

# NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT



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# INTRODUCTION



- The Third World was the creation of the Cold War confrontation that was to dominate world politics for more than 40 years following the end of World War II. The Non Aligned Movement (NAM) was the Third World's response to the Cold War. Without the Cold War, the concept of a Third World would not have emerged, although the problems that faced its members would have been the same: poverty, underdevelopment, the need for economic assistance. The rapid, worldwide rise of nationalism among the colonial peoples was a phenomenon of the post—World War II age, and even as the Cold War parameters were set in the later 1940s and early 1950s, demands for independence, sometimes accompanied by violent upheavals, transformed the old world order and brought nearly 100 new nations into existence.

# INTRODUCTION (continued)



- All the colonies of the European empires, on achieving their independence, became members of the Third World. They had become colonies because they were politically weak, economically backward, and unable to offer effective resistance to the extension of European power over the preceding two centuries. The achievement of political independence, as these new nations soon discovered, did not also bring economic independence; instead, the countries of the Third World were obliged to seek aid, a necessity that prolonged their dependence upon the former metropolitan powers as well as the new neo imperialists, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Aid was as much a creation of the Cold War as was the Third World. The history of the Third World is about two struggles: the first, the achievement of independence; the second, the long fight, still very much a part of our post—Cold War era, to break the pattern of dependency that economic weakness and the need for aid created.

# THE COLD WAR



- As long as it lasted, the Cold War dominated world politics and was the foremost consideration governing the political decisions of the major world powers; the countries of the Third World had to adjust their policies to this situation. The emergence of two world superpowers—the United States and the USSR—created a bipolar world with both powers seeking allies in the Third world. The two major colonial powers, Great Britain and France, were obliged to come to terms with political realities to the extent that they conceded independence to one colony after another until virtually all their possessions had become free, but they did so with reluctance and, whenever possible, manipulated the new states so as to maintain control of their economies—engaging in what Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana called *neocolonialism*.

# THE SUEZ CANAL CRISIS



- The Suez Crisis in 1956 brought out in stark terms the conflicting interests of the major powers while also opening up a new opportunity for the developing world. Great Britain, the United States, and the World Bank had agreed jointly to finance the construction of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, but when President Gamal Abdel Nasser insisted upon his right to accept military equipment from Czechoslovakia, an Iron Curtain country in the Communist camp, the United States withdrew its offer of aid, as did the World Bank and Great Britain. These moves led Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, which led to an Anglo-French invasion of Egypt's Canal Zone, through cooperation with Israel, whose forces invaded the Sinai Peninsula. Both the United States and the USSR opposed the invasion, which was halted after five days. The UN then provided a peacekeeping force to replace the Anglo-French force, but of greater significance to the Third World was the immediate offer by the USSR to replace the Western powers and to finance the construction of the Aswan High Dam, thus creating a precedent that would last to the end of the Cold War: thereafter, there were two courts of appeal for aid—the West and the Communist bloc—and if one side would not provide assistance, the other could be appealed to, a situation that was to be manipulated with great skill by some Third World leaders.

# FREE COLONIES



- Nationalist demands for independence, accompanied, where seen necessary, by violent confrontations with the colonial powers, led to as many upheavals and changes as did the Cold War. Independence for British India in 1947 led to the emergence of two states, India and Pakistan; and a year later, Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) became independent. In 1949 the Dutch finally abandoned their attempt to hold on to their East Indian Empire, and the giant, sprawling Republic of Indonesia was born. Even more momentous that year, the Chinese Communists under Mao Zedong drove the Nationalists from power and established their control over the whole of mainland China. The new People's Republic of China was to play an increasingly significant role in both Cold War and Third World affairs thereafter.

# FREE COLONIES (continued)



- From 1946 to 1954 France fought to hold on to its rich colonies of Indochina, but it suffered a devastating defeat at Dien Bien Phu in northern Vietnam in 1954; Cambodia and Laos had already achieved their independence by 1953. Vietnam was to undergo years of escalating violence that ended in the Vietnam War in which, despite its vast military strength, the United States was forced to sign a ceasefire in 1973 and finally leave South Vietnam in 1975; the two Vietnams united in 1975. In the West this was seen as a victory for communism; in Asia, as a victory for nationalism.
- The French, meanwhile, having been forced out of Indochina, were determined not to give up Algeria, the most important of all their African possessions, and embarked upon another war (1954 - 1962), which was to dominate French politics, lead to the collapse of the Fourth Republic, and see Charles de Gaulle come to power and extricate France from Algeria, which became independent in 1962.

# FREE COLONIES (continued)



- By the late 1950s, the focus had moved from Asia to Africa, where some 50 colonies were to emerge to independence. The year 1960, the so called *annus mirabilis* of African independence, was a turning point for the continent. In February while on a tour of Africa, Great Britain's prime minister Harold Macmillan delivered his famous "Wind of Change" speech in Cape Town, South Africa, thereby signaling that Great Britain was prepared to disengage and let its African colonies become independent. Six weeks later in March, the Sharpeville massacre of blacks protesting against the pass system imposed by the white minority that controlled South Africa reverberated around the world and became a defining incident in the long struggle against apartheid. Later that year a total of 17 African colonies became independent: 14 were former French colonies, and the remaining 3 comprised Somalia, which was created by an amalgamation of British and Italian colonies; Nigeria, the giant of British Africa; and the Belgian Congo. Tragically, and at once, the Congo descended into chaos and brought the Cold War into the heart of Africa.



