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NSC BRIEFING

27 April 1955

BANDUNG CONFERENCE SUMMARY

I. Most remarkable aspect of Bandung conference was effective role played by aggressive anti-Communist delegations.

A. Seized initiative at outset, when Turks and Paks successfully squelched Nehru's proposal to dispense with opening speeches.

B. Imposing parade of speakers mounted rostrum to denounce Communism:

1. Columbia-educated Jamali (Iraq) made particularly effective attack: Said Communists "confront world with new form colonialism, much deadlier than the old."

2. When opening speeches concluded, Romulo commented: "America doesn't realize how many friends it has here."

C. Anti-Communists also dominated conference committees.

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D. While avoiding dogmatic positions, anti-Communist group repeatedly thwarted or heavily amended objectionable proposals:

1. Favorite maneuver was to recommend that issues before conference to be dealt with within framework of the UN.
2. Thus, instead of adopting Communist-neutralist proposals regarding "co-existence" and "five principles," conference's closing communiqué held that "nations should practice tolerance and live together in peace" in accordance with principles of UN charter and that each country had right to defend itself singly or collectively, as recognized by UN charter.

E. Denunciation of colonialism, which conference sponsors expected to be common denominator at Bandung, was also turned into weapon by anti-Communists:

1. After long battle, colonialism was denounced--"in whatever form it may manifest itself"--a statement designed to cover present Communist expansion as well as past Western history.

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2. Only important issue on which all conferees readily agreed: French should quit N. Africa.

F. At end of conference Mohammed Ali told Ambassador Cumming was a 75 percent victory for free world.

II. Neutrals--primarily responsible for calling conference--were forced to take back seat, came away disappointed that meeting did not avoid controversy.

A. Nehru, who hoped to direct conference, probably ended up the unhappiest man in Bandung, with both his views and leadership quickly rejected.

B. He probably also stung by fact that Chou's offer to negotiate with US on Formosa Straits "tensions" followed immediately after Ceylon's slashing attack on Communism.

1. Sequence made it appear that lengthy Indian efforts to achieve US-ChiCom talks had been wasted labor.

C. In closing speech Nehru reaffirmed neutralist faith: exhorted conferees not to be "camp followers of either America or Russia."

1. May sulk and become even more difficult to deal with.

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III. In contrast to frustrated Nehru, Peiping's Chou made favorable impression on conference.

- A. Received hero's welcome on arrival, was "social lion" throughout.
- B. Had single objective--win friends, influence people: repeatedly stated Peiping only interested in eradicating colonialism, promoting Afro-Asian solidarity, enhancing world peace.
- C. To give substance to position, Chou:
 - 1. Concluded treaty with Indonesia ending "dual nationality" of local Chinese within one year and also backing Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea;
 - 2. Talked trade with Japanese;
 - 3. Supported Arabs against Israel and France;
 - 4. Invited such staunch anti-Communists as Romulo, Prince Wan and Mohammed Ali to visit Communist China;
 - 5. Attended numerous side meetings in interest of "reducing tensions," at one of which he straight-facedly suggested possibility of finding

honorary post for Chiang Kai-shek
in Peiping government.

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IV. Chou's climactic offer to negotiate Formosa issue designed to obtain initiative at dramatic finale--according to pro-Western observer, was "a most impressive performance."

A. Even if Chou made no new friends, he certainly didn't alienate any old ones.

1. Nehru, more often than not, defended him.

2. Neutralist press hailed his "brilliant diplomacy," praised his "forebearance."

3. Offer to negotiate with US was well-received by practically all delegates.

B. Playing same tune on smaller fiddle, only other Commie leader present--Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam--got into act by reaching agreement with Thailand's Prince Wan for evacuation of troublesome Vietnamese community in northeastern Thailand, reiterating intention to "respect integrity" of Laos, Cambodia.

V. Although sampling of Bandung "fall-out" far from complete, some conclusions possible.

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- A. There are very few specific issues--no matter how important--on which Asians and Africans can reach complete agreement.
- B. Despite lingering suspicions of Western motives, a surprising number of Asian and African countries are prepared to stand up and be counted with the West against the Communists and neutralists.
 - 1. Realize dependence on Western democracies both for economic advancement and for protection of continued existence as independent countries.
 - 2. Also indicates they are grasping Western concepts of rule of law and dignity of individual.
- C. Nonetheless, they would like to see UN, as all-embracing body, used as instrument for settlement international problems.
 - 1. Wording of conference communiqué repeatedly refers to UN, indicating willingness to accept a broader charter than an exclusively Afro-Asian one.

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2. On way home, Ceylon's Sir John said:

"The most interesting feature of the conference was the eagerness shown by everyone, including China, to uphold the authority and prestige of the UN."

D. Chou was successful at the conference in gaining further acceptance of Communist China in the international community--he clearly impressed even anti-Communists with his "reasonableness" which can be exploited in the future.

E. Chou, however, had to pay the price of associating himself with a communiqué fashioned largely by anti-Communists, and has committed Peiping to a position any significant deviation from which would rapidly dissipate the good will he has gained.

1. After conference, Sir John pointed out: "The sincerity of purpose of both sides has yet to be seen in action."