

S/w by him no. 35

Speech by Mr. K.P.S. Menon, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India on INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY at the Staff College, Wellington

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I am very happy indeed to meet you this morning. I cannot say that I am equally happy at the prospect of having to address you on India's foreign policy. Foreign policy is a subject on which the less one holds forth the better. In particular, the Foreign Secretary is expected to keep quiet about foreign policy. If I am breaking this rule today, it is simply because you have a right to know something about our foreign policy for, after all, if our foreign policy fails, it is you who will be called upon to clean up the mess. Our foreign policy, therefore, is literally a matter of life and death for you. You are, therefore, entitled to know in which direction India is moving or, as a cynic would say, drifting.

A cynic would perhaps go even further and say that, in trying to speak on India's foreign policy, I shall be speaking on a subject which does not exist. Has India a foreign policy at all? If so, what is it? Has she aligned, or is she likely to align, herself with the Anglo-American bloc or with the Soviet bloc? Or, does she, like some strange planet, revolve in her own orbit, heedless of the currents whirling about her? These are the questions which are being asked not merely in India but elsewhere.

Before answering these questions, let us see how these questions are being answered elsewhere. It is always a good thing to see ourselves as others see us. How does India stand in the estimation of those two States which have emerged as the most powerful nations in the world as a result of the last war, namely, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union. Perhaps, I could best answer this question by referring to two significant conversations which occurred recently. I hope you will treat these conversations, as indeed you will

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File No. 35

treat everything I say, as strictly confidential.

First of all, I would like to refer to a conversation which we had with Dr. Grady. As you know, Dr. Grady was the first American Ambassador to India. He did not stay here for more than a year. On the eve of his departure from India, he told us that he was leaving India with a sense of frustration. He came to India with many projects in his mind, but none of them had come to fruition. Frankly, he was puzzled with India's attitude towards the United States. He said he fully appreciated India's desire to pursue an independent foreign policy, and the U.S.A. had never attempted to bring any pressure to bear upon India in this respect. Still, the Indian habit of always bracketting the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. as two Power blocs was annoying to his countrymen. Perhaps, they were a little over-sensitive on this point. But was it necessary, he asked, to put the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union on exactly the same footing? Was it necessary to tar them with the same brush? Was not the U.S.A. a truer friend of democracy than the Soviet Union? After all, in the (then) recent Czechoslovakian crisis, the Soviet Union had shown what she was up to. Dr. Grady said that he had great admiration and affection for the Prime Minister and he also appreciated the achievements which India had made during the last few months. All the same, he repeated, he was leaving India with a sense of frustration.

Just about the same time, there were two interesting indications of the Russian attitude towards India. Madame Kollantai, a very distinguished Russian diplomat, called on Mrs. Pandit and told her that the relations between India and the Soviet Union were worrying her. The Soviet Union had sympathised with India's struggle for independence and had expected great things from an independent India. But the Soviet people were distressed to find that the true democrats in India were being ruthlessly persecuted by the Indian Government. By 'true democrats', of course, she meant

Communists.

Communists. No man stood higher in the esteem of Soviet Russia than Pandit Nehru and it was distressing to see that he should be the leader of a "reactionary" Government.

Mr. Novikov, the present Soviet Ambassador in Delhi, took a somewhat different stand. He too regretted that the relations between India and the Soviet Union had somewhat deteriorated of late. He said that this had nothing to do with the Indian Government's attitude towards the Indian Communists. This, he recognised, was India's internal affair. What was worrying the Soviet Government was India's attitude in ~~the~~ international affairs. There was a tendency on the part of India to align herself with the Anglo-American bloc on various international issues, regardless of their merits. This was a regrettable development. After all, what did India expect to gain from the United Kingdom and the United States of America? The United Kingdom and the United States had let down India over Kashmir and they would let India down again over Hyderabad. Mr. Novikov also asserted that he had great respect for Pandit Nehru. "I feel perfectly at home with Pandit Nehru", he said, "but I am not quite so at home with the Prime Minister of India".