# FREE COLONIES (continued)



- Other African colonies became free over the next ten years, but a core of problems remained in Southern Africa. The Portuguese fought wars in Angola and Mozambique and only gave up their attempt to hold on indefinitely following a revolution in Portugal itself; the white minority in Rhodesia made its unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in 1965 and had to face fifteen years of escalating guerrilla warfare before being forced to accept the inevitable when Rhodesia became independent as Zimbabwe in 1980; and the whites in South Africa held on for another ten years until President F.W. de Klerk came to terms, reluctantly, with black power, and after a period of transition, elections under universal suffrage saw Nelson Mandela become the first black president of South Africa. The other major colonial region was the Caribbean, where on the whole, the transition of its small island colonies to independence was achieved relatively smoothly. The liquidation of the European empires changed world political structures profoundly, since all these former colonial territories became members of the Third World and insisted upon their non-alignment in the Cold War.

# ORIGIN OF NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT



- Jawaharlal Nehru, the prime minister of India from its independence in 1947 to his death in 1964, may be seen as the father of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In the early stages of the Cold War, he sought a “third way” and rebuffed Trygve Lie, the secretary-general of the UN, who tried to persuade him to support the West. In 1953 when peace talks to end the Korean War were taking place at the UN, Nehru insisted that a non-aligned country that had not taken part in the war nonetheless had a right to participate in the talks since wars affected everybody and not just the active belligerents. In the event, the UN General Assembly defeated a Western attempt to exclude India from the talks, although India was not allowed a vote in the committee that subsequently met. In 1954 China’s foreign minister Zhou En lai visited India and discussed with Nehru the principle of Panchsila, or peaceful coexistence, and the two leaders agreed that it was a possible way between countries that had different ideologies.

# ORIGIN OF NAM (continued)



- In April 1955 Nehru, with Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia, sponsored the Bandung Conference in Indonesia at which the NAM came into being. The meeting also adopted the principle of peaceful coexistence. Neither the United States nor the USSR welcomed the idea of non-alignment—a formal withdrawal from involvement on one or the other side in their confrontation; both, in fact, wanted the new nations to support them, an approach exemplified by U.S. secretary of state John Foster Dulles who believed that a country was either with the United States or against it, a view that was categorically rejected by the NAM. It was not until 1961, however, when the NAM held its first formal summit in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, that the two superpowers, however reluctantly, were obliged to admit that non-alignment was a bona fide movement, with its own political standpoint, and could not be ignored. From this time onward, the NAM held summits every three years and became the most important forum for the countries of the Third World.

# ORIGIN OF NAM (continued)



- 25 head of the states participated in Belgrade conference in september 1961. This conference was organized by leaders of countries that had recently freed themselves from foreign domination and rejected renewed ties to any big power. Prominent among these leaders were Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India and Presidents Sukarno of Indonesia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Sékou Touré of Guinea, and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia. The movement has grown to include more than 110 countries, mostly from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. NAM conferences are held every three years. The group has no formal administrative body; at each NAM conference the office of chairperson rotates to the head of state of the host country.

# Values



- Membership in NAM is distinct from neutrality in that it implies an active participation in international affairs and judgment of issues on their merits rather than from predetermined positions. Thus, a large majority of NAM nations opposed the United States during the Vietnam War (1957-1975) and the USSR after its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan. In practice, however, many NAM nations leaned heavily toward one power bloc or the other.
- The purpose of the organization was enumerated by Fidel Castro in his Havana Declaration of 1979 as to ensure "the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of non-aligned countries" in their "struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, and all forms of foreign aggression, occupation, domination, interference or hegemony as well as against great power and bloc politics. The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement represent nearly two-thirds of the United Nations' members and contain 55% of the world population. Membership is particularly concentrated in countries considered to be developing or part of the Third World, though the Non-Aligned Movement also has a number of developed nations.

# END OF COLD WAR AND REDIFINING NAM



- The early members of NAM saw themselves as an important buffer between rival military alliances, decreasing the possibility of a major confrontation. Any pretension of being a “force,” however, was tempered by the diversity of the nation’s governments, which ranged from leftist to ultra conservative and from democratic to dictatorial, and by the economic and military weaknesses that often made them dependent on foreign aid from the big power blocs. The end of cold war and dissolution of the USSR in 1991 required NAM nations to redefine their role in a world where intense ideological and military rivalry between two superpowers was no longer a factor. Today the movement focuses on promoting cooperation between developing countries and on advocating solutions to global economic and political problems. However One of the challenges of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 21st century has been to reassess its identity and purpose in the post-Cold War era. The movement has continued to advocate for international cooperation, multilateralism, and national self-determination, but it has also been increasingly vocal against the inequities of the world economic order.