

COLLECTIVE SECURITY

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Introduction:

- The concept of collective security is of recent origin.
- It is another important method of securing peace in the present day world.
- It is a device of maintaining peace and preventing aggression.
- Under this system peace can be maintained by the joint action of all the states against a state which resorts to war.
- The doctrine of collective security is nothing but an extension of the principle of 'one for all and all for one' to the field of international relations.

Meaning:

- The word '**security**' stands for a *goal* and the word '**collective**' represents the *means* employed.
- Collective security means a distribution of power by which the overwhelming portion is in the hands of peace.
- Again it is based on the principle of unity.
- A war anywhere against anyone and by anyone is considered as a war against everyone.
- According to George Schwarzenberger “collective security is the machinery for joint action in order to prevent or counter any attack against an established international order.”

Nature of Collective Security:

- Certain important implications of this principle are as follows –
 1. The basic principle of collective security is that an attack on any one state will be regarded as an attack on all the states.
 2. It is a machinery for joint action in order to prevent any attack against an established international order.
 3. Attack on any nation is a threat to peace everywhere & therefore abandon the ways of neutrality and to create a more integral and interdependent world environment.
 4. Collective security was aimed at providing a deterrent to war and defend the interest of peace loving states.
 5. Collective security is a device to control the management of power and aims at restoration of peace in the world.

Assumptions of Collective Security:

1. Collective enforcement assumes a status quo or a situation of peace about which the nations with predominant strength agree.
2. Collective security demands that nations subscribing to the status quo should be willing and be able at all times to muster overwhelming strength for collective defence in time of conflict. E. g. UN Peace keeping force.
3. In the contemporary world of unequal powers, it is essential that at least the major powers must enjoy a minimum of political solidarity

Assumptions....

- The basic goal of collective security is not only to prevent war but also to protect the victim by means of collective action of the peace loving members of the international community. The assumptions of collective security are –
 1. War is a reality, and
 2. Power is an effective means to reduce the incidence of war.

Collective Security and League of Nations:

- The doctrine of collective security was given legal basis by the League of Nations.
- It imposed an obligation on the members to refrain from taking action which threatened world peace and security and also to accept the competence of international authority to take appropriate counter measures.
- Articles from 10 to 16 of the League Covenant accorded a legal status to the principle of collective security and dealt with collective security arrangement under the League.

Collective security & the League....

- The League of Nations from the beginning itself was not sufficiently broad in membership as it never included all the great powers. So it did not appear to be an effective security organization. Its weakness was revealed in the Manchurian Crisis 1931, Nazi Germany's attack on Poland, Italy on Ethiopia, etc.
- It proved that the collective security effort was half hearted. It did never develop a security system worthy of the name, in spite of Art. 16 of the covenant.
- So collective security idea did not develop into a working system under the League.

Collective Security & UNO:

- The UN Charter also contains provisions regarding collective security. These provisions are much more elaborative and more far reaching.
- Art. 1 calls for 'effective collective measures' to prevent the threat to peace and to suppress the acts of aggression.
- Chapter VII gives elaborate details of the measure.
- Art. From 39 to 51 of the Charter deal with this subject.
- Art. 43 calls upon the member states to make available the armed forces and provide necessary assistances and facilities for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.
- Art. 51 specifically recognizes the inherent right of individual or collective self defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the UN.

Collective security in practice:

- The Korean crisis was the first test of the security system as envisaged under the UN Charter.
- On June 25, 1950 N. Korea attacked S. Korea.
- The Security Council convened meeting of its members and decided to take enforcement action against N. Korea.
- It asked N. Korea to cease hostilities immediately and found the action of N. Korea as breach of peace.
- Since N. Korea refused to withdraw its forces, the Security Council realized the need for taking Military action against N. Korea.
- So the UN command under General Mac Arthur was set up with the armed forces of 18 countries and finally succeeded in ousting the N. Koreans from the soil of S.Korea.

