These problems are tremendous, and will not be beaten by aid programmes or individual effort.

Some nations would have been happier if the Djakarta Conference had been called under UN auspices.

But this was out of the question, because some Powers (including Japan and Red China) essential to the parley's effectiveness are not UN members.

However, with genuine peace-lovers like Mr. Nehru and Mr. Mohammed Ali playing leading roles, the Djakarta Conference could prove of wide benefit.

(Daily Telegraph, Sydney 4-1-’55).

Turn to the wheel

Decisions by the "Colombo Premiers" are of deep significance to Australia and the Western world. Their invitation to 25 nations, including Communist China, but excluding all Western countries, to a conference in April, could be the beginning of an upsurge of racial hatreds against the West. The decision to support Indonesia in its claim for sovereignty over West New Guinea though not unexpected, should show Australians where the sympathies of most of their near neighbours lie.

The Colombo Premiers were insistent that their sole object in calling the conference of Asian and African countries was to promote understanding. But another note was sounded when the Premier of Ceylon said he saw no reason for inviting South Africa to join. The reason given for the omission was, "We are not allowed there, so why should we ask them here"?

There is no suggestion that Communist influence has dictated the decisions, but they are in the Communist tradition and undoubtedly play into the hands of Communist propagandists.

Australia and the Western world desire and need the friendship of these nations. The West is showing its good faith in a practical way through the Colombo plan, which has already given all the "Colombo Premiers" help and will give more.

Quite clearly, however, more than economic or military aid is needed. These potentially great nations of the future are demanding the equality of friendship as well as its material benefits. The Western world would do well to decide without delay what it proposed to do about it.

(Examiner, Tasmania 30-12-54).

EUROPE

Afro-Asian Talks

The Afro-Asian conference which is to meet in Indonesia — almost certainly at Bandung — at the end of April is to have the widest possible representation and no less wide opportunities in drawing up its own agenda. A statement issued to-night at the close of the meeting at Bogor of the five Prime Ministers of the Colombo Powers says that the joint sponsors of the conference are to invite: Afghanistan, Cambodia, etc. . . .

The long statement issued emphasizes in phrase after phrase the general "get togetherness" and uncommittedness of the proposed conference. Co-operation, mutual interest, cultural relations, economic relations, the promotion of peace — these are the recurring phrases, and if something more precise, like racialism and colonialism, can be picked out, it is hardly surprising. The only conclusion can be that with such a heterogeneous collection of guests what comes out of it will depend on what is put into it, and as the task of drawing up the agenda has been left to conference itself there is little to go on.

Getting Acquainted.

Those to be invited are assured that their presence will involve no commitments or any change in their attitude to other participating States and that there is no intention of changing forms of government or ways of life. The sponsors are motivated by no desire for exclusiveness, and have no intention of forming regional blocs. The basic purpose is to become better acquainted with one another and with one another's points of view.

What some of these points of view may be is revealed in some other paragraphs of the statement. The visiting Prime Ministers took note of the Indonesian position on Western New Guinea and gave it their support; they supported nationalist demands in Tunisia and Morocco — unofficial representatives of which have been buzzing around the fringes of the Bogor meeting — expressed grave concern at thermonuclear experiments, and hoped that the Geneva agreement would be fully respected, with no outside interference. They concluded by hoping that 1955 would be a year of friendly co-operation.

The statement admits, however, that much of the interest of the conference will revolve round the inclusion of China. Clearly, if tension is to be eased or the blocs brought closer together, the Colombo Powers are best equipped to do it. There was, however, some opposition to the inclusion of China from Pakistan and Ceylon. But the recent visit of Mr. Nehru and U N U to that country and, it is reliably reported, the assurance given to U N U in Peking that China would welcome an invitation were sufficient to turn the scales.
As to the inclusion of Japan the opposition came from Indonesia, but was evidently not pressed. Obviously Japan is anxious to find her way back to the Asian scene politically as well as economically, and the new Government in Tokyo may find the invitation most timely. Support for Japan seems to have come particularly from the Burmese Prime Minister, if one may judge from remarks he made when addressing school children that morning of December 29, 1945, when they gave a concert as an entertainment to the Prime Ministers before the conference began. He quoted Japan as an instance of an Asian country which was not very rich materially, but whose strength lay in her sons and daughters, whose loyalty had contributed to making Japan a first-class Power.

It was again U NU and Mr. Nehru who drew the attention of the conference to Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia. Both Prime Ministers have passed that way lately, and Mr. Nehru has ample information at his disposal from the Indian staff of the international commissions in all three countries. Obviously this is an area which the Colombo Powers are interested in watching.

The Indian and Burmese Prime Ministers also gave some account of their impressions of China, and seem to have given a favourable verdict on that country as co-operative and peace-loving.

