

## **A “Third World” in a Cold War**

**An analysis of the difficulties the Asian Socialist Conference, as an example of a “Third World” Afro-Asian network, had in navigating the early Cold War, 1953-1960.**



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## *Abstract*

Navigating the early Cold War during the 1950s was no easy task for states and international organisations, given the changing dynamics and intrigues of Cold War geopolitics and the onset of decolonisation across Asia and Africa. In this period, a number of national, regional and international political organisations emerged across the “Third World” which sought to establish their own movements and support based on their own ideology. The Asian Socialist Conference, 1953-1960, was one such organisation which came into existence in this period and attempted to navigate the early Cold War. Significant limitations faced organisations like the ASC as they addressed the “great problems”, relating to European colonialism and the Cold War, facing the world. In a broader context, the limitations the ASC faced explain the difficulties “Third World” Afro-Asian networks in navigating the Cold War. Through a more Asian-centric approach, the purpose of this analysis will therefore be to analyse and explain the limitations the ASC faced in its endeavour to resolve the great world problems of the 1950s and how those limitations show the difficulties “Third World” Afro-Asian networks had in navigating early Cold War.

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## *Abbreviations*

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ACB   | Anti-colonial Bureau   |
| ASC   | Asian Socialist Conference   |
| CCF   | Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Canada)  |
| IISH  | International Institute of Social History  |
| ILO   | International Labour Organisation  |
| IUSY  | International Union of Socialist Youth   |
| KMT   | Kuomintang of China (Taiwan)   |
| MCP   | Malaya Communist Party   |
| MSEUE | Mouvement Socialiste pour les États-Unis d'Europe (Socialist Movement for the United States of Europe) |
| NAM   | Non-Aligned Movement   |
| PKI   | Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia)  |
| PRC   | People's Republic of China   |
| PSI   | Partai Sosialis Indonesia (Socialist Party of Indonesia)   |
| PSP   | Praja Socialist Party (India)  |
| ROC   | Republic of China (Taiwan)   |
| SFIO  | Section Française de l'Internationale ouvrière (French Section of the Workers' International)          |
| SI    | Socialist International  |
| SPD   | Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Social Democrat Party)                                 |

## *Introduction – A Changing World*

In the decades following the end of the Second World War, the international system underwent a radical change unlike anything ever witnessed before. The dissolution of European Empires, which had characterised the previous 600 hundred years of human history, was simultaneously accompanied by the emergence of a Cold War between superpowers of the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Navigating the early years of this period was undoubtedly tumultuous as decolonisation became intertwined with Cold War ideological tensions and conflict. Colonial peoples across Africa and Asia seeking, or having recently achieved, independence found themselves inescapably lodged within this complex bipolar geopolitical framework, and faced the consequential decision whether to align themselves with the US-led capitalist bloc, the Soviet-led communist bloc, or opt for a position of some form of neutrality. Advocates of democratic socialism were one of many groups attempting to navigate the early Cold War years, and were manifested in “Third World” organisation like the Asian Socialist Conference (ASC).

First conceived during an informal meeting between the socialist parties of Burma, India and Indonesia at the Asia Relations Conference held in Delhi, March 1947, the ASC became a forum in which kindred democratic socialists from across the “Third World” gathered to discuss ideas of socialism, human rights democracy and self-determination.<sup>1</sup> During its operative years between 1953 and 1960, the ASC met to discuss the pressing issues of the time, particularly those regarding anti-colonialism, decolonisation, the Cold War and the two power blocs. Forming its own principles and policies, the ASC attempted to address these issues, but faced significant limitations in doing so.

In the historiography of the post-1945 world, ideas on the “Third World”, non-alignment and Afro-Asian networks have generally been attributed by historians such as Christopher Lee to the Bandung conference of April 1955 and its part in generating “the idea of a Third World” and spirit of the “Bandung moment”.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, until recently, little attention has been given to

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<sup>1</sup> International Institute of Social History (hereafter: IISH), INT 1095/15, ‘Three years of Asian Socialist Conference’, Second Congress of the ASC, (Bombay: Preparatory Committee, November 1956), 4 (hereafter: ‘Three Years of ASC’).

For more on the Asian Relations Conference, see Carolien Stolte, ‘The Asiatic Hour: New perspectives on the Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, 1947’, in Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné and Nada Boškovića, *the Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 57.

<sup>2</sup> For literature on the Bandung Moment and the significance of that conference, see Christopher J. Lee, ‘Introduction, Between a Moment and an Era: The Origins and Afterlives of Bandung’, in Christopher J. Lee (ed.) *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 15.

movements like the ASC which were just as important in establishing Afro-Asian networks, international socialist solidarity and the foundations of non-alignment. Historians such as Talbot Imlay have written extensively about the ASC as an example of a socialist organisation operating within an international framework of socialist internationalism, along with other institutions such as the SI, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY).<sup>3</sup> Conversely, others such as G.H. Jansen have written about the ASC as a failed attempt by socialist parties to harness Afro-Asian feeling and non-alignment to their party interests, particularly emphasising that the ASC failed to produce any practical results from its debates on neutralism and joining the Socialist International (SI), and the movement subsequently drowned in the “noisy hectoring of the Solidarity Movement”.<sup>4</sup>

Whilst a degree of attention has been given to the contested relationship of the ASC with the SI and Cominform, and debates within the ASC on neutrality and non-alignment, less notice has been given to the impact internal divisions, ideological disillusion, domestic politics in Asian countries, and Asian-centricity had on the ASC. Imlay’s work in *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism* and his article ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s: Competing Rights and the Postcolonial Order’ in *American Historical Review* neglect to exemplify the particular importance domestic political factors had for Asian socialists, instead focusing on the ASC through a Western-lens as a more ideologically homogenous entity. The reality was that the ASC was rife with internal ideological divisions, not just between socialist parties, but also within the parties themselves, along with the implication of wider Cold War dynamics.

Bridging a gap in the historiography, which has hitherto merely addressed the ASC as form of socialist internationalism or a failed Afro-Asian network, this study will demonstrate how the ASC, as an example of a “Third World” Afro-Asian network, attempted to navigate the early Cold War years and the difficulties it encountered in doing so. Chapter I begins by outlining the establishing of the ASC, its principles, policies and overall significance as a “Third World” Afro-Asian organisation during the early years of the Cold War. Chapter II goes on to specify the concerns the ASC had at the time of its meeting and how its member subsequently approached and acted on those concerns. Chapter III thereafter highlights the significant limitations the ASC faced in its endeavour to navigate the early Cold War. The subsequent

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<sup>3</sup> Talbot Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism: European Socialist and International Politics, 1914-1960*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2018), 422-429, 446-468.

<sup>4</sup> G.H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*, (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1966), 267.

conclusions will be drawn on how specific limitations exemplified the difficulties “Third World” organisations like the ASC had in navigating the early Cold War. Across all chapters, there will be a continuous emphasis on the contextual importance of the anti-colonialism, decolonisation, the Cold War and the two-power bloc rivalry and how they pertained to the difficulties the ASC encountered.

Using a combination of primary and secondary literature on the ASC, international socialist movements, Afro-Asian networks, non-alignment, decolonisation and the Cold War, the following study and critique of these sources will exemplify the difficulties the ASC had in navigating the early Cold War. Understanding the difficulties the ASC had requires a number of areas to be addressed. First, it is important to have an overview of the conference itself, its members, beliefs and principles. Second, an acknowledgment of the conferences’ discussions, concerns and resolutions. Third, an explanation of the limitations the conference faced, both internally and externally. Concurrently, all of these aspects must retrospectively be understood within the context of European decolonisation and the Cold War as both having unavoidable implications on the ASC and its individual socialist party members.

Primary sources predominantly employed for this research were sourced from the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam, including an array of publications made by the ASC itself, as well as the Anti-Colonial Bureau (ACB) Newsletter, the Praja Socialist Party of India’s (PSP) magazine publication *Janata*. To counterbalance any ideological predisposition from sources produced by the ASC and its members, documents from the Socialist International and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) will also be employed to provide an external viewpoint. Sources produced by Asian socialists, whilst undoubtedly credible in their content, must be acknowledged in retrospect of the context in which they were produced, particularly the individuals who spoke or wrote the words analysed and the pre-existing allegiances and tendencies they subsequently held.

### ***Problems with the term “Third World”***

As an example of a “Third World” Afro-Asian network, it would be morally neglectful to ignore the issues surrounding the term “Third World” before continuing to use it for this study. In terms of origins, whilst the exact academic roots of the term “Third World” are difficult to pin-point, the most prevalent first use was by French economist and demographer Alfred Sauvy, who coined the idea of a “Third World” in his article ‘Three Worlds, one planet’ in the August 1952 edition of *L’Observateur*, as a term to describe “the formerly colonized, non-



aligned, and supposedly underdeveloped societies of Asia, Africa and Latin America”.<sup>5</sup> Initially accepted as a more positive term to describe countries which had previously been describe as “backwards”, “underdeveloped”, “peripheral” or “societies in transition”, who now sought to establish “an alternative to past imperialism and the politics economics and power of the US and the Soviet Union”, it is permissible to understand why term was initially applied to describe Afro-Asian (and Latin American) countries in unison.<sup>6</sup> However, the problematic implications of the term are not to be understated, not least because of different interpretations and definitions of the “Third World”, but also because of its negative connotations.

Mark Berger defines the “Third World” as “an ideological trend centred on a wide array of anti-colonial nationalism and national liberation movements that linked the utopian strands of Marxism and/or liberalism to romantic conceptions of the pre-colonial era”.<sup>7</sup> Used to “generate unity and support among a growing number of non-aligned nation-state whose leaders sought to displace the ‘East-West’ (Cold War) conflict”, the term has subsequently been both appraised and criticised by academics.<sup>8</sup> He demonstrates how advocates of the term, who seek to “revitalise the idea of a Third world”, argue that the emergence of post-Cold War world can still be explained through the idea of the “Third World”, whereas critics draw attention to term’s “profound shortcomings during the Cold War”, emphasising on the geopolitical divisions of the Cold War and how, in post-Cold War studies, the term “Third World” dubiously implies to a homogenous group of countries across “a large and diverse area of the world”, and Col War-era divisive terms grounded in political, economic and territorial differences are no longer relevant.<sup>9</sup>

Berger also highlights the complexities of the term “Third World” given how it can be discerned between two generations of “Third Worlders” in the Cold War period. The first generation of “Third Worlders” included figures like Jawaharlal Nehru, Ho Chi Minh, Sukarno, Zhou Enlai and Gamal Abdel Nasser who were generally linked to the anti-colonial nationalist movements of their countries, but had a less defined relationship with socialism and communism.<sup>10</sup> The second generation came during the 1960s-1970s and comprised of more

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<sup>5</sup> Christoph Kalter, *The Discovery of the Third World: Decolonization and the Rise of the New Left in France C. 1950-1976*, translated by Thomas Dunlap, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1, 42.

