Message from Prime Minister Sir John Kotelawala to the Asian-African Conference Bulletin

There are many thoughts that cross my mind as write this message for the Bulletin of the Asian-African Conference. I feel a sense of elation that this Conference has become 8 reality, that a new era is about to begin in the history of Asian-African relations. But we are meeting in difficult times, and for this reason I have some anxiety about the future. We, Eastern nations, have, so tO speak. been reborn a divided world. We have to find our places among the other nations and our task is made difficult by the tensions all around us that threaten to endanger our very survival.

Among the problems that face us, undoubtedly the most pressing is the economic development of our countries. For many centuries our people have been compelled to be satisfied with small mercies, while the rich resources of our lands have gone 10 benefit others. But this state of affairs is now at an end. We are free and are

the masters of our own destinies. Freedom alone is, however, no panacea for our ills. We have to rebuild the traditions of our lost civilizations, and we have to infuse in our people a will to better themselves. The road ahead is by no means easy but I am confident that we shall not falter,

The first requirement of all our countries, if We are to progress, is period of undisturbed peace and peace in our time has become a very uncertain thing. But there can be no peace without international understanding. The principal task of the leaders gathered at Bandung is therefore the establishment of confidence and understanding among themselves. If we can make the slightest contribution towards creating an arca of understanding in Asia and Africa, we shall have justified our meeting.

Sami Solh, Lebanon

On the threshold of this conference let us not forget that the world is observing and judging us. Let us not forget that on our work depends the well-being and may be the salvation of numerous peoples and the first thought, which, I believe, should dominate these debates, is that of Human brotherhood.

In fact, regardless of the distance or the opinion Or the culture which differentiates the peoples here represented we are all or which separate them from those absent,

united here by the ties of this brotherhood. Therefore the value of the service which the leaders of every nation may render to their country and to the world is proportional to their efforts to bring together peoples and to insure for individuals lodging, clothing and food.

However, three obstacles impede this idea, hinder the success of our meetings and enterprise to may compromise the noble which, gentlemen, you have today linked your name. These dangers are first, fanaticism in all its forms,

second, chauvinism or overpushed nationalism. and third hatred of foreigners.

These are, without doubt, seeds for discord and division. These are the enemies of peace and of humanity. If human rights, as defined by the Charter of the United Nations, are sacred, the right of nations themselves, no matter how small, to the respect of greater nations is at least just as sacred. Furthermore, the oppressed peoples, those who have not yet enjoyed freedom and independence as well as those who have been deprived of both will find here, we hope, the best support.

Deeply convinced, on the other hand, of the existence of a fundamental justice and imbued with the principle

of democratic freedoms, we believe of men that it iS through safe-guarding faith in the spiritual destinies of men that \_we would ameliorate their fate and it is by encouraging such policy that this Assembly would have accomplished its mission.

After all it is through tolerance that we will settle permanently our difficulties and that we will impose our respect on the world. It is through tolerance that we will create an atmosphere favourable to international collaboration. Finally it is through tolerance that we will appease passions, which unfortunately have been for so long nourished, and which if unchained, would lead uS to disaster.

Momolu Dukuly, Liberia

This delegated convocation of top-level emissaries of goodwill from most of the Nations of Asia and Africa cannot but be considered as the beginning of a New Era symbolic of a new awakening on part of the Peoples of these two great continents to their momentous responsibilities to mankind everywhere.

As for us, we have come with no preconceived notions calculated to undermine the meaningfulness and import of this Convocation or detract from the lofty aims and ideals of this Assembly. We proffer friendship, love and mutual respect for all; consequently, we express the fervent hope that we shall enter upon all deliberations the healthy atmosphere of objectivity and common understanding.

In a Foreign Policy Statement contained in his message to the National Legislature on January 21, 1955, our Chief of State, President William V.S. Tubman stated the following:

"There is a tremendous upsurge of the under-privileged peoples of the world for independence and self-

determination. Toward the natural and inherent tendency and clamour of this group of the carth's inhabitants, Liberia cannot be indifferent or unsympathetic.

"She is the second oldest Negro Republic in the world and the only Republic in West Africa, and has enjoyed this status for more than a century. She too has passed through the grind of deprivation of the rights and benefits of freedom.

