

ON THE RELATION
BETWEEN MILITARY
AND ECONOMIC
NON-ALIGNMENT

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Non-alignment as a structure and an ongoing world process, with an impressive number of conferences and resolutions,¹ is one of the many reactions of what used to be, and still to some extent is, the world periphery against the world center. It is a reflection of the logic of the world center in the periphery, but essentially in political-military terms rather than socio-economic terms. The latter is taken up by the Group of 77, using UNCTAD as its secretariat and by other organizations of a more regional nature. The topic of the present paper is to explore the inter-relationship between these two periphery actions, in a sense the inter-relationship between two major concepts in the post second world war era: peace and development.

The point of departure is the so-called East-West conflict, a much too broad term where a more geographically restrictive term, the North-East - North-West conflict would be more appropriate. On the world map as seen by the United Nations this is essentially a conflict within the space covered by the Economic Commission for Europe, meaning the North Atlantic and the European area, actually not very small since it does span the whole world in the Northern hemisphere, from the Bering Strait around to the Bering Strait, from Alaska to Kamchatka. The power of this region when it comes to organizing the rest of the world remains considerable, although that may now, due to the tremendous forces released by the crisis of the two systems, be slowly moving towards the end. In this process it is certainly in the interest of the South, the rest of the world, to try to stay clear of both conflict and crisis, particularly as the two may easily become inter-related: the more pronounced the crisis, the more may the two superpowers try to conceal the scandalous bankruptcy of both systems - when it comes to providing the inhabitants with a decent, human life - by means of a war.

The non-aligned movement, started by three major countries, Yugoslavia, Egypt, India with one of them well inside the Northern sphere, has had a major effect in trying to insulate the South from the battle among the giants in the North. One may describe it as a movement to reduce the conductivity of the conflict energy roaming around in the Northern sphere in the Southern direction. The methodology is simple but also terribly important: to stay out of the military alliances, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Treaty Organization as they emerged in 1949 and 1955 respectively. Of course this is the most narrow definition of non-alignment. There will also be a stricter definition which will include the non-availability of one's own country when it comes to military sources or assets of any kind, including not only bases, but also strategically important raw materials, availability as a market for excess military production in the North, etc. ⁽²⁾

Non-alignment does not necessarily imply political-moral non-alignment. There may be matters strictly pertaining to the superpower conflict as such on which a non-aligned country may not pronounce itself (perhaps mainly because the matter is uninteresting for others). But generally a non-aligned country will reserve for itself its right to be non-aligned in the sense that its stand on an issue involving the superpowers and their allies is dictated by other principles than loyalty to either of the blocks. As the Western part of the bellicose system up in the North also was the colonial center, and the colonial center for some reason seems to think that the former colonial periphery owes it some loyalty, they have tended to be surprised when voting in the United Nations, from the Third World, increasingly has been in their disfavor. ⁽³⁾ They might have tolerated fifty-fifty splits, the division that the Eastern part of the bellicose system scornfully (and rightly,

I think) characterizes as "objectivism" rather than objectivity. But they try to see voting increasingly in their disfavor as a sign either of Eastern infiltration, or moral degradation. They have, as governments, certainly not had the courage openly to see that it may simply be a sign that on a world scale (as opposed to a European scale) the Western part has committed more atrocities than the Eastern part of the North. And Afghanistan is not the equivalent of Indo-China.⁴

The non-aligned movement has been an important counter to what one might call the Dulles system based on the ancient maxim that "He who is not with me is against me", calling for the enrollment of the whole world in the crusade against communism. The Dulles system, when really implemented, means a bi-polarization of the whole world, a dichotomous wedge driven between its "communist" part and the rest, with nothing but hostility between the two parts and no overt hostility within them. The non-aligned movement has refused to accept that; it may have yielded to regional arrangements, but all the time under the assumption that there should be no automatic transfer of a conflict in the European space (or Northern space in general) to the rest of the world. The path-breaker was Tito, in June 1948, when he not only broke the military-political tie to the Soviet Union, but also refused to join in any institutionalized manner the Western system. Although there has been considerable economic integration into the Western system later on, as will be argued, Yugoslavia has consistently continued along that line, the line of non-alignment or neutrality for that matter, and then conceived of neutrality as non-alignment in the strict sense.⁵

However, this is a difficult course to steer in a problematic, conflict and crisis ridden, and terribly top-heavy world. The problem with non-alignment is that it touches

only the political-military aspects of the East-West conflict. In its weak interpretation it exempts the parties from the disciplining influence of alliance membership in terms of sharing costs and risks. In the stricter senses it also exempts them from availability as a sender and receiver of "military assets" and from the operation of the frighteningly powerful military-bureaucratic-corporate intelligentsia complexes operating within the superpowers, with similar complexes inside their allies.