There is a feeling that the proposed conference will be rather too vague and purposeless, not to say heterogeneous, if all those invited accept. Perhaps the whole thing has been left vague lest any feeling of failure should cloud the participants if precise goals were aimed at.

(\textit{The Times, London 30-12-54}).

\textbf{In April the A-A Conference on the Island of Java}

The conference of the five Prime Ministers of the "Colombo group" — as INDIA, PAKISTAN, CEYLON, INDONESIA and BURMA have been called — started in an atmosphere of great cordiality at Bogor, Indonesia's summer capital . . .

... The five Premiers, Nehru, Sastroamidjojo, Moham-mad Ali, U NU and Kotelawala — had a thorough exchange of viewpoints regarding the arguments which have to be discussed by the conference and regarding the countries which will be invited to participate. There should not be any disagreements about the first point, because the conference will examine suitable means for a relaxation of tension in Asia as well as in the rest of the world, and all agree on this point. Disagreements might arise regarding the invitations to be sent to some countries, first of all to the People's Republic of China and secondly to Israel.

Regarding the latter, the opposition comes from the Arab countries which lately assumed an increasingly rigid attitude towards the Tel-Aviv government and which miss no chance to isolate the Jewish State more and more.

The question of the invitation of China is more complicated. India, Burma and Indonesia are favourably inclined towards inviting the Peking government among those due to be invited to participate in the conference, while Pakistan and Ceylon — though they have not assumed a contrary attitude — are rather reserved and diffident on this issue. It is feared that the presence of the Chinese delegates might induce some of the Asian countries, such as the Philippines and Siam, which have not recognized the Peking government, to desert the conference. In fact, there are already rumours according to which America is bearing pressure to induce these two countries to assume a similar attitude.

In this connection we must recall that Siam and the Philippines belong to SEATO, whose function is decidedly anti-Chinese, and therefore it is, apparently, being considered that their presence at the same conference table with the People's Republic of China would be rather anachronistic.

These arguments are, however, being rejected by Nehru and U NU, who pointed out that, above all, the people's Republic of China is fully authorized to participate in said conference in so far as she has fully recognized and approved the famous "five points" of the Colombo plan, which represent the foundation of solidarity and friendship among the Asian nations. After all, the Bandung conference is not supposed to produce the formation of a political and military Afro-Asian bloc, but should only serve the purpose of discussing and approving some fundamental principles — which might be the same "five points" of Colombo — insofar as they could serve as a presupposition and guiding principle for the relations between the two continents.

The importance of next April's conference, the foundations of which were laid last May during the meeting of the five Premiers at Colombo, can easily be evaluated if we consider the fundamental part played by the Asian countries — and particularly by India — during the last year. It is sufficient to recall the happy results achieved by the Geneva conference for peace in Indochina, the success of which was greatly due to India's acting as intermediary.

The task of the next Bandung conference in which some countries will participate will be the unification of the forces of the Afro-Asian countries; for the realization of peace policies and the creation of an area of security and stability in that vast part of the world. It would be absurd to exclude China from the number of the invited powers.

(\textit{Avanti, Italy 29-12-54}).

\textbf{What Bogor Conference Showed}

American ruling circles are now devoting all efforts in order to hamper Bandung conference or at least to get the conference to limit itself to discussion on cultural and economic relations and not touch political problems. USA would like to turn the conference into teaparty wich
would not impose any obligation. Dulles Department already taken counter measures in connection with forthcoming Bandung conference. It decided to send its emissaries to Asian countries. General Paoshrianon director general Thailand police who recently visited USA being sent to Indonesia and Burma. Fieldmarshal Pinchunhavan deputy Prime Minister Thailand being sent to Laos and another deputy Prime Minister of Thailand being sent to Cambodia. The Thailand is given important role in American attempt to hamper the success of the conference. Manoeuvres of State Department prove blindness of imperialists who don’t want to see awakened peoples of East and have-Enough power and resolutions to decide their fate of themselves. The convening of Bandung conference will mean practical carrying out of peaceful co-existence.

(Literary Gazette, Moscow 6-1-'55).

AMERICA

Today and Tomorrow

(By Walter Lippmann)

As the old year was coming to an end, there became visible something of the shape of things to come. I know that in a venture of this sort we are all of us like the blind men in the fable who were trying to describe the shape of the elephant from what they could learn by touching it. But there have been three stories in the past three weeks which, put together, foretell something big and important that we shall be running into.