"We therefore must give sympathetic support and encouragement to these under-privileged and less fortunate inhabitants of the earth, but within the bounds of firm determination and orderly and peaceful evolution.

"'The coming together of racial and continental groups to discuss their general welfare appears to be commendable, provided the main objectives are for the enhancement of universal peace and brotherhood among all nations and peoples in order to evolve a better era of international concord, freedom, equality, justice, privilege, opportunity and benefits for all alike, regardless of race, colour, religon, creed, clime or cost. To be contrariwise would mean a widening of international gaps."

Mahmoud Bey Muntasser, Libya

My country is of the opinion that the present tension in world relations is due to a number of evils evils which must be won if humanity wishes to live in harmony, and if world peace is at all to be safeguarded. Most countries have realized long ago where the danger lies. Their efforts to fight it, however, have been too slow. I am referring to Firstly: COLONIALISM. Mankind has been able to free itself from individual slavery, but, alas, it is still

suffering in many parts of the world from nation slavery, the subjugation of an entire people.

It is also very regrettable that France, the first nation to proclaim the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, should meet the rightful claims of these three countries to freedom and independence, with violence and repression. We sincerely hope, however, that France will reconsider her attitude, and stop bloodshed, and answer the aspirations of the people of North Africa.

Secondly

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, whether based on colour or origin, is an evil derived from the offence to humanity. colonial spirit and it is indeed a great Thirdly : EXTERNAL IDEOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE. We all agree that every country has a perfect she wishes right to choose for itself whatever ideology the world as a whole, that to, but It is very dangerous for any country should attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, and to force upon her, whether of openly or secretly, a different way of life or system government.

Such interference, whatever its source might be, iS but another kind of colonialism more dangerous and of much stronger effect, since it embodies all the disadvantages of colossal colonialism, and, in addition, intellectual slavery. It is a danger menacing the sovereignty of nations, and the cause of world peace.

I shall conclude by saying that the United Kingdom of Libya firmly believes in the institutions of Democracy, and in the principles proclaimed by the Charter of the United Nations, and sees in them the only means to ensure for all peoples on earth, peace and security. For these reasons the Libyan people and its Government are against colonialism, whatever its kind or source may be, as well as against racial discrimination, and external ideological interference. It furthermore believes in the desirability of economic cooperation based on equality and common interests, and in the necessity to widen the scope of such cooperation by lessening control over trade.

All these principles in which my people and Government believe, do fall within the aims and purposes of this

Conference.

Mohammed Ali, Pakistan

It is my earnest hope that our work in this Conference will result not only in promoting understanding among the nations here represented, but will also be of benefit to all nations of the world. The countries of Asia and Africa cannot regard themselves as a group apart. Their problems and their fortunes. are inevitably bound up with those of the rest of the world.

They meet because they find it necessary to come together for promoting goodwill and cooperation among themselves and to exchange views on problems which require their combined attention. They meet also in the conviction that by so doing they may help, in So far as lies in their power, to promote international goodwill and strengthen the fabric of world peace.

I am confident that no nation in the world pays only lip service to justice and that the trend towards the liberation of subject peoples is universal. I believe that imperialism, as we have known it in the past in Asia and Africa, is an anachronism and is well on the road to liquidation. We cannot be complacent however.

We must do everything in our power to ensure that the peoples who are still groaning under the hell of foreign domination, are allowed to enjoy in full measure the fruits of freedom. At the same time we must be very careful that we are not misled into opening our doors to a new and more insidious form of imperialism that masquerades in the guise of liberation.

We shall during this Conference discuss the means whereby the causes of tension between nations may be removed and world peace assured. At the appropriate time I propose to place before you the following seven principles, acceptance of which by all nations is, in my

opinion, essential for the maintenance of peace. These seven principles are

ONE • •

Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.

TWO Recognition of the equality of every independent and sovereign nation.

THREE: Abstention from interference 10 the internal affairs of one country by another.

FOUR Non-aggression against the territorial integrity Or political independence of any country.

FIVE : Right of self-defence exercised singly or collectively.

SIX Right of self-determination of all peoples and abhorrence of colonial exploitation in any shape or form and

SEVEN Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, namely, negotiations, mediation or arbitration.

