MUNICH, 13 September 1961 (Research & Evaluation - aa)

The Belgrade Conference of aligned nations is now receding into the past, but important points of significance remain to be explored. Interpretations of its achievements vary widely. Among the most interesting are those coming out of the USSR, China, and Albania, and those expressed by the man whose moral leadership exercised very great influence on the Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru.

The USSR appeared wary at first of a "third bloc," but in a September 14 broadcast announcement, President Khrushchev warned of the testing of atomic tests. It warmed quickly to Tito's announcement on September 3 that: "One could understand the reasons which prompted the Soviet Government to take this decision." (Tass, September 5) Thereafter, the Soviet press proceeded to use the Congress as a handy vehicle for propaganda favorable to the Soviet Union. An analysis by Radio Liberty summarizes the process that followed:

"In reporting the Belgrade conference of non-aligned countries, Soviet propaganda plays up those parts of speeches critical of colonialism and calling for the recognition of two German states and ignores or minimizes those Premier Nehru of India, President Nasser of the United Arab Republic, and Mrs. Bandaranaike of Ceylon expressing shock at the Soviet tests resumption and opinions critical of the Soviet position of the German problem. Through omissions and distortions, Soviet sources try to convey the impression that there is a 'clear understanding' in Belgrade of the Soviet decision to resume tests, that most speakers call for the solution of the German and Berlin problems on the basis of Soviet proposals and that despite western attempts to the contrary, the conference has become an anti-Western forum demanding that an end be put to colonialism, voicing support for Khrushchev's plans to reorganize the UN, demanding a UN seat for China, advocating general and total disarmament, condemning fascism and militarism in West Germany." Soviet propaganda emphasizes that alleged western plans to turn the conference into an anti-Soviet tribune have failed and that instead the 'imperialist West' has appeared in the role of the accused."

With the Congress over, Pravda "praised the Belgrade conference of 25 uncommitted states for its work for peace and against colonialism." Also, still employing the Congress for its own uses, Pravda said on September 9 that "the peace-loving states welcomed the conference's contribution to easing international tension and consolidating peace throughout the world.

China's response to the Congress differed considerably from that of the Soviet Union, particularly for its virulent attack upon President Tito of Yugoslavia. Thus the China Communist News Agency (Hainhui) claimed in a despatch on September 5 that Tito had attacked the Soviet decision to resume nuclear testing, quoting the passage from Tito's speech deleted by the
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Soviet press: "We are not surprised so much by the Soviet Government Statement, but we are surprised by the fact that this was done on the day of the opening of this conference of peace. All this has alarmed the whole world to an even greater extent."

Hsinhua's report also criticized Tito for not asserting "that the Western Imperialists were bent on arms expansion and war preparations, and had obstructed agreement on the disarmament question"; furthermore Tito had not uttered "a single word about US Imperialism." (Munich, September 5) (CMD F-84) Hsinhua quoted Tito as putting in the same category the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) and the economic communities organized by the Western Imperialist countries. Tito maintained, the agency said, that both were a great obstacle to the so-called closer economic cooperation.

"Hsinhua also reported Tito's remarks on the United Nations. Tito, it said, stressed that greatest efforts should be made to preserve this organization and enable it to carry out its responsible and difficult functions in full. It is essential, Tito said, to wage a resolute fight against all tendencies to bypass and weaken the organization or to distort its role. He also thought the Republic of China should take its seat in the United Nations. (Hsinhua, September 5)"

This set the tone of Chinese comments during the Congress. After it was over, however, although Chinese attacks upon Tito continued the evaluation of the Congress changed. Concerning Tito, on September 9, the Peking People's Daily said that he had played the role of a spokesman of US Imperialism wearing the cloak of non-alignment. It went on to define Tito's role more clearly:

"He made a big effort in calling for cooperation with all countries and for restraint from attacking this or that country, while peddling his so-called non-bloc and positive coexistence. But everybody knows that what the Tito clique pursues is not a policy of non-alignment. As early as 1953 this policy made Yugoslavia a member of the Balkan alliance, the other two members of which, Greece and Turkey, are both NATO members. There is nothing in common at all between the Tito clique's non-bloc and positive coexistence policy and the Afro-Asian policy of peace and neutrality. The Afro-Asian policy of peace and neutrality starts from the stand of safeguarding national independence and has an anti-colonial anti-imperialist nature. In their struggles against imperialist aggression and for world peace, these countries have common interests with the socialist countries and therefore can establish good relations with them. But the activities of the Tito clique, carried out under the non-bloc and positive coexistence labels, are painstakingly made to oppose the socialist camp, to divide the world peoples' solidarity and to undermine the Afro-Asian peoples' struggle for national liberation."
"The Tito clique passes itself off as anti-colonialist, but in fact it betrays the national interests of the Afro-Asian countries, lures them to forsake their anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist struggles and serve imperialism."

