Who's Who in the Conference

GAMAL ABDEL NASSER

Lieutenant-Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, Prime Minister of the Republic of Egypt, was born on 15th January, 1908, at Beheira, Assiut Province, Upper Egypt.

He is the eldest son of Abdel Nasser, a postal clerk in Cairo and Alexandria. His family and ancestors were all "people of the soil". After finishing his secondary education, Nasser enrolled in the Military Academy in 1937 and graduated a year later. Thereafter he joined the army. At the outbreak of World War II, he was stationed at Alexandria and later in the Alamein area. Then followed two years of duty in the Sudan.

In 1942 Nasser was transferred to the Military Academy. Then he enrolled in the General Staff College.

Nasser was in combat duty during the Palestine war and was twice awarded the Fouad Military Star, with clasp, for outstanding service.

Nasser was the founder and leader of the "Free Officers" secret organisation. This organisation was dedicated to fighting favouritism and corruption, as well as to abolishing agricultural feudalism and all forms of foreign domination.

Nasser was the leader of the coup d'état of 23 July, 1952, which resulted in the abdication of ex-King Farouk and the establishment on 18 June, 1953, of the Republic of Egypt.

The Egyptian Prime Minister and his Indonesian colleague

Before becoming Prime Minister on 17 April 1954, Nasser was successively Secretary-General of the Liberation Rally and Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, Minister of the Interior and Deputy Prime Minister. At present, he is also President of the Council of Ministers and of the Revolutionary Command Council.

Nasser was married in 1944 and now has five children.

Desks and Facilities

Djakarta, April 18. The city of Djakarta, which for weeks now has been the focal point of pre-conference activity, is deserted. The gay bunting at Kemajoran airport, which only yesterday fluttered briskly over the milling throng of delegates, newsmen, photographers, officials, and all the great and the near-great, droops in the aftermath of a quick late monsoon rain. Here and there a spent flashbulb lies unnoticed under a corner table.

The job of the bright and smiling young Indonesian students, most of whom are from the Foreign Service Academy in Djakarta and the Gadjah Mada University in Jogjakarta, is over here until the end of the conference. Many of them have followed the personnel of the Ministry
of Information, which is staffing the various information desks at the hotels, airports and stations, up to Bandung. There they are carrying on the job of shepherding the visitors and delegates through their hotels, booking taxis and theatre tickets, helping them to contact friends, and even teaching them a few words of the Indonesian language.

At the end of the Conference the Djakarta Information centers will again become active; meanwhile the few staff members who remain at their posts take care of late arrivals and departures, and wait for the city to come to life again.

ENTERTAINMENT FOR LADIES.

The Women’s Committee of the Asian-African Conference whose clubhouse is at “Pintu Terbuka”, 3 Djl. Braga, has arranged a programme of entertainment for the lady visitors to the Conference. They have planned visits to social institutions and a teaparty at the Governor’s Residence. Details of these may be obtained from the clubhouse. Ladies are also invited to use the clubhouse to meet one another and rest and have refreshments.

Also under the auspices of the Women’s Committee a gift shop has been opened in Gedung Merdeka. Many lovely examples of Indonesian arts and crafts are for sale such as the famous Jogjakarta silverware, Balinese carvings, woven cloths and jewellery.

EXHIBITIONS AND ENTERTAINMENTS.

The following items will take place during this week in Bandung.

April 20th at 8am : Massed Choir of 10,000 school-children at Tegallega.

April 20th at 8pm : A Batik Show in Naga Mas Building.

April 18th — 2nd May. Exhibition of Classical and Modern Indonesian Art, at Lyceum Building, Dago Street.

April 17th — 24th. Exposition of Chinese Paintings and Oil Paintings at Sin Ming School Building, at 47 Atjeh Road; open from 9-12am and 5-7pm, daily.

April 17th — 24th. Exhibition of Indonesian Products at Djalan Naripan, open from 7.30-12am and 4-7pm.

For further details please enquire at information desks.

MATERIALS AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE.

Postal, telephone and cable facilities (300,000 words a day), hand-outs of speeches made at the plenary sessions, guide books, information books, publications of the Bandung Chamber of Commerce, English language newspapers and Indonesian newspapers with inserts in English, are available at the information desks already mentioned.
ASIA

THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

In Bandung not only a conference will be opened, in Bandung a new period in the history of the peoples of colonial and semi-colonial countries will be opened.

For the first time in history the representatives of 29 countries representing more than half of mankind will meet to decide upon their own destinies and their own future.

Since ages their fates have been "decided" by non-Asian and non-African hands.