It is my conviction that not until these seven principles of peace are universally recognized and resolutely implemented, can existing world tensions be resolved and world peace firmly secured. It would not be enough merely to proclaim our faith in these principles.

It is only when these principles are not only accepted but acted upon by all countries that it will be possible for nations to co-exist in peace, regardless of diversities of race, religion, ideology or form of government.

I look upon these seven principles as the Seven Pillars of Peace. Only when the edifice of peace has been thus securely raised, will fear and mistrust be banished from the hearts of men and it will be possible for all nations freely to maintain and develop friendly relations on the basis of mutual esteem, mutual trust and mutual benefit.

From a willingness to accept these seven principles will stem agreement on reduction and international control of armament.

In our efforts to help strengthen the forces of peace and remove international tensions we will no doubt consider the question of the Palestine refugees and the grant of self-government to Tunisia and Morocco as well as the problem of Algeria when we take up detailed discussion of our agenda.

There is one other matter on the agenda with regard to which I should like to indicate the attitude of my delegation at this stage. We believe firmly in the university of membership of the United Nations. We consider that the more broad-based that organisation is the better it will be In a position to serve mankind.

We consider that all independent countries which have applied for membership of the United Nations and

are eligible should be admitted as members of the body. There may be some difficulties in the way of admitting certain countries in Europe, but we see no reason why the admission of such countries in Asia and Africa to the United Nations should be held up. We consider also that these two vast continents are inadequately represented in the Security Council and would suggest an increase in the non-permanent seats on the Security Council to ensure proper representation of Asian-African nations.

The political crisis of our time creates anxiety in our hearts. But we must remember that peace is not a purely political phenomenon. It IS affected largely by economic, social and moral factors. As the difficulties on the political plane increase, we should lay greater stress on the economic, social and moral values. The real enemies of peace and progress are poverty, disease, ignorance and prejudice. They corrupt and corrode society and breed unrest and hatred. Economic improvement will combat the evils of poverty and disease, and education will dispel ignorance and prejudice. In these days of political anxiety we must intensify our efforts for the economic, social and intellectual improvement of our peoples.

Carlos P. Romulo, Philippines

All who are represented here are certainly concerned with the issues of (1) colonialism and political freedom (2) racial equality, and (3) peaceful economic growth. The history of the world in our time turns on the ways in which these issues are met and resolved, or not met and not resolved.

To begin with, the very fact that we have come together here in this manner illustrates the great new fact that these issues of freedom, equality, and growth are no longer merely national problems but world problems.

In this world of contending great powers, the indepence of the small or meak nation is at best a precarious and fragile thing. Obviously the ultimate greater freedom will lie in a greater coherence, a uniting of regional interests, in the creation of counterbalancing moral, economic, and physical strength, in the greatest possible common action by all to avert the disaster of a new world war. Let us face squarely up to the fact that within the nation we can regain our self-respect and grapple with our local problems but that for the primary goals of economic transformation and well-being and peace, the nation no longer suffices. Western European man today is paying the terrible price for preserving too long the narrow and inadequate instrument of the nation state. Besides the issues of colonialism and political freedom, all of us here are concerned with the matter of racial

equality. This IS a touchstone, I think, for most of us assembled here and the peoples we represent. The systems and the manners of it have varied, but there has not been and there is not a Western colonial regime, which has not imposed, to a greater or lesser degree, on the people it ruled the doctrine of their own racial inferiority.

We all confront the staggering facts of our economic backwardness. This has been partly due to factors of climate, geography, and the stubborn survival of obsolete social patterns. But it has also in large measure and perhaps decisively been the result of patterns imposed upon us by Western colonialism. This heritage is the heaviest burden we carry with us into the new epoch of national freedom. The-great masses of our people live in a state of poverty. We need to diversify our economies. We need to industrialize in accordance with our resources and needs. We have to win a more balanced place in the market places of the world. We have to do this in a manner that will effectively raise the standard of living of our people. These are the things we have fought for. These are the things that some of us here are still fighting for. For these things above all, we have needed to be free to seek our own way

But let us not have too many illusions about national independence. We arrive in the world as nations in the middle of the 20th century, not the 19th or the 18th. In this 20th century world the sober fact is that I

illusion. We cannot start centuries ago. purely national economy is an We have where, say, England started two to make our places in 2 world that has already made economic tremendous advances technologically and where inter-dependence has become the key to effective economic development and growth, But this by no means leaves us helpless to act in no choice our own interest. It does not mean that we have but to leave the great decisions to others. Quite the contrary. Quite the contrary, because it is precisely in our lands, in our continents, that the most important decisions are going to be made. And it is we who will make them, by what we do or by what we do NOT do in the coming years.