<sup>6</sup> Ash Narain Roy, *Third World in the Age of Globalisation: Requiem or New Agenda?*, (Delhi: Madyham Books, 1999), 3; Christopher Lee, ‘Introduction, Between a Moment and an Era’, 15.

<sup>7</sup> Mark T. Berger, ‘After the Third World? History, destiny and the fate of Third Worldism’, in *Third World Quarterly*, 25:1, (2004), 31.

<sup>8</sup> Berger, ‘After the Third World?’, 10

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 11, 20.

radical, unambiguously socialist, authoritarian regimes, many of which had overthrown the previous post-colonial first generation “Third Worlders”, including figures like Fidel Castro, Ahmed Ben Bella, Houari Boumédiène, Julius Nyerere, Salvador Allende, Muammar Qaddafi.<sup>11</sup> “Third World” thus cannot homogeneously describe the Afro-Asian movements and regimes during the Cold War period due to ideological changes many of them, particularly in Asia and Africa, underwent between the 1950s and 1970s.

Other historians such as J.D.B. Miller have described the term “Third World” as “a cant phrase... used to describe those countries which are plainly neither communist nor western”, in which some countries are easily distinguished as part of the “Third World”; such as India and Indonesia, whilst others are not due to their individual circumstances; such as Japan and Israel.<sup>12</sup> Miller ultimately defines the Third World as comprising of Asian and African countries “which are not under the control of Europeans and do not have Communist governments” and “wish to defend themselves by whatever means seem appropriate, whether collective or individual, but they do not wish to enter into quarrels which they do not feel are theirs”.<sup>13</sup> “Third World” countries have specific aspirations which subsequently vary in priority depending on the individual state in question:

1. to maximise the prestige of the national government,
2. to preserve sovereignty and territorial integrity,
3. to improve the economy,
4. to be on good terms with neighbours,
5. to cooperate with like-minded states,
6. to be well thought of amongst Afro-Asian states,
7. to avoid domination by a major power,
8. and to obtain assistance from major powers.<sup>14</sup>

Of course, a major omission in Miller’s definition is Latin America. However, given most of Latin America’s colonial history and independence took place in the preceding centuries, the distinct relationships between the countries of Latin America and the US, and their general lack of involvement with the ASC, the exclusion of Latin American countries is therefore permissible for the purpose of this analysis.

There are some major issues with the term “Third World” in academia, specifically regarding its connotations. When Sauvy coined the term “Third World” in 1952, he implicitly referred to

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<sup>11</sup> Berger, ‘After the Third World?’, 19.

<sup>12</sup> J.D.B. Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), x-xi.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, xi, 104-105.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 70-73.

those countries between the capitalist West and communist Eastern blocs.<sup>15</sup> However, statesmen, particularly in the West such as President Eisenhower and General Marshall, took the view that “Third World” referred to a group of “infantile” countries and that those “Third World people could not interact with outside influence but only adhere to tradition or accept modernity through either its capitalist or communist variants”.<sup>16</sup> Evidently, ascribing countries as part of the “Third World” thus carries negative and derogatory connotations towards those countries, which must subsequently be remembered whenever scholars seek to use the term.

### ***The Importance of Decolonisation***

Decolonisation is a consistently essential aspect to consider when analysing the difficulties the ASC faced in navigating the early Cold War, particularly with regards to the relationship decolonisation had with the tensions and geopolitics of the Cold War. Many historians have highlighted how interlinked and connected decolonisation and the Cold War are, including Imlay and Connelly, particularly regarding the unshakeable presence of a “Cold War lens” which Western statesmen, policymakers and academics often have when addressing “Third World” issues, which they subsequently both argue is impossible to remove when discussing decolonisation, as the geopolitics of Cold War influenced how people understood events at the time, which notably for the ASC were the Malaya Emergency, First Indochina War and latterly the Suez Crisis.<sup>17</sup>

Historians have also examined how the Cold War ultimately pertained to decolonisation through the way in which it provided both threats and opportunities for anti-colonial movements during their struggle for independence.<sup>18</sup> In particular, the rivalry between the US and USSR “presented revolutionary movements and newly independent states with the benefits and the dangers of superpower patronage through weapons and arms, advisers and funds for civil and military development, and direct military intervention”.<sup>19</sup> Hence, colonialism and military pacts were the major issues in relations between the Third World and the West, and not only were anti-colonialism and involvement with the great powers “highly publicized and

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<sup>15</sup> Matthew Connelly, ‘Taking off the Cold War lens: visions of North-South conflict during the Algerian war for independence’, *American Historical Review*, June 2000, 743.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 744.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 739-769; Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1108-1109.

<sup>18</sup> Jason Parker, ‘Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era’, *Diplomatic History*, 30:5 (November 2006), 867

<sup>19</sup> Mark Phillip Bradley, ‘Decolonisation, the Global South and the Cold War, 1919-1962’, in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.) *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1: Origins*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 465.

emotional issues” for the Third World, but evidently, “without question, the Cold War affected decolonizing states at multiple levels”.<sup>20</sup> It is therefore critical when analysing the difficulties the ASC had in navigating the Cold War that a decolonisation is tentatively acknowledged, particularly the intricacies the relationship between decolonisation and the geopolitics and tensions of the Cold War.

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<sup>20</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 14, 101; Bradley, ‘Decolonisation, the Global South and the Cold War’, 465

## *Chapter I – The Asian Socialist Conference*

The gathering of Asian socialists during the 1950s was by no means an insignificant event during the early Cold War period. Comprised of parties from Asia, Africa and Europe, the conference saw the gathering of socialists from India, Burma, Indonesia, Japan, Israel, Lebanon, Malaya, Pakistan and Egypt, and fraternal guests from the Socialist International (SI), Yugoslavia, Algeria, Tunisia, Uganda, Kenya, Nepal, the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY), and the Movement for Colonial Freedom.<sup>21</sup> The first congress met on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1953 at Rangoon in Burma, and the second on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1956 in Bombay, India, with U Ba Swe of the Socialist Party of Burma nominated as chairman, with a number of bureau meetings taking place in between at Hyderabad in August 1953, Kalaw in May 1954 and Tokyo in November 1954. In total, the ASC had an initial membership of some 602,000 people between the nine party members, making it a modestly sized organisation compared to the SI.<sup>22</sup>

The ASC was greeted with the upmost enthusiasm, from within its own delegation and beyond. In the preface to the report of the first congress of the ASC, Joint Secretary of the Preparatory Committee U Hla Aung described the conference as “a mile-stone in the history of freedom and socialist movements of Asia and Africa”.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, a report written in *Janata* by Israeli socialist Moshe Sharett proclaimed the conference was “a daring enterprise to call together representatives of Socialist parties from such different and distance parts of the far-slung Asian continent... most of whom had hardly been in contact with on another before”.<sup>24</sup> Given how recent the development of socialism had been in Asia - the oldest party being the Socialist Party of India established in 1934 (which would later form part of the PSP) – and the failure of the recent *Mouvement Socialiste pour les États-Unis d'Europe* (MSEUE) to enlighten European socialists on the struggle non-European socialists were facing at the 1948 ‘Congress of European, Asiatic and African Peoples’ – such high expectations of the ASC by its members is permissible, even more-so because no such gathering of Afro-Asian socialists had ever been undertaken.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> ‘Three Years of ASC’, 4-6. For a full list of delegates who attended the first and second congregations of the ASC, see appendix 1 page.

<sup>22</sup> Three years of ASC, 5.

<sup>23</sup> IISH, INT 1095/7, ‘Report of the First Asian Socialist Conference, Rangoon, 1953 [Preface by U Hla Aung, Joint Secretary]’, preface. Hereafter; Report of the First ASC.

<sup>24</sup> IISH, ZF 30489, Praja Socialist Party, ‘Janata: Voice of Democratic Socialism, 1951-’ (hereafter; *Janata*) Vol. 8, Moshe Sharett, ‘Significance of the Asian Socialist Conference’, (17 May 1953), 5.

<sup>25</sup> Saul Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 1; Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 422.

The ASC received international attention through a number of messages sent for the first congress by fellow social democrats from Europe, Africa and the Americas, wishing good fortunes, prosperity and success in the meeting of delegates in Rangoon. Fraternal greetings came from the SPD in Germany, the Congress of Peoples against Imperialism, the American Socialist Party, the Indonesian Socialist Party, the Algerian Party, the IUSY, Dutch Socialist Youth, The Third Force Central Committee (Tel-Aviv), the Ukrainian Socialist party, and the Canadian Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (and its Youth Movement)<sup>26</sup> Evidently, as Indian socialist delegate Jayaprakash Narayan declared, “the people of Asia and Africa, if not elsewhere, are looking... to Rangoon in the expectation of a new light”.<sup>27</sup>

The ASC reciprocated its own global outlook following the first congress, as representatives of the ASC were despatched across the world to establish relations with other socialist democrats. U Hla Aung was sent to Central Africa, the Gold Coast, Kenya and Uganda to connect with nationalist political parties in December 1953, as well as Canada by invitation of the CCF, and attended a UN General Assembly meeting in New York. An ASC study mission was sent to Indochina and Malaya in the summer of 1954 to learn of the political, economic and social situations in those countries. In addition in July 1955, Indonesian socialist Wijono, General Secretary of the Bureau of the ASC, and Joint Secretary Madhav Gokhale from India led a delegation of ASC members to attend the Fourth Congress of the SI in London.<sup>28</sup> Evidently, the ASC was establishing itself as an important international organisation and sought to extend its outreach beyond the “Third World”.

From the offset, Chairman U Ba Swe outlined the aims and ambitions of the ASC by establishing the “great problems” facing the world in the post-1945 period; (1) the threat of a new world war, (2) colonial peoples struggle for freedom, (3) national revolution, and (4) the economic development of the underdeveloped areas.<sup>29</sup> With all four concerns relating to decolonisation and the Cold War, the ASC subsequently sought to navigate the early Cold War years by spearheading attempts to resolve these concerns. Such problems, U Ba Swe claimed, could not be resolved by a single political party, and instead required “repeated efforts of all the participants of this conference”.<sup>30</sup> Thus the ASC established a set of cohesive aims within

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<sup>26</sup> Report of the First ASC, vii-ix.

<sup>27</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 11.

<sup>28</sup> Three years of ASC, 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 8.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

the framework of democratic socialist ideology. In summary; the ASC established the following general purposes:–

- a) “to strengthen relations between the Asian Socialist Parties,
- b) to co-ordinate their political attitude by consent,
- c) to establish closer relations with Socialist parties in the world,
- d) establish a liaison with the Socialist International and to champion the cause of all colonial and oppressed peoples and guide the freedom movements towards the establishment of democratic national independence,
- e) and co-operation for the maintenance of world peace”.<sup>31</sup>

To address its four primary concerns, three committees (A, B and C) were formed in the First Plenary Session comprising of representatives of all participating delegates: Committee A addressed the ‘Principles and Objectives of socialism’, ‘Asia and World Peace’, and the ‘Permanent Machine of the ASC’; Committee B discussed ‘Agrarian Policy for Asia’ and the ‘Economic Development of Asian Countries’; and Committee C focused on the ‘Freedom Movements in Colonies’ and ‘Common Asian Problems’.<sup>32</sup> Whilst some of these issues related solely to the ASC, a number of them pertained to the wider Cold War and decolonisation, highlighting the underlying importance of these dynamics for the ASC.