One is the crisis of indecision in the French Parliament on the role of France in Europe and in the world. The heart of this crisis has been that the democratic Assembly is so divided in its aims and so contradictory in its views that it cannot render a firm judgment about the vital interests of France. This malady of the French democracy is not confined to France. Our own Congress, for example, is in a similar state of deadlock and confusion over our policy in the Far East. The members of Congress are so divided within their own mind, they are so committed by the many statements and speeches they have made, that they cannot go beyond saying no to those who want to make war and no to those who do not.

The second story is that Moscow and Peking have for the time being returned to the tactic of increasing rather than of relaxing the tension. This is understandable enough, in regard to Europe in the face of the Western push to rearm Germany. But the German problem is not a sufficient explanation of why Peking has also chosen this time to increase the tension by such acts as the conviction of the American airmen. For when Peking made this decision the American policy in the Far East was undergoing the important modification of limiting the Nationalist’s practical aims to the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores. This was a decisive step in withdrawing American support from counter-revolution in China. Yet Peking chose that moment to exacerbate the relations not only with the United States but with the European nations who fought with the United States in Korea.

The third big story at the year’s end is probably the biggest of all. It is the decision at Jakarta by the Prime Ministers of the Colombo powers, that is to say of Pakistan, India, Burma, Ceylon and Indonesia, to call a conference in April of the thirty “independent governments” of Asia and Africa. The more closely one reads the text of this historic communique, the plainer it is that we and our leading European allies are not going to be able to afford the luxury of parliamentary confusion and delay which prevents our governments from making clear and firm decisions in Asia and in Africa. The fixing of April as a date for the meeting of the Asian-African conference is in effect the setting of a kind of deadline for a great many issues, such as Formosa, and perhaps North Africa as well — which will have to be much more clearly dealt with than they are now.

Let us have no illusions about the fact that the United States and its leading allies in Western Europe are going to be the judges and not the judges at this April conference. The official communique all but says in so many words that the conference will consider our intentions in Formosa and Korea, the French intentions in North Africa and South Viet Nam, the Netherlands position in New Guinea, the British in such places as Cyprus.

The list of the non-invited countries is interesting. Among the countries which are in Asia as a matter of geography, the non-invited are the Soviet Union, Australia and New Zealand, North and South Korea, Nationalist China and Israel. There appear to have been two main criteria of non-admission. One is to be now a satellite or colony of the West. Formosa and Korea are not to be treated as “independent governments”. The second criterion is not to be of Asian stock, as the Soviet Union, Australia and New Zealand are not.

The list of the states they did not invite makes it very evident that this is no mere attempt to make a neutral bloc or a third force in between the giant military powers. Red China is no neutral and no third force. What this is to put it plainly, is the most formidable and ambitious
move yet made in this generation to apply the principle of Asia for the Asians.

The members of this conference are to include all the great Asian powers — foremost among them India, Pakistan, Japan and China. The conference intends to promote economic, social and cultural cooperation. But the least common denominator among the members is the alignment on what the communiqué describes as "problems affecting national sovereignty and of racialism and of colonialism." The United States and its allies are going to be put on the defensive, and they had better not lose much time seeing to it that the positions they are going to defend are in fact defensible.

So far as we are concerned, Formosa is the place of greatest vulnerability. It is vulnerable not perhaps because there is danger of war but because of the danger of our finding ourselves isolated from and at odds with the massive sentiment of all of Asia. In point of fact the American position in Formosa is by way of becoming more rational and, therefore, more intelligible and defensible. But this is being done surreptitiously, indeed it appears that it is being done by the dubious device of secret clauses attached to open treaties. The reason for this is not wholly but mainly because Congress is supposed to be unwilling to face up to a rational and workable decision.

In Washington, in Paris, and in some degree in all the democratic capitals, the question is whether the elected assemblies will support those revisions of judgment and those decisions of policy which are called for by the swift march of world events.

(New York Herald Tribune, 4-1-'55).

A conference on a grand scale

There is an element of unreality about the "African-Asian" conference which the five Colombo power Premiers propose to hold next April. These five statesmen representing India, Ceylon, Pakistan, Burma and Indonesia have themselves a fair amount of subjects to discuss which they hold in common. The conference they now propose to hold will have no binding quality.

Offhand, indeed, it is possible to think of only two common qualities. One is that all the nations involved are non-white. The other is that all of them have emerged, or are emerging, from some form of subject or inferior states. As that status was imposed in all cases by the white peoples of the western world, they all hold strong views on the subject of colonialism which, it is expected, will bulk largely on the proposed conference's agenda.

What makes for the conference's unreality is, however, the fact that the practical issues that now face this substantial group of powers are now by no means the same. Some of them indeed are barely on speaking terms, and distrust their neighbours deeply. An example of this is
to be found in the fact that no invitation will be sent to Israel. If Israel were invited, so the argument runs, the Moslem powers would not attend. Israel of course belongs at such a conference as much as any of the others. Israel, when Palestine was a British mandate, learned much about "colonialism" in a broad sense. But the common bond which exists among all of them because of colonialism is overlooked in Israel's case because Israel's neighbours are virtually in a state of war with it.