I have referred to these conversations because they clearly indicate the official attitude of the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union towards India. The popular attitude in those countries towards India is not particularly enthusiastic. The Soviet Press has been increasingly hostile to the Government of India. The Press and the Radio in the Soviet Union have been depicting India as a stronghold of reaction, a persecutor of democratic forces, a hanger-on of the Anglo-American bloc and the harbinger of a new Imperialism in the East.

The Press of the United States has not been quite so abusive and the tones have been more varied. Still, the American Press too has shown a singular inability - one might even say refusal - to see the Indian point of view on such vital issues

vital issues as Kashmir and Hyderabad.

In fact, the attitude of the Great Powers - I say Great Powers, because the small Powers usually followed their lead - over Kashmir was an eye-opener to us. They simply refused to understand our viewpoint. Take Kashmir, for instance. We went into Kashmir with a clear conscience. After we attained independence, we did not move our little finger to secure the accession of Kashmir to India. The one thing we insisted on was that the will of the people and not the will of the Ruler must prevail. It was only after the fair Valley of Kashmir had been invaded by the raiders, who committed inhuman atrocities, and when Srinagar itself was threatened, that Kashmir acceded to India and we marched into Kashmir. Even then, we made it clear to all the world that we regarded the accession as purely provisional and that the question whether Kashmir should accede to India or to Pakistan should be left to the will of the people to be exercised after normal conditions had been restored. But the raiders, backed by Pakistan, continued to pour into Kashmir; and Pakistan troops themselves, at first in mufti and afterwards openly, started fighting against Indian troops. We then placed the matter before the Security Council. And what did the Security Council do? It allowed all sorts of issues to be raised, but refused to face the one issue, namely, whether Pakistan had any right to encourage its people to invade Indian territory. All kinds of issues, such as genocide and Junagadh, were raised in order to complicate a simple matter. Week after week, month after month, the Security Council beat about the bush. They did everything possible to put the aggressor on the same footing as the aggrieved and to effect some unworthy compromise between them. It was a nauseating performance.

The Security Council was ready to repeat this  
performance

performance in the case of Hyderabad ~~and~~ also and would have done so but for the valour of our soldiers. To compare small things with great, Hyderabad during the last few months reminded one of Turkey before Mustapha Kemal Pasha. Just as Turkey was known in the 19th century as the Sick Man of Europe, so was Hyderabad the sick man of India. And just as international vultures had gathered round the Sick Man of Europe, so had they round the sick man of India. Adventurers like Cotton, die-hards like Churchill, lawyers like Monckton and journalists like Desmond Young had gathered round Hyderabad, attracted by the hoarded gold of the Nizam and the opportunity of discrediting the rising power of India. The Nizam, as we all know, put his case, ingeniously prepared by a British lawyer, before the Security Council. Hyderabad could not in any sense be regarded as a State in any sense of the word. And yet the Security Council decided to take cognisance of it. Indeed, Sir Alexander Cadogan cut short a well-earned holiday in order to discuss this question; and all the members of the Security Council assembled, smacking their lips, to deal with another case from which, some of them must have hoped, new India would emerge with discredit. Unfortunately for them, our Army was too swift; and before they had got into their stride, Hyderabad became what it always has been, and will always be, an integral part of India.

Why did the Security Council behave in this fashion? A facile explanation is that the United Kingdom is responsible for it. Many would have it that the United Kingdom was the villain of the piece. The United Kingdom knew India; and others were content to follow her lead. The popular belief is that the United Kingdom favoured Pakistan at the expense of India. This is not to be wondered at, for, after all, Pakistan is fundamentally the creation of British rule.