The Anti-colonial Bureau (ACB) was also established to function alongside of the ASC, with the aim “to encourage, guide and help the freedom movements to speed the attainment of independence in their own countries according to socialist lines as adopted by the Rangoon conference”.<sup>33</sup> Coordinated by a number of delegates from the ASC, including Rightist Japanese socialist Roo Watanabe, U Hla Aung, Ram Lohia (India), Israeli socialist Reuven Barkatt, Tandiono Manu from Indonesia, and Malaysian socialist Peter William, and with a monthly ACB Newsletter edited by Jim Markham – a pan-African organizer born in the Gold Coast and educated in London – the ACB addressed a number of issues relating to decolonisation, colonial peoples struggle for freedom and their right to self-determination.<sup>34</sup> These included reports on anti-colonial situations in Uganda, Malaya, Indochina, Tanganyika (Tanzania), Rhodesia, Central Africa, Nyasaland, the Gold Coast, Singapore, French North Africa, and Kenya, as well as addressing the impact Cold War tensions had on anti-colonial developments, the resistance of colonial powers to admit independence, and the role of the UN

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<sup>31</sup> ‘Three years of ASC’, 4.

<sup>32</sup> For a complete list of the Committees and membership composition, see Report of the First ASC, 113-114.

<sup>33</sup> IISH, Microfilm 5483, Jim Markham (ed.) ‘Anti-colonial Bureau Newsletter: Asian Socialist Conference, 1954-1957’ (hereafter: ACB Newsletter), Issue 1, (June 1954), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Gerard McCann, ‘Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian solidarity? Africa's 'Bandung moment' in 1950s Asia’, *Journal of World History*, 30:1&2, (2019), 100, 103.

and its effectiveness in handling decolonisation.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, in recognition of the prominence of anti-colonialism, the ACB also established a dependent peoples freedom day to be held annually from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1954.<sup>36</sup> The existence of the ACB alone reflected how, for Asian socialists, anti-colonialism significantly manifested “in their political experience and in their approach to Socialism”, and the overall importance decolonisation had on the concerns of the ASC.<sup>37</sup>

The ASC also had an economic bulletin to discuss and arrange their economic goals and policies for Afro-Asian countries. Documents from bulletin meetings highlight the in-depth discussions the bureau had on a range of issues affecting many Afro-Asian countries including agricultural policies, structural (transportation networks) changes, provision of external aid, world trade, challenges facing economic development.<sup>38</sup> During economic bulletin meetings between 1953 and 1956, attention was given to microcosmic aspects of “Third World” economies, specifically regarding peasants, labour, women, international party organisation and youth movements.<sup>39</sup> Interestingly, there was a major emphasis on the need for Afro-Asian countries to mobilise the role of women in the struggle for national independence, recognising the disadvantaged position women were in as mothers and housewives which made them more susceptible to injustice and exploitation. The ASC subsequently called upon Afro-Asian socialist parties to “devote their best of attention” to the role and mobilisation of women to strengthen “the cause of socialism”.<sup>40</sup> The ASC’s recognition of the need for economic development of Afro-Asian countries ultimately reflected the idea held by Asian socialists that colonialism was “the root cause of underdevelopment in the Third world countries” and must be resolved.<sup>41</sup>

The ASC based its economic and political ideology and policies around its own interpretation of democratic socialism. Economically the ASC believed that “capitalism should be displaced rather than modified”, as capitalism equated to colonial exploitation, and thus sought “to

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<sup>35</sup> For complete overviews of discussions in the Anti-colonial Bureau, see ACB Newsletter, Issues 1-26, (June 1954-December 1956).

<sup>36</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 1, 2.

<sup>37</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 2.

<sup>38</sup> For a complete set of documents from the ASC Planning Information Bureau from June 1955-August 1957, see IISH, ZK 30608, ‘Planning. Information Bureau Economic Bulletin. Asian Socialist Conference, 1955-1957’ (hereafter; ASC Economic Bulletin).

<sup>39</sup> IISH, Microfilm 5486, ‘Asian Socialist Conference Information Bulletin, 1956-1961’, 1:4, November 1956, 9-12 (hereafter; ASC Information Bulletin).

<sup>40</sup> IISH, ZK 31577, Praja Socialist Party, ‘Janata: Voice of Democratic Socialism, 1955-1957’ (hereafter *Janata*), 11:42 ‘Work Amongst Peasantry’, (18 November 1956), 14.

<sup>41</sup> G. Krishnan-Kutty, *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment in India*, (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 1991), 61.



condemn both publicly”.<sup>42</sup> However, whilst “unequivocally rejecting capitalism”, the ASC was “not so positive in defining the Socialist economic system”, as it ambiguously claimed economic planning depended on the individual socio-economic make-up of the country concerned.<sup>43</sup> Such ambiguity reflected the wider opacity “first generation Third World” movements had in defining their relationship with socialism and communism, as stipulated by Berger.<sup>44</sup> Yet, the ASC fervently advocated that any economic measures taken should be “applied dynamically rather than gradually”, as dynamic economic policies were the only means by which post-colonial countries could successfully improve their economic underdevelopment, particularly agrarian issues and a lack of capital required for industrialisation.<sup>45</sup> The specificity for dynamic economic change and resolution ultimately brought the ASC into conflict with other international socialist who conversely advocated gradualism as a core principle of democratic socialism.<sup>46</sup>

Politically, the ASC advocated the establishment of democratic socialist societies with freedom of speech, organisation, assembly, faith and conscience, and election of representative bodies.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, and importantly, the ASC rejected communist forms of totalitarianism and methods of mass coercion, particularly noting that the regimes of the USSR and its satellite states completely subordinated “the individual and the group to the centralized power of the leadership of the ruling party”, which was in plain contradiction to the socialist belief that states man is “an integral part of a class or group and as a human individual”.<sup>48</sup> Such a stance was one of many issues members of the ASC took towards Soviet-style Cominform Communism, and inevitably influenced the ASC’s attempt to navigate early Cold War geopolitics.

The principles of the ASC were subsequently established through a series of resolutions during the second and third plenary sessions of the first ASC in January 1953. Addressing the issue of world peace the ASC looked to the UN charter as “the best hope for the maintenance of peace in the world”, and particularly supported the UN Declaration on Human Rights; resolving at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASC Bureau meeting in May 1954 that it should be “respected by all peoples of the world”, and the right to self-determination must be exercised “equally by colonial and

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<sup>42</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, CREST, CIA-RDP78-00915R000500160003-6, ‘Brief on the Asian Socialist Conference, undated c. 1953-1956’, document created 11 November 2016, 2, (hereafter: ‘CIA, Brief on the ASC’).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Berger, ‘After the Third World?’ 11, 20.

<sup>45</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 427.

<sup>47</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 2.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

dependent peoples and satellite countries”.<sup>49</sup> Such a stance reflected the “faith and conviction” members of the ASC had towards the UN.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, a number of ASC members supported the idea of a policy of neutrality towards the two power blocs in attempt to facilitate peace in the increasingly hostile Cold War world. Several delegates of the ASC, notably India, Burma, Yugoslavia, Egypt and the leftist Japanese delegation, advocated the creation of a “third force” (or “third way”), which was not aligned the principles of the capitalist US and West, nor the communist USSR and East.<sup>51</sup> They particularly believed that socialism was “the Third Way of life, the harbinger of a new civilisation”, and thus the means by which to achieve global peace.<sup>52</sup>

Responding to the economic agrarian needs, the ASC formed a policy based on the successful agricultural developments in Yugoslavia, Israel and Egypt. The ASC’s policy focused on land reform based on the needs of the peasantry, who required greater freedom and agency in order to flourish.<sup>53</sup> The agrarian policies included:–

- a) Land reforms,
- b) Co-operatives and agricultural finance,
- c) Collective farms,
- d) Productivity of labour and mechanisation,
- e) Electrification,
- f) Cottage Industries,
- g) Experimental Farms,
- h) Mass organisation, and
- i) Agrarian Policy in the hills.<sup>54</sup>

In addition, the ASC declared the principles and objectives of socialism to be:–

1. Freedom from economic, political and social exploitation,
2. Equality and the well-being of all,
3. Co-operative living in the civic, economic and political spheres,
4. Civil liberty, personal freedom, dignity of the individual,
5. Direct and effective participation of the people in political, economic and civic affairs.
6. Full employment and steady improvement in the standard of living,
7. Universal culture based on universal moral values, eliminating cupidity, dishonesty, cruelty and violence from individual and social life,
8. An international community of nations living at peace and in cooperation with one another.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Report of the First ASC, 96; Three years of ASC, 26; ‘Resolutions at 3rd Bureau Meeting, Kalaw, Burma, May 25-28 1954’, Three years of ASC, 39.

<sup>50</sup> ‘Decisions and Statements at 4th Bureau Meeting, Tokyo, Japan, November 19-21, 1954’, Three years of ASC, 42-43.

<sup>51</sup> Report of the First ASC, 28, 48-49.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 47.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Second Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 38.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 39.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 41.

The above-mentioned resolutions evidently show how the ASC sought to address and respond to the issues of world peace, agrarian problems and the principles of socialism through noticeably specific means. However such means would not necessarily prove effective nor realistic in the practical implementation of the resolutions, particularly within the context of decolonisation, Cold War politics and rivalries, and underlying differences between ASC members and their home countries. The resolutions reflect a somewhat inflated sense of moral probity the ASC held towards itself, which ultimately proved detrimental for the ASC as it navigated the early Cold War.

Indeed, after the various socialist internationals of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the ASC saw itself as leading proponent of a new form of socialist internationalism.<sup>56</sup> Inflating a morally high position, the ASC was highly critical of the recent “Third International” – which had been established from the Russian revolution and produced the Comintern – arguing it failed to “unite the workers of the world”, and instead widened the differences between socialist movements, as communist parties became more interested in establishing party dictatorship than promoting democratic socialism<sup>57</sup>. For the ASC, the Second World War highlighted the corrupt nature of communist parties within colonies such as Indonesia, Burma and India, in which many communists collaborated “with their colonial masters”, and thus sabotaged anti-colonial struggles from within, whilst also placing the interests of Soviet Russia above the interests of the national and socialist revolutions within their own countries.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, some ASC socialists such as Soetan Sjahrir could confidently claim their sustained loyalty to socialism and their country’s struggle for freedom, having no record of fraternising or collaborating with the Japanese during the war, and had “remained faithful to a pre-war anti-fascist stance”, thus bolstering the ASC’s moral claims to be the leading force of international socialism.<sup>59</sup>

Throughout the immediate post-war years, major world events unfolded which subsequently came to affect the position of the ASC. Anti-colonialism across Asia had flourished after the Japanese defeat in Asia, and had already claimed victory in the form of independence in India,

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<sup>56</sup> For more on the various international socialist organisations, see Frits Van Holthoorn and Marcel van de Linden (eds.) *Internationalism in the Labour Movement 1830-1940*, (Leiden: Brill, 1988); James D. Young, *Socialism Since 1889: A Biographical History*, (New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1988).