This conference now taking place is of extreme importance. Not because this conference — except for the League of Nations and the UNO — is the biggest ever known in history, but because this Bandung conference is a landmark that alters the course of history; the destiny of Asia and Africa from now on will be decided by and in Asia and Africa.

From this it can be explained why the significance of April 18 cannot be measured in terms of days, months or years; April 18 will put its mark for ages.

It is quite easy to understand why the colonialists are loath to see this Asian-African awakening. It is also understandable that they will utilise all means possible to wreck this historic conference.

At first they maintained that it was an impossibility that twenty-nine countries should meet and they referred to the fact that Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines had
already joined Seato. But the fact that the Bandung conference is in progress and is also attended by Thailand, the Philippines and others, is a living proof that the desire for Asian-African co-operation is stronger than the wish to be enemies, that the desire to unite is stronger than the wish to dispute.

They furthermore alleged that the different levels of development and the differences in state systems, religions and convictions would make it impossible for the Asian and African peoples to get together. For the colonialists whose principal weapon is divide et impera, differences are indeed of far greater importance than similarities. But it is impossible for the colonialists to neglect the reality that however the twenty-nine countries may differ in various aspects, they do not differ in one question: they all want peace and wish to develop their countries.

It is at this direction that all the work and activities of the present Bandung conference are aimed. The optimism and the certitude shown by the participating delegations testify to the fact that this conference will not be in vain but on the contrary shall realise its aim.

_Harian Rakjat Djakarta (English Edition 18-4-1955)._

**THE A-A CONFERENCE**

This Bandung conference is of unprecedented importance in history and Indonesia feels proud that it can be host to this epoch-making gathering.

What dare we hope from this conference? It is obvious that this conference cannot come with clear cut and strong worded resolutions. The effects of the cold war will certainly make themselves felt at the conference and some fierce debates will most likely turn up. Nevertheless, these debates are highly appreciated as long as no party attempts to make this conference a springboard for propaganda. Some frank discussions on the most urgent problem which confronts Asia today would certainly be most useful. The possibility of preserving peace in Asia should become the most important topic of discussions.

We have stated on Saturday that this conference stands a good chance of winning peace in Asia as long as the participant nations can put aside their differences and try to seek the common ties which may establish their solidarity. With this the area of peace can be extended in the world so that the danger of war will be lessened.

It is in this field where the conference can hope to make its most valuable contribution and we hope that it will achieve this objective.

_(Indonesian Observer, 18-4-1955)._

**ASIAN-AFRICAN EXPECTATIONS**

_(by Surveyor)_

For sponsors and critics alike, the forthcoming Asian-African Conference has acquired something of the character of a big event of the season. Even those to whom any such conference not sponsored by the Western Powers is automatically suspect, have acknowledged in various ways that the conclusions of the Bandung meeting will almost certainly have a vital bearing on international affairs. It was clearly some appreciation of this that "cordial greetings" to the Asian-African delegates. A similar consideration appears to have been responsible for Thailand's sudden decision — in reversal of its earlier attitude — to participate in the conference.

**Unobjectionable.**

There is nothing objectionable in the view that non-neutral Asian Powers such as those that have accepted Seato commitments should attend the Bandung conference in an attempt to modify the policies of the non-aligned Asian Powers. A conference of the sort which the Colombo Powers have in mind cannot in any sense be exclusive, and the more hospitable it is to various and even conflicting points of view, the better it will serve its purpose as a clearing house of ideas and policies designed to ease international tension. With Japan, Thailand and Pakistan as well as the Middle Eastern countries fully represented at Bandung, there will be no question of an uncritical acceptance of all the principles and policies favoured by the Colombo Powers.

This is not to say that there is likely to be any serious opposition to the Pancha Shila or that the principle of non-alignment will be effectively disputed. What is hoped for is that — as in the British Commonwealth — despite differences of approach of assessment a general sense of the meeting will emerge to enable the Asian-African Powers to play a more influential role in world affairs. It is easier to specify what the conference should not be rather than to define its objectives. Obviously there is an impression, particularly in the United States, that there is to be a sort of "gang up" of the Asian-African powers in an attempt to offset Seato and provide the machinery for an anti-colonial campaign.

Some of the participants at Bandung are likely to have similar ideas unless it is made clear in good time that the meeting is not intended in any way to be "agitational." The ventilation of grievances, particularly against the Western Powers, is no way to conduct constructive policies and would merely add to international tension and misunderstanding. Something more positive and substantial is expected of a conference so comprehensive and unique. Since its members will include Communist China, Japan,
the Arab States, the Gold Coast and even the Central African Federation, it can hardly deteriorate into a so-called "third bloc." Nor can racism --- a negative and profitless approach to world affairs --- dominate a meeting of this kind.