As long ago

As long ago as 1833, a British official, Sir William Sleeman, who was responsible for the suppression of Thuggi in India, was asked what of all things in India he liked best. His reply was that he liked nothing better than a species of melon called Phut. There was a pun on the word phut. It meant a kind of melon but it also meant disunion. For a century and a half, the British divided and ruled; and then they divided and quitted. Their final legacy was Pakistan. A strange, freakish State, with its head in one corner of India and its tail in another, unconnected with the head by the long corridor of Mr. Jinnah's imagination. Mr. Jinnah might be the father of that State, but John Bull was its foster-father and can be trusted to foster it, as he certainly did in the dispute over Kashmir.

There is some truth in this theory, yet it is not the whole truth. If the United Kingdom gave the Kashmir dispute a pro-Pakistan, I will not say, anti-Indian, bent, most members of the Security Council were only too content to follow her lead. The only exceptions were our friendly neighbour, China, who did her best to appreciate, and get others to appreciate, the Indian point of view, and taciturn Russia, who did not utter one word throughout the Kashmir dispute. The reason why the Security Council took up this attitude was because they regarded this matter, as many others, not according to its intrinsic merits, but in its relation to Power politics. From the point of view of Power politics, India was nowhere. Where, wondered the majority of the Security Council, did India stand? Was she with us, or was she against us? If the object of our Foreign policy is to mystify, we certainly have succeeded in doing so.

Yes, it is farthest from our thoughts to mystify foreign countries. The objectives of our foreign policy are clear as sunlight. They have been stated over and over again by one who, more than any other, is responsible for our

for our foreign policy - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The main principles of this policy may be summed up as follows:

Firstly, we stand for peace. So, you may say, does the Soviet Union; so does the United States of America; so does the United Kingdom. In this atomic age, no one but a suicidal maniac would wantonly welcome war. All profess to stand for peace, but I think we may claim that India stands for peace in a truer and nobler sense than many other countries. To us who have been brought up in the generation of Mahatma Gandhi, peace through non-violence is not merely a matter of necessity but a matter of conscience.

Secondly, we do not think that world peace can be attained by the division of the world into rival blocs. We feel that this division will inevitably lead to another world war and the extinction of civilisation as we know it. We do not, therefore, wish to belong to any Power bloc. We do not want to be hangers-on of American or Soviet policy. We are determined to pursue an independent foreign policy. We wish to judge international issues, as far as possible, on their own merits and with due regard to our national interests, whether such and such an issue is backed up by one Power or the other or not.

Thirdly, we stand by the United Nations. Of the deficiencies of that organisation, we are only too conscious. We are aware that that organisation is being used in very different ways from those which its sponsors expected. It is being used, more and more, as a platform to fling criticism and even abuse against one's opponents. The rule of unanimity on which the United Nations is based has gone with the wind. The veto, which was to be a symbol of that rule, has been grossly abused. The result is that the rule of unanimity has become a symbol of disunion between the Great Powers. We are also aware that the interests of dependent peoples receive scant attention in

the United Nations.

the United Nations. And we have a personal grudge against the United Nations because we were let down by the Security Council over Kashmir. Still, we shall not abandon our faith in the United Nations. It is the one concrete symbol of man's primeval and unattained longing for peace. It is, as Secretary Marshall put it, the symbol of the aspirations of mankind.

Of the objectives of our foreign policy, one, our determination to follow an independent foreign policy, is a constant irritant to the Great Powers. Three years ago, our attitude might have been understood, or even applauded, by them. At that time, there was still faith in the conception of One World. But today, One World has been irretrievably split up into two and India seems almost the one country which still retains faith in one World.

How has the world come to this pass? In 1945, there was a faint glimmering of hope that, at the end of the global war, the world might settle down to a durable peace. Mr. Roosevelt's 'Grand Plan' was to establish a World Order composed of, and indeed composing, rival ideologies - a World Order where capitalism and Communism would lie side by side, not perhaps in conjugal bliss, but without pushing each other out. President Roosevelt made what are nowadays called great "sacrifices" for the achievement of this goal. He gave away to Russia Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Finland. Whether he could have helped giving them away is, of course, another question.

