

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

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Dear Mr. Rogers:

Looking back at the great and small events of the Bandung Asian-African Conference, I am struck by the fact that nearly all of the twenty-nine participants went away with a prize of some sort.

Communist China was introduced as a polite member of polite society, busy Japan made trade agreements with at least seven countries, the Arab states gained limited conference support against Israel, the SEATO and NATO powers won conference recognition of their right to collective defense pacts, and Nehru saw the formulation of the neutralist dream: a broad joint statement of non-aggression and non-interference backed by moral rather than material sanctions. Even small Yeman was supported in her claim to Aden.

As host, Indonesia won admiration and gratitude for her



gracious hospitality. Conference arrangements were made with thoroughness and flair, and hundreds of delegates and newsmen who gathered in the cool, clean West Javanese city of Bandung from April 18 to April 24 could not fail to be impressed.

Yet critics have continued to harass the Ali Sastroamidjojo government for placing so much importance on the "great show" at Bandung, which they claim did little to further Indonesia's real state interests.

The accomplishment of the Indonesian government at Bandung--and in the weeks following--cannot be dismissed so easily. The conference itself did not change the course of history, but it did supply the occasion for events and developments of considerable moment for troubled, groping Indonesia.

Prestige at Home

Despite a sustained publicity campaign by the government Information services, the significance of the Bandung Conference was not clearly felt by the average Indonesian. Thousands of on-lookers were able to catch the spark of excitement that burned for ten days or more in Djakarta and Bandung, as many of the notables of the world sped through town escorted by screaming sirens and police motorcycles. I found that many scores of them had clear enough ideas on the conference aims ("lessen world tension", "opposition to colonialism", "promote peace"). But outside the conference area, the meeting seemed to be another mystery and wonder to the illiterate millions who are little influenced by government posters and banners proclaiming great purposes in high, stilted Indonesian.

Among the literate minority, however, the Bandung Conference was a matter for discussion and opinion. Within this group, the conference most directly affected the politicians and officials of the government parties which sponsored the event. Its most important result may well have been to strengthen the faltering self-esteem and confidence of the small group which rules Indonesia.

It has been clearly to the detriment of Indonesian state interests that government leaders have felt so harrassed by uncertainty and sensitivity to outside opinion. This has perhaps been more true of the Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet than its predecessors. In many fields--foreign investment, foreign aid, trade relations, information policy--Indonesia has paid heavily for the fears and uncertainties of her leaders.

This lack of self-confidence has been brought home to newsmen who have interviewed Prime Minister Ali. With some embarrassment, they have heard this man of position worry volubly and at length about unfair, unsympathetic foreign press coverage of Indonesia. They have been told, in short, that Indonesia does



President Sukarno
leaves "Freedom Hall"
after opening speech
at Bandung A-A Conference

not want critics. After the defeat of the Indonesian case on West Irian in the U.N. General Assembly, nationalist circles were preoccupied for weeks about the "hostile" attitude of the American press in general and the New York Times in particular. Angry charges were made that the New York Times--presumably with its solitary short editorial on West Irian--was responsible for the U.N. defeat. It seemed for awhile that foreign opinion had become more important than the concrete interests of Indonesian foreign policy.

I witnessed the same over-attention to foreign opinion in an informal conversation with a cabinet minister recently. He argued that East and West could never meet, that the East understands the West thoroughly, but that the West in turn could never fathom the Eastern mind. He felt that the Indonesian case on West Irian had been defeated by the shortsighted, colonial attitude of the NATO powers. He ended his talk with the shocking statement that war could hardly be avoided now. I asked if he meant war between the communist and American blocs. He answered, "No, between East and West." Allowing for the excitement of the moment and some exaggeration, the minister's statement seemed to indicate a serious insecurity and uncertainty in his thinking on foreign policy.

The Asian-African Conference was a balm and bolster to many nationalist leaders who have in the past been so upset by a single editorial or a series of flip, patronizing articles in Time Magazine.

As editor Herawati Diah commented in the Indonesian Observer on April 29, "Those who were doubtful of the conference's achievement now talk differently and are completely convinced that in spite of ideological differences Asians and Africans have something in common...The Asian-African Conference has helped a few people to get rid of their inferiority complex of being an Asian. This I would call the greatest achievement of the Asian-African Conference."