<sup>57</sup> For more on the Third International and Comintern, see Tim Rees and Andrew Thorpe (eds.) *International Communism and the Communist International, 1919-1943*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

<sup>58</sup> *Three Years of ASC*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> Ethan Mark, *Japan’s Occupation of Java in the Second World War: A Transnational History*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 276.

Burma and Indonesia from their European colonisers by 1953.<sup>60</sup> A year before, the Korean War had ended after a costly (both human and financial) war between the communist North, supported by the USSR and People's Republic of China (PRC), and anti-communist South, support by the US and its Western allies.<sup>61</sup> At the time of the Rangoon conference, two notable events were underway which highlighted the complexities of decolonisation within the Cold War. (1) The "Malaya Emergency" involved British forces attempting to suppress a communist insurgency, supported by the PRC and Soviet Union.<sup>62</sup> Karl Hack has highlighted how much the Malaya Emergency exemplified the impact Cold War geopolitics and tensions had on colonial conflicts and decolonisation, specifically regarding the instructions and support the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) received from the Soviet Union and the British attempt to contain threat and spread of communism.<sup>63</sup> (2) The First Indochina War, in which the French Empire was simultaneously battling against Ho Chi Minh's communist-backed anti-colonial nationalist movement.<sup>64</sup> As with the Malaya Emergency, the intricacies of the First Indochina War vis-à-vis American and Chinese support for the French and DRV respectively exemplified "the complex ways in which the Cold War could play out in the decolonising world".<sup>65</sup>

Ever mindful of these events, the ASC presented its own views on the current state of affairs and how they should be resolved. Thus, within the context of the period of decolonisation in the early Cold War and period of European decolonisation, the importance of the ASC "should not be overlooked", as stipulate by the CIA in a report on the ASC.<sup>66</sup> Given how socialism in Asia arose "as a response to the injustices of colonialism, and is a demand for both political and economic independence", the ASC was a prime example of "a general Asian desire for co-operation in solving immense common problems and a desire to play an independent role in international affairs after long colonial exploitation".<sup>67</sup> Indeed, "given the magnitude of Asia's problems and rising nationalism, upon which the communists are attempting to capitalize", the ASC represented a collective symbol of the more democratic elements which were "asserting

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<sup>60</sup> For more on the decolonisation and independence of India, Burma and Indonesia, see Martin Thomas, Bob Moore and L.J. Butler, *Crises of Empire*, (London: Hodder Education, 2008).

<sup>61</sup> For more on the Korean War, see Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2010).

<sup>62</sup> For more on the Malaya Emergency, see Simon C. Smith, 'General Templer and Counter-Insurgency in Malaya: Hearts and Minds, Intelligence, and Propaganda,' *Intelligence and National Security*, 16:3 (2001).

<sup>63</sup> Karl Hack, 'The Origins of the Asian Cold War: Malaya 1948', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 40:3, (October 2009), 473.

<sup>64</sup> For the First Indochina War, see Mark Lawrence and Fred Logevall (eds.) *The First Vietnam War. Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis* (Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>65</sup> Bradley, 'Decolonisation, the Global South and the Cold War', 474.

<sup>66</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 4.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 4-5.

themselves in Asia”, and thus was an intrinsic aspect of Asian geopolitical developments during the emerging Cold War.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, at the first congress of the ASC, Margaret Pope from the Congress of People against Imperialism (founded by British Labour MPs in 1948) described the ASC as a clear “manifestation of the renaissance of Asia after its long slumber of apathy and repression”, further highlighting the optimism and high regard held towards the ASC.<sup>69</sup>

Evidently, the gathering of “Third World” socialists at the ASC was a significant event during the 1950s. The optimism towards the conference was mirrored by the apparent success of the end of the first congress at Rangoon, as Yugoslavian delegate Ales Bebler claimed the ASC had “shown the world that in this ancient continent a new democratic socialism has been born”.<sup>70</sup> Yet future difficulties facing the conference were already apparent at the first ASC, as even U Bae Swe made clear in his closing speech; “the next two years are going to test our mettle, individually and collectively”, a reality which manifested itself by the ways in which the ASC addressed the “great problems” facing the world, and the subsequent limitations it faced as the conference attempted to navigate the early Cold War.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 5.

<sup>69</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 23.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 62.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

## *Chapter II – Concerns*

In an effort to navigate its way through the early Cold War years, the ASC sought to resolve a number of concerns it regarded as “great problems” the world faced. These were; (1) the threat of another great war, (2) the colonial peoples struggle for freedom, (3) national revolution, and by extension nationalism, and (4) the economic development of underdeveloped areas. Each of these concerns carried with it its own issues and controversies, yet were an intrinsic part of how the ASC attempted to navigate the emerging Cold War as an Afro-Asian network.

### *The Threat of Another Great War*

No sooner had the Second World War ended in September 1945, the threat of another great war emerged and subsequently became a major concern for the ASC, particularly those members who had been enthralled during the previous world war(s). The prospect of a new war was entirely related to the tense relationship between the US and the Soviet Union, catalysed by the end of the Second World War and exacerbated by the partitioning of Germany and Berlin, the Berlin Blockade, and the Korean War. By 1953, the US and USSR had established their own power blocs, the former which included NATO and Western allies and the latter encompassing the USSR’s satellite states, the Cominform and alliance with the PRC. In the new bipolar international system, “each bloc tries to win over neutral countries, with resultant repercussions everywhere, i.e., loss of hundreds and thousands of lives on the battlefield, and civil war in some countries”.<sup>72</sup> Any future global war, whatever the outcome, would result in the destruction of humanity due to the nature of modern warfare and technology, particularly nuclear weapons.

The ASC had a major anxiety over the development and use of nuclear weapons, and criticised the power blocs and other countries who were, in Ahmad Hussein’s words, rearming “in the name of peace”.<sup>73</sup> By the time the Rangoon conference took place, the US, USSR and the UK had all successfully tested their own atomic weapons (in 1945, 1949 and 1952 respectively). Acting on this concern, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bureau Meeting in Burma, May 1953, the ASC directly addressed the issue of nuclear weapons and rearmament, which proved a danger to “the very existence of mankind”, by advocating the urgent need for an international response to the rapid development of atomic weapons, and called for general disarmament and the prohibition of

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<sup>72</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Report of the First ASC, 28, 48.

production and experimentation of atomic weapons.<sup>74</sup> At the second ASC in November 1956, the advent of the Suez Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution reaffirmed the concerns of Asian socialists regarding an escalation towards another greater war, and thus the conference passed resolution supporting the prohibition of nuclear weapons and disarmament.<sup>75</sup> In the particular case of the Suez Crisis, the ASC appealed to “all concerned” in the dispute to refrain from using arms and violence as a resort to resolving issues, as the threat of nuclear weapons being used in the Crisis “exacerbated Cold War tensions and raised the spectre of nuclear war”.<sup>76</sup>

Asian socialists’ concern over nuclear weapons was explicitly manifest by the Japanese socialists present at the ASC. Having been the only country to experience the devastating effects nuclear weapons on human life, Japanese hostility towards the development of nuclear weapons was a bipartisan issue across Japanese politics, and thus cannot be understated. From the legacy of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan continuously opposed nuclear weapons throughout the early cold War, and such opposition was heightened with the testing of a hydrogen-bomb at Bikini Atoll in 1954 by the US, in which 22 Japanese fishermen aboard the *Lucky Dragon* were irradiated by fallout from the explosion.<sup>77</sup> Previously, public criticism in Japan over the use of nuclear weapons during the war been censored by the US occupation forces, however the Bikini Atoll Incident facilitated widespread public opposition to nuclear weapons which could no longer be contained.<sup>78</sup> Japanese socialists fervently expressed discontent “about American nuclear tests and the possibility of nuclear weapons in and around Japan”, and subsequently paid close attention on the progress of nuclear disarmament during the mid-1950s.<sup>79</sup> They were ultimately disappointed that the UK, USA and USSR all rejected the proposal of the Japanese Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs to halt nuclear-tests, claiming instead that effects of radiation were minimal, whereas in fact Japanese scientists refuted such claims, declaring nuclear weapons were “more dangerous to mankind than has been hitherto believed”.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> ‘Resolutions at 3rd Bureau Meeting, May 1954’, Three years of ASC, 41.

<sup>75</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:4, (November 1956), 3-4 and 1:7, (April 1957), 1.

<sup>76</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:4, (November 1956), 5-6; Saul Kelly and Anthony Gorst, ‘Introduction’, Saul Kelly and Anthony Gorst (eds.) *Whitehall and the Suez Crisis*, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 1.

<sup>77</sup> Anthony DiFilippo, *Japan’s Nuclear Disarmament Policy and the US Security Umbrella*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 70.

<sup>78</sup> DiFilippo, *Japan’s Nuclear Disarmament Policy and the US Security Umbrella*, 69-70.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas A. Drohan, *American-Japanese Security Agreements, Past and Present*, (London: McFarland & Company Inc. 2007), 77.

<sup>80</sup> Jim Falk, *Global Fission: The Battle Over Nuclear Power*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1982) 96-97; ASC Information Bulletin, 1:7, (April 1957), 1-2

Extending from their hostility towards nuclear weapons, Japanese socialists were notably concerned with the prospect of another great war, and not least the use of nuclear weapons in such a war. Chairman of the Japanese Socialist Party (Left) Mosaburo Suzuki emphasised; “the major problem today confronting the people of Asia who number more than a billion is how to prevent the 3<sup>rd</sup> World war”, and whilst he was sure there was “no question which can’t be solved by peaceful means”, events in Korea, Indochina and Malaya all proved how the existential “threat of war...exists even now”.<sup>81</sup> Such a stance was shared by the Nepalese delegate B.P. Koirala, who corroborated Suzuki in declaring; “the world today is menaced by the grisly prospect of a world war” with two “international warring blocs... in a death grip, each trying to vanquish the other and dominate the world”.<sup>82</sup>

Referring to the conflicts Indochina and Malaya, Suzuki substantiated the view that wars “in Asia were not created by the Asians themselves, but rather by forces other than Asia”, namely the great powers, who accordingly entertained the idea “of having Asians fight one another” in order to achieve their “ambitions for world domination”.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, proxy wars became a common feature throughout the Cold War as “an expression of the larger... hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union”.<sup>84</sup> Asian socialists were justifiably worried that their home countries could be subdued into such conflicts, as was already happening in Indochina and Malaya where French and British forces, backed by the US, were fighting communist movements supported by the USSR and PRC. Even Japan, in its post-war settlement, found itself in state of precarious peace between the USA and USSR, reflecting further how Asia had, in the words of rightist Japanese socialist Komakichi Matsuoko, “degenerated to the position of a pawn in the game of the balance of power between the two opposing arms camps in their bid for supremacy”.<sup>85</sup>

The desire of Japanese socialists to avoid conflict and advance the cause for peace were exemplified in a letter to James Hagerty, press secretary to President Eisenhower from Tadataka Sata, executive member of the Socialist Party of Japan. Discussing the proposed visit of US President Eisenhower to Japan in summer 1960, Sata stated how the majority of the Japanese public were opposed to the security treaty between Japan and the United States signed

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<sup>81</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 13.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, 13-14.