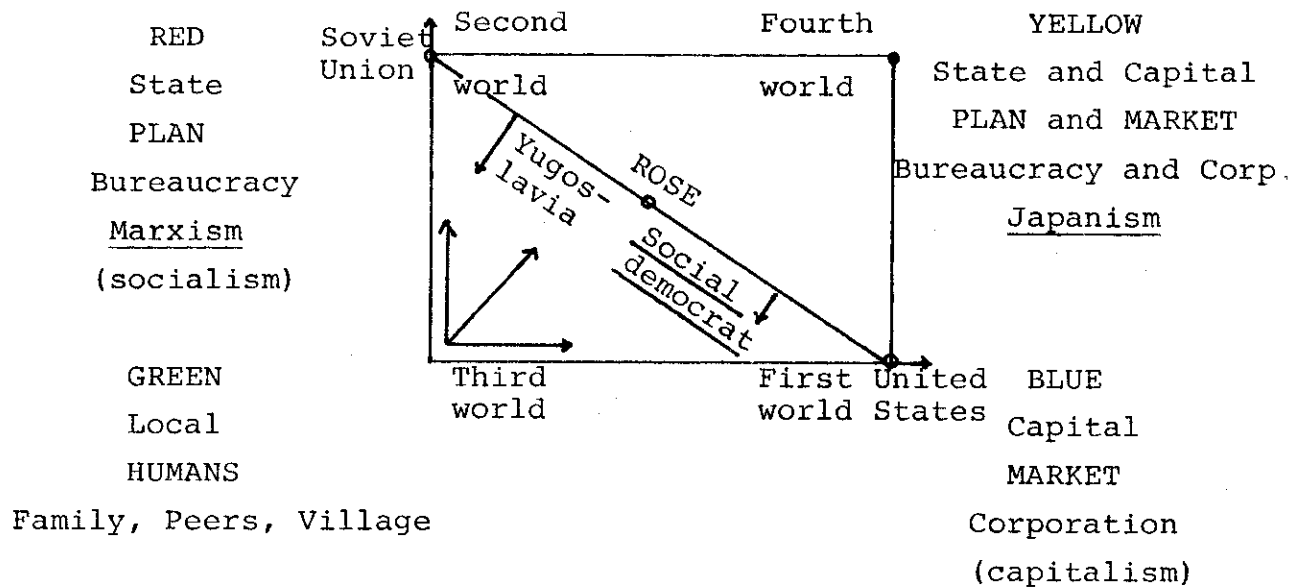
But these are the consequences rather than the causes of the East-West conflict. The causes are to be found in values and interests, they are ideological on the one hand and very material on the other. Two models of what a society should look like, in other words two models of development are pitted against each other: the capitalist, market-based model with very strong corporations underpinned by a liberal or conservative ideology on the one hand and a socialist, plan-oriented with very strong bureaucracies underpinned by a Marxist ideology on the other.

And the two systems have very concrete interests here seen as the interest in using the whole world to spin their web of economic cycles with centers in the North-West in the first case, and the geopolitical security interest of the Soviet Union in having a security belt of surrounding states that if not friendly are at least not hostile to them. Of course it is not as dichotomous as this: the United States would also get very nervous if its two geographical neighbours, Canada and Mexico should develop in a hostile direction and the Soviet Union is not without interest in markets and raw material availability in other parts of the world. But by and large this description is seen as covering the most important aspects of that complex of issues known as the "East-West conflict" and for that reason can be used in what follows.

And the basic point in what follows is simply this: it is only by being at least to some extent non-aligned also in terms of values/ideologies and interests that non-alignment can become not only credible, but also implementable as a world force of major significance. In order to explore this thesis the diagram on the next page may be useful.

