the Congo had


870 “Bandung Conference - Round up of Belgian Opinion,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. D 919/AAC-55, National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi, India.

become independent, saying “as a result of Belgium's policy in the past, is almost wholly lacking in educated and trained personnel” and that “before the Congo can look after its own affairs adequately, and there is always the danger of someone else trying to fill that vacuum”, but he was more optimistic about the role of the UN, which he thought “brought a measure of balance” and “prevented the ambitions of some Powers to take advantage of the situation”.

As I will discuss at length in the following section, India played a significant role in bringing the secession to an end and in bolstering UN efforts in the strife-torn country. However, it is also important to note that the crisis in the Congo coincided with a parallel crisis in the UN. As the study of India’s response to the Congo crisis will show, Nehru sought to approach African problems only when he was pressed to do so, and exclusively through the interface of the UN. Evidently, as in Korea and later in Egypt, one of the prime motivators for this approach was respect for the sovereignty of the country in question. Additionally, in the case of the Congo, it is clear that Nehru considered India too far removed for a comprehensive appraisal of the situation on the ground or even a sense of how events were developing. Moreover, Nehru was certain that the Cold War would play out in Africa as it had in Asia (and as India had experienced during the Korean War). He also knew that the independence experiences of the Belgian Congo and of British India were very different from each other and that in dealing with the Belgians, the UN was dealing with an imperial power that was reluctant to give up its colony and had had no process that could be considered equivalent to the transfer of power in India. A review of Belgian colonialism had explicitly said that the Belgians “never thought with the British in terms of African self-government as the ultimate goal of their administration nor have they thought with the French in terms of assimilation and the eventual merger with the metropolitan area”.

Subsequently, the continent was also easily susceptible to the forces of the Cold War. Indeed, an early estimation of the situation had said that “the African nations from the very moment of their birth have been in the frontline of the ‘big’ game of Power Politics.

and Economics”, having been considered “the hinterland of Europe”, as European prosperity depended on Africa and West Asia.

The UN thus became an extremely crucial conduit in the relations between India and Africa in general, and the Congo in particular. On one level, it was important for the Congo not only to retain her independence and sovereignty but also to integrate into the international system without coming under the influence of either of the two superpowers. On another level, it was crucial for the Congo (and indeed, other African nations) to develop not as nationalist and inward-looking states, but as fully participatory members of the international community. By removing the accent from race, and from relations based solely on race, Nehru seemed to be pushing forward the idea of heterogeneity as the basis for cosmopolitanism – the idea that it was important to look for “unity in diversity” rather than to highlight similarities amongst largely similar groups of people.

By relying so heavily on the UN, and not using the channels of Asia-Africa cooperation that had been opened up at Bandung, Nehru made it very clear that the Indian approach to international cooperation was to cooperate with the seats of empire too, and with the US and the Soviet Union, not just with the other nations of Asia and Africa. After all, even in Asia, Nehru had adopted this approach and had rescinded the idea that Asian relations would be built as distinct from those relations formed at the UN. This is a logical progression from Nehru’s ideas of modernity and how Asia would shape her future on the basis of an internationalist approach to world politics. By extending the Asian metaphor to Africa, Nehru sought to skirt the issue of race, which he clearly perceived as divisive after a point. Yet, by not clearly specifying what the limitations of race politics were, Nehru left behind a theoretical absence in non-alignment. A reading of non-aligned politics now simply shows a lack of engagement with the question of race – whether that silence is borne out of sophistication or apathy is hard to tell. This is in stark contrast with Nehru’s handling of Asian crises, as seen in the Indian approach to the Korean War. The inconsistencies in non-alignment also come across in

874 “NA and India-Africa,” Sr. No. 42, Apa B. Pant (1st Installment), Writings by him, Apa Pant Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi, India, 1; Also see “General Note on Certain Problems of Africa” by Apa B. Pant,” Ministry of External Affairs File No F-39/9/55-AFR II, NAI, 8-9.
875 In fact, Nico Slate is of the opinion that the larger forces of the civil rights movement in America and the Third World movement in Asia and Africa did not bring together the connections between Indian and African freedom struggles. See, Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism, 163.
the case of European contexts, such as the one in Hungary. However, in the case of Africa, there is a lack of effort on the part of non-aligned India to understand the racial politics of newly emergent African states.

Race was a significant component of politics in independent Congo – while some such as Tshombe condescendingly referred to Africans other than themselves as “les noirs” 876, Lumumba tried to use socialist methods to overcome race-based discrimination on the domestic and international fronts. In so doing, these leaders were looking to preempt the exploitation of coloured races by coloured men. 877 Thus, race constituted a prominent source from which African leaders drew inspiration for their politics. Indeed, political narratives in African colonies were often framed in the language of race. And so, African anti-colonialism was at a remove from Indian anti-colonialism that had very different emphases. In answer to Nehru’s own question, “Security for whom?”, one might consider that his critique was based to some extent on whether it was the security of Asian, European or African states that was being considered. In the case of Africa, there was a history of settler colonies, and a specific sort of violence borne out of that context. Nehru had no tailored response to the specificities of African problems, or indeed, more narrowly those of the Congo. His awareness of the differences between Asian and African contexts did not lead to a systematic treatment of particularly African conditions.

Instead, in order to overcome these differences, Nehru sought to use the UN as a forum, and as a neutral actor in the Congo. The UN, itself in crisis over leadership, relied very heavily on the deployment of troops to bring peace to the Congo. Although India caveated her contribution to these operations, she did participate in substantial measure to bring them to a victorious close. As a close look at India’s involvement in the UN response to the Congo crisis will show, this gap in non-alignment reduced the possibilities for political action to a large degree. India had contributed troops to the UNEF in the Suez too, but the troops sent to the Congo were armed, and mandated with the specific objective of carrying out an offensive, and reclaiming territory. This necessarily involved the use of force, thus marking this phase as one in which Indian non-alignment lapsed into the practice of security.

876 Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 22.
877 W. Du Bois had warned against substituting “the exploitation of the coloured races by white races, an exploitation of coloured races by coloured men,” quoted in Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism, 245.
The Congo Crisis

The crisis in the Congo unfolded over three years between 1960 and 1963. After an increase in political unrest and rioting in the Belgian Congo in 1959, Belgium adopted full independence as a goal for the colony. The independence movement had been put into action by various groups, of which the Congolese National Movement or the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) was the most prominent. Amongst its leaders was Patrice Lumumba who splintered from the main party with his radical wing in July 1959; Joseph Iléo, Cyrille Adoula, and Albert Kalonji led the rest of the party comprising the moderates. After a Round Table Conference was held in Brussels to discuss independence, elections were held to the national legislature in May 1960. The faction of the MNC headed by Lumumba won a majority and Lumumba was elected Prime Minister of the newly independent Congo. Joseph Kasavubu, who along with Lumumba had led the negotiations with Belgians, was elected President of the First Republic, established on 30 June 1960. A day before independence was announced, on 29 June 1960, Belgium and the Congo signed a treaty stipulating the conditions under which Belgium would intervene in Congolese affairs, explicitly specifying that Belgium would only intervene on the request of the Congolese government.

Soon after, the Belgians promulgated the Loi Fondamentale (or the Fundamental Law) as the first constitution of the new republic. This marked the beginning of Belgian intervention in the independent republic of the Congo. On 5 July 1960, the Congolese troops of the Force Publique mutinied against their Europeans officers, leading to the Africanization of the army, renaming it the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC) and the appointment of Victor Lundula as the Chief of Army Staff with Joseph-Désiré Mobutu as his deputy. As the mutiny spread throughout the Congo, Belgian authorities sent paratroopers to curb the situation, but continued to stay on the pretext of restoring order. The first of the Belgian troops began to arrive on 9 July without the permission of the Congolese Government. On 11 July, Belgian paratroopers began to evacuate white civilians from the strategic port city of Matadi and then began to bomb it, killing black civilians in the process and intensifying the racial violence. Soon, another crisis erupted.

as the mutiny had spread to the province of Katanga that Moise Tshombe declared an independent state on 11 July 1960. Leopoldville was now faced with the two-pronged problem of Katangan secession as well as Belgian intervention in the affairs of the Congo.

On 12 July 1960, the Congolese Government asked the UN for military assistance and protection of its national territory against external aggression, failing which they would have to go to the Bandung Treaty powers\textsuperscript{879}. In response, Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold initially invoked Article 99 of the UN charter but it could only authorize technical and not military assistance. Thus, the United Nations Security Council met on 13 July and began deliberations on a resolution calling for Belgian withdrawal from the Congo and UN intervention to bring the situation under control. The Security Council voted on and adopted a resolution sponsored by Tunisia, with no votes against it and only three abstentions, from China, France and Britain but both the superpowers voting for it\textsuperscript{880}. The Congolese government had called for the UN force to consist only of troops from neutral powers. Accordingly, the UNSC resolution sent a UN force consisting mainly of troops from Sweden, Ireland, UAR, Ghana, Morocco, Mali and Indonesia. UNSC Resolution 143 (1960) was a crucial resolution because it led to the establishment of the ONUC, initially mandated with military and technical assistance to the Congolese Government, and the withdrawal of Belgian troops as infrastructure around the Congo collapsed in a near civil war situation. The ONUC was tasked with maintaining the political independence and territorial integrity of the Congo from that date until it was finally disbanded in 1964. On 15 July, the first UN troops arrived in the Congo, and began military intervention against Katanga and in support of the government in Leopoldville the following day.