Whether any acceptable programme can result from a meeting of States covering so large an area as the Asian and African continents is doubtful. It would certainly be too much to expect vigorous and positive policies to result. But policies are not the vital need. More important is the need to identify the Asian-African Powers with an approach to world affairs that accepts international peace as the primary objective, not cold war advantages or ideological victories ......

(The Times of India, March 28, 1955).

...... Because of the divergence in the point of view of the participating countries, large areas of agreement on concrete problems cannot be reasonably expected. In exploiting the resentment against colonialism and imperialism of peoples who have only recently gained independence, the Asian-African Conference will furnish a convenient point of departure for the propaganda of the puppet Peiping Communist regime.

Instead of creating better understanding among the participating countries, the struggle for leadership in the conference and subsequent to it may cause some trouble. If India would try to insinuate herself into the better graces of the Arab countries, she would not be improving her relations with either Egypt or Pakistan. Should India let Peiping have too great a hold on the conference, Nehru would be jeopardizing his own position of preeminence. Vice versa, Peiping could not be expected to play second fiddle.

The philosophy of the proposed conference cannot be divorced from the desire of India to play "Follow the Leader" with the other youngsters of the neighborhood with herself as leader. The leadership of India is essentially in the hands of Nehru. A generation ago, Nehru wrote: "Much in Soviet Russia I dislike --- the ruthless suppression of all contrary opinion, the wholesale regimentation, the unnecessary violence ...... but there is no lack of violence in the capitalist world." In the final analysis, Communist violence is to be preferred, for "violence was common in both places, but the violence of the capitalist order seemed inherent in it, whilst the violence in Russia, bad though it was, aimed at a new order based on peace and cooperation and real freedom for the masses."

Such are still Jawaharlal Nehru's views. Such seems to be the philosophy underlying the proposed Bandung Conference.

(Daily Mirror, Manila, 19-3-55).

AUSTRALIA

RED HERRING

Why should Dr. Evatt want to buy in to the Afro-Asian Conference?

Whit his party crashing about his ears he should have plenty to keep him busy at home.

The Australian Government will not be represented at the Conference.

By seeking to attend in any status Dr. Evatt appears guilty of unnecessary interference in the nation's affairs.

He is unable to formulate a unified policy for his party but, by inference, in the eyes of Afro-Asians he would appear as an Australian policymaker.

Many Australians will believe his real concern is to divert attention from the Labor catastrophe.

(Daily Telegraph, Sydney, 24-3-55).

AMERICA

WEST WILL HAVE FRIENDS AT ASIA-PARLEY

By Chalmers M. Roberts

Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru the other day described the Asian-African Conference which opens at Bandung, Indonesia, as "essentially an experiment in co-existence".

The evidence is beginning to pile up that the "experiment" is going to be one of the most fascinating in recent years and that the results are likely to be of great importance in today's global conflict between freedom and communism ......

Ready to speak. Semantically speaking, the conference may not "discuss" freedom vs. communism. But evidence is beginning to appear that the conference is not just going to pass resolutions opposing colonialism, imperialism and racial discrimination and favoring peaceful co-existence. There is very likely going to be a real effort to speak up and be heard of the nations which most palpably feel the hot breath of communism on their necks.

There is a solid piece of public evidence for this view, a completely overlooked statement issued on the last day of the recent Southeast Asia Treaty Organization conference at Bangkok. That was the meeting of foreign ministers from the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand.
The statement noted that the last three named would also be at Bandung. It said that the Seato Council accordingly asked those Asian members of the Council to transmit cordial greetings to the other free countries and to express the hope that out of their conference at Bandung would come increased assurance that the free nations would remain free and that all peoples would come increasingly to enjoy, in peace, the blessing of liberty.

"The Council also invited a broad sharing of their dedication, expressed in the Pacific Charter, to uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and to promote self-government and to secure the Independence of all countries whose people desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities".

This statement is a clear outline of the task which those nations at Bandung most closely associated with the United States are going to take in April. Adherence to such a course is expected from such varied countries as Japan, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Turkey, Ethiopia, Liberia and some of the Arab states — in all, a formidable number of the 30 invitees.

Just how much preconference consultation has been going on among these nations is hard to say. But there are good reasons to feel the Bangkok statement can safely be taken as the head of the iceberg.

The idea of the Bandung conference originally revolved around economic, and cultural matters. But it was Nehru who put over the conference last December after his trip to Peiping. It seems reasonably clear that his idea was that the conference would be a good opportunity to demonstrate his theory that Red China should be accepted by the world community and thus be subject to its rules, such as they are.