In this diagram the two major ideologies constitute the two axes, they are easily recognizable by means of key concepts.⁶ Of course, in the United States there is also a state and a bureaucracy, but they are seen as subordinate to corporate interests and processes. Similarly, there are certainly markets in the Soviet Union, but they are seen as marginal and subordinate to more fundamental bureaucratic interests and processes, built around the notion of planning. Needless to say there are many countries that cannot be classified as that extreme but perhaps be seen as located on the diagonal between these two: I would place Yugoslavia in the middle as a country combining micro-socialism (the self-management formula inside Yugoslavic economic institutions) with macro-capitalism (the basically capitalist nature of the Yugoslav republic and national market) and then the Northern European welfare states as located somewhere between Yugoslavia and the United States. But characteristic of all the countries on this diagonal is a relatively high level of national market and/or plan articulation. And another characteristic, terrifyingly important in the present world is that precisely the two powers that are most extreme when it comes to accumulation of weapons of mass destruction are also among the countries most extreme when it comes to not only ideological position but also implementation of the ideology.

Figure I Development as national plan and market articulation



There is something dead or at least moribund about this diagonal. It has a ring of the nineteenth century,⁷ it was meaningful when both ideologies, Liberalism and Marxism, were young, fresh and creative. And this is of course also a reason why so many countries have found it fruitless to conceive of socio-economic politics in terms of plan or market and have preferred to see it in terms of plan and market. However, it is not so easy to implement both at the same time, particularly not for people whose minds have been trained to conceive of the two as mutually exclusive.

And this is where the second diagonal enters the analysis, the one stretching from the green corner down to the left up to the yellow/golden corner to the right. Down in the green corner are social systems that do not depend on national markets of national planning. They are local systems, the planning is within families, usually in the extended sense; the markets tend to be village markets or their equivalents. One would easily recognize in this type of description very much of what was the Third World, and much of what the two major ideologies that have come out of the Third World after the Second World War, Gandhism and Maoism might see as not only what was but also what should be, but then in a very much improved fashion. Moreover, roughly speaking, this is the kind of social formation that the green wave in Europe (and not only in Western Europe, much of what happens in Poland can also be seen in this perspective) stands for.

However, this is not the only position on what here would be referred to as main diagonal, and not only in order to follow mathematical practice. It continues through the Yugoslav and other efforts to create a balance between state and capital, between plan and market and up to the yellow/golden corner where Japan may be seen as having as a basic

factor underlying its economic power a successful effort to combine fully articulated market forces with fully articulated planning. The contradictions between the two was and is basic not only in polarizing ideologies, but also in orienting economic practice in the more ideological parts of the North. It will be understood that in the following Japan is not seen as a part of the North, certainly not as a part of the North-West either, but as an industrialized country pursuing a very different type of policy.

All along this main diagonal are systems that differ from the systems run by the superpowers; and here it should be said in defence of the superpowers that they are certainly also taking themselves the medicine they so eagerly prescribe for others⁸. Since they pursue different policies it is more difficult for the superpowers to penetrate them. This is most clearly seen by comparing the countries on the main diagonal with the countries close to the superpowers both in ideology and what they actually try to do in shaping their countries. Incidentally - "shaping" is exactly the word: we live in the era of "development", the effort to shape countries from the state in which they were when colonialism - in other words slavery at the collective level of nations - came to an end in the 1960s (with some very few exceptions, South-Africa being the major one). It is as simple as this: if a country ideologically is akin to one of the superpowers it is of course susceptible to the normative power of ideology; after all the superpowers are specialists in that type of ideology and have at their disposal thousands, even millions of people who can express the ideology correctly. And in addition to this and perhaps more importantly: they are susceptible to the material incentives that come along with the ideology. The superpowers know how to build market economies and planned economies, they have the expertise and in addition to that

have the concrete tools with which to do it and the material incentives when it is being done⁹. Those material incentives may take the form of technical assistance, and it may take the form of concrete arrangements when the systems are operating, provided a sufficiently high level of subordination is demonstrated. To put it very simply: the superpowers have much more of a handle on countries ideologically and socio-economically in their own camps than on other countries.

Some years ago China was a very green country, in the era of the Cultural Revolution, before the death of Mao Zedong¹⁰. The local level was predominant. One may be in favour of this or against it; the point in the present context is simply that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union had much of a handle on the Chinese system. There were no national markets to speak of, with international spill-over, into which the United States could launch their considerable expertise and manipulatory resources. To the extent there were markets they were very local, and not necessarily in monetary terms. And as to the Soviet Union: there certainly was planning, but it was at a very local level, more at the level of the Peoples Commune and headed and implemented by the Revolutionary Committee than at the national level headed and implemented by the Central Committee of the Party and the national bureaucracies. Soviet Union has expertise in the latter, not in the former - they have always been distrustful of the local level except as a deliverer of goods and ideas to be processed at higher levels, and as a receiver of processed goods and processed ideas.