Similar difficulties exist in the case of India and Pakistan which, in 1947, partitioned the Indian sub-continent between them and have since fallen out violently over the major boundary dispute involved in the future of Kashmir. There are also reports that, if Red China is invited some of the sponsoring powers won't even turn up. There is a fear in Asia over China's ambitions, and that fear grows stronger as the feeling of Asiatic identity loses its original driving force.

It seems likely then that the conference, if and when it takes place, will spend its time drawing up resounding declarations of broad general principles. The text of each resolution will be carefully combed to make sure it does not interfere with complete freedom of action of each nation represented. They will be against the old colonial order of things. They will be for nationalism and independence. They will also probably declare that the big world power struggle with its poles in Washington and Moscow is something to stay out of.

"Peace, it's wonderful", will be the slogan, but whether it is necessary to hold a vast conference in order to recite the phrase in chorus is something that can be questioned.

(The Montreal Star, 12-29-54).

**Asian powers at work for peace**

Common problems and common danger have disposed the countries of Southeast Asia to draw closer together, even though serious political differences divide some of them. The Colombo powers, so-called because their leaders first met in Ceylon, are conferring now in Jakarta, Indonesia, and their main purpose is to plan a broader Afro-Asian meeting there in April. Their aim is to preserve an area of peace in a troubled world, for war could ruin their hopes of a better life in their populous lands.

India is prepared to give "peaceful co-existence" with Communist China a chance, and no one could do more than Prime Minister Nehru has done to establish good relations with Peking. If in the future those relations change for the worse, it is not likely to be India's fault. To assume that peaceful co-existence is possible, and to act on this assumption while at the same time giving due attention to defence, is a more hopeful policy than stubborn hostility . . .

... Premier U NU of Burma has carried a step further the Indian policy of good will and good offices. He rejects the policy of anti-Communist alliance, considers passive co-existence inadequate, and favors active friendship toward all other powers.

This policy ought, as a matter of fact, to commend itself to those powers that regard themselves as predominantly Christian. Active friendship, again, does not preclude keeping the powder dry. It does, or would if put into effect, give efforts to stabilize peace a maximum chance of success. Burma's advocacy of active friendship is an important contribution to thought about international affairs.

(Ottawa Citizen, 12-30-54).

**Warning and challenge**

A momentous conference, the like of which has not been seen on earth before, is to take place next April in the Indonesian mountain city of Bandung. If all the invitations are accepted, thirty Asian and African countries, inhabited by half of mankind, will be represented. The meeting will offer a warning and a challenge to the other half of the human race, and especially to the nations of the Commonwealth.

The list of people bidden to Bandung is unique in two respects. It brings together Asian and African leaders unaccustomed to exchanging ideas except in the United Nations Assembly; and it brings together the spokesmen of states at different stages of political development, unaccustomed to meeting anywhere. There are sovereign nations on the list — Turkey, Egypt and Japan among them. There are Commonwealths still under some form of tutelage or external control, shaky though it may be — the Gold Coast, the Sudan, the Indo-China states and others.

What can bind these scattered countries together? What is the common interest of Red China and Ethiopia, of the Philippines and Lebanon, to name four more of the invited? The answer is plain. These Asian and African states, with few exceptions, recently were or still are dependencies. With no exception whatever, they have a lower standard of living, measuring welfare by the distribution of material goods, than is enjoyed in other continents. This, of course, is obvious. What is significant about the call to Bandung is that the common plight of Asians and Africans has been recognized and proclaimed — in Asia.

It is true that the invitation to the Conference does not speak directly of grievances. The five inviting countries — India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia — refrained from suggesting an Afro-Asian bloc with revolutionary aims. Their objectives, however, are plain on the agenda they have proposed. Colonialism, racialism and economic problems are to be discussed. Bids to the Red regimes in China and Northern Vietnam are an acknowledgment of communism as a factor in Asia's upheaval.
South Africa, headquarters of discrimination against the Negro, has been pointedly excluded from the list of guests.

Any working combination of African and Asian peoples to banish Western influence from their two continents may be a generation away. Seething discontent in Africa and Asia is a current fact and Bandung may prove to be a rallying point. The fortunate nations of the earth have much to offer to the discontented in their search for liberty and well-being. They can offer political education, economic help and, above all, friendship. The British Commonwealth, to which three of the five Bandung hosts belong, is especially well equipped for the job. Unfortunately, its English-speaking members as a group are doing woefully little about it.

("The Globe and Mail", Toronto 1-5-55).