At the end of the war, cracks began to appear in this beautiful edifice of Mr. Roosevelt's imagination. Mr. Roosevelt himself was dead and there was no one with the will or the power to repair these cracks. He had, in return for his 'sacrifices', obtained from the Soviet Government an assurance that the Governments of the countries in Eastern Europe would be "broadly representative". Actually, they turned out to be no more than instruments of Communist expansion.



expansion. And where there were non-Communist elements, experience showed, as in Czechoslovakia, that they would not be allowed to stay there long.

When such developments took place in Eastern Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States hummed and hawed. They protested and they made representations. They expressed their surprise, their regret, their disappointment, but they did nothing further so long as the Soviet Government confined their antics to Eastern Europe. For, after all, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Finland lie within the shadow of Russian power. But when Russia penetrated into Central and Southern Europe, when she set at nought the economic unity envisaged in the Declaration of Potsdam, when Communism became a grave menace in France and in Italy, then the United States had to sit up. The time had come for the United States to cry halt. And indeed the United States did cry halt in the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan is often advertised as an example of the benevolence of a mighty Power which was anxious to restore the shattered economy of Europe. Actually, it is something different. Fundamentally, it is anti-Soviet. It is anti-Soviet in the sense that it is an attempt to contain Communism within its legitimate bounds in Europe. It is anti-Soviet in the sense that it is an effort to consolidate non-Communist elements against Soviet Russia. The objective of the Marshall Plan is that it would enable Western Europe to thwart and, if necessary, to fight Communism. As a cynic put it, the United States is preparing to fight Russia to the last Frenchman.

Thus, the United States has moved away from the ideal of President Roosevelt. President Roosevelt's objective was to build up a World Order. Mr. Truman's objective is to build up the world against Russia. It was not without misgivings and without hesitation that the U.S.A. decided to  
follow this

follow this policy. As Mr. Marshall put it in his note to Soviet Russia last May, it represented the "inevitable reaction" of the American people to Soviet policy. It was America's answer to Russian expansionism. If the U.S.A. thus reacted sharply to Soviet policy, so did Russia to the new American policy. Whether Soviet Russia ever meant sincerely to cooperate in a World Order is an open question. Even Soviet Russia must have longed for a period of peace in which to restore her war-shattered economy. But soon after the war, Soviet Russia discovered evidence of the inveterate hostility of the Western Powers. Mr. Truman's declaration of American policy in respect of the atom bomb was an eye-opener to Russia. The refusal of America to share this deadly secret with her former Allies amounted, in fact, to a vote of non-confidence in Russia. Then, Russia recalled all the intrigues of the capitalist Powers, how they had tried to strangle the Soviet State at its birth and how they had, in various ways, continued this opposition ever since. The Soviet came to the conclusion that strength, brute strength, irresistible strength, was the only means by which she could survive in a hostile world.

The motto of Soviet policy can be summed up in one word, security. Now, Soviet Russia is determined to find security, greater security and still greater security. She hopes to find it by devising a vast belt of States, subservient to her, in Europe and in Asia. She wants to establish a regular Soviet belt, a cordon sanitaire. Poland, Hungary, Finland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, are all links in this iron girdle. Latterly, however, events in Yugoslavia and the apostasy of Tito have indicated that, if the Soviet tightens the belt too much, it might snap. Realistic as they are, the Soviet Government appear to have realised that they have reached the limits of expansion in Europe. Therefore, they seem to be turning their eyes more and more to Asia in pursuance of the old Russian policy of redressing in the East  
the balance

the balance of the West.