As the People's Republic of China, after the death of Mao Zedong, moved further away from this "green" corner towards an interesting and problematic combination of national market economy with national planning both the United States

and the Soviet Union became more interested because they saw more opportunities. The United States was the first to take up the challenge, promising all kinds of resources that could be helpful in expanding a national market economy, with international spill-overs. The Soviet Union was impeded by the tightly spun web of conflict between these two giant powers, but seems recently to make more progress in the efforts to be conciliatory, no doubt launching into the negotiations some offers of high planning expertise, etc. It is interesting to note that the Chinese course of action seems to develop in both directions at the same time, evidenced very clearly by the first move the People's Republic took after the death of Mao Zedong in the sphere of foreign affairs: in the direction of Yugoslavia.¹¹

At the other end of this main diagonal Japan is located. I shall never forget the impression it made on the present author when, on the very first day of my first visit in Japan in January 1968, I encountered a Soviet gosplan (the center of planning) specialist who was studying the Japanese economy and somewhat desperately had come to the conclusion that: "Die verdamnten japanischen Kapitalisten machen den Sozialismus besser als wir." (The damned Japanese capitalists are better at socialism than we are). A very insightful remark indeed; which could have been matched with a US specialist remark to the effect that "the damned Japanese socialists make capitalism better than we do" if it had not been for the circumstance that people with that level of insight seem to be very scarce in the Western superpower. At any rate, there are very strongly articulated elements of both systems in Japan although the Japanese system should be seen basically as sui generis, as being of its own kind, the ideology best described as "Japanism". It has its own logic, its own considerable strength, actually independent of ideological and material inputs from

either superpower.

But Japan is certainly not non-aligned, it is a part of the US security system! Is it really? Technically, yes. Where Japan stands or will stand in case a major conflict should erupt is quite another question. Japan has painstakingly avoided the type of commitment that makes for automaticity in case a conflict should erupt, preferring to stand at the by-lines as Japan did both during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, making considerable profits. The US effort to prop Japan into a higher level of military commitment¹², partly stimulated by the US belief that much of Japan's economic prowess comes from its relatively low military expenditure may very easily backfire. It may provide a Japan with a stimulus to develop forces of its own that may be used in directions surprising to the United States, and may also give them a legitimate incentive to develop a military industry of their own that with Japanese capability quickly could become highly competitive with the US military industry and for that reason cause even more unemployment and economic crisis in the superpower. Thus, even if Japan today is aligned I would classify her as "potentially non-aligned", in a state of unstable equilibrium that could easily make Japan change her position. Incidentally, this should not be confused with the political party structure in Japan: the conservative party that has been in power most of the time after the Second World War (LDP) might also be a carrier of non-alignment, just as much as it has been in favor of alignment under the United States up til now. Nor should it be confused with pacifism or anti-militarism: a move of that kind might be highly compatible with some kind of resurging Japanese militarism.

Let us now look at the main diagonal again. A major conclusion is that the countries that have been most im-

portant in some phase or another in the non-aligned movement are countries on the main diagonal. Of the three founding countries Yugoslavia had already at an early stage placed herself in the middle of this diagram, perhaps in that phase socio-economically closer to the Soviet end of the spectrum. India had in that period, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Neru, still much of the Gandhian reality, even if the official ideology was strongly influenced by London School of Economics, by what could be referred to as "Laskiology" (after the late Professor Harold Laski)¹³. But India has by no means solved its basic dilemma, its contradiction between its green tendencies on the one hand and its red-rose-blue inclinations on the other, making for the low level of predictability that must have been to the despair of the superpowers during the whole period, now more than 35 years, of independence (since 1947).