After asking the UN for help, Kasavubu and Lumumba had also asked the US and USSR to watch developments in the Congo. The Soviet Union made no immediate offer, and the US refused, asking the Congo to approach the UN\textsuperscript{881}. This chain of early incidents shows the ambivalence of Congo’s relations with the big powers. Nevertheless, it also marks the beginning of UN involvement in the crisis, with the

\textsuperscript{879} Rahman, \textit{Politics of Non-Alignment}, 181.
\textsuperscript{880} Dayal, \textit{Life of Our Times}, 394.
establishment of the ONUC as a “temporary security force”\(^\text{882}\), intended to address the breakdown of the instruments of law and order. Less than a week after the ONUC started its operations, Ralph Bunche, the Assistant Secretary General of the UN was sent to the Congo as the Secretary General’s personal representative and India was approached to send an official to act as military adviser for the operations\(^\text{883}\). On 22 July, the UNSC adopted Resolution 145 (1960) reaffirming that of 14 July 1960. Dag Hammarskjold then travelled to the Congo to deal with Tshombe who had declared himself head of the secessionist Katanga province. Tshombe wrote to Hammarskjold on 3 August to say he would resist UN attempts to take Katanga. In response, Hammarskjold sent Bunche to Katanga on 4 August, where Bunche met with the “unqualified and unyielding opposition of Tshombe, his Ministers and the Grand Chiefs”\(^\text{884}\). Having made no inroads into the situation, Hammarskjold returned to the UNSC, reporting on Tshombe’s uncooperative manner and asking for a fresh mandate, as the resolutions of 14 and 22 July had not authorized UN intervention in internal conflicts. Even before the Katanga secession could be successfully dealt with, the province of Kasai also seceded from the Congo on 8 August 1960, under the command of Albert Kalonji. The Security Council then adopted UNSC Resolution 146 (1960) on 9 August, which called for the “withdrawal of Belgian troops from Katanga under speedy modalities determined by the Secretary General” but reaffirmed the non-interference by UN forces in any “internal conflict, constitutional or otherwise”\(^\text{885}\).

Hammarskjold then presented a memorandum to the UNSC containing his interpretation of the resolution of 9 August that emphasized the withdrawal of Belgian troops from the Congo, which he said wouldn't be secured unless they were withdrawn from the Katanga province. Accordingly, Hammarskjold arrived in the Congo with four aircraft carrying troops from the UN force\(^\text{886}\). He travelled to Kamina, Elizabethville and reached Leopoldville on 14 August, on which day he received a protest from Lumumba who accused the Secretary General of acting “in connivance with the rebel Government of Katanga and at the instigation of the Belgian Government”, thereby interfering in the internal matters of the Congo and “retarding the restoration of order in

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\(^{883}\) Ibid.

\(^{884}\) Ibid., 186.

\(^{885}\) Ibid.

\(^{886}\) Dayal, *Life of Our Times*, 400.
the Republic, particularly in the province of Katanga.\textsuperscript{887} This led Hammarskjöld to lose confidence in Lumumba and see him as a threat to both the Asian-African bloc but also to the UN on the whole in his “drive for power.”\textsuperscript{888} The Secretary General returned to New York on 16 August, and when the UNSC met again on 21 August, he places his responses to Lumumba’s allegations before the meeting and suggested the setting up of a Consultative Committee of states with forces in the Congo.\textsuperscript{889} The disagreement around this time was centred on the question of the use of force with the Congo and the Soviet Union pressing for it against Tshombe’s rule in Katanga and the UN preferring political measures first. The African states with troops in the ONUC attempted mediation between the two positions, as they didn’t want the UN to fail in its mission. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana wrote to Lumumba to warn him of the Cold War coming into the Congo, which would “become a battlefield between East and West” and that this would spell “disaster for all in Africa.”\textsuperscript{890} He also advised Lumumba to place his faith in the office of the Secretary General of the UN and to be cautious in his relations with Kasavubu.

However, Lumumba chose to impose martial law on the Congo and declared that Katanga must be taken by force or that the Congolese government would attack it. At this stage, India’s role in the management of the crisis was mostly confined to aid and assistance, without even an embassy in Leopoldville. Nehru had issued a statement on 11 August saying that India recognized only one state of Congo, that the Belgian troops were the cause of the problem, that the Secretary General had acted with “vision and also wisdom” and that although the situation was complicated, it was also rather straightforward.\textsuperscript{891} India had sent 700 tonnes of wheat flour and 36 personnel from the Indian Air Force for logistics support to the UN mission.\textsuperscript{892} In the chaos following Lumumba’s declaration, the Indian personnel who had been sent as part of the UN force were manhandled on 18 August. Nehru wrote to Lumumba to complain and spoke in the Lok Sabha saying, “It is a matter of sorrow that the Indian personnel should have

\textsuperscript{887} Rahman, \textit{Politics of Non-Alignment}, 188.
\textsuperscript{889} Gopal says there was antipathy between Dag Hammarskjöld and Lumumba from here on; see, Gopal, \textit{Jawaharlal Nehru}, vol. 3, 46.
\textsuperscript{891} \textit{The Hindu}, 12 August 1960, quoted in Rahman, \textit{Politics of Non-Alignment}, 196.
\textsuperscript{892} “Cablegram from C.V. Narasimhan to Secretary General,” Cordier Collection, Box 165, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Countries G-J, AWC Congo – India, CUL: MS.
been given unfriendly and rough treatment by members of the Congolese Force Publique.”

On 31 August, both Nehru and Hammarskjold issued statements with respect to the situation in the Congo. Hammarskjold’s statement was part of the annual report on the working of the UN, in which he predicted correctly that the Cold War would make its way into Africa, and that’s what made the Congo crisis and its resolution even more critical. Andrew Cordier, had arrived in Leopoldville on 27 August 1960 in order to review the situation for the Secretary General and had reported back to Hammarskjold. Nehru said, “the manner in which the United Nations has functioned in the Congo has been commendable” and that in the absence of the Congo, apart from “the possibility of a great deal of internal conflict, there would be a possibility of intervention by other countries, big and small.” Hammarskjold, Nkrumah and Nehru had all echoed each other in their fears of the Cold War finding an entry into Africa through the Congo. Nehru made a statement in the Lok Sabha informing the house of India’s assistance in the manner of sending Maj Gen Inderjit Rikhye as Military Adviser to Hammarskjold, and mentioned another officer who was going to be his personal representative, and also spoke of the “heavy demand on us for settling up immediately a 400-bed hospital in the Congo”, reporting that India had agreed to all these measures. In the same speech, Nehru also discussed non-alignment in the context of the Congo, saying, “Non-alignment... was not an acrobatic feat of sitting on a spiked fence and balancing between the two sides; it had to be an effort to uproot the fence and throw it away.”

893 Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 190-193.
894 Ibid., 181.
895 “Note to Correspondents,” Note No. 2227, 27 August 1960, Office of Public Information, United Nations (U.N.), New York (N.Y.), Cordier Collection, Box 78, UN Files, Cordier: Official Trips 1956-1962, CUL: MS.
896 Nehru quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Aligment, 197.
897 Rikhye was placed temporarily at the disposal of the Supreme Commander of the UN Force, Major General Carl von Horn, and of the Secretary General's Personal Representative in the Congo; See, Note No.2226, 27 August 1960, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, U.N. Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases Note to Correspondents, CUL: MS.
899 Nehru quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Aligment, 195.
900 Ibid.
Hammarskjold had requested the secondment of Rajeshwar Dayal, a senior officer of the Indian Foreign Service. Dayal’s view of India’s role in the crisis was based on an appraisal of Nehru’s own foreign policy principles, one of which was to “extend ungrudging support to the United Nations in peace-keeping whenever his help was sought.” Dayal’s predecessor, Ralph Bunche had “fallen foul of the Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba because the latter had totally misconceived notions of what the United Nations' functions and capabilities in the situation were.” With this view of the political landscape in mind, Dayal arrived in Leopoldville on 5 September 1960 and was received by his predecessor, Andrew Cordier. On his arrival, Cordier told Dayal that Kasavubu had removed Lumumba from the office of Prime Minister. Dayal was of the view that Cordier had attached greater importance to questions of law and order than to constitutionalism, and the power of the President’s as deigned by it. Lumumba protested by making initially moderate and then inflammatory statements, causing Cordier to shut the National Radio Station and close airfields for all except UN traffic. This led to a break between the West and Americans on the one hand, and the Asian-African bloc on the other, with the latter criticizing these measures. Hammarskjold “expressed considerable disquiet” at the manner of these actions, and the Soviet Union accused the ONUC “with conspiracy and collusion with the western powers, sharply accused the SYG as an accomplice, and demanded the immediate revocation of Cordier's orders.” All orders were then revoked and a Commission for National Reconciliation was set up. In this atmosphere of constitutional crisis, Dayal officially took over from Cordier on 8 September 1960, and his first port of call was to meet Lumumba.

Although Hammarskjold was of the opinion that Dayal would “have same orientation as Bunche and would be even more forceful,” from the beginning, Dayal didn’t get along either with Clare Timberlake the American ambassador or Ian Scott, the British one. By his account, this was due to their belief that “as their countries made substantial contributions to the UN budget, they had a prescriptive right to expect compliance by

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901 Letter from Hammarskjold to Nehru asking for Dayal based on Dayal's earlier stint in Lebanon peacekeeping, Dayal, Mission for Hammarskjold, 9-10.
902 Ibid., 11.
903 Ibid., 392.
904 For a discussion of the removal of Lumumba and Cordier’s actions, see Dayal, Life of Our Times, 402-403.
905 Ibid, 408.
906 Ibid, 409-411.
the UN with their wishes. Timberlake had worked closely with Andrew Cordier, and so Dayal’s ensuing conflict with the US ambassador divided opinion about him amongst the Americans. This divide was widened considerably when in line with American suspicion of Lumumba being a communist, on 14 September Chief of the Army Staff Mobutu seized power, appointed a College D’Universitaires system, “suspended the parliament with Cromwellian contempt,” expelled the diplomatic missions of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia and offered the explanation that he had taken this step “to neutralize’ both President and Prime Minister ‘as a temporary measure.” However, he retained Kasavubu in a nominal position as President.

The UN Security Council was in session when this coup took place, and thus it evoked a great deal of criticism of the UN’s handling of the situation, particularly from Egypt, Ghana and the Soviet Union. Amongst the non-aligned nations, Tito withdrew his diplomatic mission from the Congo and Nasser expressed his deep regret at the events. Nehru sent a critical letter to Hammarskjöld saying that the situation in the Congo seemed to be extremely unclear and asking what the UN Force was doing if the constitutional processes could be so easily subverted. In his response, the Secretary General sent Nehru a copy of the Dayal Report and continued to reiterate his “complete confidence in Dayal.” Thus, Nehru did not approve of Nkrumah’s suggestion that direct military assistance be sent into the Congo, to help Lumumba. Even so, Nehru’s instructions to the Indian delegation were that “India should avoid finding herself in opposition to the majority of African and Arab states, but if pressed, would have to vote against direct military assistance, for abstention was not possible on such a vital issue.” On 16 September, Tunisia and Ceylon had introduced a draft resolution but it was vetoed by the Soviet Union. The US then invoked the Uniting for Peace resolution and took the issue to the General Assembly in an emergency session opened on 17 September 1960. The Secretary General considered the role of India and particularly

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910 Chatterji, *Storm Over the Congo*, 17.
911 Dayal, *Life of Our Times*, 413.
912 Gopal is of the view that Nehru was less than critical because both Rikhye and Dayal who were at the helm of affairs on the Congo were Indian officers. See “Crusade in the Congo,” in Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, vol. 3, 147.
914 “Memorandum of Conversation Between Secretary of State Herter and Secretary General Hammarskjöld, New York, September 26, 1960, 6:30 p.m.1 (#fn2),” *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Volume XIV, Africa, eds. Schwar and Shaloff, Document 230.
that of Nehru to be decisive in holding together the Afro-Asian bloc. On 20 September, the UNGA recommended and admitted the membership of the Congo (Leopoldville) to the UN, and recommended the membership of the Congo (Brazzaville). The UNGA emergency session then adopted a resolution supporting the resolutions of 14 and 22 July and 9 August and appealing to all the Congolese for a solution, and made provisions for an advisory body of Asians and Africans.