All Asia is feeling the impact of Communism. Turkey and Iran are being kept on tenterhooks by perpetual demands, often accompanied by threats. From the Palestine region, Soviet influence had so far been sedulously kept out by the Anglo-American Powers. But the birth of Israel, which the Soviet Government was in a hurry to recognise, has given Russia a voice in this region. In the East, whole slices of China are being devoured by <sup>the Communists</sup> ~~Soviet Russia~~. Outer Mongolia, which used to be an integral part of China, has practically become a Soviet Republic. And Inner Mongolia is likely to follow the Outer. A large slice of Sinkiang, the Ili region, is dominated by Russia. In fact, Russia is in a position to walk into Sinkiang at any time she pleases, as indeed she did in 1933. One third of China itself is in Communist hands and there seems to be no limit to Communist advances. In Malaya, Communist terrorist bands are still roaming about the countryside and the Burma Government is at its wits' end to fight Communism and to recover the lost provinces. In Indo-China, Ho Chi-Minh, the nationalist leader is also reputed to be a Communist; and in Indonesia, Communism is hoping to take the place of the rapidly and reluctantly and clumsily expiring Dutch colonialism. In fact, Communism is hoping to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of Imperialism in the East.

The U.S.A. cannot, of course, afford to ignore the growth of Communism in Asia. Communism is a global menace and must be fought on all fronts. That is the essence of America's policy in China and in Japan, though General McArthur thinks that, in restoring the power of Japan, he is acting in strict accordance with the tenets of the New Testament. The needs of Europe, however, are regarded as more urgent than the needs of Asia. As we all know, the Allied strategy in the last war was dominated by the motto 'Europe first'. In the cold war which is proceeding between  
the U.S.A. and

the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. too, the motto is 'Europe first'. Save Europe and all will be saved.

I have briefly explained the way in which the world has come to be divided into two blocs. Between these two blocs stands, alone, unfriended, melancholy, slow, India, belonging to neither bloc and somewhat disliked by both. How long can India remain in this condition? How long can India maintain this, so to say, stand-offish stand? If she does, will she not be crushed by the two blocs advancing towards each other with fire and brimstone? In her own interests, will it not be better for her to line up with one side or the other?

We have had no lack of advice as to what we should do. We have been advised to align ourselves with the U.S.A., the United Kingdom or the Soviet Union. Those who want us to line up with America, point out that the United States is essentially democratic while the Soviet Union is totalitarian. The U.S.A., they say, is enjoying those civil liberties for which we ourselves have been fighting. Moreover, we need the help of the United States. We need her capital, her capital goods and her technical assistance. We are only at the beginning of our industrial re-construction and there is no country whose help we need more than that of the United States. Why not, therefore, openly take the side of the U.S.A?

There is a good deal of substance in this argument. Undoubtedly, there is greater political freedom in the United States than in the Soviet Union. In the United States, unlike the Soviet Union, you have freedom of speech. You can indulge in the luxury of abusing the Government - a luxury to which we in this country are addicted to. In fact, you may say anything in the United States provided it is not something "un-American". The activities of the Committee on un-American Activities, however, show that even in the United States freedom is not altogether out of danger. It is also true that we need America's help. But we want that help as equals, not as satellites. After all, if we have something to get from  
America,

America, we have also something to give. We do not want to be bolstered up, as Japan is being bolstered up, with the primary object of being used in the war against Communism. We do not want to be a supplicant at the door of the United States as poor China has turned out to be. If you depend on someone else's help, you will depend more and more on his help and you will lose your self-confidence and your self-reliance. At the same time, your benefactor will start putting on airs. If we have to fight Communism, we would like to do so out of our own free choice and not at the dictation of the United States.

There are others who would like us to follow the Soviet bloc. They point to the evils of the capitalistic system and attribute to it the parlous state of the world today. The Soviet Union has evolved a new way of life, full of limitless possibilities. Moreover, the Soviet Government, according to them, is on the side of the under-dog both at home and abroad. The Soviet Union, unlike America and the British Commonwealth, is free from racialism; and there has been no more redoubtable opponent of colonialism than Soviet Russia. The pro-Soviet advocates, therefore, argue that India too, which is a foe of racialism and colonialism, must align herself with the Soviet Union.