<sup>84</sup> Ann Hironaka, *Neverending Wars: The International Community, Weak States and the Perpetuation of Civil War*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 104.

<sup>85</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Matsuoka, Report of the First ASC, 17.



in January that year as it was viewed a step towards provoking the USSR and PRC, and was particularly viewed by socialists as nothing more than a disguise for military re-armament.<sup>86</sup> Instead, the socialist party firmly believed that Japan could contribute significantly to regional and world peace, but could only do so successfully if she was “independent from any of the two power blocs”.<sup>87</sup> Concerns held by the Japanese socialists over nuclear weapons and the threat of another great war epitomised the ASC’s wish address these issues.

Indeed, the ASC responded to the threat of a great war by advocating a “third way” of neutrality. Reiterating the comments of Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk in *Janata*, many Asian socialists supported “non-bloc policy” (non-alignment) as the most viable option to achieve peace.<sup>88</sup> In navigating the conflict between the “Free World and communism”, the ASC advocated a “neutral position in the sense of pursuing and independent foreign policy” which did not align with the policies of the East or West, and instead stressed the cause for peace, support for the UN, and the disarmament of nuclear weapons.<sup>89</sup> Both the Indian and Burmese socialists believed the ASC should develop and practice a Third Force outside of the two blocs. They argued that world peace was threatened by (1) rivalries and war preparations of the two blocs, (2) economic unbalance in the world, (3) the insistence of certain western powers to hold onto colonial possessions, (4) and the aggressive character of the international communist movement.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, Asian socialists believed nothing but socialism could “ultimately bring eternal peace” and socialist countries would partake in any warmongering, and instead will be the forerunners democracy, moral consciousness and social justice.<sup>91</sup>

Arguably, the necessity to follow a path of non-alignment became contested by the late 1950s due to shifting Cold War dynamics. Miller has highlighted how Afro-Asian concerns over alignment lessened towards the end of the 1950s as the bipolarity which characterised the decade diminished with the proliferation of nuclear weapons into other countries, notably the PRC, and with the advent of “loyalty blocs” such as the British Commonwealth.<sup>92</sup> Subsequently, the end of bipolarity meant “Third World” countries were able to “shop around” for alliances and relationships, and were not so tightly bound to pursue a policy of non-

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<sup>86</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, (June 1960), 11; ‘First Plenary Session’, Suzuki, Report of the First ASC, 14.

<sup>87</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, (June 1960), 11.

<sup>88</sup> IISH, Microfilm 5485, ‘Asian Socialist Conference Information, 1956-1960’ (hereafter: ASC Information), No. 9&10, Extract of Prince Norodom’s ‘Non-bloc policy is the best way to peace and progress’ from *Review of International Affairs*, 11:234, (January 1960), 7.

<sup>89</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 3.

<sup>90</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 48-49.

<sup>91</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Suzuki, Koirala, Report of the First ASC, 14, 25.

<sup>92</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 83.

alignment and neutrality, or join of the two power blocs.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, the idea of a “Third force”, as advocated by countries of the ASC can be “traced back to proposal made by democratic socialists in the post-war period”.<sup>94</sup> By expressing their reservations and anxieties regarding nuclear weapons, supporting calls for nuclear disarmament, and advocating a position of neutrality through a “third force”, the ASC demonstrated how it was responding to the threat of a great war and, in turn, attempting to navigate early Cold War tensions which were evidently exacerbating the threat of another war and nuclear weapons.

### ***Colonial Peoples Struggle for Freedom***

From the outset, the ASC made clear that advancing the cause for emancipation of colonial peoples from the yoke of imperialism was a priority objective, just as U Ba Swe demonstrated in calling on Asian socialists to “make efforts to find out ways and means of combatting colonialism”.<sup>95</sup> Asian socialists regarded themselves as well acquainted with the effects of colonialism, having “had bitter experience of colonial rule”, and were thus sympathetic to their “less fortunate sister countries which have not yet achieved their freedom”.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, historians such as David Kimche highlight how much anti-colonial sentiment became the “common denominator embracing most of the countries of Asia and Africa” and a “unifying factor” for Afro-Asian movements to interact and co-operate, reflecting the underlying consistent importance colonialism and decolonisation had for the Afro-Asian “Third World”.<sup>97</sup> Importantly, socialism was considered to be, in the words of Malayan socialist Mohamed Sophe, the only effective means in bringing “an end to the menacing problems of colonialism”, not only in replacing colonial governments, but also in making Europeans realise the responsibility they had in causing all of the repression and bloodshed across the “Third World”.<sup>98</sup>

The ASC established its official stance on colonialism and decolonisation in a joint statement with the Fourth Congress of the SI. The statement declared; (1) self-determination as a basic principle of a democratic system, and should be exercised by all colonial and dependent peoples as well as satellite countries. Ultimately, colonial and dependent people must aim towards the realisation of their right to self-determination. (2) Claimed European imperialists were clinging

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<sup>93</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 84.

<sup>94</sup> Oskar Pollak, ‘New Goals for International Socialism’, *Janata*, 11:22, (24 June 1956), 12.

<sup>95</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 9.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> David Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973), 19-20.

<sup>98</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 18, 23.

onto their “scared mission” to civilize and modernise “backward nations” as a means to justify their self-interest for safeguarding their domination over others.<sup>99</sup> (3) As long as there are colonialists and dependent peoples, there will always be a struggle “for freedom against economic enslavement”, and colonial exploitation and spheres of influence will remain a source of international unrest. (4) The struggle against colonial rule was essentially a “human protest against poverty, misery, degradation and indignity”, national freedom is only a means to human freedom, and the struggle against colonialism should ultimately lead to the emancipation from any form of exploitation of man by man.<sup>100</sup>

Catalysed by the Second World War, by the early 1950s anti-colonial momentum had gathered across the “Third World”, particularly in Asia, and the ASC took interest in a number of countries which were engaged in an anti-colonial struggle between 1953 and 1960. Malaya was one such country enthralled in a conflict in which British forces were battling against a major communist insurgency supported by the USSR and PRC. At the first ASC, Mohamed Sopheo accordingly highlighted that his country was familiar with the repercussions of colonialism and how Pan Malayan Labour Party was actively voicing the aspirations of colonial peoples as the only member-party taking part in the first ASC from a country which was not yet independent.<sup>101</sup> In effort to help resolve the conflict, the ASC declared support for the formation of a Malayan National Congress to establish a united front towards the creation of an independent state of Malaya, demanded the release of Nationalist leaders, and condemned the use of terror by the British administration or communist insurgents.<sup>102</sup> As the “emergency” continued, the ASC strove to keep democratic socialism flourishing in Malaya amidst British counter-insurgency operations, particularly as the power of communism grew whilst Feudalist Malays and Chinese and Indian capitalist supported the British during the conflict.<sup>103</sup> Given how the conflict involved a number of international actors, the ASC was unsurprisingly concerned with the situation in Malaya, not least because of the socialist plight achieve independence, but also because of the Cold War intrigues at play during the Malaya Emergency

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<sup>99</sup> For an overview of European colonialism and imperialism as a “civilizing mission”, see Carey A. Watt, ‘Introduction: The Relevance and Complexity of Civilizing Missions c. 1800-2010’, in Carey A. Watt and Michael Mann, *Civilizing Missions in Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia: From Improvement to Development*, (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 1.

<sup>100</sup> ASC Information, No. 6&7, (1959) 6; ACB Newsletter, Special Edition, (October 1955), 4.

<sup>101</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Mohamed Sopheo, Report of the First ASC, 18.

<sup>102</sup> Report of the First ASC, 107

<sup>103</sup> ACB, Newsletter, Issue 11, (July 1955), 10.

meant it became, as Karl Hack substantiated, “a local branch of the Asian Cold War, which was in turn a Moscow-directed extension of the Western Cold War”.<sup>104</sup>

The persistence of conflict in Indochina had the attention of the ASC which, on several occasions between 1953 and 1956, demanded a cease fire and requested that free elections be held, and urged a peace settlement in which all foreign troops would withdraw, all under some form of international supervision.<sup>105</sup> Importantly, the ASC also demanded a “joint guarantee of the independence of the free States of Indochina by both power blocs”.<sup>106</sup> The latter demand reflected, just as in Malaya, the influence Cold War rivalries had in the conflict, with the US and UK supporting the French war effort whilst the Soviet Union and PRC aiding the Viet Minh militarily and economically.<sup>107</sup> At the second congress of the ASC, the delegation further declared its support for the reunification of Vietnam through peaceful means and that the country should be admitted to the UN.<sup>108</sup>

Conflict in Burma was also a major concern for the ASC, and not least because the Burmese Socialist Party was a founding member of the ASC. Although officially independent, “Burma experienced a very traumatic post-independence period” with the formation of many militant insurgent armies by ethnic groups, communists, socialists, and army rebels.<sup>109</sup> Whilst the Burmese Socialist Party had cordial relations with the governing Union Party under the leadership of U Nu, the ASC was concerned over the continued presence of Kuomintang (KMT – Republic of China) forces in Burma, and condemned the Taiwanese government for unprovoked aggression towards Burma which was, in the view of Asian socialists, a “treasured symbol of Asian socialism”.<sup>110</sup> The presence of the KMT meant the conflict in Burma was also part of Cold War dynamics as both the US and PRC weighed in on the conflict, with Washington offering support to KMT forces in effort to contain communists supported by the PRC.<sup>111</sup> Hence, the ASC appealed to the UN to help resolve the conflict in Burma by issuing

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<sup>104</sup> Hack, ‘The Origins of the Asian Cold War’, 473.

<sup>105</sup> ‘Resolutions at 2nd Bureau Meeting, Hyderabad, India, August 10-13 1953’, Three years of ASC, 38; ‘Resolutions at 3rd Bureau Meeting, May 1954’, Three years of ASC, 40-41.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Resolutions at 3rd Bureau Meeting, May 1954’, Three years of ASC, 41.

<sup>107</sup> Kathryn C. Statler, ‘After Geneva: The French Presence in Vietnam 1954-1963’, in Mark Lawrence and Frederick Logevall (eds.) *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 263. 263-281

<sup>108</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:4, (November 1956), 5-6.

<sup>109</sup> N. Ganesan, ‘State-society Relations in Southeast Asia’, in N. Ganesan and Kyaw Ying Hlaing (eds.) *Myanmar: State, Society and Ethnicity*, (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007), 22.

<sup>110</sup> ‘Resolutions at 2nd Bureau Meeting, August 1953’, Three years of ASC, 37.