The United Nations General Assembly met for its fifteenth session in October 1960, and immediately called an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in the Congo. Speaking at the session, Krishna Menon, pleaded for “a greater sense of urgency and imperativeness” and reminded the assembly to ask if it was “nearer progress” or “nearer settlement”. Nehru spoke at length at the opening of the session, reminding the General Assembly and no doubt, the many nations represented there, both of the importance of the UN in general, and of its role in mediating the conflict in the Congo. He referred to the “disruption of the state” in the Congo and of the lingering presence of Belgian personnel of various kinds in Katanga, and throughout the rest of the country. He declared that there would be no peace in the Congo “except on the basis of the integrity of the State” and called upon foreign countries to “avoid any interference in these internal affairs or encouragement of one faction against another”. Nehru also spoke of the crisis of leadership and the lack of a functioning Parliament. He laid emphasis on the Parliament’s role in the “ironing out of internal differences” and hoped that the Congo would soon be able “to take its place in the Assembly of the United Nations.” In the end, Nehru spoke of the UNSC Resolutions that had repeatedly called upon the Belgian military personnel to leave the Congo. He regretted that these decisions had “not been given full effect” and considered this “highly undesirable” and suggested a delegation be sent to the Congo to ascertain full facts about the presence of these outsiders and how far they were interfering in local affairs. He concluded by saying it was essential that “the problems of the Congo be

916 Dayal, Mission for Hammarskjold, 84-85 and100.
919 Ibid.
920 Ibid.
921 Ibid.
922 Ibid.
dealt with by the people themselves.” At a press conference held during the General Assembly, Nehru had said, “All we can do is deliberately to try to be impartial. But our own thinking colours our actions. While we may be men of high integrity, we cannot get rid of our own minds in our approach to a question.”

It was in the same session of the General Assembly that the Soviet Union came down with its heavy criticism of the Secretary General. During Khrushchev’s infamous speech that involved the shoe-banging incident, he attacked the office of the Secretary General, demanded the abolition of that office, threatened to bypass the UN and used the situation in the Congo as a reason to do so. When asked to comment on Khrushchev’s statement, Nehru trod cautiously, interpreting Khrushchev’s words as a criticism of “rather the system than the individual”. He agreed that the UN’s first task was “keeping out troublemakers…keeping out stickers-on” and said India was “very much disturbed by how despite UN resolutions and everything, Belgian personnel have stuck on there…it is highly provocative and irritating.” India distanced itself from the rivalry of the Congolese factions at the UN, even when the Americans flew Kasavubu into New York and sat him at the UNGA, despite Indian protests. Even though India had cosponsored a resolution demanding the seating of Lumumba in the General Assembly as representative of the Congo, India’s Permanent Representative to the UN CS Jha made a statement on 24 November distancing the Government of India from any sort of commitment to Lumumba and stated that a vote for him was not an anti-US vote and emphasized instead that the Afro-Asian Conciliation Commission should go to the Congo on 26 November as had been previously decided. Nehru’s outlook on Indian involvement was that he didn’t want to send further troops or even technicians into the Congo although he didn’t withdraw Indian troops already present there; he was equally certain that “even the UN should not impose any solution by the use of force.” In light of this view, Nehru also rejected Khrushchev’s idea of an African

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923 Ibid.
924 Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 148-149.
926 India had had no objection to Dayal meeting with Kasavubu on his arrival in Leopoldville either. See “Krishna Menon’s statements during the United Nations Advisory Committee on the Congo Meetings,” File No. S-0849-0001-02-00001, 9-15 November 1960, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UNARMS), New York, U.S.A.
927 Rahman, Politics of Non-Aligned, 195-196.
928 He also disagreed with Tito’s proposal that under certain circumstances, the national troops would follow national, not UN command as impractical and dangerous. See, Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 153.
Army,

rather focussing his attention on the reconvening of the Congolese parliament, an objective enthusiastically adopted by Dayal in Leopoldville. Dayal pressed on with his campaign against the unconstitutional nature of the Mobutu regime, while Hammarskjold sought to “fully circumscribe the Belgian factor and eliminate it”.

In November 1960, Antoine Gizenga left for Stanleyville to establish a government rival to Kasavubu’s in Leopoldville. A memorandum of a meeting between Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Semenov and Nasser confirmed that the Soviet Union wanted to send diplomats and military advisors to Stanleyville, but Nasser suggested rather dramatically that the only way to get them into the Congo was to parachute them. Along with the secession of Kasai and Katanga, Stanleyville had now added to the different centres of power in the Congo. This also proved to be a trying period for India’s relations with both superpowers. In an interview, Nehru had said that to be friends with the United States, one had to join in the Cold War. The growing distance between the positions between the two powers meant to Nehru that they were “bent on self-destruction, and in the process, destroying the rest of the world also”. Nehru was equally incensed at the other big powers, lamenting in his letters, “Thus, in this age of terror, nations try to protect themselves by exhibiting their strength of muscle, breadth of jaw and stiffness of the upper lip. Or is that this exhibition of concentrated power is a reaction to the fear and suspicion within their minds and hearts?”

Yet, archival material now shows that the Americans didn’t have a carefully laid-out plan either. They had proceeded on the basis of the assessment from Leopoldville that there was “no quick solution” and “no favorite son.” Yet, Nehru was livid at the attitude taken by these powers, and not in the least with Belgium who in his view had “behaved in a scandalous manner which has no justification in principle, in constitutional theory or even in any practical results.”

930 K to Nehru, 9 November and Nehru to K, 13 November 1960
934 Nehru's telegram to Krishna Menon from Delhi after his return from New York, 22 October 1960, quoted in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 152.
937 Nehru to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, 7 December 1960, quoted in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 153.
Although in this manner, India tried to distance herself from the positions taken up by the big powers, Mobutu directly assailed her non-aligned position saying, “These Indians who run the United Nations here are doing everything they can to bring Lumumba back into power and turn the Congo into a Soviet state”\(^938\). Regardless, India co-sponsored a resolution on 19 December demanding “immediate release of all political prisoners under detention” with a view to securing the release of Lumumba from Mobutu’s confinement\(^939\). The Indian resolution was eventually withdrawn but it brought to the fore the irreconcilable nature of the positions held by all the big powers. The handling of the matter by the UN was widely criticized in the Indian press, with The Statesman denouncing United Nations' decision to accept the Kasavubu delegation in the first place and the Times of India condemning “the full undiluted wickedness of the cold war”\(^940\). Nehru drew attention yet again to the root cause of the problem in his view – Belgian presence in the Congo. Citing from the Dayal Report sent by Hammarskjold to him in the Lok Sabha, he said, “You will find that wherever the Belgians are in the greatest numbers, that area is asking for separation from the Congo and the separate Statehood. In fact, Belgians are often leading these movements. It is not an unjustifiable assumption for me to make that one of the first things that should be done in the Congo is to carry out firmly and clearly what the Security Council said previously about Belgians. In the circumstances, it is very difficult to draw a line between civilians, military personnel and paramilitary formations.”\(^941\)

Over the following month, various proposals were put up by Argentina, the US and the UK, Poland, and the four powers, but none of these was adopted. Nehru criticized the Four Power proposal saying it would result in the “tying up the hands of the Secretary General”, and that the UN who had been sent to the Congo “when the need for it arose, to prevent wrong doing” were “humiliated often”; he closed by referring to the fact that “large number of African countries have been infuriated by the turn of events” and that they had “started withdrawing their forces from the Congo”\(^942\). Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Nehru clarified India’s position with respect to her troops in the UN force, “We

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\(^{938}\) Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 152.  
\(^{939}\) Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 198-199.  
\(^{940}\) The Statesman and The Times of India, 25 November 1960, quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 199-200.  
\(^{941}\) Nehru’s Lok Sabha speech quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 198-199.  
\(^{942}\) Nehru speaking in the UNGA, 21 December 1960, Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 204.
have put up with the many difficulties that face us, but I cannot, if our people are not treated properly and given opportunities to do the work for which they were sent, guarantee that the question will not arise whether it is worthwhile keeping them there or not. Normally we would have withdrawn them, but we have hesitated and we hesitated to do so because it would really mean the collapse of the United Nations' work. It would mean most inevitably leaving the Congolese to fight it out amongst themselves, and it would also mean the intrusion of foreign powers with their troops and, therefore, war. Over the course of this time, he referred repeatedly to the “fantastic and Gilbertian situation” brought on by the conduct of the ANC vis-à-vis the ONUC.

The first half of the year was characterised by the same atmosphere that Nehru considered “most depressing sometimes rather exasperating.” First, Kasavubu said he did not want an Indian on the UN Conciliation Commission, consisting of fifteen members, which was to visit the Congo in January-February 1961, although this matter was later sorted out. Additionally, two crises erupted at the same time considerably complicating India’s role in the Congo. The first was the near failure of the UN mission in the Congo and the second was the death of Lumumba. The opaqueness of the UN mission and its ability to hold the Mobutu regime accountable, to secure the release of Lumumba and to reconvene Parliament had alienated support for it amongst most Asian and African countries, some of which began to withdraw their troops from the UN force. In view of the situation, Hammarskjold sent a personal appeal to Nehru asking him for a battalion of combat, to which Nehru responded by saying he would send a brigade. In order to strengthen the UN’s mandate in the Congo, Nehru pressurized the Secretary General to keep Congo out of Cold War alignments, and had forewarned him that if “because of this African troops were withdrawn from the UN Command, India could not be expected to replace them.” The Afro-Asian bloc began deliberations on a UNSC draft resolution, aiming to further the mandate of the UN in the Congo, whilst decrying the obstacles that had been placed in its path so far. The Secretary General supported this idea, thought the Indian influence on a Security Council resolution would

944 Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 152.
945 Congress session, Bhavnagar, 6 January, reported in The Hindu, 7 January 1961.
“be toward moderation” and informed Adlai Stevenson that Dayal had suggested the paragraph to be added to the resolution on use of force by the UN⁹⁴⁹.