In could be that Russia's bombs or America's bombs the tate will determine the future shape of the world and of humanity.

If it comes to that the tragedy will be total total: it will make all we say or do here or anywhere else quite irmove relevant. Reason will die and the survivors will as best they can into a new epoch of savagery. But I do not think the great decisious will come that way. I think

be determined in the shape of the world is going to large measure by the way in which the peoples of Asia and Africa gO about the business of transforming their lives and their societies.

This made the lowliest drunken sot superior, in colonial society, to the highest product of culture and among the subject people. scholarship and industry

Today this type of Western racism survives in virulent form only in certain parts of Africa, notably in the Union of South Africa but certainly in many other places as well on that vast continent. Against this every decent man on earth has to set his face. In the United Nations, the Asian and African states have again and again forced this issue on the unwilling attention of the other members. There we could see palpably the extent to which Western men have had to become defensive about their past racist attitudes. Few of the Western countries were willing to go far enough in condemning the racial practices of the Government of the Union of South Africa. They have yet to learn, it seems, how deeply this issue cutsand how profoundly it unites non-Western peoples who may disagree on all sorts of questions.-

Khaled El-Azem, Syria

In the battle for peace, first and foremost, we must have faith in our capacity and our potentiality. We are not negligible. It is true we are under-developed in the military and economic fields. It is equally true that we do not possess nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. But still our contribution can be great and decisive. With our combined will, if we earnestly will, we can veto a catastrophic war or bring it down to a minimum. Without us a world war cannot be waged. We command the greatest of man power, of raw material, of war fuel, of military bases and of strategic positions. What a great asset to arrest war and establish peace.

Peace cannot be manufactured. Peace is not a commodity liable to export or import. Peace is the making of a peaceful mind, of a peaceful policy and of a peaceful action. Should a third war be waged, there would be no victors or vanquished, as all will be vanished. Those on the right or on the wrong, those on the offensive or defensive all would be brought to non-existence. This dreadful destiny decrees that peaceful co-existence must be the basic foundation of our international life. It is a fallacy to think of war as a necessity. It IS a great evil to think of war as an unavoidable evil. In this world of ours with the human genius capturing the riches of nature, all human needs can be satisfied. There is ample room for all ideas to be advanced. and enough room for all ideals to be achieved.

Israel does not belong to Asia or Africa. Israel is a pocket left behind the line of imperialism in its desperate retreat. Placed at one of the main gates of Asia, at the cross-roads of the three continents, Israel is an advanced outpost of imperialism. Thus, Israel exposes to danger the liberty of the peoples of Asia and Africa a liberty they captured through their sweat, blood and tears.

Next comes the question of North Africa. The conditions in Morocco, Tunis and Algeria, are distressing and disturbing. Morocco, a State ten centuries old, is now vast concentration camp with a deposed monarch. Tunis is lingering since 1950 in a process of protracted negotiations for its humble autonomy. Algeria is in a state of little war, a recurrence of a century's conflict. In general these three Arab territories, once the seat of dynasties and civilizations, are denied their national aspirations and the exercise of the principle of self-determination.

Africa presents another tragic problem. Racial discrimination against the people of Indian and Pakistan origin and the policy of Apartheid are a source of grave concern and deep anxiety to the whole civilized world. On Asia we have the question of West Irian. This is again a legacy of imperialism. The territory is an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia. It is alarming that the United Nations dealing with this question in its last session has not adopted a resolution framed in the most moderate language.

In all these problems imperialism stands out as the main cause with no other cause.

We trust that our conference will lead to concrete results. The world has become sick of deliberations without tangible outcome. It would be a great disappointment to public opinion if we are to confine ourselves to oratory

as a substitute to constructive measures. We hope, when we gO back to our homes, we will be able to offer our people a list of action rather than a heap of speeches. Let us hope that the closing session of our Conference would point out before us a line of conduct and action to realize the sublime purpose of this historic conference.