The truth of Mrs. Diah's comment could be felt during the conference sessions and in the final conference communique, which was marked by realism and dignity. It was perhaps this substantial

new confidence--which seemed to jell overnight as the Bandung Conference started--which gave the meeting that atmosphere of excitement and historical significance which literally swept away attending delegates and newsmen. For once, the importance and standing of such countries as Indonesia did not have to be defended; they were obvious facts.

Indonesian press commentary during and after the conference emphasized the theme of prestige: "...it is already apparent what the AA Conference in Bandung is doing to raise our national prestige." "First of all, the Bandung Conference will give Indonesia a higher position in international society..." "...the eyes of the world have now been opened to the fact that in Indonesia too there are leaders of big caliber, whose role in world affairs cannot be ignored."

Prestige was also the main concern of official government information to the Indonesian people. Posters, statements, and speeches told the village and city people that, "the eyes of the world are on Indonesia." President Sukarno addressed a mass meeting in Bandung with pardonable hyperbole, "We are like a light-house with our Panchasila, pointing the way in this dark world."

It was certainly for the sake of appearances and "face" that the Bandung police rounded up and detained over five hundred prostitutes and vagrants before the conference. Old timers in Bandung remarked on the dearth of the usual "night butterflies" soliciting strangers from dark doorways and corners. Unfortunately, however, the relative absence of private prostitutes contributed indirectly to the now-famous "hospitality committee" scandal.

According to the opposition press, a "hospitality committee" was set up to provide delegates with prostitutes selected and sponsored by the government. One newspaper published documentary evidence in great detail, and the existence of some such organization can hardly be doubted. As far as I know, however, these services were only provided at the loud insistence of foreign delegates who could not find what they wanted in the "purged" city.

Such an arrangement would cause little stir in a more cosmopolitan country, but Indonesian society is generally puritanical. The opposition press was shrewd in picking the incident as a weapon to attack the prestige-conscious government. Religious, youth, and women's groups reacted vigorously and spoke out against the government with indignation. Government agencies angrily denied knowledge of the committee, but their statements seemed to indicate that the arrangements might have been made by other offices at other levels.

For more than a week, items on the scandal overshadowed other Asian African stories in the national press. With almost sadistic enjoyment, the government's tormentors let it be known that the outside world was laughing at the government's folly,

LAGI2 MAS TJANTRIK !



SEENAKNJA SADJA, MAU KEBANDUNG SENDIRI?
GUA MESTI IKUT!!!

"Hey! Who told you to traipse
off to Bandung by yourself?
I'm going too!"

while the Indonesian world was deeply shocked at its lack of Eastern morality.

When the "hospitality committee" scandal had cooled, opposition newspapers jumped with unerring instinct to other charges which called into question not the government's basic conduct, but its dignity and prestige. One newspaper intimated that visiting delegates were poorly impressed by Prime Minister Ali's conduct as chairman of the political committee, and several editorials expressed doubt that the historical significance of the conference warranted the purchase of so many new Plymouths, American cigarettes, and plastic coat hangers by an impoverished government.

For once oblivious to its critics, the Ali government conducted itself with a buoyant and confident air in the weeks following the Asian-African Conference. Opposition criticisms were parried or ignored and the government had obviously gained stature, not so much in the eyes of the uninformed masses as in its all-important attitude toward itself.

The new air of confidence may not be easily or quickly deflated, for it is based on the plain fact that the Asian-African Conference was well-run and that Indonesia and the other participants pursued their goals without undue bravado or a false sense of power.