The Americans were certain that it was necessary for the UN to have a more administrative role as “regardless of the government formed in the Congo, it will not in fact be able effectively to govern and administer”⁹⁵⁰. Albeit, they wanted Dayal gone from Leopoldville, Kasavubu had first demanded the withdrawal of Dayal on 14 January 1961, a request to which the Secretary General had not acceded saying the ONUC was “solidly behind Dayal”⁹⁵¹ and that Hammarskjold rejected “the complaints against Ambassador Dayal for lack of neutrality”⁹⁵². These attacks on the person of Dayal were accompanied by allegations in the UN that a secret agreement had been reached between Lumumba and Nehru for the immigration of two million Indians into the Congo as a price for India's support of the Congolese nationalist leaders⁹⁵³. Hammarskjold had also been told of this alleged agreement when he had visited Leopoldville⁹⁵⁴. This led Nehru to question India’s contribution to the ONUC and particularly, Hammarskjold’s policy in the Congo. In his correspondence with Dayal, he expressed his conviction that Hammarskjold was to be supported, and discussed Hammarskjold’s request for Indian troops, saying “the Operation must not be allowed to fail as it would destroy the United Nations and threaten peace in Africa”⁹⁵⁵. In the end, Nehru decided to send Indian troops, but “with the caveat that he would insist on their effective use”⁹⁵⁶.

In early January, Secretary of State Dulles reported that Timberlake, the US ambassador in Leopoldville was “alarmed over developments and skeptical about Mobutu's ability...
to remain in power”. Convinced that Lumumba was a communist, the Americans were worried that he “may even return to power”. Fearing a coup d’état by the Casablanca Powers restoring Lumumba to power, they sought to remind Hammarskjold that “if Congo falls under Communist domination while UN sharing major responsibility for security of country, the results in US public and Congressional opinion likely to be extremely damaging to UN.” Meanwhile Lumumba had unsuccessfully attempted to escape imprisonment and had been held captive by Mobutu’s men. On 15 February, Hammarskjold reported to the UNSC that the UN forces had no knowledge of his whereabouts. Lumumba, who had offered his support to Gizenga’s government in Stanleyville, was taken to Katanga, and killed by Mobutu’s men on 17 January 1961, although his death was only revealed in February.

Nehru denounced the death in strong language saying, “Murder has been committed and murder probably by people who occupy high places”. Referring to the “international crime of the first magnitude”, Nehru informed Hammarskjold that in the absence of a revision of UN policy, India would have to reconsider her association with “the perpetrators of these crimes to continue in their gangster methods”. Nehru also asked the Secretary General of the MEA to write to Hammarskjold and emphasize that it was necessary to ascertain the cause of Lumumba’s death. Nehru also asked India’s Ambassador to the US, MC Chagla to convey to John F Kennedy, the newly elected President of the US that India was concerned about the weakening of the UN and that the Kennedy administration must address this issue. This fell in line with Kennedy’s own policy towards the Congo whose main objective was to remake the image of the

958 Ibid.
960 Rameshwar Rao had provided three conflicting accounts of the whereabouts of Lumumba on 13 February at Leopoldville, leaving the Secretary General with no option but to plead ignorance. See 13 February 1961, Cordier Collection, Box 157, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Advisory Committee Conciliation Commission, CUL:MS.
962 “PM’s Statement in Lok Sabha on the Situation in the Congo,” 15 February 1961, Ministry of External Affairs, External Publicity (XP) Division, Press Relations Section, New Delhi, India; Also see, Cordier Collection, Box 165, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Countries G-J, AWC Congo – India, CUL: MS.
963 Nehru Telegram to Dag Hammerskjold, “Message received by UN SG DH from JN, PM of India,” Press Release SG/1007, 15 February 1961, Statement by the Secretary-General, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, CUL: MS.
964 Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 208.
965 Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 154-156.
966 Ibid.
US in the eyes of the Asian and African powers. As further fallout of Lumumba’s
death, the Soviets decided to stop recognizing Hammarskjold as Secretary General and,
Egypt and Guinea recognized the Gizenga regime in Stanleyville and Guinea began to
withdraw troops from the UN force. Members of the Government of Congo continued
to attack Indian efforts in the UN mission, complaining that “Dayal has permitted all
key posts to be filled with Indians and that Indian merchants in the Congo had been
favoured in UN purchases”; these allegations proved to be baseless.

Nehru took a dramatically different position from the other non-aligned powers, and
indeed from most of the other powers of the Afro-Asian bloc. He considered “the
murder of Lumumba” a “turning point in history, with Lumumba dead infinitely more
important than alive.” In light of the intractable positions adopted by the big powers,
Nehru wrote twice to Harold Macmillan saying there should be a shift in US policy
under Kennedy on 1 and 12 February. The Americans seemed to have a similar
assessment and feared that “greatest threat to successful outcome in Congo comes from
our friends.” Nehru was adamant that the UN “with all its inadequacies and mistakes
was the Congo's only hope.” Thus, Nehru repeatedly rejected Khrushchev’s proposals
for the three-way division of the post of the Secretary General, particularly as it
involved a recognition of a third non-aligned bloc; as discussed previously, Nehru was
completely averse to the idea, as was Krishna Menon who saw it is illogical. Similarly,
Nehru also rejected Nasser and Nkrumah’s ideas for an African command. Nkrumah
had already demanded that “all non-African and Asian military personnel not
specifically required to work under the United Nations command must leave the
Congo.” Thus, working in consultation with other Asian and African members, India
put forward a resolution, which was then adopted as UNSC Resolution 161 (1961)

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967 For a discussion of these events, see Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 207-210.
968 Letter from Dragon Protitch to Secretary-General, 24 January 1961, Cordier Collection, Box 157, UN Files,
Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Advisory Committee Conciliation Commissions, CUL: MS.
970 Adlai Stevenson to Department of State, “Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of
35.
972 Nasser's and Nkrumah's expulsion of Belgian diplomatic missions and the proposal to create an African High
Command, see Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 197-198.
973 “Kwame Nkrumah to Secretary General,” Press Release PM/3965, 18 February 1961, Office of Public
Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africu - Congo - Press Releases,
CUL: MS.
allowing, amongst other measures, for a three-man body to investigate the death of Lumumba and India to send troops to the Congo mission.\footnote{974}

In the Lok Sabha, Nehru listed the stipulations put forward by India as being the withdrawal of Belgian troops and effective control exercised by the UN “even if it is necessary to use armed force and not merely look on while others use armed force for a wrong purpose”\footnote{975}. The Indian position had also been clarified in communication with the Secretary General\footnote{976}. Indeed, Nehru was deeply worried and wrote to Hammarskjold saying, “India might even get involved in civil war between one side and the other, besides creating tensions between Asian and African forces.”\footnote{977} Hammarskjold then sent CV Narasimhan, the UN Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs, to meet with Nehru and Krishna Menon and persuade them about the dire need for Indian troops\footnote{978}. Narasimhan had reported to the Secretary General that “India has been somewhat taken aback at political implications of sending whole brigade while recognizing military value of such force”\footnote{979}. However, the presence of Rameshwar Rao on the Conciliation Commission reassured the Prime Minister that Indian troops were crucial to the success of the mission\footnote{980}. Hammarskjold also informed CS Jha that “the views and position of the Government of India with regard to the use of armed Indian troops in the Congo” would be carefully noted and under UNSC mandate, the troops could not “be used to further any partisan political ends”\footnote{981}.

India then informed the Secretary General on 3 March 1961 that troops were being dispatched to the Congo. With growing tensions on the Sino-Indian border that eventually resulted in the war of 1962, Krishna Menon and others were less than

\footnote{974}{See [Cover page Missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No. D-2442/61-AFR II, \textit{NAI}.}
\footnote{975}{See “Prime Minister’s Statement in Lok Sabha on the Situation in the Congo,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQ-16/61-AFR II, February 15, 1961, \textit{NAI}.}
\footnote{976}{“India Offers Brigade for UN Force in Congo,” Statement by the Secretary-General, Press Release SG/1015 + CO/135, 3 March 1961, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, \textit{CUL: MS}.}
\footnote{977}{“Note for Supplemandaries – Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 269 (Final List) for 23 February 1961, Ministry of External Affairs File No. D-1833/61-AFR, 23 February 1961, \textit{NAI}.}
\footnote{978}{CV Narasimhan also travelled to the Congo to ascertain facts. See “Letter from CDA MM Rahman to JS Coelho, MEA dated 12 May 1961,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQA-139/61-AFR II, 12 May 1961, \textit{NAI}.}
\footnote{979}{“Cablegram from C.V. Narasimhan to Secretary General,” Cordier Collection, Box 165, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Countries G-J, AWC Congo – India, \textit{CUL: MS}.}
\footnote{980}{Dayal, \textit{Life of Our Times}, 443; Rameshwar Rao was particularly well-regarded on the Congo as he had correctly estimated that Lumumba needed to be given some kind of protective custody, either through the UN or the ICRC. See, 20 January 1961, Cordier Collection, Box 157, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Advisory Committee Conciliation Commission, \textit{CUL: MS}.}
\footnote{981}{“Letter from Secretary General Dag Hammerskjold to Permanent Representative of India”, Statement by the Secretary-General, Press Release SG/1016, 4 March 1961, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, U.N. Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, \textit{CUL: MS}.}
enthusiastic to send troops to the Congo. However, Nehru prevailed over them and agreed to send a brigade. Hammarskjöld praised this “great act of faith” saying it would “go down in history as a most remarkable and in many ways the decisive event”. The first contingent of troops arrived in Leopoldville on 15 March 1961, as the Congolese government threatened that “blood would flow” and Tshombe added from Katanga that he considered Indian involvement a declaration of war. Nehru complained to the British and the Americans about this attitude adopted by Kasavubu’s government and that of Tshombe, expressing his opinion that all trouble came from Belgian interference.