There is some substance in these arguments too. It is true that the days of undiluted capitalism are over. We are not, however, sure that the only alternative to capitalism is militant Communism of the Russian type. It is also true that, on the whole, the Soviet Union has stood against racialism and colonialism. Both Mr. Molotov and Mr. Vyshinsky gave their powerful support to India in her fight in the United Nations against racial inequality in South Africa. Moreover, the Soviet Union has proved herself to be a relentless critic of colonial administration. But whether she has adopted this attitude out of love for the colonial peoples, or whether she is hoping to take the place of the Colonial Powers, is a subject on which there can be much argument. In any case, the attitude

of the Soviet Union towards the satellite States in Eastern Europe and, in particular, her conduct in Czechoslovakia which, one had hoped, would be a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe, does not inspire us with much confidence. On the contrary, they make us think that the condition of Soviet friendship is political subservience.

There is another body of opinion which would recommend that India should range herself by the side of the British Commonwealth and the Western Union. This has certain obvious advantages. The economic system of these countries, particularly of the United Kingdom, is similar to what India is herself striving to achieve; it is something different from the naked Communism of Russia and the unabashed capitalism of the U.S.A. Moreover, the countries in Western Europe have felt the impact of war more than the U.S.A. To them, another war will mean suicide and they know it; whereas, to quote a statement to which I have already referred, the U.S.A. would not mind fighting the Soviet Union to the last Frenchman or the last Englishman. It can, therefore, be argued that, if India gives the weight of her moral and material support to the British Commonwealth and the Western European countries, they might act as a brake on the race towards a third world war, in which the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. seem consciously or unconsciously engaged.

Yet, this is a choice which it is not easy for India to adopt. Human memory is not so short as to let India forget the policy of British rule which has resulted in the partition of India, with its uncomfortable and seemingly interminable consequences. Nor can we forget that a large portion of humanity - in Indo-China, in Indonesia, and in Africa - is still being exploited by the countries of Western Europe. True to her principles, India cannot abandon the cause of millions of people who hailed the birth of a free India with hope for their own emancipation. Above all,

India

India cannot forget the unfriendly attitude of the United Kingdom in the Security Council over the Kashmir dispute and the ambiguous part which she played over Hyderabad.

Latterly, however, the United Kingdom has made amends. The British have a great gift of rising to an occasion. They did so when they left India. Nothing, it may be said, became the British in India more than their leaving of it. Similarly, at the recent Commonwealth Conference in London, they showed themselves so sensitive to the sentiments of India that they have even dropped out the word 'British' from the phrase, the British Commonwealth. What exactly the relations of India with the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth should be, is a matter for anxious consideration.

I have stated the pros and cons of our joining the United States, the Soviet Union or the United Kingdom. But what exactly does the word 'joining' mean? Does it mean that we should back up that country right or wrong? Take for instance, Korea, I would like to refer briefly to the Korean problem partly because I gained an intimate knowledge of it as Chairman of the Korean Commission and partly because in Korea, more perhaps than anywhere else, we see the present division of the world in sharp focus.

For centuries, Korea was an independent State. Korea had three thousand years of independent history with only three dynastic changes, a record which few other countries possess. Towards the end of the 19th century, Korea attracted the attention of the Western Powers and of one Eastern Power, Japan. She became the bone of contention in the Sino-Japanese war of 1895 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. As a result of these wars, the ancient kingdom of Korea became, at first, a protectorate and, afterwards, a colony of Japan. For 30 years from 1910, Japan exploited Korea to her heart's content. The heartless efficiency with which she did so has no parallel in colonial history.

In 1943,

In 1943, there was a gleam of hope for Korean independence. At Cairo, the three Great Powers, the United Kingdom, the United States and China - subsequently joined by Russia - declared that they were determined that Korea shall become free and independent. A few months later, the United States and Soviet Russia took a minor, and then unnoticed, military decision. They decided that the United States should be responsible for fighting Japan and eventually taking their surrender to the south of the 38th parallel and the Soviet Union to the north. This minor military decision, however, has become a major political obstacle in the way of the unification of Korea. And the 38th parallel continues to remain even today, a sinister symbol of Power politics.