Rapprochement with China

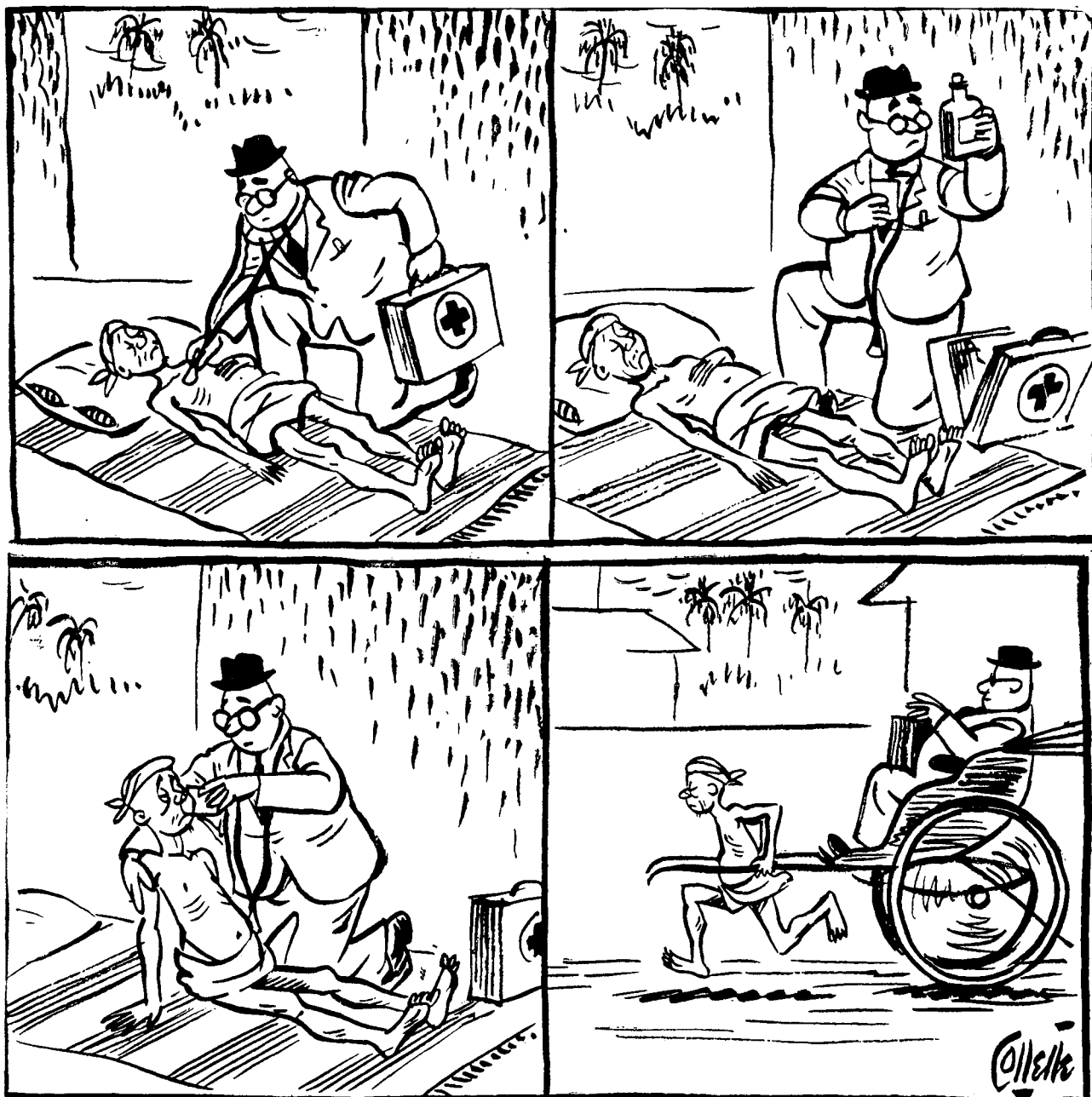
Apart from its elusive concern for prestige and "face", the Indonesian government pursued concrete goals at Bandung with some success. The principal effect of its course of action at the conference and in the weeks that followed has been the creation of closer and more sympathetic relations with Communist China.

A major achievement of the conference--shared by Indonesia

and all conferees--was the mutual pact of non-aggression and non-interference contained in the Final Communiqué. Its essence was stated in ten principles:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations large and small.
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
6. (a) Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers.
(b) Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement, as well as other peaceful means of the parties' own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and cooperation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

The excellent purpose in inviting China to attend the Asian-African Conference is apparent from these ten points, for China is the only major nation in the conference area which could feel its activities restricted by such a pledge of non-interference and non-aggression to the other powers attending. The pact is completely in the spirit of the Bandung Conference, in that it is backed by moral rather than material sanctions. As such, it is a triumph of Nehru's neutralism and will stand as its clearest test-case. Apart from its emphasis on the morality of neutralism, the pact seems also to have been based on the general conference opinion--publically stated by U Nu--that China is principally concerned with her internal problems and is not bent on a program of expansion.