In April, the UNGA continued to ask Belgian troops and mercenaries to leave, and Kasavubu had signed an agreement with the UN agreeing to honour the resolution adopted on 21 February, and forming a government with Cyrille Adoula at its head. Yet, with at least four competing sovereignties and two secessionist states, the Congo was experiencing complete administrative chaos. Additionally, there was a refugee crisis in the North Kasai region, where Indian nurses had also been deployed. While these crises raged on, a simultaneous diplomatic quandary ensued with the attacks on Dayal gaining strength and the Secretary General being forced to recall him. US Ambassador to the Congo, Timberlake wrote tirades against Dayal calling him a “thunderhead” and comparing him to Ralph Bunche to say, “Dayal must go if UN is to assist the Congo to move with any sureness or speed towards stability”. Timberlake also quoted Kasavubu, Bomboxo and others to say there were insurmountable difficulties in working with Dayal, saying he was a “communist” and had a “high-caste disdain for the blacks”. Kennedy agreed with this assessment telling Chester Bowles, American Ambassador to India, “I don't care how good he is, but he must go”. The British Ambassador Ian Scott said Dayal was “rabidly anti-Belgian”.

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982 Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 156.
984 Ibid., 156; As a result, Indian troops suffered numerous casualties in Katanga; see [Cover page missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No. D12176/61-AFR, 1961, NAI.
986 For a description of these along with political allegiances, see Dayal, Life of Our Times, 439.
987 Ibid., 441–442.
989 Ibid., and Dayal, Life of Our Times, 463.
Dayal was then called for consultation to the UNHQ in New York, but not sent back. Considering this an affront to the Indian contribution to the mission, Nehru threatened to pull out Indian troops if Dayal was not restated, but later agreed at the least for the British and American ambassadors to also be recalled. Nehru relayed these feelings to Dean Rusk when they met at the end of March, hinting that some of the rumours about Dayal and the Indian troops were coming from American sources. In a curious discussion between the Americans and the British, both agreed that Dayal had to go, that it was a bad idea to send Indian troops into the Congo in general, and that they should not be allowed to fight in Katanga (a province whose secession these troops finally ended), that Nehru was “obsessed by the Belgian presence” and that “Nehru seemed to be pursuing a separate Indian policy rather than merging with the United Nations effort”. This was despite Hammarskjold’s statement in the General Assembly applauding the Indian contribution as responsible for restoring to the UN mission its original and intended numerical strength. Hammarskjold had also written to Adlai Stevenson reminding him that “the artificial and slanderous campaign against Ambassador Dayal” could be “be very embarrassing to Nehru in India” and that “it would probably affect his relations to the United States, and even endanger the follow-up on the troop decision” and that in order to reverse the situation, “the United States assist in giving Dayal the moral redress which is his due”. Yet, the Americans continued to press for Dayal’s removal even suggesting to the mission in the UN that Afro-Asian delegations be asked to bring pressure on the Secretary General in order that the US, India and the Congo do not continue to suffer and that “so much should not be sacrificed interests [of] one man”. Arrangements were then put in place to get Dayal to leave presumably by announcing that his mandate had been successfully fulfilled, and not under fire. It was also suggested that an

992 “Memorandum of Conversation Between Prime Minister Nehru and Secretary of State Rusk1 (#fn1), New Delhi, March 30, 1961,” FRUS, 1961–1963, Volume XX, Congo Crisis, ed. Schwar, Document 54.
Indian presence hold the fort in the interim to placate Nehru and that Narasimhan and Rikhye, both of the Secretariat were firmly behind this plan. Dayal finally resigned on 22 May 1961, although his mission officially came to an end on 27 May 1961. The UN saw Dayal’s departure as a shift in the duties of the Special Representative from a primarily diplomatic role to an administrative one, although Hammarskjold said he was letting go of Dayal “with a very heavy heart”. The Americans saw in the departure of Dayal, an opportunity for the Government of Congo to reestablish harmonious relationships with UN. But Nehru said that Dayal’s withdrawal “from the Congo at that stage would create a new balance of forces against implementation of the Security Council’s resolutions, which would “affect the situation very much”).

The constant attacks on Indian personnel and on the Indian effort in the Congo brought about “an impossible situation for India as well as the UN”. Albeit, Britain, France and Belgium continued to spread rumours about Indian troops, and President De Gaulle of France contemptuously declared, “Now what is the U.N.? The U.N. is men like Hammarskjold and Dayal and also troop contingents from Nasser or Ghana.”

Even so, the first half of the year ended with India pledging 105,000 USD for the United Nations Fund for the Congo and India sought assurances from the UN about the effective implementation of policy in the Congo, even in the absence of Dayal.

Even as the politics of the big powers was playing out at the UN, and with specific animosity towards the Indian mission, the troops of the 99th Infantry Brigade sent from India to contribute to the ONUC continued to fight mercenaries in and around Leopoldville. India initially provided logistics support for the mission, but was later

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1000 Dayal, A Life of Our Times, 463.
1002 “Dag Hammarskjold to Nehru letter,” File No. S-0844-01-08, UNARMS.
1003 “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, Washington, March 9, 1961, 8 p.m.,” FRUS, 1961–1963, Volume XX, Congo Crisis, ed. Schwar, Document 46.
1004 Dayal, Mission for Hammarskjold, 260.
1005 Telegrams to Indian mission at NY, 23, 25, 30 March - letter to Nasser, 1 April reporting conversations with A Harriman and Dean Rusk in Delhi, interview in US News and World Report, 10 April, quoted in Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, 3, 157.
1006 Conor Cruise O’Brien, quoted in Rahman, Politics of Non-Alignment, 208-209.
1008 “Note to Correspondents,” Note No. S-2348, 12 June 1961, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, CUL: MS.
1009 “C.S. Jha from the Permanent Mission of India to the UN (on behalf of and transmitting message from Nehru) to DH”, File No. S-0844-01-08, 23 May 1961, UNARMS.
requested by the Secretary General to send a brigade. The 99 Infantry Brigade under Brigadier K A S Raja was sent by air and sea to Leopoldville from March to June 1961. The secession of Katanga was tackled in two phases, the first lasting from August-September 1961 to January 1962 and the second from December 1962 to March 1963. The operations conducted in 1961 were Rumpunch, Morthor and Grand Slam, all aimed at freeing Elisabethville and Jadotville from the grip of the Katangese gendarmerie. Brigadier R S Noronha and Major General Dewan Prem Chand commanded the operations. The Indian Air Force (IAF) also contributed substantially towards the success of the U.N. troops in the Congo, with the Canberra bomber participating in these operations, led by Wing Commander AIK Suares. The first four Canberras left India on 9 October 1961 for the Congo, flying over Aden and Nairobi. The carriers of the US Air Force helped transport the support equipment and groundmen for the operation. The main action took place from late November 1961 until early January 1962 and the Indian Canberras provided the UN with its only long-range air support force. The Indian troops faced many difficulties in being transported to the Congo, and anxieties were rife in New Delhi and in New York about the sort of reception that they would receive in Leopoldville, with reports that they would be attacked on arrival by the ANC. The Indian Embassy was also accused of trying to murder Mobutu and two Congolese ministers by kidnapping or poisoning them, leading to the arrest of an embassy official. However, a report from the UN confirmed, “Indian troops in Katanga [had] created an excellent impression on the local population and have won their admiration” and as a result, Tshombe’s sanctions

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1002 For troops deployments, see ibid.

1003 The original plan was to send the Hunter aircraft, but this was then changed to the Canberras, see ‘Canberras in the Congo’ in Pushpendar Singh Chopra, William Green and Gordon Swanborough, eds. The Indian Air Force and its Aircraft. IAF Golden Jubilee, 1932-82 (London: Ducimus Books, 1982).

1004 This also led to a controversy where it was inaccurately reported that the US had refused to airlift Indian troops. See “Nehru to Commonwealth Secretary,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQA-106/61-AFR II, 1961, NAI.

1005 “Canberras in the Congo,” in Chopra, Green and Swanborough, Indian Air Force.

1006 Cordier Collection, Box 165, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Countries G-J, AWC Congo – India, CUL: MS.


against the Indian contingent had also been removed\textsuperscript{1019}. Albeit, diplomatic relations were rather stagnant as “the relations between the Congolese leaders and the Indian envoy [were] far from being cordial and they [were] not even in regular personal touch with each other\textsuperscript{1020}.

During this first leg of operations held in 1961-1962, the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold was killed in a controversial plane crash on 18 September 1961, while on his way to the Congo. Nehru wrote to Padmaja Naidu saying Hammarskjold’s death had been a result of British policy in the Congo\textsuperscript{1021}. Yet, he laid emphasis on his view that the “Congo was still the symbol and the touchstone of the success of the United Nations”\textsuperscript{1022} and accused the superpowers of “thinking in two directions”\textsuperscript{1023}. A hostage crisis had erupted when Irish troops were held as prisoners of war by mercenaries during the siege of Jadotville, a part of Operation Morthor, causing great embarrassment to the UN mission. In contrast to Dag Hammarskjold’s policy of reconciliation, and perhaps partly aggravated by his death, the Secretary General U Thant’s policy was based on a more aggressive approach. In line with that view, Thant announced in November that the UN would not hesitate to use force to end the secession and bring the conflict in the Congo to a close. UNSC Resolution 169 of 24 November 1961 spoke of this new policy, completely rejecting Katanga’s claims to statehood and denouncing armed action against UN forces. The resolution authorized the Secretary General to use whatever means necessary to rid the Congo of all mercenary forces and paratroopers, and to prevent their return. Thereafter, an assault by the ONUC on Katangese forces continued through December 1961 and all of 1962, with their main objective being the disarmament of the secessionist forces and the deportment of mercenaries. The Indian arm of the ONUC played the most significant role in these operations\textsuperscript{1024}, leading Nehru rather uncharacteristically to exclaim, “Thank God for India!”\textsuperscript{1025}. U Thant continued to request member countries that had contributed troops to the mission to persuade other

\textsuperscript{1019}“Question of hostile sanctions by the Tshombe administration – Lok Sabha starred question no. 1565,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. JS(S)/DS(AFR)/AFR II, 31\textsuperscript{st} July 1961, NAI. Also in [Cover Page Missing], Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQA 115/61-AFR II, 1961, NAI.