The General Assembly of the United Nations, in an effort to solve this problem and lead Korea to independence, constituted a Commission consisting of nine member-States, of which I had the honour to be the Chairman. The Soviet Union too professed to be in favour of Korean independence but refused to cooperate with the Commission. In fact, we were unable to visit the Soviet zone at all. Still, we decided to hold elections in South Korea, and as a result a Government has come into existence. The United States promptly recognised this Government as the National Government of all Korea. She has been anxious that we too should recognise it as the National Government of Korea. She has, in fact, been bringing considerable political pressure to bear on us. We have, however, been resisting this pressure because we honestly feel that a Government, constituted in South Korea, even though it may have come into existence as a result of elections held under the observation of the UN Commission, cannot be regarded as the National Government of Korea.

To do so,



To do so, we feel, would be to harden and perpetuate the division of Korea.

I mention this merely as the kind of problem which arises as an off-shoot of Power politics. It is also an instance of that independent attitude which India is determined to adopt in such matters.

Over Korea, India did adopt an independent attitude, independent of both the United States and the Soviet Union. If we had wanted to placate the Soviet Union, we would have voted against the resolution of the General Assembly constituting the UN Commission on Korea. Not only did we refuse to do so, but we accepted the membership of the Commission and I, as delegate for India, accepted its Chairmanship. If, on the other hand, we wanted to placate the United States, we would have recognised the new Government in South Korea as the National Government, as the United States themselves, and China, have done. We declined to do so because we felt that this would be to betray the goal of Korean unity. In adopting this attitude, we caused annoyance - both to the United States and to the Soviet Union. Indeed, the Soviet Government threw out a hint that if India supported them over Korea, they in return would support us over Kashmir. But we refused to sacrifice our principles to expediency; and throughout the Kashmir debate in the Security Council, the Soviet Union remained stonily silent. On the whole, I think it is not unfair to say that, while the Great Powers looked at the Korean problem in its relation to their rivalries, we regarded it from one standpoint and one only, namely the welfare and the aspirations of the Korean people.

It is time I concluded this rather rambling talk. I began by saying that, in talking about India's foreign policy, I might be accused of talking on a subject which did not exist. In one sense, such a criticism would be correct.

Our foreign policy

Our foreign policy does not exist as a finished product. It has not been finally formulated. In fact, there is no finality about foreign policy. It has to be evolved from time to time, adjusted to changing circumstances. Moreover, India is new to the international sphere. It is true that, even in the British period, India used to attend international conferences; and hand-picked politicians used to strut and fret their hour on the international stage. But in those days, the strings were all in British hands. It is barely two years since we became masters in our own house. In our inexperience, we may have made many mistakes and I have little doubt we shall make many more. But our objectives are fundamentally sound.

Foreign policy is essentially a combination of objectives and methods. Our objectives have been defined by our Prime Minister, one of the few Indians who has a complete grip over international affairs, one who has that rarest of all gifts, political vision. Our objectives, as defined by him, are sound, but the methods of attaining those objectives have still to be learnt by us in the hard school of experience.

Our foreign policy has been criticised as neutral, passive, weak-kneed. We have been criticised by both sides as perpetually sitting on the fence. But our neutrality is not a fad. We shall not hesitate to discard it if ever we find that it is contrary to our national interest or to the interest of world peace. In any case, it is not a passive neutrality which we are following. It is no more passive than non-violence. In Mahatma Gandhi's hands, non-violence became an instrument of attaining freedom, the means of resisting tyranny. So also, our neutrality is meant to be a means of preserving world peace and of opposing all those evils which threaten world peace, racialism, colonialism and rampant Communism. Thus, our foreign policy is not

is not passive but active, not negative but positive, not static but dynamic. This, gentlemen, is the policy which you and I have to carry out - I, with my feeble pen and tongue, and you, with your sword which, as you have shown recently, you can wield, when called upon, with power, restraint and humanity.