The US believes it is dealing with a market economy and is profoundly disturbed sometime later to find both Coca Cola and IBM in basic trouble¹⁴. The Soviet Union may hope they are dealing with a planned economy then to see a tremendous resurgence of banya capitalism of often a very subtle kind, not easily understood by persons trained at the Harvard Business School or some similar places. To this, then, should also be added how disappointing India has been to the people believing in green/alternative development, in Gandhism of various kinds, people who then easily would issue certificates of betrayal to the Indian leadership. And something not too different from this may also be said about the third founding country: Egypt. The green forces have been insignificant indeed, but the oscillation back and forth along the red-blue axis has caused the same type of despair among the superpowers, who have been invited and disinvited (even kicked out) at more or less regular intervals.

If we now go even one step further back, to the Bandoeng conference, seeing that as a starter in 1955 of the non-aligned movement just as much as the Beograd 1961

conference, the leading role of China is more clearly seen, certainly at that time not a country that could be easily classified as red or blue in the occidental sense this was a mistake the Soviet Union made, incidentally.

In short, the thesis that non-alignment can only become operational in a military sense if it has a solid ideological and socio-economic underpinning seems to be a strong one. If a country is in either camp, economically speaking, then it will not only be susceptible to ideological and renumeration power emanating from the superpowers, but also to the threats of punitive power. This may take various forms. The simplest one would be blackmail: "If you do not accept to be under my protection you will suffer the consequences, from gunboat diplomacy to withdrawal of all types of cooperation and assistance". Then there is the other form: "The world is a dangerous place, there are enemies all around, you need my protection". Ideological communality, combined with the promise of rewards if only weak non-alignment or no non-alignment at all is pursued (rather than strict non-alignment) may work miracles, and open for a base or two. Of course countries of this type become less credible as members of the non-aligned movement, Cuba being the example right now since the chairmanship of the movement for the time being rests with that country¹⁵. And this, incidentally, is also a major reason why India seems to continue being some kind of "leader of the Third World", precisely because she combines ideological, material and military non-alignment even if it is in a confused, often non-explicit and oscillating way. China might have had the same type of position if China had not been so confusing and so closed to others.

Then some important implications of this type of thinking for the future of the non-aligned movement.

Most importantly, there is the necessity of working out alternative models of development, along the main diagonal. Whether green, rose or yellow-golden, to stick to the colors of the diagram, may from this perspective matter less than the fact that they are not clearly blue or red. And here history may be on the side of the non-aligned movement: both of these systems, as mentioned above, are in fundamental crisis. When capitalism was in crisis and socialism was still very new and relatively untried it was but natural that many Third World elites would opt in favor of strong state, strong planning and weak national markets and corporations.¹⁶ Later, when the true nature of the Soviet Union became more clear, with Gulag as its major expression and symbol, not only doubts but also direct aversion developed. In a sense this was unfair to the system as a more favorable conclusion might emerge judging it by its more modest expressions, such as Bulgaria which right now experiences considerable economic success.¹⁷ But the system is in disrepute, and even if the capitalist system showed considerable growth in the 1960's it is now, in the 1980's much more clear how vulnerable it is precisely to itself, to its own unstoppable type of economic growth. The hectic, typhoid fever-like patterns of behaviour of the capitalist system as well as the static, bureaucratically rigid non-behaviour of the socialist systems could both be a blessing in disguise to the South: an incentive to stimulate innovative behaviour, a negative learning that might be translated to constructive search for something new.

This something new, in the mind of the present author, might be located in the vast territory roughly described as light green-light red-light blue¹⁸; countries like at present but with much more local autonomy also economically speaking, with smaller scale capitalism and smaller scale socialism, meaning small corporations and small national ministries.

In short, the plea would not be for a "dark green" country consisting of mutually isolated and highly self-sufficient communities, essentially agricultural with very light industry only. However much this may have been both the Gandhian and the Maoist perspective in certain phases it is hardly compatible with the images and dreams held by most of the world population today.¹⁹

Then, third, there is the necessity of articulating economic non-alignment as a part of the general stand in confrontations with the crisis-ridden and conflict-ridden systems of the North. This may in some stage reduce the number of explicit non-aligned countries, and there may be considerable fear of losing quantity in the search for quality. But it may also be worthwhile, particularly if India and China, the two most populous countries in the world accounting for much more than one third of human-kind could come to a better understanding.