\textsuperscript{1020}“Lok Sabha Short Notice Question No. 323 regarding expulsion of Indian Embassy from Congo,” Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQA103/61-AFR II, 1961, NAI.

\textsuperscript{1021}Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 157.

\textsuperscript{1022}Ibid., 159.

\textsuperscript{1023}Ibid., 156.

\textsuperscript{1024}“Appeal to General K S Raja of the United Nations Forces in Katanga”, “Note to Correspondents,” Note No. 2457, 22 December 1961, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, CUL: MS. The appeal said, “We think that we are all allowed to live. We thank your soldiers in the Elisabeth district of Elisabethville, where it is now possible to walk peacefully.”

\textsuperscript{1025}Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol. 3, 161.
countries to send troops as well, and commended the effort of the Indian contingent as “due special praise for the role they played”\textsuperscript{1026}.

On 13 November 1962, India’s first Ambassador to the Congo arrived in Leopoldville. D N Chatterji was an ex-military man whose previous posting had been in Washington DC in the Indian Embassy. He was thus, well versed with the military aspects of India’s contribution to ONUC as also with the diplomatic complications that had so far been characteristic of the UN mission in the Congo. Chatterji was also aware that Kennedy’s “energized and activist” policy towards Africa in general and the Congo in particular brought Indian and American positions on the Congo crisis closer together since they had been since the start of the UN mission\textsuperscript{1027}. However, his primary concern was to provide an assessment for Nehru if in his judgement, “the India troops were not going to be employed to end the secession in Katanga, or if the military operations were to be undertaken again at ‘half cock’”, so Nehru could “consider withdrawing the Indian Brigade from the UN Forces, especially in view of the threat to India from China”\textsuperscript{1028}. India’s continuous troop contribution to the UN effort had been receiving some domestic criticism in light of India’s increasing troubles with China, but Nehru defended his policy saying national issues would not come in the way of “India's international commitments”\textsuperscript{1029}. However, Nehru drew a parallel between the responses of the international community to the problems of Katanga one the one hand and Goa on the other, saying it was “monstrous” to support Katanga while saying India was in the wrong over Goa\textsuperscript{1030}.

In December 1962, Prime Minister Adoula relenting under pressure from all quarters, appealed to the UN to use force and end the secession in Katanga. U Thant, seeing that this mission would have no chances of success in the absence of American support, gave the Kennedy administration an ultimatum threatening to withdraw from the Congo altogether\textsuperscript{1031}. In light of the intensified mandate of the mission in the Congo, the

\textsuperscript{1026} “Note to Correspondents,” Press Release SG/1124 + CO/186, 23 January 1962, Office of Public Information, U.N., N.Y., Cordier Collection, Box 140, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Press Releases, CUL: MS.

\textsuperscript{1027} Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 6-7, 11.

\textsuperscript{1028} Ibid., 2-3.

\textsuperscript{1029} Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, vol.3, 160.

\textsuperscript{1030} Ibid., 159.

pressure on India to keep her troops in the Congo increased manifold, with both Justine Marie Bomboko, the Foreign Minister and Isaac Kalonji, the President of the Senate, appealing to the Indian Ambassador, “not to withdraw your troops until the secession has terminated”, given that “no other military contingents could adequately replace Indian troops”\textsuperscript{1032}. The main questions at this time were whether Tshombe’s troops would be able to resist the UN offensive, and if they would give enough provocation for UN troops to begin an offensive in the first place. In the absence of clearly defined answers to both questions, it became increasingly difficult for India to justify the presence of her troops in the Congo\textsuperscript{1033}. However, the pressure from the international community was immense, with Robert Gardiner, the Chief of Operations of the UN Mission in the Congo, exclaiming to Chatterji, “They know the country; their military reputation is tremendous; how can they be replaced?”\textsuperscript{1034}.

Immediately after Christmas, following provocation from Tshombe’s troops, the ONUC launched its operations, the second phase of the Katanga offensive that lasted until January 1963\textsuperscript{1035}. On 14 January, Katanga was finally reintegrated into the Congo, when Tshombe conceded defeat. The ONUC started withdrawing from the Congo, and had left entirely by June 1964. The repatriation of the Indian troops, the 99 Infantry Brigade that started on 1 March 1963, was also completed on 30 June 1964. In all, 39 units of the Indian Army participated in the Congo operations during 1961-64. However, Adoula was not happy with the withdrawal of the troops and complained to Gardiner “the UN were withdrawing troops without consulting him and leaving him helpless”\textsuperscript{1036}. This was in contrast to rumours that Indians were planning “to colonize the Congo” and were “stealing Congolese babies”\textsuperscript{1037}. Nehru had also heard about these rumours and expressed his disappointment when they were traced to American officials\textsuperscript{1038}. A controversy also broke out in the UN over the unauthorized actions of Indian troops, which the Indian presence in the Congo found hard to comprehend, wondering whether “the UN High Command in New York thought that our troops had gone to the river on a fishing expedition”\textsuperscript{1039}. These ill feelings were heightened by the refusal of the

\textsuperscript{1032} Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 64.
\textsuperscript{1033} Ibid., 75-59 for discussion on composition of Indian contingent.
\textsuperscript{1034} Ibid., 80.
\textsuperscript{1035} For the movement by 4th Madras and Rajputana Rifles, the Gurka regiment, see ibid., 81-91.
\textsuperscript{1036} Ibid., 98.
\textsuperscript{1037} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1038} ‘Later’, “Journal Entry of April 12,” in Galbraith, Ambassador’s Journal, 69; However, D.N. Chatterji was of the view that these rumours were being spread by “European elements”, see Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 98.
\textsuperscript{1039} Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 87.
Congo to request India, or indeed “any Asiatic country” for military instructors for their own army, even after the success of the Katanga offensive.\textsuperscript{1040} American and Indian positions that had converged before and during the Katanga offensive began to diverge, once their joint objective had been achieved\textsuperscript{1041}. As the ONUC was withdrawn in phases and the UN’s military presence began to fade, foreign powers began to approach the Congo for bilateral arrangements. India, the “sword arm of the UN in the Congo” withdrew from the scene completely, after assisting an international operation where none of her national interests were involved in the least measure\textsuperscript{1042}. UNSC Resolution (199) of 30 December 1964 noted the continuing deterioration of the security situation in the Congo.

‘The Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church’\textsuperscript{1043}

When it emerged as a state newly independent from Belgian colonial rule, the Congo declared itself non-aligned. Thus, in their conduct with Leopoldville during the crisis, the Soviets, the Americans and indeed, other non-aligned powers such as India, Egypt and Ghana were dealing with a non-aligned state. But disagreements on how the crisis must be handled left opinion divided across these divisions. Indeed, at times, India found herself in agreement with the US rather than with Ghana or with the United Arab Republic (UAR). This was particularly true in light of the aggressive anti-imperialism of the latter two, with India deeply worried that she would have to face Arab troops in the Congo.\textsuperscript{1044} Nkrumah tried to court American cooperation since in his view their “ideas seem fundamentally so much the same”\textsuperscript{1045}. Thus, Nehru found himself at a distance from most of the other major non-aligned members of the UN, who were looking to adopt either the American or the Soviet view on the Congo. Instead, Nehru

\textsuperscript{1040} General Kebbede of Ethiopia, commander-in-chief of the UN Forces in the Congo, quoted in Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 103.
\textsuperscript{1041} From correspondence with KRP Singh - MEA African Affairs, ibid., 35; for divergent interests of European countries, particularly from the Francophone, see ibid., 108-11; Indeed, historians of the crisis have posited the view that the operations “would probably have collapsed if either New Delhi or Washington had withdrawn its support before the integration of Katanga in January 1963.” See E. W. Lefever, Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1965), 63.
\textsuperscript{1042} Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 62.
\textsuperscript{1043} M. C. Chagla, Selected Writings by him, S. No. 29, 19 September 1961, NMML, 1-2, “Broadcast on the death of Mr. Hammarskjöld. “It was this reason that led him to start the UN operation in the Congo, to persist in it notwithstanding abuse and calumny and to bring it to a successful conclusion to achieve which he visited his Congo and gave his life.””
\textsuperscript{1044} “Cablegram from C.V. Narasimhan to Secretary General,” Cordier Collection, Box 165, UN Files, Subject Files, Africa - Congo - Countries G-J, AWC Congo – India, CUL: MS.
\textsuperscript{1045} Rakove, Kennedy, Johnson and the Nonaligned World, 99.
sought to use that position to temper between those of the US and the Soviet Union and also believed that nonaligned states would have to be nonaligned amongst themselves too, even if this caused discord between them. In fact, when the Non-Aligned Movement was founded in Belgrade in September 1961, most tensions within members had been directly influenced by the crisis in the Congo. When the second summit was held in Cairo in 1964, a controversy broke out over whether Kasavubu or Tshombe would attend, leading to great diplomatic embarrassment for the host country.

The American policy on the Congo meandered throughout. While Eisenhower had adopted a passive outlook, Kennedy seemed more agitated, leading to a more enthusiastic handling of the crisis, yet one that “took many vital months” to gain speed, and was abruptly cut short by Kennedy’s assassination in 1963. Even at the time when they were deeply engaged with the Congo, the Americans believed that Lumumbism represented a sort of “voodoo version of communism”. This led to a rather jaundiced view of their interests in the resolution of the crisis. In fact, the US kept track of the inroads that not only the Soviet Union, but also China was making into Africa and was convinced that Peking saw Africa “as the major field of the battle”. Washington tried to impress upon the Indians “the stake which neutrals have in support of the genuine independence of other neutrals”, whilst advertising their own accomplishments in the Congo so “no literate adult east of the Suez” was left unaware of them. In trying to convince Nehru of India’s “stake” in assuring the independence of other newly decolonized nations, the Americans were preaching to the choir. In fact, Nehru’s brief to Indian officials concerned with the crisis, whether it was Dayal, Rikhye, Narasimhan, Chatterji or Rahman, was to gain a “friend with an international

1046 For an analysis of these moves, see ibid., 99-100.
1048 Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 150-151.
1049 Rakove, Kennedy, Johnson and the Nonaligned World, 97. Rakove makes the point that non-aligned leaders had “raised expectations” of American policy, but ignores Nehru, who relied less and less on American support and much more in the Congo Crisis than anywhere else, on Indian initiative.
1050 Dayal, Mission for Hammarskjold, 121.
1051 Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 22.
outlook similar to our own”\textsuperscript{1056}. Chatterji notes that, in fact, “this had not happened”\textsuperscript{1057} and that a majority of Congolese, including Kasavubu had wondered why the Indians had had any interest in their situation at all, why they “did it, or whether it was worthwhile”\textsuperscript{1058}.