World Press Opinion

HISTORY IS MADE

A great thing, something taking place for the first time in world history, has become a reality in Bandung with the holding of the Asian-African Conference. Indonesia plays not only an important but also an honourable part in its convening, because she is the initiator of the conference as well as host.

For several days the big political figures of Asia and Africa such as Nehru, Romulo, Chou En-lai, Nasser, Mohammed Ali and U Nu are gathered in Bandung. On their shoulders is laid the task of carrying out measures to maintain world peace as well as to raise the position of the Asian-African nations in the world today and in the future.

For centuries Asian and African nations have been the victims of Western domination. The Bandung conference will seek ways and means to eliminate that domination. The representatives of the twentynine AsianAfrican nations will consider various important problems affecting the peoples of Asia and Africa in particular and the world in general.

The conference in Bandung IS a unique conference in world history, and we hope it will be able to come to a joint declaration that conforms with the aspirations of all the Asian and African peoples. The big political figures of Asia and Africa taking part in the deliberations should put forward new ideas and new ways to eliminate international conflicts and the cold war which exists today. If this can be done, the results of the Con-

ference will represent a valuable and important contribution now and in the future.

The Conference offers an excellent opportunity to the participating countries to create closer relations with one another, and we are convinced that each delegation will make use of this opportunity to sow the seeds of understanding in order to smoothen future relations. Only by close co-operation can the remnants of colonialism be eradicated. and only in this way can the political, economic, social and cultural development of each participating country be achieved.

Indonesia, as the host, should realise the importance of her position and do her utmost to see that the Conference achieve the best possible results results that will not disappoint either the Asian and African nations or the world in general.

(Merdeka, Djakarta, 18-4-1955 Translated).

THE WHYS & WHEREFORES OF THE A-A

CONFERENCE

The Asian-African Conference due to meet in Indonesia this summer, is an event of unique significance in the history of Asia. In order to educate public opinion in India and the rest of Asia, where Blitz is widely. read and commented upon, we began last week a new series of articles by leading public figures as to the main issues before the Asian-African Conference and how they can be tackled. This week's contributor is Dr. Rafiq

Zakaria.

The move to call the Asian-African Conference is another successful application of the now famous Nehru Doctrine in international politics.

About three years ago, no one would have dreamt that such a move on such a gigantic scale would ever have materialised. But let it be said to the credit of our Prime Minister that he stood firm by his policy of neutrality and non-alignment with the two power blocs even in the days of India's isolation in world affairs.

Widening the Sphere of Neutrality.

This move, as the sponsors have made it clear, is not directed against any country or group of countries. It is a move in the direction of world peace and progress. True, this move, if successful, will widen the sphere of neutrality and to that extent some powers may not relish it. But we have to look today at the problems of the world, specially in view of the Atom and Hydrogen Bombs, in the larger perspective of the preservation of world peace.

Important Role of Arab Countries.

Viewed thus, it would be clear even to the meanest intelligence that, as our Prime Minister has repeatedly made clear, defence pacts do not lead to any security but on the contrary provoke others to organise themselves into counter-defence pacts with the result that the menace of. war becomes more and more real.

In the Asian-African Conference, I am sure, the Arab countries will play an extremely important role. Today they occupy, not only strategically but also on account of their immense oil resources, a key position in world affairs ; and hence if they are persuaded by the Colombo Powers to take a correct lead it will go a long way In the easing of the world tension.

In this connection the fight that is going on between Egypt on one side and Iraq on the other in the Arab League is of more than local significance. On its outcome will largely depend the contribution that the Arab bloc will make towards the success of the Asian-African Conference

United Stand For World Peace.

The Egyptian Prime Minister, though a military man and yet in his thirties. has proved to be a great statesman and I am sure he will not leave any stone unturned to preserve the Arab unity, of course without sacrificing any of the fundamentals of his stand.

1 am also hopeful that the new King of Saudi Arabia, Saud bin Abdul Aziz, who has already acquired a unique position for himself in the Arab world, will exert all the influence at his command to see that no edge is created in the edifice of Arab security and that the Arabs will come unitedly to the forthcoming Asian-African Conference and help Mr. Nehru in preserving world peace.