<sup>111</sup> N. Ganesan, ‘State-society Relations in Southeast Asia’, 22

a ceasefire, overseeing the withdrawal and disarming of KMT troops, condemning the Taiwanese Government, and issuing sanctions against the antagonists.<sup>112</sup>

The ASC also addressed the struggles against colonialism across Africa. In Uganda, the ASC advocated the need for reform, demanding direct elections to a legislative assembly on the basis of common roll, establishing a democratic local government, and the provision of greater education and social facilities. In Kenya, the ASC criticised the current state of affairs under the Kenya Colonial Government, and demanded the release of political and educational leaders, the restoration of freedom of assembly and press, the re-opening of school, an end to racial discrimination, repeal discriminatory land laws, and an end of the intimidation of Europeans and Asians who are trying to improve relations with Kenyans. In South Africa, by the mid-1950s the ASC saw the situation as at a crisis point, threatening both race relations in Africa and world peace, and thus continued to criticise the racial supremacy policy of the apartheid regime, offering support to the socialist movement and calling on others across the world, both socialist and non-socialists, to also rally against Apartheid in South Africa.<sup>113</sup>

Amidst growing tensions in French North Africa, the ASC demanded the release of political prisoner, a restoration of full powers to legal Tunisian government, and called a conference of Afro-Asian heads of government to discuss how to aid liberation movements in the Maghreb.<sup>114</sup> Escalating violence in Algeria became a critical concern for the ASC, which subsequently condemned the aggression of French colonialism as a threat to race relations and international peace and security.<sup>115</sup> Although the ASC remained optimistic that colonial people's determination would prevail victorious in Algeria against the French imperialists, the conflict "became a test case of the anticolonial resolve of European socialists".<sup>116</sup> Indeed, the ASC could not count on agreeable French policy for resolving conflict in Algeria, as the SFIO "sought to frame the future of Algeria... in terms of minority rights", which ultimately contradicted the ASC's prioritisation of national rights above minority groups.<sup>117</sup> Hence war in Algeria in 1954 not only pertained to the struggle against French imperialism, but also for the ASC it proved to be a point of disagreement between Asian socialists and the SFIO over

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<sup>112</sup> 'Resolutions at 2nd Bureau Meeting, August 1953', *Three years of ASC*, 37.

<sup>113</sup> Complete overview of the ASC's interest in the struggle against colonialism across Africa can be found in, *Report of the First ASC*, 107-108.

<sup>114</sup> *Report of the First ASC*, 108.

<sup>115</sup> *ACB Newsletter*, Issue 10, (June 1955), 5-6.

<sup>116</sup> *ACB Newsletter*, Issue 10, 6; Imlay, 'International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s', 1117.

<sup>117</sup> Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 444.

decolonisation and rights. Evidently from these example, the ASC intensely concerned itself with colonial peoples struggle for freedom as part of its attempt to navigate the early Cold War.

Advancing colonial peoples struggle for freedom, the ASC believed the struggle against colonialism was in essence a struggle for peace, as both U Ba Swe and Marshal Tito stated, “there can be no world peace so long as some territories continue to be colonies, for they have themselves been a cause of previous wars”, meaning “the fight against colonialism must be combined with the struggle for peace”.<sup>118</sup> Spheres of influence, power-politics and the self-interest of men were hindering struggles for freedom, particularly exemplified by the conflict in Indochina where the anti-colonial movement was manipulated by power-bloc politics, and hence the ASC was concerned that power-bloc politics could hamper the independence struggle in North Africa as it did in Indochina.<sup>119</sup> Colonialism not only constituted economic disequilibrium and encouraged the politics of spheres of influence, but was the “main source of international unrest and instability and served as a constant threat” to world peace.<sup>120</sup> The conflicts in Malaya, Indochina and Algeria, exemplified how the tensions and troubles in the colonies were “the outcome of British and American diplomacy, aristocratic high handedness of the French and the Russian stubbornness in the game of postwar power-bloc politics”.<sup>121</sup> Subsequently, the ASC firmly believed that the great powers had to realise that colonial peoples struggle for freedom could not be exploited “in the long run” and that it was “pure wickedness to ignore the sincere will of the down-trodden masses in their fight for freedom”.<sup>122</sup>

Despite its concerted efforts to advance colonial peoples struggle for freedom, the ASC was setback with a number of external challenges in doing so. Even with the onset of decolonisation, there were “signs all over Asia that the West [was] still a menace” to the progression of peace across the continent.<sup>123</sup> Along with the Cold War intrigues at play in Malaya, Indochina and Burma, the ASC was further disgruntled as the PRC was being denied membership to the UN by the Western powers, Taiwan was becoming an empire government under the protection of the US Navy, and India was being dragged into conflict as the US moved to purchase military bases in Pakistan as a strategic launch pad for the US to contain

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<sup>118</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 9; ‘Marshall Tito on Colonialism’, ACB Newsletter, Issue 6, (February 1955), 10.

<sup>119</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 3, (August 1954), 1-2.

<sup>120</sup> ‘Resolutions at 2nd Bureau Meeting, August 1953’, Three years of ASC, 39.

<sup>121</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 3, 2.

<sup>122</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 3, 1.

<sup>123</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 4, (September 1954), 3.

communist in Asia.<sup>124</sup> Essentially, Asia was becoming embroiled as part of the political and military rivalries of the Cold War, but without any consultation and support from Asian peoples.<sup>125</sup>

Moreover, the Second World War failed to bring about an improvement in race relations between colonies and metropolitan countries, as newly independent countries were plagued by the domination of small European communities who implemented doctrines of racial superiority and economic exploitation against “indigenous natives”, as evident in French North Africa, South Africa and Kenya.<sup>126</sup> An account of the political situation in Kenya highlighted the pressure European settlers placed on the Kenyan Colonial Government to continue the suppression of the Mau Mau rebellion, as Europeans seemed to take law into their own hands by dropping leaflets within Mau Mau-territory stating that anyone guilty of murder would be brought to justice by hanging.<sup>127</sup> “Endemic racism” and the “codification and institutionalisation of white privilege” within settler colonies such as Algeria, Kenya and later in Angola and Mozambique, ultimately facilitated colonial violence and instability, and complicated the process of decolonisation.<sup>128</sup>

Simultaneously, in the post-war international system, “the collective conscience of the world” was dulled by “preoccupations with the Cold War” which the colonial powers took benefit from.<sup>129</sup> Indeed, U Hla Aung expressed his frank disappointment in the US over its lack of support and intervention for anti-colonial movements, given its own colonial past and how globally respected the US was for overthrowing its colonial oppressors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>130</sup> Indeed, Brad Simpson has highlighted the lack of US commitment towards the promotion of self-determination for colonial peoples after 1945, particularly in Asia, as the US instead pursued a foreign policy that sought to support European allies whilst only acknowledging anti-

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<sup>124</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 4, 3; For PRC membership to the UN, see Sam S. Kim, ‘China and the United Nations’, in Elizabeth Economy and Michael Okensberg (eds.) *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999) 45, 42-90; For American influence over Taiwan, see John F. Cooper, *Taiwan’s Democracy on Trial: Political Change During the Chen Shui-bian era and Beyond*, (Maryland: University Press of America, 2007), 33; For US bases in Pakistan, see A.Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan Relationship: Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 16.

<sup>125</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 4, 3.

<sup>126</sup> ‘The Problems of the Colonial Peoples: Excerpts from U Hla Aung’s Speech to a New York Gathering’, ACB Newsletter, Issue 6, 3-4.

<sup>127</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 7, (March/April 1955), 1.

<sup>128</sup> Caroline Elkins, ‘Race, Citizenship, and Governance: Settler Tyranny and the End of Empire’, in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen (eds.) *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 203-204.

<sup>129</sup> ‘The Problems of the Colonial Peoples’, ACB Newsletter, Issue 6, 5.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

colonial nationalism.<sup>131</sup> The ambivalence of American policy towards decolonisation ultimately reflected how Washington was often more concerned with its Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union and the containment of communism rather than the colonial peoples struggle for freedom.

The UN also struggled to advance colonial peoples struggle for freedom, despite the ASC's firm belief that the political advancement of colonial peoples should be a priority on the UN's agenda, particularly self-determination and Human Rights as "effective and fruitful" means to advance colonial freedom.<sup>132</sup> Indeed the UN faced vocal opposition from the imperial powers in Europe, notably France and the UK (both being permanent Security Council members), who often lambasted the institution for providing a "forum for international anti-colonial manoeuvrings" which would subsequently disrupt the more efficient organisation of colonial affairs by European imperialists.<sup>133</sup> Facing powerful opposition from its imperialist members, the UN failed to act on the demands of Afro-Asian groups to force France into granting measurements of self-government in Morocco and Tunisia, with the motion being voted down in the 8<sup>th</sup> general assembly.<sup>134</sup> The result reflected how the colonial powers in the UN were able to manipulate the Charter through the clause in Article II on "domestic jurisdiction" which declared states have independent authority over their internal affairs and could not be interfered with by the UN.<sup>135</sup> Hence, European imperialists were able to claim any problems arising in their colonies were domestic issues so as to avoid UN intervention. By extension, the ASC argued there was too much disparity between the accountability administrations of Trust Territories and Non-Self Governing Territories (NSGTs) had in reporting information to the UN, as NSGTs were not required to report on political advancements of the people to the UN, only social, economic and education developments.<sup>136</sup> Consequently, it became apparent to the ASC that there was little accountability in the UN towards the achievement of self-determination, and in failing to "deal with" the situations in French North Africa, Indochina, South Africa and Kenya, the ASC believed the UN ultimately diminished colonial people's

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<sup>131</sup> Brad Simpson, 'The United States and the Curious History of Self-Determination', *Diplomatic History*, 36:4, (September 2012), 679-680.

<sup>132</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 10, 2

<sup>133</sup> Jessica L. Pearson, 'Defending Empire at the United Nations: The Politics of International Colonial Oversight in the Era of Decolonisation', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45:3 (2017), 526. 525-49

<sup>134</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 10, 3.

<sup>135</sup> Codification Division Publications, Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, 'Charter of the United Nations: Article 2 (7) Repertory of Practice (1945-1954), Volume 1', 59.

<sup>136</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 10, 3.



hopes of achieving self-determination peacefully and instead led them to violent alternatives to achieve their goals.<sup>137</sup>

A period of retracted UN involvement in decolonisation in the early 1950s meant Afro-Asian enthusiasm for the UN's ability to advance colonial peoples struggle for freedom diminished, and was replaced by puzzlement, frustration and ambiguity towards the UN. Indeed, the ASC even launched its own criticism of the UN, stating it should "settle down into being what it was obviously meant to be – a world forum for discussing and settling outstanding issues, rather than the preserve of great and superior powers", and further denounced the UN charter which had, in the ASC view, "become drivell" due to the structural advantages it gave to imperialist countries.<sup>138</sup> Hence, at the ASC 4<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting in Tokyo in November 1954, the ASC demanded a study of the revision of the UN charter to address the structural imbalance, polarisation, lack of universality and equality, all of which meant it was unable to serve the cause of peace, facilitate the development of under-developed countries, and respond to crises across the globe.<sup>139</sup> Evidently, experiencing the underlying persistence of Cold War intrigues within anti-colonial struggles, as well as the external issues regarding the power of white settler communities and the weakness of the UN, the ASC clearly had difficulties in advancing colonial peoples struggle for freedom as part of its attempt to navigate the early Cold War.