Meanwhile, the assault on Indian troops and Indian personnel mounted feverishly, with Indian spokespersons in Leopoldville, New York and New Delhi having to defend these actions repeatedly\textsuperscript{1059}. One particular allegation on the floor of the General Assembly that involved Indian troops allegedly firing at a Red Cross van, provoked a cry of protest from India, and prompted Krishna Menon to remind the assembly that “a Red Cross van does not become a Red Cross van because a cross is painted on it. It fired on and killed the Irish crew of a United Nations armoured car”\textsuperscript{1060}. He also pointed out that Belgian paratroopers had mounted the van with a bazooka and quoted from the officer-in-charge of UN operations to say that the Indian troops were “well led, well disciplined and conducted themselves well”\textsuperscript{1061}. The Indian administration was thus caught in the strange situation of defending the actions of their troops that they believed “were deployed by the UN, not always to the best advantage”\textsuperscript{1062}. The explanation for India’s involvement in the Congo crisis was captured in the view that India had sent troops because “the UN had got itself into a mess”, because India was in principle “against the secession of Katanga” and because for India, the crisis in the Congo spoke of “the come-back of the Empire”\textsuperscript{1063}.

In fact, even when India’s troop contribution had “shored up the UN position” to the point of saving it, the domestic risks of this commitment had been considerable\textsuperscript{1064}. When in 1962, India’s own borders became temporarily indefensible, her contribution to the UN mission was not held back. Those closely associated with it have suggested

\textsuperscript{1056} Chatterji, *Storm over the Congo*, 224.
\textsuperscript{1057} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1058} Ibid., 100.
\textsuperscript{1059} This included domestic questions; for instance, when an Indian soldier was killed by a shot fired from the Belgian Consulate Building in Elisabethville, a question was raised in the Indian parliament demanding that a protest be made to the Belgian Government. The matter had to be closed by reminding the house that the Indian troops were working there under the UN command, and therefore not in a national capacity. See Ministry of External Affairs File No. PQA-194/61-AFR II, 1961, NAI.
\textsuperscript{1060} Krishna Menon, Representative of the Indian Delegation, UNGA, 16\textsuperscript{th} Session Speeches, 1025\textsuperscript{th} Plenary Meeting, Wednesday, 4\textsuperscript{th} October 1961, at 3 pm, New York.
\textsuperscript{1061} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1062} Brecher, *India and World Politics*, 105.
\textsuperscript{1063} Ibid., 106.
\textsuperscript{1064} Letter of April 17, 1961, Galbraith to J.F.K., in Galbraith, *Ambassador’s Journal*, 76.
that this was for Nehru “a personal act of faith in the UN” and “impinged on two moral commitments of Nehru's - to the values of the UN and to the people of Africa”. Nehru expressed it as India doing her “best to further the purposes of the United Nations”. Menon was more forthright, and admitted that for the UN it had been “an untried step”, one perhaps it should not have taken as “only a state can wage war” and that in the event that “nobody else who had any troops was willing to send them”, India had stepped up to the task. In fact, it was the Indian view that Indian troops should by no means represent the “biggest numerical force in Congo” and that “that honour should belong to African country”. Indeed, Menon also held the view that India “should have stood behind the nationalist forces instead of weakening them” and that when the ONUC had “became a Western operation”, it “caused splits in Asian and African opinion”.

In fact, it was this “growing resentment voiced by African countries over India’s role in the Congo” that tested nonalignment in this last phase of the Nehru years. As I have suggested earlier, nonalignment began to resemble a practice of security, albeit a critical one, because it lost sight of the question “Security for whom?” When it had erupted onto the international scene, Nehru praised the Congolese anticolonial movement as an “astounding revolution”. When eventually the state became Balkanized, India should have taken into account the fact that it was dealing with a new African state. Further into the crisis, when Foreign Minister Bomikoko declared that the Congo was “at war with the UN”, it should have alerted India to the deep discontent brewing in the Congo, against the UN, and against India who had become a very visible representative of that presence. Yet, when Indians such as Dayal publicly announced their estimation of Congolese state capacity, declaring the Congolese army was “rabble”, and further alienated India from the Congo and the Congo from nonalignment. This was in no way

aided by the superpower rivalry that coloured this operation from the start, particularly their disagreement over “the increasingly powerful role assumed by the UN secretary-general,” which became symptomatic of the Cold War tensions, and their entry into Africa.

Yet, Nehru continued to place an accent, and his faith, not in the Congolese people or their state leaders, but in the UN, proclaiming that “the operation must not be allowed to fail and the UN must be fully supported.” He thus put much stock in the UN, whose mandate in the Congo was initially unclear, and subsequently, almost completely reliant on the use of force, “the only recognized medicine to be administered by whichever side was in a position to do so.” Nehru was fully aware that the Cold War had swept the UN in its wake, therefore sought to remake it to some extent, exclaiming to the General Assembly, “I have listened attentively and with respect many of the speeches here, and sometimes, I have felt as if I were being buffeted by the icy winds of the cold war. Coming from a warm country, I have shivered occasionally at these cold blasts.” He sought to remind them that the UN was “not fully representative” and that “if there had been no United Nations today, our first task would have been to create something of that kind.” Nehru recognized the “African problem as tremendous” and kept “the hope that Khrushchev will calm down.”

But the crisis increasingly took shape in a security context. Even thought Nehru insisted that the “United Nations forces in the Congo have never been authorized to initiate any military action,” the problem in the years 1961-1962, that is to say, at the height of the crisis, was primarily about the use of force. India’s response to this problem, via India’s contribution to the upkeep of the UN was to send troops, for military action albeit under the aegis of the UN. Dayal, who had been the only non-military UN personnel from India was also removed at a time when the UN moved into providing technical assistance. Justice Bidhu Bhusan Malik, an eminent jurist was eventually appointed by U Thant on a panel to draw up the Congolese constitution, but this took

1077 Dayal, Life of Our Times, 454-455.
1078 Chatterji, Storm over the Congo, 185.
1079 Nehru, 882nd PLENARY MEETING, Monday, 3 October 1960, at 10.30 a.m, 324.
1080 Ibid., 325.
place at the deep end of the Indian presence in the Congo. From 1961 itself, the Indian Embassy became estranged from the seat of government in Leopoldville. When DN Chatterji arrived at the end of 1962, he came primarily to oversee the usefulness and effectiveness of the Indian contingent as part of the ONUC. Thus, quite conspicuously, Indians in Leopoldville took on a rather securitized identity for the Congolese, who saw them as military men, before all else. The initial Indian contribution in terms of food aid, Indian medical assistance and logistics support became overshadowed by an entire brigade of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force carrying out military manoeuvres in the country. This representation of India became even more entrenched when Nehru, unsure of who was in power after the death of Lumumba, kept correspondence with the Congolese government to a minimum, and making the UN indispensable to that relationship. Seeing that relations between the Congo and the UN were fraught with distrust, this also coloured Congo’s relations with India. This precarious situation suffered more setbacks as the Belgians, who had been anti-India from the very start, and the Americans, who put their bilateral interests before the Congo’s national interests and the UN’s international mandate, orchestrated much of Congolese policy. As Dayal puts it, the mouth was the mouth of Esau but the hand was the hand of Jacob”.

Nehru tied up the question of the Congo with the survival of the UN, and that of the UN with “the future of humanity”. But, he chose to ignore the early advice of his own emissaries, who had suggested that with the coming decolonization of African states, Asia “shall have to understand fully this new dynamism vibrating to express itself in Africa”. In the 1950s, the estimation was that Africa was “keeping an open mind about Asia”. Many of these newly emergent forces lent themselves to solidarity by virtue of their shared goals, as was evident at Bandung. Africa looked to Asia and to leaders such as Nehru and Sukarno, particularly with respect to the sculpting of their foreign policies. Many African states adopted nonalignment immediately after independence, for it was marked by the imprimatur of the states of Asia who had successfully maneuvered Cold War politics by being more than neutral. At the time, it was possible for Asia, and particularly for India to make “a special effort to know and to

1084 Dayal, Life of Our Times, 427-428.
1087 Ibid.
understand Africa”¹⁰⁸⁸, and more particularly the centrality of race to the question of African politics. Nehru recognized the differences between Asian and African politics, but sought to reconcile them by developing the UN as a theatre of politics. However, the UN as an international body, functioned on the basis of sameness, one that overrode the heterogeneity to be found within the politics of Asian-African countries. In the absence of a fully formed critique of African politics, then narrowed down to suit the specific contexts of each new state, and simultaneously address the looming question of race, non-alignment relied much too heavily on the apparatus of the UN, assuming over the time that role for itself. In so doing, the critique within it became subsumed by the practice of security it slid into. The distance between politics and security grew once more, and India found it difficult to close that gap in the years after 1964, when the last of Indian troops returned home, and by which time, Nehru was dead.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ibid.
Conclusion

The opening chapters of this thesis have put forward the claim that non-alignment was concerned with bringing world politics into sharper focus by casting light on the dangers of adopting security as a central idea around which that politics revolves. This approach, however, was not borne out of irreverence towards the place of security in political life. Rather, the non-aligned approach was to bring the arenas of politics and of security into confrontation with each other and to dismantle both to the greatest extent possible. By facing security and politics towards each other, non-alignment attempted to move away from the assumption that they were essentially mutually constituted. Instead, the non-aligned position used security as a foil to politics, showcasing the complex links between both, while firmly arguing in favour of the latter. The empirical chapters have discussed this orientation towards political action in specific contextual settings. The historical analysis in these chapters also shows that outside these settings, non-alignment was intermittently disoriented in its approach towards security, and particularly in its critique of it.

India’s response to the Korean War issues from the early days of non-alignment, not only in that it took place in the early 1950s, but also that it offers an example of the well-rounded critique and deep theorization that is needed to make non-alignment work. Indeed, these are not just ways in which it might be bettered, but ways in which non-alignment survives as an idea. When it was first introduced internationally, Nehru was widely considered to be of a liberal persuasion, an idea readily thrust open non-alignment too. Yet, its critique of security was a radical move away from a liberal view of politics, as demonstrated by India’s response to the establishment of the South Korean state. Non-aligned politics drew on many different schools of political thought including liberal narratives, but this was not a passive translation of ideas; it was the imagination of a new politics, one whose novelty stemmed from calling these ideas into question, critiquing them and applying them selectively. Indian diplomacy at the height of the Korean War was a striking example of a new political model being put into play, highlighting the possibilities for the decentring of security. Even while adopting an approach critical of security, Nehru’s diplomatic apparatus was still operating within an international framework dominated by the Cold War. But it wasn’t just an energizing of the moment; the signing of the armistice agreement and the exchange of the prisoners of war were consequences of this newly re-imagined politics.