Also on September 9, the important Peking daily Ta Kung Pao took steps to identify China with the ideals of the unaligned states and at the same time to push its own views on coexistence:

"The declaration of the conference supports the principles of peaceful coexistence among countries with different social systems and holds that the existence of different social systems does not constitute an insurmountable obstacle for the stabilization of peace, provided attempts at domination and interference in the internal development of other peoples and nations are ruled out.

"As a matter of fact the socialist countries have always stood for peaceful coexistence among countries with different social systems, supported the struggle of various peoples to win and uphold national independence and set examples for peaceful coexistence between the socialist countries and many nationally independent countries.

"But the Imperialist countries, headed by the United States, do not want peaceful coexistence. They are trying by hook or by crook to eliminate the socialist countries, carrying out frenzied aggression and intervention against the nationally independent countries and brutally suppressing the just struggle of all peoples for independence and freedom.

"No peaceful coexistence is possible between the Imperialist countries and the countries fighting for and upholding national independence. How can the oppressed coexist peacefully with the oppressors? How can the victims of aggression coexist peacefully with the aggressors!

"In fact, the issue of war or peace is inseparable from the issue of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. This is because imperialism and colonialism breed war. The struggles of all people to win and uphold national independence and oppose imperialism and colonialism is itself an important part of the struggle to defend world peace. Those who use the threat of war created by US imperialism as an excuse to tie the hands of the people of all countries to prevent them from waging a resolute struggle against imperialism and even to ban condemnation of aggressive crimes of US-imperialism actually only help boost the imperialist policies of aggression.

"Peace can be won only by fighting for it, not by begging. Only by relying on the struggle of all peoples can world peace be safeguarded."
The last word has probably not been spoken at the moment, but on September 12, Takashi Oka reported from Hong Kong that the Chinese interpretation is now concentrating on two points: "High praise for the final declaration against Imperialism and Colonialism and condemnation of Indian efforts to focus on the problem of a world on the brink of nuclear despair." Attacks upon Nehru have been expressed by Marshal Chen Yi, deputy premier and foreign minister, who charged Nehru indirectly for "denying history, disregarding actualities, and distorting truth," and by the Peking People's Daily which made similar charges. Fundamentally China's views are incompatible with those of Mr. Nehru.

The main points of Chinese propaganda continue to be that the "non-aligned nations favor the Communist bloc and are hostile to what Peking calls "Western Imperialism." (Takashi Oka)

Albania has followed the lead of the Chinese. On September 12, the Albanian News Agency ATA reported an article in Zeri I Popullit which said that the hopes of the "Imperialists to pull after their chariot the Belgrade Conference as well as the efforts of the revisionist clique of Tito to give to the conference a direction that would put aside the attention of its participants from the present international problems, failed completely." This article went on to say that Tito had attempted to slander the Soviet Union when he tried to find the cause of international tension in the policy of the big powers in making equally responsible the Soviet Union and the US and "when he attacked the Soviet Government's decision to resume atomic weapons tests."

Finally echoing the Chinese line Zeri I Popullit said: "The Belgrade Conference had shown that there was nothing in common between the policy of Yugoslavia and the policy of Afro-Asian countries." The positive results of the conference were "without doubt a valuable contribution to the strengthening of the national liberation and anti-colonialist struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America."

Mr. Nehru's views on the Belgrade Congress offer a striking contrast to those of the three socialist countries. Conducting himself circumspectly during his recent trip to the Soviet Union, he voiced only cautious expressions of hope. On his return to New Delhi on September 11, however, according to Phillip Potter writing for the Baltimore Sun (New York, September 12, RFE CF-99) his conclusions were somewhat grim:

"As asked if he felt that the appeals issued by the Belgrade Conference and his own visit to Moscow had pushed back the possibility of war, Nehru replied 'I think the Belgrade Conference had some good results and perhaps my visit did."

"As a result of many factors I think it is correct to say that the situation, though still difficult and tense, is a little less tense than it was."
"But then anything could happen to make it more tense."

"He noted that he and President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana had handed Khrushchev a copy of the conference's joint appeal to the Russian and American leaders to get together and arrest the trend toward war; but said he could not say what impact it may have had.

"'He thanked us for it,' Nehru said."

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"Nehru seemed to suggest that the Belgrade Conference's decisions should not be taken too seriously to heart by any country.

"When a reporter noted that there had been disappointment over the outcome 'in some quarters' the Prime Minister replied 'I don't know what quarters were disappointed. One cannot expect too much of these things. I think it was successful, as a conference.'"

Russia, China, and Albania appear to be calling different parts of the elephant the whole animal. As for the achievement of the Congress, Mr. Nehru was simply saying that the elephant had accomplished no more than he had expected, but perhaps less than he might have hoped for.