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CIA/RR CB 65-19  
March 1965

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# INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

## THE AFRO-ASIAN ECONOMIC SEMINAR

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THE AFRO-ASIAN ECONOMIC SEMINAR

The Economic Seminar in Algeria sponsored by the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization closed on 28 February after 6 days of deliberation. It was attended by low-level delegations from almost 40 Afro-Asian nations and committees of national liberation movements as well as observers from Cuba, the Organization of African Unity, the Asian Economic Office, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Both the USSR and Communist China sent large delegations. The Seminar was notable both for the Chinese-oriented proposals advanced by some of the participants, particularly Algeria and Cuba, and for the absence of the Sino-Soviet polemics that have characterized similar forums in the past.

1. The Final Declaration

The final declaration of the Seminar, which reflected many of the more extreme proposals advanced during the meeting by Algeria and Cuba, included calls for (a) an intensification of the national liberation struggle, including aid in arms, equipment, finances, and military training to the liberation movements; (b) an economic boycott against, and a break in diplomatic relations with, the "colonialist" countries; (c) a limitation of economic relations with imperialist countries; (d) the promotion of economic relations between the Afro-Asian countries and the socialist countries on the basis of unconditional aid without interest; (e) the further development of ties in all fields with the revolutionary countries of Latin America and especially with Cuba; and (f) the adoption of a series of institutional and fiscal measures designed to enhance the economic independence and viability of the Afro-Asian countries.

There were strong expressions of anti-Westernism at the Seminar, but it was the socialist countries as developed nations who were called on to increase both military and economic aid to less developed countries -- free of charge if possible. Cuban Minister of Industries Che Guevara, the only high-level official at the Seminar, demanded that countries "on the path of liberty" should be aided even at the expense of the developed socialist countries.

2. Sino-Soviet Participation

The Chinese Communist delegate reiterated many of the same points advanced by Communist China at the Asian Economic Seminar

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held in Pyongyang, North Korea, in June 1964. Reaffirming the virtues of self-reliance and urging that most developmental capital be generated from internal sources, the Chinese delegate nevertheless acknowledged it the duty of socialist states to aid developing countries and promised continued Chinese assistance, particularly for "enterprises requiring less investment and yielding quicker results." He made reference to the Eight Principles of Chinese foreign aid first enunciated during Chou En-lai's African tour in early 1964\* but noted that they were only preliminary and invited suggestions for their improvement or supplementation. Repeatedly stressing the similarity in experience and problems of China and other Afro-Asian nations through "long years of imperialist aggression and plundering," he proclaimed the Chinese experience in economic development a useful reference for other countries.

The Soviet delegate, in contrast, primarily stressed trade rather than aid as the most effective assistance that the USSR could offer less developed countries and spoke of helping such countries by purchasing their finished products, by reducing tariffs (the USSR formally abolished tariffs on imports from less developed countries in January 1965), and by concluding long-term trade agreements.

Possibly in response to expressions of disapproval voiced by many Afro-Asian leaders against Sino-Soviet wrangling at previous Afro-Asian meetings, \*\* both the Soviet and Chinese delegates carefully avoided in their speeches any attacks on or hostile remarks about the other. It is possible that the two countries, increasingly sensitive to Afro-Asian unwillingness to become embroiled in the internecine Sino-Soviet quarrel, do not intend to press their polemics in such forums as energetically as they have done in the past.

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\* For a discussion of the Eight Principles, see CIA/RR CB 64-34, Communist China's Eight Principles of Foreign Aid, May 1964.

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\*\* Expressive of such sentiments on the part of many Afro-Asians, one Kenyan delegate to the council meeting of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization in Algiers a year earlier reportedly complained, "We are not Marxist-Leninists. Most of us have not read a line of Das Kapital. What interest do you expect us to show in your doctrinal quarrels? I am tired of being asked what I think of the Soviet position when I'm eating a sandwich and what I think of the Chinese argument when I'm drinking my coffee."

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In spite of an appearance of unanimity, however, an open but unpublicized disagreement over a Chinese-sponsored resolution reportedly delayed the termination of the Seminar for a full day. The resolution, which called for the less developed countries to coordinate their development efforts outside the UN and which virtually declared that body useless by referring to it as a "tool of the United States imperialists for promoting neocolonialism," led to protracted haggling between the delegates of Communist China and the South Vietnamese Liberation Front on the one hand and the delegates from the USSR, Algeria, and the United Arab Republic on the other. The six-point plan of action approved by the Seminar declared only that the resolutions of the Seminar have no connection with the UN or its specialized agencies.

### 3. Conclusions

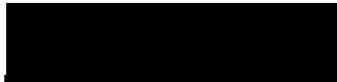
Although the significance of the Seminar does not appear to be great, the final declaration reflects Chinese aims in the less developed countries and represents the most extreme measures advanced thus far in Chinese efforts to build up a "poor man's association" arrayed against the advanced nations. Perhaps as a consequence, Peiping's propaganda media have given full coverage to the conference in contrast to the minimal publicity given the Seminar by the USSR, which did not even publish the speech of the chief Soviet delegate.

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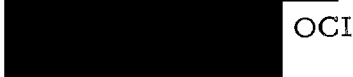
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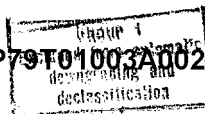
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