(Blitz, Bombay, 12-2-55).

BILLION AND A HALF PEOPLE WILL BE

PRESENT

By Donald Grant

Red China's premier, Chou En-lai and Vietminh's successfull revolutionary, Ho Chi Minh, are expected to use all of the tactics of world Communism, developedin the nearly 30 years since the Russian revolution, to

turn the Asian-African Conference into a cosmic antiAmerican demonstration.

Viewed from the perspective of Washington where high State Department officials newly returned from conference in Asia believe, they say, much of that part of the world is in the process of sliding down into the morass of Communism the issue at Bandung seems to be Will the Asian-African Conference become another way-station on the road to domination by the Moscow-Peiping axis for a billion and a half Asians and Africans ?

But viewed from Asia or Africa, Bandung raises the hope of being a way-station on the road to independent power and economic development the high road to world recognition.

Red China and Vietminh will present the "'Russian way" as the most attractive way for the as yet uncommitted nations to modernize their economies and to achieve the status they seek.

The United States will have friends at the conference notably the representatives of the Philippine Republic, whose delegation probably will be headed by Gen. Carlos P. Romulo, Philippine Ambassador to the United States and personal representative in the United States of President Ramon Magsaysay.

Gen. Romulo's position nt Bandung, however, will have not be an enviable one. State Department officials for months been recommending with the greatest urgency that new and massive American program for the econoour mic development of the underdeveloped areas be projected in advance of the Bandung Conference, to give friends there something to talk about.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles at the Seato Conference earlier this month at Bangkok, Thailand, referred to the Asian-African Conference by stating that "all of us are working for peace, freedom, justice and well-being and therefore working for a common purpose." The Seato Conference adopted a resolution of greeting to the AsianAfrican Conference, which will be attended by Seato members, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines.

As of today, the most the State Department hopes for from the Bandung Conference is that Nehru, leader of the uncommitted nations may be able to emerge as the dominant figure. The only visible alternative is outright Communist domination.

There is evidence that Nehru will indeed assert his leadership atthe conference, not only through his friends in Asia, but also through Egypt's strong-arm Premier Gamel Abdul Nasser, with whom Nehru recently has gone. out of his way tO develop cordial relations.

(St. Louis Post-Dispatch, USA, 13-3-55).

CONFUSING

With the best will in the world it is difficult to understand what Premier Jawaharlal Nehru expects of the Afrasian conference at Bandung next April.

Doubtless the fault is largely with the abbreviated account of his views on the subject made available over the radiocasts. But from what can be ascertained from such a skimpy source, Mr. Nehru really doesn't expect anything much.

He concedes that all the nations represented are opposed to colonialism, but he adds that the conference IS not expected to bring out any definite program of nction against colonialism. It is possible that since the colonialism to which Mr. Nehru has been accustomed is pretty much of a dead horse, there is no point in kicking it any longer. There is n new colonialism around, of course, but it is expedient at this time to say nothing about it.

He concedes that there are two distinct forces in the world and that among the nations to meet at Bandung

there will be those favoring one or the other, and nations which choose to stand aloof from the controversy. But he adds that the conference is not intended to serve as (I involved. debating floor for the issues He does add that this will be the first time a large number of nations of differing and contrasting ideologies overlooks a meeting will meet together. But there he nations naground for precisely the same three categories of that has been in action for ten years come April mely the United Nations.

He points out that the conference will not be called upon to discuss issues as between the various nations represented. But if that is so, why is not Israel represented?

About the only positive point in the conference, according to Mr. Nehru, will be that it is an "experiment in co-existence", But there is a good deal that is inconsequential in using the world "coexistence." It is something that has been accepted since the beginning of man who would be extinct aS a species now if he had not learned by instinct, back before the Peking, the Piltdown Or the Neanderthal, that co-existence is as essential to keeping alive as food, water and air. Unless, that is, we accept the Soviet Russian premise that co-existence, like the radio and the airplane, among other things, was first discovered by a Russian.

All of which leaves one somewhat confused as to the purpose and objective of the Afrasian conference.

(The Sunday Times, Manila, 6-3-55).