Finally, in so doing the countries would be less susceptible to the United States as markets and sources of raw materials. There would also be less of a threat to the Soviet Union, when they are bordering countries, because they would not be seen as actual or potential allies of the United States. A condition for seeing it this way would be a recognition that the Soviet Union has a legitimate security interest, easily seen by having a look at Russian and Soviet history since, say, 1812. If five major invasions do not convince, what would convince people that expansionism has been into rather than from what today is Soviet territory?²⁰

And, thus, maybe, someday we could come closer to the dream of combining peace and development rather than making a travesty of either. Non-alignment has demonstrated the possibility of being militarily independent. Time has come to take the next step.

NOTES

[1] The series of conferences, Beograd 1964, Cairo 1964, Lusaka 1970, Georgetown 1972, Colombo 1976, Havana 1979 is in itself a sign of Third world alignment in their non-alignment; emanating from a very special part of Europe, then involving all three parts of the Third world.

[2] Traditionally, the assumption of the status as "neutral" has been seen to carry the obligation to be armed, in order to defend the neutrality. Non-alignment alone carries no such obligation.

[3] To take but one recent example: the nuclear freeze resolution in the UN, adopted against, essentially, only NATO members [with Denmark abstaining, together with Iceland and Greece]. The vote on the UN Law of the Sea was more complicated as geography plays a major role but some of the same structure can be seen. [For the freeze resolution, see Indian Express 25/11/82].

[4] This is not because the wars of Indo-China [so far] lasted longer and because there was more killing [so far] involved. It is only because the other superpower, the Soviet Union, had and has some element of legitimacy in demanding that Afghanistan, a border country, should not possibly serve as a platform for an attack against the Soviet Union. The solution, of course, lies in strict non-alignment for Afghanistan. Indo-China was and is by no stretch of imagination a security threat to the US.

[5] There is the famous statement by Tito to the effect that "we should rather go hungry and barefooted than sacrifice our independence" [Tito, Govori i članci, Vol. V, p. 21]; see the general analysis by one of the architects of non-alignment [and secretary general of the first conference, Leo Mates, in Non-Alignment Theory and Current Policy, Beograd, 1972, p.207ff where it is also pointed out that the Western countries had indicated that Yugoslavia's "independence, integrity and frontiers could best be safeguarded if we were to join the North Atlantic Pact" (p. 207)].

[6] See Johan Galtung, A Farewell to "Development", forthcoming, Oslo, 1983.

[7] "Two Ways of Being Western: Some Similarities Between Liberalism and Marxism", op.cit.

[8] In fact, it is important that the two superpowers are so consistent: on top in offensive weaponry and on top as realizations of the respective systems. If they were not ideologically/socially so extreme the high level of destructive power might not have been so dangerous and vice versa: had they had less destructive power and capacity at organizing others into alliances it might not have been so dangerous that they are so extreme.

[9] For a general theory of power along these lines, see Johan Galtung, The European Community, A Superpower in the Making, London, Allen & Unwin, 1979, chapter 3 and The True Worlds, Free Press/MacMillan, New York, 1980, chapter 2.4.

[10] For one theory of the Chinese zig-zag pattern of development, see Johan Galtung, "Is there a Chinese Strategy of Development", with a critical comment by Mark Selden, "The Inner Logic of Chinese Development", Review, V, 3, Winter 1982.

[11] This was a top level delegation, also to study the Yugoslav pattern of self-management - obviously prepared for some time.

[12] This is written Fall 1982.

[13] "Fabianism" is another word that comes to the mind, all terms that refer to Britain, a colonial power in a crisis of capitalism in the 1930s -- but that was the source of inspiration for Indian leadership of the 1950s.

[14] In both cases over transfer of technology.

[15] Since the 1979 Havana conference. But then Cuba is the the most provocative symbol of US defeat, because of proximity and because the imperialism against which the Cuban revolution is directed so obviously was US imperialism.

[16] The impressions from the 1930s, capitalism in crisis, were still strong on the minds of many Third world leaders in the world that emerged after 1945 - only five years after the 1930s, incidentally.

[17] As an example, see the article by J.B. Oakes, "In Bulgaria, a Regime Without a Dissidence", Int. Herald Tribune, 10 September 1982. Bulgaria has the lowest debt per capita or as percentage of export in Eastern Europe.

[18] See the book referred to in footnote 6 above.

[19] Those dreams are, it seems, to a large extent urban dreams, if not necessarily so industrial as found in many countries today. But they are not pastoral dreams, in most cases.

[20] With the important exception of countries bordering on the Soviet Union, such as Finland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan - but then it may be argued that these excursions were to strengthen the security belt.