Uniting for Peace Resolution and Collective Security:

- The UN application of collective security in Korea revealed certain defects.
- To remove these defects the 'Uniting for peace Resolution has been passed in 1950.
- It is an important landmark towards implementing the collective security measures.
- It provides for collective action even when a Security Council resolution is vetoed.
- By virtue of this resolution the General Assembly became the ultimate custodian of collective security.

Operation of Collective Security in other cases:

- In certain other cases also collective security measures were employed like –
- The Suez Crisis 1956, The Lebanon Crisis 1958, the Congo 1960, the Cyprus 1963, West Iran 1962, Yemen 1963, Kashmir 1965, Middle East 1967, the Afghan issue etc.
- The major UN efforts recently undertaken in the gulf crisis, Cambodia, El Salvador and former Yugoslavia.

Peace-Keeping Today:

- Traditionally, peace-keeping was carefully organized with troops from member states to serve under the command of the Secretary General of the UN.
- The objective of the troops were to keep an agreed ceasefire. These troops were collectively financed & organized to diffuse the crisis.
- peace-keeping forces today are not limited to keeping away warring parties but many a times they are expected to safeguard humanitarian relief operations, to monitor human rights, to assist in mine clearance, to support electoral assistance, to provide police support and so on.

Peace-keeping....

- In addition to peace-keeping and peace-enforcement, the UN also undertakes peace-making which means negotiation. This is necessary after any conflict to build trust and co-operation among the former enemies.
- Peace building also involves nation building which is capable for sustaining its sovereignty.
- Thus peace keeping, peace enforcement and peace building are all inter-related. So collective security today works under a broad structure of peaceful co-existence of nations.

Assessment of Collective security under UN:

- Practicability of the collective security principle is doubtful and also a dangerous one.
- Morgenthau says that under this principle no war could be localized and every war would become a world war.
- Following are some of the weaknesses of the system of collective security as envisaged by the UN Charter.
 1. Under this system, there is no place for neutral nations to maintain neutrality. As a result of this, Switzerland, a neutral country stayed out of the UN.

Critical assessment of the principle:

2. Secondly, the concept of collective responsibility had to be reconciled with the right of self defence which is given to member states. In other words, it is difficult to determine the aggressor.
3. Thirdly during the cold war period, it was difficult for the UN to exercise control over the actions of states, since the security council cannot take any action if any major power vetoes the action.
4. Collective security is based on the assumption that all states should have equal say in arriving at collective decision. But usually, the big states take major decisions and the small powers are expected to support unconditionally such collective decisions.

Critical assessment.....

5. The experience of the working of collective security during the past few years under the UN shows that it had been effective only against middle powers and small states, but it could not take any action against the big powers/states which have the support of the big powers.
 - For example, when China attacked India in 1962, there was no collective security to protect India.
 - Similarly, when Soviet Union intervened in Hungary in 1956 and the WARSAW powers invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 and so on.

Problems of Collective Security:

- There are many problems of operating collective security which are as follows –
 1. Conflict of independent F. policies of different nation states. Many times the nations fails to come together o check the aggressive actions of a country as it goes against their national interest to do so.
 2. The psychological blocks are also created towards the collective security which has its cause in the ideological conflict and resentment. E.g. capitalism v/s communism conflict.

Problems of collective security..

3. The relationship between collective security and peaceful change is very complex. Collective security is neutral towards peaceful change.
4. It is difficult to make the nations to feel that the security of one becomes the security of all to involve collective action for the preservation of the established international order.

Conclusion:

- Despite the weaknesses of the collective security system, it cannot be called as irrelevant to the contemporary situation of world politics.
- Theoretically the collective security system is inherent with weaknesses but in practice, it has developed means to adapt itself by incorporating preventive diplomacy and peace keeping to make it operable.
- Collective security today may become successful only if it is combined with other approaches to peace or with other pacific means for the settlement of disputes.