"THE UNDERDEVELOPED MAN" (Jana Magazine)

"Jana"—a worthwhile new magazine published in Ceylon—enlivened its "Asian-African" Conference issue with the above interpretation of the fate of the common man of Asia and Africa. "The great powers are now anxious to rehabilitate him, to give him "teeth", to fight his battles for him and to chose his friends and foes for him", claims Jana.

The only specifically Indonesian problem mentioned in the Final Communique was in relation to the disputed area of West Irian, which is still under the control of the Netherlands. A carefully worded paragraph in the Final Communique stated that the conference, "supported the position of Indonesia in the case of West Irian, based on the relevant agreements between Indonesia and the Netherlands." Since the Indonesian "position" is merely that the Netherlands should consent to reopen negotiations on the problem, the support offered Indonesia in the Final Communique cannot be considered strong. It does, however, promise Indonesia slightly increased support in the United Nations General Assembly if West Irian is discussed in the future.

Outside the official conference sessions, Indonesia was as engrossed as its neighbors in making special contacts and arrangements. The most consequential of these were with Communist China. During and after the Bandung Conference, close contact

between the two governments has led to a series of friendly understandings.



The first event in the series was the Chou-Sunario "Treaty on the Issue of Dual Nationality", signed on April 22. The agreement represents a fresh start in the difficult problem of determining the nationality of Indonesia's powerful Chinese minority, estimated at between two and three million persons. The effect of the new treaty is to nullify past Indonesian regulations on citizenship for Chinese and to obligate all persons of Chinese descent to make an active choice within a two year period of citizenship of one nation or the other. Those who do not make an active choice will automatically assume the citizenship of the male parent.

Chou En-lai charmed the Bandung Conference but won no special concessions.

The treaty is valuable for its concrete definition of the status of the persons involved. For the first time in history, a Chinese government has agreed to relinquish the allegiance of overseas Chinese. Those who chose Indonesian citizenship will be indisputably Indonesian subjects.

A weakness of the treaty is that it cancels the choice already made by many hundreds of thousands of Chinese who became Indonesian citizens by earlier regulations. This group--perhaps a million persons--will have to make a second, or in some cases a third choice for Indonesian citizenship.

The effect of the dual-nationality treaty will almost certainly be to ensure the perpetuation of an immense minority of Chinese citizens within Indonesian borders, and the new arrangement clearly stipulates their loyalty and "patriotism" to Peking.

It is too early to know whether the Indonesian government is intentionally discouraging the integration of the Chinese into Indonesian society, but the obvious effect of the Chou-Sunario agreement would indicate such an attitude.

The second major development in Indonesian-Chinese relations was the issuance of a Joint Statement by Chou En-lai and Ali Sastroamidjojo on April 28. Four of its five articles are innocuous reiterations of the co-existence pacts China had already concluded with India and Burma. The remaining one--Article 4--has caused confusion and concern.

"Article 4. The two prime ministers are agreed that it is the inalienable right of every nation to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity. They express their deep sympathy and support towards the efforts of either nation to preserve its own sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The article of course raises the question of Taiwan and West Irian. How far is Indonesia bound to sympathize with and support an attack on Taiwan? And will Indonesia's future attitude on West Irian be patterned after that of Peking toward Taiwan? The official newspaper of the Masjumi Party, the largest opposition group in Indonesia, considered Article 4 to be a direct departure from Indonesia's "independent foreign policy".

The Foreign Ministry came to Ali's defense by denying that the article called for military aid or support in the event of war over Taiwan. The Minister of Information joined in with a statement that Indonesia had in no way departed from her principles but that it did recognize the claim of Peking to Taiwan.

