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MAY 29 1955

**NSC BRIEFING**

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**29 March 1955**

**AFRO-ASIAN CONFERENCE**

- I. All but one of 25 countries invited by the five Colombo Powers have accepted bid to meet in Bandung on 18 Apr.
- A. Only Central African Federation (newly-formed UK colony) has declined.
  - B. 29 conferees represent more than half of world's population (1.4 billion).
  - C. 15 of 29 share history as former colonies or protectorates of Western nations.
  - D. Of remainder, almost all have taken their lumps from "imperialist" West in past hundred years.
- II. Sponsors adopted no clear-cut qualifications in making up invitation list.
- A. Even Nehru stated that invitees were "an odd assortment"
  - B. However, guests and sponsors alike are taking conference seriously, sending highest available official as chief delegate.
  - C. Biggest surprise--whisp-bearded, frail ex-photo-retoucher Ho Chi Minh, who, despite Moscow ties, is living representation of nationalism triumphant over evil in eyes of many conferees.
- III. Provisional agenda reflects strong Indian influence, indicates that Nehru--as spokesman for the neutralists--will be a dominating figure.

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- A. Agenda stresses world peace, colonialism, racialism, nuclear energy, economic co-operation.
- B. Coexistence" and "progress in Indochina" top agenda, indicating that plea will be made for broader adherence to Chou-Mehru "five principles" and for unanimous support Geneva agreement.
- C. Sponsors vehemently deny desire to promote a new "bloc."
  - 1. However, final agenda item ("desirability of holding cultural festivals in participating countries on appropriate occasions") strongly suggests hope for development of permanent organization.
- D. Although sponsors also profess desire avoid controversy, agenda actually gravy-train for Communists.
  - 1. Can assume posture on side of angels time after time, express pious views, avoid aggressive appearance.
- E. Indonesian president Sukarno's opening address may provide tip-off to tone of conference.
  - 1. If he makes only routine welcoming statement, would indicate sponsors sincerely trying to keep meeting friendly.
  - 2. If bombastic speech instead, hitting primarily at West, bitter debate probable from very outset.

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**IV. Chicom, Viet Minh working hard for big splash at Bandung.**

- A. Their propoganda calls Conference reflection of Asian-African desires for peace, protests against "colonialism."**
- B. At first, accused US of trying wreck conference by discouraging attendance; now claim US sabotage plan, based on manipulation of "puppets."**
- C. Importance to Communists underlined by Chou's and Ho's (leadership respective) delegations.
  - 1. Both men not only extremely adroit negotiators, but possess unusual ability to charm others.**
  - 2. Delegations will be well-briefed, prepared with definite program.****
- D. Measure of Communist expectations provided by large numbers Commie newsmen who will cover conference.
  - 1. 12 TASS men, 3 correspondents of London Daily Worker and 20-30 Chinese reporters.**
  - 2. Chinese reportedly requested facilities to send out 10,000 words a day.****

**V. Communists will have chance for try-out of their Bandung "line" at 6-10 April dress rehearsal at New Delhi "Asian Conference to Relax International Tensions."**

- A. Delhi meeting, under auspices of Commie-front All India Peace Council, will be attended by number of Asian, Middle Eastern ~~Countries~~ (also USSR).**

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B. Agenda remarkably similar to Bandung's.

VI. Expectations at Bandung:

- A. Viet Minh--plug theme of Vietnam's "reunification" in fulfillment Geneva accord.
- B. Chicom--press claim to Formosa, plant advance justifications for future actions.

VII. In contrast, anti-Communist and pro-Western countries--although a substantial majority--apparently not preparing themselves nearly so vigorously as either Communists or Indians (spokesmen for "neutralist" minority).

- A. So far, little co-ordination of position.
- B. Also, these nations themselves divided.
  - 1. Middle Easterners--roughly along lines for and against Turk-Iraqi Pact.
  - 2. Asians--these for and against Manila Pact (plus some simply at loose ends).

VIII. Outlook for West, however, is not at all bad.

- A. 27 of 29 participants are non-Communists; 21 are strongly anti-Communist; of these, 12 are closely linked to West.
- B. Numbered among delegates are many experienced and eloquent advocates of co-operation with West.
  - 1. Rowulo (Philippines).
  - 2. Zorlu (Turkey).
  - 3. Wan (Thailand).
  - 4. Janali (Iraq).

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- 5. Mohammed Ali (Pakistan).
- 6. Kotelawala (Ceylon).
- 7. Malik (Lebanon) also may attend.

C. Further factor favorable to West is possible development Sino-Indian rivalry.

- 1. Nehru not believed favorably disposed to domination of conference or show-stealing by Chicoms.

IX. Outcome at Bandung difficult to forecast with precision.

- A. Conference may wind up with succession of innocuous statements agreeable to widely-divergent viewpoints of participants.
- B. Instead, may end with Communists and anti-Communists at sword points--to despair of hand-wringing neutrals.
- C. However, no dramatic Communist victory appears likely.
  - 1. Communists' most probable achievement--temporary reduction of suspicions felt towards them by non-Commie participants.

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