### ***National revolution and Nationalism***

The ASC was under no illusion that advancing colonial peoples freedom and achieving democratic socialism would come easily, nor peacefully during the early Cold War. National revolution, in whatever form it may take and against whatever form of government, was viewed as an essential aspect of a country's political development, as Ba Swe summarised:

"Revolution... cannot be destroyed or checkmated by counter revolutionary measures. This would only lead to great unrest, dictatorship and other undesirable results. Vietnam is an instance in point. The French government, by trying to suppress the revolutionary upsurge of the Vietnamese people for independence, has turned it into a place of world tension".<sup>140</sup>

With such an awareness of the national revolutions developing and taking place across the "Third World", the ASC thus firmly believed it "should help national revolutions complete

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<sup>137</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 10, 3-4

<sup>138</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 10, 2-3; 'Public Opinion', ACB Newsletter, Special Issue, (October 1955), 11.

<sup>139</sup> 'Decisions and Statements at 4th Bureau Meeting, November 1954', Three years of ASC, 42-43; Report of the First ASC, 96.

<sup>140</sup> 'First Plenary Session', Report of the First ASC, 9.

their course” to achieve socialism, as part of its attempt to navigate the early Cold War period.<sup>141</sup>

However, there were certain discrepancies regarding the relationship between national revolution and violence. Indeed, Narayan expressed concerns over how, in the period of anti-colonial revolution; “whereas everyone... is anxious to achieve international peace, I am afraid we are not equally anxious about national peace”.<sup>142</sup> Reflecting the view of more radical socialist revolutionaries, Narayan highlighted how many anti-colonial revolutionaries thought there essentially had to be a violent civil war for socialism to be achieved, and only then could world peace be attained.<sup>143</sup> Narayan himself conversely believed countries could strive for a peaceful, truthful and constitutional means to achieve socialism, as India had done after independence, based on the teachings of Buddhism and Gandhism.<sup>144</sup> Drawing on this narrative, Narayan implicitly criticised the anti-colonial revolutions in Indochina, Malaya and the insurgent movement in Indonesia for their more radical and violent approaches to establishing a socialist state.

Whilst Narayan’s advocacy of peaceful national revolution is understandable, the significance of underlying nationalist fervour amongst colonial peoples and its subsequent implication for instilling violent revolutionary behaviour is not to be understated. Indeed, in a lecture at the first ASC, Indonesian socialist Soetan Sjahrir outlined the distinctiveness of nationalism for colonial peoples, arguing that in colonial countries, nationalism referred “the struggle for freedom of colonized peoples” and manifested itself “as violently and intensely racial”, but was essentially a struggle for a separate identity, particularly within Asian societies, and thus a “natural thing” for Asian socialists to experience and feel.<sup>145</sup> Imlay has since substantiated Sjahrir, stating anti-colonialism in Asia entailed an enthusiasm for nationalism, “which Asian socialists viewed as an expression of the collective desire of colonial peoples for freedom”.<sup>146</sup>

Moreover, nationalism of colonial people was unique not only in how it represented their struggle against imperialism, but also against Western nationalism, and its demands for self-

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<sup>141</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 9.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>143</sup> Urmila Sharma and S.K. Sharma, *Western Political Thought: From Bentham to Present Day*, Volume II, (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2006), 209.

<sup>144</sup> Vijendra Kasturi Ranga Varadaraja Rao, *Indian Socialism: Retrospect and Prospect*, (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1982), 97.

<sup>145</sup> IISH, INT 1095/12, Soetan Sjahrir, *Nationalism and Internationalism*, (Rangoon: Asian Socialist Publications, 1953), 4-5.

<sup>146</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1110.

determination and freedom from exploitation and oppression, all of which ultimately pertained to how colonial peoples were “inherently driven by the egocentricity of anti-colonial nationalism.”<sup>147</sup> In addition, nationalist violence in the colonial world is argued by Adria Lawrence to be inexorable due to the “intransigence of imperial rule, representing violence as the result of escalating conflict between the imperial power and the nationalists”.<sup>148</sup> Thus national revolution was intrinsically bound to anti-colonial nationalism, which could in itself prescribe violent methods to achieve revolution. Thus, despite Narayan’s advocacy of peaceful means to achieve socialism through national revolution, the distinct nature of anti-colonial nationalism meant there was no uniform approach to national revolution for Asian socialists to follow, and ultimately a country’s individual experiences pertained to the levels of violence used.

### ***The Economic Development of Underdeveloped Areas***

The ASC fervently believed colonial exploitation was entirely responsible for the low living standards and socio-economic “backwardness” in Asia and the Arab world, meaning economic development was a major concern for Asian socialists.<sup>149</sup> The nature of colonial capitalist exploitation meant colonies seldom made any financial gain from economic transactions, and consequently were left in a state of underdevelopment after decolonisation. Indeed Koirala highlighted the level of underdevelopment resulting from imperialism, describing how Nepal was dealing with a difficult transition period to a modern democracy, which included updating both its administrative system and economic structures which were otherwise inadequate and obsolete, and how Nepal significantly lacked in the appropriate capital needed for industrialisation.<sup>150</sup> Importantly for the ASC, the economic underdevelopment of most of its members’ countries not only differentiated them from richer Western or Communist countries, but was a major source of unity between socialist parties.<sup>151</sup>

The rhetoric that “European imperialism was directly responsible for the underdevelopment” of Asian countries is permissible given how trade between Europe and Asian colonies “naturally favoured the Europeans; that European demand for luxuries out-competed Asian

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<sup>147</sup> Sjahrir, *Nationalism and Internationalism*, 13, 16.

<sup>148</sup> Adria S. Lawrence, ‘Triggering Nationalist Violence: Competition and Conflict in Uprisings against Colonial Rule’, *International Security*, 35:2, (Autumn, 2010), 90.

<sup>149</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 14.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, 24-25.

<sup>151</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, xii-xiii.

buyers and caused a politically destabilising inflation”.<sup>152</sup> A number of Asian countries such as Indonesia, Indochina and Burma exemplified a high level of underdevelopment as a result of their colonial experience, despite how ardently contested they had been fought over for their natural resources by European imperialists and the Japanese Empire during the Second World War.<sup>153</sup> Indeed in Southeast Asia after 1945 “the process of post-war rehabilitation was... slow”, as neither Burma, Indonesia, South Vietnam nor Malaya had returned to their pre-war levels of per capita GDP by 1959, the result of which was solely “a consequence of the devastation of the 1940s”.<sup>154</sup> Colonialism thus had a two-fold effect on economic underdevelopment. Not only had it resulted in the exploitation of “Third World” countries, it had also contributed to their involvement in the Second World War due to their strategic and resource value, which subsequently further heightened their underdevelopment post-1945.

To address underdevelopment, U Ba Swe stated the ASC advocated “an equal, all-round development of various countries, and not one or two countries, with the rest used as suppliers of raw materials and a dumping ground for cheap manufactured goods”, and members of the ASC subsequently agreed the need for a policy to economically develop underdeveloped areas of the world.<sup>155</sup> However, the practical means by which to overcome economic underdevelopment were more ambiguous. In one instance, the ASC believed Asian countries were too reliant on Western industrialised nations, and whilst cooperation with them was essential for economic development, Asian countries should find a way to help one-another without the need for Western interference, hence the Japanese socialist delegates suggested the establishment of an Asian economic conference for Asian socialists to meet and carry out plans for development.<sup>156</sup>

However, historians such as Miller have posited that the “experience under colonialism” provided the “only effective base” by which development could proceed in post-colonial “Third World” countries, particularly through the economic, administrative and military apparatus and framework left behind following decolonisation.<sup>157</sup> Ergo, if a “Third World” government wanted to achieve growth and prosperity akin to “the economies of Europe and

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<sup>152</sup> Eric Lionel Jones, *Growth Recurring: Economic Change in World History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 130.

<sup>153</sup> Akira Iriye, *The Origins of the Second World War in the Asia and the Pacific*, (New York: Routledge, 1987), 126.

<sup>154</sup> Anne Booth, *Colonial Legacies: Economic and Social Development in East and Southeast Asia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 165.

<sup>155</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 9, 49.

<sup>156</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 9, 15.

<sup>157</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 2-3.

North America”, it would ultimately mean bringing that country into a closer economic relationship with the West by adopting similar methods and policies.<sup>158</sup> Addressing the issue of economic development in underdeveloped countries was thus an arduous task for the ASC. Whilst ASC members recognised the need for development across “Third World” countries, it was less clear how they should approach economic development; either actively co-operating with the West, or through an independent Asian economic forum without Western involvement. Moreover, ASC members internally disagreed over economic ideology regarding the implementation of gradualist economic policies versus radical and dynamic changes, which further highlighted the difficulties the ASC faced in establishing an agreeable economic policy, but also the underlying presence of divisions within the ASC over economic methods which would come to significantly limit the ASC as it attempted to navigate the early Cold War.

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<sup>158</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 3.

### ***Chapter III – Limitations***

Although the ASC actively sought to address the “great problems” as part of its attempt to navigate the early Cold War, the ASC was significantly hampered by a number limitations, many of which contextually overlapped. Defining the relationship between the ASC with the SI and Cominform, ideological disillusion, overcoming internal division divisions between ASC members, the impact of domestic politics on the ASC political parties in their home countries, and the extent of Asian-centricity in the discussions and beliefs of the ASC, all had major implications for the ASC.

#### ***Relationship with SI and Cominform***

Establishing a relationship with the Cominform and SI often proved to be a divisive task for the ASC. Arguably, the ASC had less difficulty in establishing its attitude towards the Cominform and communism than it did towards the SI. The ASC fervently believed “a socialist who dislikes the evil nature of capitalism but who does not realise the evil nature of communism will fall into the lap of totalitarian communism”, and only by declaring the principles and objectives of socialism in Asia, the “evil nature of capitalism... and the evil nature of communism” would be revealed.<sup>159</sup> Ultimately, the ASC viewed Cominform communism as equally oppressive and exploitative as European imperialism, as it denied the “practice dignity and equality of man” and was inseparably bound to “the position of Soviet Russia”, which meant members of the Cominform were “essentially, merely the vanguards, observers and informers of Soviet Russia”.<sup>160</sup>

Indeed there were palpable ideologically differences between the ASC and the Cominform. Whilst the ASC recognised the importance nationalism had for anti-colonial movements, Cominform communists took a more discriminatory view towards nationalism, judging nationalist movements entirely “in connection with the inner structure of that country and its society and its relations with the rest of the world”, specifically the USSR, and in turn argued was revolutionary and violent in nature.<sup>161</sup> Moreover, the demands communist regimes placed on people meant it ideologically negated “all concepts of freedom, individual self-expression and genuine mass responsibility” which were the “very breath of democratic socialism”.<sup>162</sup> Hence, as Oskar Pollak stated in an article for *Janata*; “we [democratic socialists] may have

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<sup>159</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 47.