The latest clarification of Article 4 was offered by Chou En-lai on June 10. He indicated that China considers West

Irian to be an Indonesian domestic problem, just as Taiwan's status is an internal problem for China. In his interpretation, Article 4 simply states the fact that both parties would give "political and moral" assistance to the other in its efforts to implement sovereignty in the two disputed regions, but that neither party was obligated to aid militarily.

Soothing statements have not reassured the opposition parties, and Ali's critics quite reasonably ask why the debated article was included in the statement if it has no meaning. In line with the events of the past two months, the Chou-Ali statement should be viewed as a part of a steady trend in official Indonesian sympathies toward China and away from the western bloc.

Indonesia has not made a concrete obligation which departs from her policy of neutralism, but her official affection is obviously drifting. If the rapprochement is genuinely a matter of sympathy and Asian neighborliness, its nature was well stated by a recent editorial in a government party newspaper: "Fancy an Asian country feeling itself closer to the west, which still has the will to colonialism, than to an Asian country (China) which has the will to freedom and self-development."

There is no reason, however, to describe Indonesian policy completely in terms of anti-colonial sentiments. If the Ali government looks on China as a potential friend in the struggle for West Irian or as a diplomatic counter-balance to western power, it is also true and perhaps more important that it sees China as a market for rubber and other raw materials.

Prime Minister Ali took the latest step toward cementing Indonesian-Chinese relations, when he boarded a plane on May 24 for Peking. During a busy ten-day schedule, he met Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh, Liu Shao-ch'i, and carried on discussions in regard to the Asian-African Conference decisions and matters of commerce. On his return to Djakarta, Ali let it be known that Indonesia had made an offer of good offices in future negotiations on Taiwan and that "a meeting of minds" had been reached on the vital Indonesian-Chinese trade agreement, which has been virtually a dead letter for over eighteen months because of the U.N. embargo.

The weakness of the Indonesian foreign policy position is seen in the uncertain history of this trade agreement. As long as the U.N. embargo on China stands, implementation will be very difficult, yet Indonesia does not have the power to ignore the embargo or to work effectively for its abolition. The embargo was not mentioned in the Bandung Conference Final Communiqué (nor was China U.N. membership), and Indonesia must continue to work toward a larger China trade more or less alone, improvising a foreign policy whose effectiveness is dependent on the will of more powerful nations. In furthering its trade relations with China, the Ali government has been walking a tight-rope with some skill, but it's goal has not yet been reached.



Ko-eksistensi Nehru

Ko-eksistensi Ali Sastroamidjojo

An opposition newspaper (Indonesia Raya) on "co-existence" with China.

The Asian-African Conference has inaugurated a new period in Indonesian-Chinese relations, and the Ali government can claim several important achievements: the settlement on dual-nationality, the joint statement on non-interference, the offer of good offices on the Taiwan problem, and a major step toward implementation of the trade treaty. In each case, the government has had to meet the criticism that it has been hoodwinked by Chou En-lai or is drifting dangerously toward one side in the cold war.

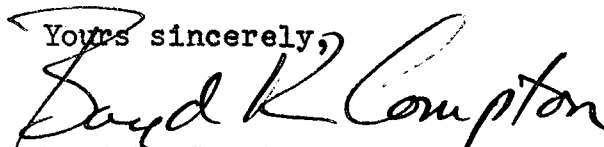
The critics, however, may be premature. The Ali government has made sizeable advances in its foreign policy towards China without materially obligating Indonesia or losing the friendship of the United States. The offer of "deep sympathy and support" to China may return to haunt the government as an embarrassing commitment, but the wording of the declaration is so ambiguous that it is nearly impossible to construe it as a positive, binding offer.

From the first day of the Asian-African Conference, the government's foreign policy has won a series of major and minor

successes. Indonesian prestige abroad may indeed have risen and the foundations may have been laid for profitable future relations with China.

At home, however, the dike holding back inflation has broken, the government budget is dangerously unbalanced, corruption in government has deeply corroded national morale, rebellion continues to spread in the provinces, the threat of outright warlordism in Sulawesi remains unanswered, and new rumblings are being heard in the army.

Prime Minister Ali seems to have done very well at Bandung, but his accomplishments are comparatively minor if Indonesia's internal problems continue to push the young nation closer and closer to disaster.

Yours sincerely,

Boyd R. Compton

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