The events of the year 1956 give us pause in thinking about the ascendancy of non-alignment as an idea. The upward momentum of non-alignment was broken as suddenly as it was by the events of the Hungarian Revolution. And the Suez Canal Crisis although marked by
convergence between the American and Indian points of view, brought back the specter of colonialism and placed it squarely in the middle of the conversation that non-aligned India was trying to have with the world. These difficulties also exposed the contexts in which non-alignment was yet unable to operate. The most important question is not whether Nehru should have condemned the Soviet action earlier. Rather more insightful is the evidence that India was unprepared for such a contingency in the countries of the Warsaw Pact. Being blind to these possibilities led to the assumption that a political actor would not favour security over politics, even though this actor was one of the two protagonists of the security-riddled international political landscape of 1956. This blindness to context is in fact, rather curious, as Nehru’s writings and his political thought worked within the framework of historical readings. Evidently, Nehru subscribed to a global historical perspective and it was this perspective that informed his politics. For this reason, it is puzzling that he did not anticipate Soviet suppression in Hungary, and indeed the tripartite aggression against Egypt. Despite being so heavily invested in a politics removed from and critical of security, how do we explain these blind spots in non-alignment?

As discussed in the opening chapters, the literature from Critical Security Studies (CSS) argues that in fact, political limits are in themselves a function of security discourses. Therefore, while moving away from security and towards politics, a political actor looking to unmake security through making politics must also guard against the limits on the politics that security enacts. During the Korean War, non-alignment was largely successful in opening new sites for political action i.e. initiating a new course for politics. Before this new course could be fully developed or consolidated, two international events of the magnitude of the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution occurred. Both these events occurred because political actors (the British, French, Israelis, Soviets) chose to move away from politics and towards security. Thus, even though non-aligned India was attempting a move in the opposite direction, the other four actors prioritized the securitized resolution of situations over possible political alternatives. These essentially opposed moves produce two stages in the way these events proceeded. Initially, security occupied center-stage by creating situations of military confrontation, the resort to arms, and the use of force. Subsequently, some of this move towards a highly securitized situation was reversed by international diplomacy, particularly of the Asian-African states. In this second stage, of which non-aligned India is a primary motivator, the international arena was politicized by first critiquing security-centric thinking, and then aiming to undo the measures put in place by it. The belligerent powers were called upon diplomatically to surrender their positions, such as were entrenched deeply in securitized discourses.
These events showed the continuing grip of colonialism and the idea of the Cold War in parallel play. The former context being more familiar than the latter, India’s response to the events was always going to be more clearly defined in the case of Suez. Yet, the non-aligned position on Hungary showed disconnect between the positions adopted by the western world, the wider Asian-African collective, and between the non-aligned states. Preoccupied by his own domestic crisis, Nasser was least expected to have a response to Hungary, but Tito was close to the situation and well acquainted with the Soviet power structure. Nehru’s early reliance on Tito’s appraisal, and their subsequent parting of the ways shows a shift towards an independent reading of the revolution. This went ahead in fits and starts, with an eventual reliance on the UN, and on the office of the Secretary General. In many ways, therefore, India’s approach to the Hungarian problem presages her approach to the Congo crisis. In the Congo, yet again, there was limited analysis of the contextual setting in which the politics would take place. The archival material shows that Indian diplomats read African politics as mainly concerned with ousting colonial powers and preserving their mineral resources. Although these estimations correctly summed up the objectives towards which African society was being oriented, they ignored that the ordering vision of this political model was the question of race. Whether it was agitation against racial discrimination, or the forging of networks based on racial solidarity, race was a central idea in African politics. Indeed, as the study of the Congo crisis shows, race was a rallying cry in the anti-colonial fight, until the fight ended and brought independence, when race became an internally dividing factor, used by elites to advance domestic political ends, to the exclusion of democratic processes. India’s objective in the Congo was to restore the parliamentary system, and in later years, encourage constitutionalism. Both these projects are decidedly political in nature. But in the absence of a central authority and multiple attempts at overthrowing government when it had been established, the military aspect of resolving the crisis was inflated disproportionately. The language of security replaced that of politics, and both the ‘normality’ and the ‘normativity’ of the political agenda were subsumed.

From the Korean War to the Congo crisis, the idea of the UN acquired more and more salient form, primarily through the expansion of its membership. Over that time, Indian commitment to the UN was also elevated in unprecedented measure. This came from Nehru’s belief that the UN was the sphere in which politics could be sequestered from security and restored to its origins as a form of contestation over authority. In this contestation, he also believed that India would put forth her commitment to morality as a source of power. The ideas that preceded and eventually found form in non-alignment were thus fundamentally concerned with a domain in which they would operate. Thus, the evolution of the UN as an organization and that of non-alignment as an idea were processes braided together from the very start. In all the crises studies in this thesis, the UN was faced with defiance from states that had committed aggression. Nehru, and indeed
leaders of other Asian-African states, had long believed that the UN represented their best (even if not ideal) hope for political action. Therefore, the crisis of the UN and the challenge to its authority drove them into diplomatic initiatives. Even when security had displaced politics from the areas where these crises broke out, at the UN, new sites for political action had been opened up especially through the diplomacy of Asian-African states, and frequently under the leadership of non-aligned India.

The task before Nehru was to reconcile the question of achieving, what he later called “a just society by just means” on the national front with the twin objective of advancing India’s position in the international setting. As a foreign policy, non-alignment was intended to secure India’s strategic autonomy in case war came, while pushing ahead in the UN to prevent the conditions for such a war. Indian diplomacy brought two particular methods from India’s anti-colonial experiences – that of an emphasis on the means-ends question and equally, the force of morality in public life. Morality was not just a guiding principle or larger vision for India’s diplomacy at the UN – very often it was the method itself. Gandhi had successfully ousted the British by invoking them to apply their standards of morality to the case of India. Nehru propagated this method at the UN by repeatedly calling into question the methods of the two blocs and their insistence of maintaining the Cold War, which he saw as anomalous, an uneasy stage before full-blown war. Thus, under Nehru’s leadership, India imagined and constructed the United Nations as a space where the decentring of security could be made possible.

A particularly fascinating aspect of this period is Nehru’s articulation of India’s non-aligned stand in relation to different events or periods. Although a lot of emphasis is placed on the use of rhetoric in his speeches or the letters he wrote to an international recipient or to a domestic audience, it is interesting to see Nehru frame non-alignment in response to different globalities, modernities, forms of nationalism, forms of government, varieties of state systems, etc. In responding to these many differences, there is constant revision and re-articulation, the making and unmaking of non-alignment, with a somewhat stable core – one that begins to unravel in the latter part of the 1950s and the early 1960s. From the mid-1940s for a decade after, non-aligned India catalogued the deficiencies of a system based on the pursuit of greater, deeper, wider security and constantly critiqued the positions adopted by the two blocs as partaking of the same security-centred discourse. By appropriating and setting the agenda for the United Nations, India, under Nehru’s leadership, offered an alternative imagination to the countries of Asia and Africa, forced Europe to acknowledge a diversity of positions, put a check on the securitizing actions of the US and the USSR and provided a new role for the neutrals – countries such as

1089 Nehru’s reply to a question by Andre Malraux, quoted in Sunil Khilnani, “Nehru’s Faith”, Outlook, December 9, 2002.
Sweden and Switzerland – in international diplomacy. If 1919 was the Wilsonian moment, 1955 was just as easily the Nehruvian moment.

Nehru imagined the United Nations as a truly international body, but he imagined international politics as divided along artificial lines. Whether it was communism or democracy, he was of the opinion that the East and the West were both equal votaries of a highly securitized imagination of politics. By adopting a non-aligned stand, he chose to keep India out of that sort of constructed view of the world. Over time, as India became increasingly active at the UN, she was bound to take positions on political events. Nehru insisted that those positions were influenced by her non-alignment but it was the lack of a concrete position (notably in the case of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956) that damaged non-alignment as an approach to security and politics. There are points in the early history of non-alignment where it converged with worldviews adopted by other states, whether or not non-aligned themselves. There were also points in this period when these worldviews clashed with each other, as was common amongst the great powers even before India emerged on the international scene. However, non-alignment approached political contestation in two original ways – first, it sought to recover the political arena as a space for contestation. The Indian experience of the twentieth century had been of a time marked by two world wars and the onset of the Cold War. This war mentality elevated security to the most powerful position it had ever occupied, as it became the leitmotif of international relations. Ironically, the superpower rivalry of the Cold War laid to rest any ideas of political contestation because of the resident fear that the war would turn hot. Thus, security dwarfed politics and became the principle around which states organized their external affairs. By being non-aligned, India treated these positions as identical, not divergent and called out world politics as representing a false opposition between identical positions. These identical positions only diverged in the form of government they had chosen but in the absence of a critique of security, their politics essentially consisted of being governed by discourses of security. Non-alignment attempted a move away from these discourses and so, the historical analysis of non-alignment as practised by India in this period provides a full spectrum in which to understand the tenuous relationship between security and politics.

By placing empirical evidence alongside claims grounded in critical reasoning, this thesis has tried to stake a claim for non-alignment as a source of political imagination. The fundamental objective of the study has been to write new history, one that gives us a powerful critique of the past of non-alignment. Past studies have often treated non-alignment as a historical anomaly, an idea with such shaky foundations that its collapse was inevitable in the absence of Nehru, or eventually along with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the receding reach of communism. This charge is often accompanied by the claim that ideological rivalry still
persists, so the normative project taken up by non-alignment has been unsuccessful. Both these points of view are themselves embedded in realist or liberal retellings of non-alignment. On the contrary, this thesis has taken a rather different approach, whose fundamental objective has been to show that politics is defensible against the aggression of security and that the ramparts around politics were quite often built through non-western, non-Eurocentric processes. But the history of security as an idea is inattentive to these projects, a direct casualty of which is non-alignment in the Nehru years.
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