

Some question the wisdom of this course. They believe that through imposition of ideologies, one side or the other will gain a strategic advantage. This concern is rooted in historical experiences during the fifties and sixties -- the difficult years of decolonization in large parts of the world -- when we witnessed the courtship by the Soviet Union of many of these countries, fuelled in part by their own suspicions of their former colonial masters in the West. But today we see little homogeneous adherence to a single ideology in the Third World. Political forms and institutions vary greatly, determined in part by cultural factors which transcend the rigid tenets of Soviet ideology. In retrospect, we know that the ideological promotion of decolonization brought few countries into the Soviet orbit -- and these only for short periods of time. In addition, Cuba's efforts within the Non-Aligned Movement have only increased Third World suspicions of Soviet motives, particularly since the invasion of Afghanistan. In short, I believe that few Third World nations, having attained independence from Western colonial powers, are prepared to subject themselves ideologically to another power, especially the Soviet Union.

Those of you familiar with the Declaration of the Ottawa Summit may have a variety of views about how well the heads of government and others involved in that process met the concerns of the developing nations. And no doubt some of those views will be elaborated in the course of this conference. From my own vantage point, I believe the Summit consensus has gone a long way in identifying common ground with at least some of the principles that have been advanced by Canada for some years. For example:

The Summit quite explicitly supported the "stability, independence and genuine non-alignment of developing countries". This implicitly supports the immunization of the Third World from East-West confrontations. Explicitly, it is a commitment to non-interference where there is genuine non-alignment.

Beyond this, however, I believe that one very positive result of the Summit was an agreement to resume preparations for global negotiations. The significance of this commitment should not be underestimated, since in essence it represents -- for some Summit partners at least -- a return to a position