This was clearly to Peiping’s liking. Premier Chou En-lai, who is expected personally at Bandung, said in announcing Red China’s acceptance that the conference "reflects the ever stronger desire of Asian and African countries to take their destiny into their own hands and to enter on an equal footing into friendly cooperation with the other countries of the world."

"The main enslaver". All of this set the scene for Chou to produce at Bandung the Big Bad Wolf of Asia — the United States. Moscow has openly indicated the Communist line in a Pravda editorial headed, "Against Imperialist Oppression." Pravda declared that "American Imperialism, acting the part of the main gendarme and enslaver of the colonial peoples, is attempting in every way to thwart the great process of the renaissance of the peoples of the East." Peiping Radio has been full of the same.

Perhaps a middle position was best expressed by the Prime Minister of Ceylon, Sir John Kotelawala, when he said: "Moscow and Washington must realize that there are others, too, in the world and that the main concern of these others is peace."

(Washington Post, 6-3-55)
**EUROPE**

"ASIAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE"

Although it may be questionable whether the twenty-five countries invited to attend the Afro-Asian Conference in Indonesia in April have enough in common to achieve any positive result, the purpose of their meeting, even if it is not couched in the clearest terms, is significant. The five Asian powers who have sent out the invitations — India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon and Indonesia — must consider their uncommitted position in world affairs to be positive enough to appeal, under the heading of "mutual as well as common interests," to countries as far apart as Japan and the Gold Coast. ......

There has been a noticeable feeling among Asian leaders for some time that world policies are the result of western thinking, both from inside the United Nations and out of it. This western dominance not only adds to the general feeling of affront, but it offers no solution for the common problems, economic and political, which face the countries of the area. There is a common approach among the countries of the East to certain problems, and there is no doubt that Middle Eastern and African countries view their problems in a similar perspective.

One of the surest facts they will find when they take stock of their position is that on the economic plane they have a great deal in common, for all of the countries invited, except Japan, are beginning, or will shortly begin, to move into a stage of industrial development. To achieve this smoothly and rapidly, as India has so often made clear, it is vitally necessary to avoid involvement in the issues which create tension between western democracy and Communism. The whole question of economic aid from the West, and chiefly from the United States, has created suspicions among the Asians that its acceptance would possibly commit them in some small way to support of the donor's policies. The Colombo Plan is acceptable because of its emphasis on mutual and self-help. There has been no great enthusiasm for the proposed American "Marshall Plan for Asia," and it is possible that in the minds of many Asians there is a hope that the coming Afro-Asian Conference will go some way towards finding a solution to economic problems within the framework of cooperation.

That there is a desire among the countries of Asia to be unencumbered by obligatory economic ties with the West cannot be denied, but whether the desire will be felt as strongly by the Middle Eastern and African countries is not so certain. But they must, in general terms, feel much the same about political and economic relations with Europe and America as the Asian countries do, because had it been otherwise the five Prime Ministers could not have talked at Bogor so assuredly of common interests.

No one can say at this early stage whether the conference in April will be successful, or if it will achieve anything at all. There is no question, apparently, of its being regarded as a kind of regional United Nations. Whatever way it is regarded it is regrettable that neither Malaya nor Israel was invited. Both come within the purview of the invitation. Malaya was apparently regarded as too much of a colonial administration to be represented, but, with the elections pending, it might at least have been courteous to invite some prominent political Malayan leaders like Sir Cheng-lock Tan and Tunku Abdul Rahman as observers; after all, the Central African Federation has been asked to attend. The ignoring of Israel is less defensible. Her economic problems and most of her political ones in the global context are similar to the other invited countries. It is, of course, obvious that had she been asked to attend the Arab countries would have refused, but this very factor undermines the emphasis laid upon the promotion of peace. This is the danger implicit in bringing an intangible idea down to practical levels and widening its scope: national rivalries become apparent, and they weaken the purpose. The important feature is that China has been asked to attend, and it may well be that Mr. Mohammed Ali agreed to China's invitation only if Mr. Nehru and U Nu would cease to press (as it is known that they did) for the inclusion of Israel.

It will be a big conference, and a little unwieldy, if all 25 countries attend, but it has great possibilities. Apart from economic questions it seems apparent that the Indian theory of dynamic neutralism will be the dominant theme, and, if China can be persuaded to see the sense in other countries adopting it as a foreign policy, what would those countries have to lose by doing so? By being committed to either side, the countries of Asia, Africa and the Middle East will not achieve satisfactory national progress. Neutralism plus economic co-operation could be the long term answer to their problems.