<sup>160</sup> Three years of ASC, 35.

<sup>161</sup> Sjahrir, *Nationalism and Internationalism*, 8.

<sup>162</sup> U Tun W, ‘Struggling Asia’, *Janata*, 8:28, (9 August 1953), 6.

different views as to whether the United States is a whole capitalist or semi-capitalist state, but we are certain that Russia is not a Socialist state”.<sup>163</sup>

Cominform communism was viewed as having “imperialist tendencies” by the way in which it achieved economic advances “through forcibly regimenting the people and marshalling economic resources”.<sup>164</sup> Indeed, the Hungarian Revolution in October 1956 and 1959 Tibetan Uprising “unmasked” communism and its false claims of advancing the cause for emancipation of weak and underdeveloped states, in which Soviet and Chinese “masters” suppressed all opposition and hopes of self-government.<sup>165</sup> In the case of Hungary, the Soviet Union’s handling of the revolution was significantly disapproved of by the ASC and symbolised “the Soviet Socialist model’s bankruptcy”.<sup>166</sup> Resulting from a process of de-Stalinisation and liberalisation of the political system in Hungary, the USSR responded to the student-led revolution by violently repressing the revolutionaries, which the ASC subsequently saw as another “despicable form of colonialism”.<sup>167</sup> With the Tibetan uprising, in which an anti-Chinese and anti-communist uprising was suppressed by an overwhelming invasion by the PRC’s Liberation Army, resulted in the death of some 85,000 Tibetan and Khampa protestors the ASC reaffirmed its position against the oppressive nature of communist regimes.<sup>168</sup>

Generally, Asian socialists viewed communism as an ineffective means by which to counter imperialism and Western influence in the “Third World”. The ASC was well aware how the prospect of Asia going communist was “responsible in a large measure for every major Western concession” within domestic conflicts in Asia, notably Malaya and Indochina (later Vietnam).<sup>169</sup> In the case of Malaya, whilst the MCP declared their tactics during the conflict “have been directed toward gaining independence for Malaya”, in reality the insurgency provided “the British with an excellent excuse for remaining” in Malaya to suppress the communist threat, which corresponded to desires in Washington for the British and the Malayan government to contain the communist threat.<sup>170</sup> Similarly, in Indochina, Ho Cho

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<sup>163</sup> Oskar Pollak, ‘New Goals for International Socialism’, *Janata*, 11:22, (24 June 1956), 3.

<sup>164</sup> Extract of Rita Henderson’s ‘Asia to Learn From Europe’s Failures’ from *The Socialist Call*, 27:7, ASC Information, No. 9&10, (1959), 11.

<sup>165</sup> ASC Information, No. 6&7, (1959), 6-7.

<sup>166</sup> Paul Lendvai, *One Day that Shook the Communist World: The 1956 Hungarian Uprising and its Legacy*, translated by Ann Major, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), 195.

<sup>167</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:6, (March 1957), 4-5; U Ba Swe, ‘Tasks Facing Asian Socialism’, *Janata*, 11:40-41, (11 November 1956), 17.

<sup>168</sup> Dinesh Lal, *Indo-Tibet-China Conflict*, (Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2008), 145-147.

<sup>169</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 4, (September 1954), 4.

<sup>170</sup> Sam A. Jaffe, ‘Restive Malaya: Driving for Independence’, ACB Newsletter, Special Issue, (October 1955), 8; Wen-Qing Ngoei, *Arc of Containment: Britain, the United States and Anti-communism in Southeast Asia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019), 3.

Minh's communist forces had risen to take power immediately after the Japanese surrender, and proceeded to engage in full-scale war by 1950 as the "French- and US-led anti-communist camp... established a state in South Vietnam" to counteract a complete communist takeover by the Soviet and Chinese-backed Viet Minh.<sup>171</sup> Undoubtedly, events such as the Hungarian Revolution, Malaya Emergency, Indochina War and Tibetan uprising proved to the ASC how, as Wijono stated, "the socialist struggle for peace cannot be merely reduced to the emotionally dry, intellectually sterile and functionally static confrontation of democracy with totalitarianism. It must concern itself as much with totalitarianism as with colonialism".<sup>172</sup>

In addition, the threat of communist regimes taking hold in post-colonial "Third World" countries clearly had an implication on Cold War dynamics which dictated much of the West's foreign policy towards Asia, as the US (and its allies) sought to contain communism from spreading across the continent. Indeed, through the Cold War lens of President Eisenhower's foreign policy, manifest through his Domino Theory – which posited that once one country fell to communism, surrounding state would also in domino-effect – "every domino in Southeast Asia was critical to the United States", meaning the West was obliged to intervene and prevent any potential communist takeover.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, the outcome of Yugoslavia's break in relations with the USSR in 1948, resulting from years of ideological tension between Marshall Tito and Stalin and culminating with Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform, further conveyed to the ASC that socialism could be achieved without the "domination of the Soviet bureaucratic metropolis", as Yugoslavia successfully severed ties with the USSR, albeit with diplomatic and military aid from the US, and continued to exist independently from Stalinist Russia.<sup>174</sup>

Consequently, in the view of the ASC, communism was an ineffective opponent against imperialism. Not only was it an unsuitable replacement for colonialism due to its own oppressive, exploitative and imperialistic tendencies, Cominform communism also encouraged continuous Western involvement within Asian countries as Cold War tension simply rendered any communist regime a threat to the West, and meant it must be eradicated. Hostility towards

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<sup>171</sup> Anna Belogurova, 'Communism in South East Asia', Stephen A. Smith (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 244.

<sup>172</sup> IISH, Socialist International Archives, ARCH01340, 3374, Invoice Number 247, Report of the Fourth Congress of the Socialist International Held in London, July, 1955, (hereafter; Report of Fourth Congress of the SI), 'Fraternal Address by Wijono, Secretary of the ASC to the Fourth Congress of the SI', 2.

<sup>173</sup> Ngoei, *Arc of Containment*, 3.

<sup>174</sup> Ivo Banac, *with Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits In Yugoslavia Communism*, (Ithaca; Cornell University Press, 1988), 3-45; 'First Plenary Session', Bebler, Report of the First ASC, 21; Ivan Laković and Dmitar Tasić, *The Tito-Stalin Split and Yugoslavia's Military Opening Towards the West, 1950-1954: In NATO's Backyard*, (Boulder; Lexington Book, 2016), 1-15.



Cominform communism ultimately reflected the “mounting distrust” the ASC had towards communist Russia and its fears of the PRC.<sup>175</sup> Combined with the criticism of its imperialist tendencies and ideological differences between the ASC and the Cominform, it is little surprise that the ASC did not seek allies amongst “Cominform sympathisers” within Asia, as no form of imperialism, be it in a European-capitalist or Soviet-communist form, could be tolerated by the ASC in its pursuit of achieving democratic socialism for colonial peoples in the early Cold War.<sup>176</sup>

Whilst the ASC had less trouble denouncing the faults of Cominform communism, establishing an agreeable relationship with the SI proved more problematic. Whilst the SI made a “concerted attempt to enlarge the International... by wooing Asian socialists” during the 1950s, U Ba Swe reiterated, whilst it was not the intention of the ASC to be a rival International against the SI, there should be “a machinery for closer contact and cooperation amongst Asian parties”.<sup>177</sup> Such closer co-operation amongst “Third World” socialists was logical, according to Sjahrir, given their shared experience as underdeveloped dependent countries which was otherwise “unknown to socialists living under different circumstances”, in the West.<sup>178</sup>

The ASC openly believed there were obvious distinctions between socialism in Asia and in the West. Narayan suggested “socialists in Asia are placed differently from those in the West... as most of the countries in Asia are preponderantly agricultural communities” based on peasant societies, unlike in the West where socialism was based on the working class.<sup>179</sup> Socialism was therefore likely to be applied differently in Asia than in the West, meaning the ASC and SI would not be compatible as one united international socialist organisation, as hoped for by the SI. Indeed, even the CIA externally commented how the socialist parties of the SI, especially those in Western Europe, were not “entirely sympathetic to Asian problems” and thus there was a reluctance within the ASC to join SI because of its Eurocentric composition, which meant European socialist parties dominated the organisation “by virtue of a larger membership”.<sup>180</sup> Conversely to the ASC, the SI was also deeply suspicious of anti-colonial nationalism, seeing it as a source of oppression and war, saw the self-determining nation-state as something that

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<sup>175</sup> Rita Henderson ‘Asia to Learn From Europe’s Failures’ *The Socialist Call*, 27:7, (1959), in ASC Information, No. 9&10, (1959) 11;

<sup>176</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 17, 28.

<sup>177</sup> Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 422; ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 10.

<sup>178</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Sjahrir Report of the First ASC, 10.

<sup>179</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 41-42.

<sup>180</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 6; For a full list of the SI’s membership, see Harry Harmer, *The Longman Companion to the Labour Party, 1900-1988*, (London: Routledge, 2014), 191-193

needed to be tamed, and even doubted the readiness of many colonies had for independence, particularly post-colonial governments' guarantee of minority rights.<sup>181</sup>

Political ideological differences were prevalent between the ASC and SI, particularly regarding world politics, decolonisation, and notably regarding the rights and freedoms of colonial peoples.<sup>182</sup> In one instance, the ASC rejected and dismissed the gradualist approach taken towards decolonisation and self-determination by Western socialists, arguing that “phased and constitutional development” were historically used by colonial powers as a means to “break up national states and to create antagonistic societies in order to maintain... their own domination”.<sup>183</sup> Instead, the ASC favoured dynamic policies entailing radical change over gradualist change. Moreover, throughout the 1950s, “Asian and European socialists disagreed on the priority to accord to national rights”, in which the ASC insisted colonial peoples in Asia and Africa had a “preeminent right to national independence” and self-determination.<sup>184</sup> Moreover, the ASC dismissed the SI's concern for minority rights over national rights as a ploy “to break up national states and to create antagonistic societies” and thus deny independence to colonial peoples, which ultimately reflected how the ASC viewed the protection of minority rights as a defence of white European settler communities in colonies, who subsequently subordinated the majority ethnic group, as was notably the case in Algeria, Kenya and South Africa.<sup>185</sup> Bringing an end to colonialism thus became the “leitmotif” in Asian Socialists' relationship with their European counterparts, in which European socialists “found the ASC's demands frustrating”, preferring a more gradual reformist approach to decolonisation over rapid change, which the ASC viewed, in turn, as a way for “European socialists to subordinate independence to development”.<sup>186</sup>

Unsurprisingly, dissatisfaction between the ASC and SI over approaches to decolonisation heightened during the mid-1950s, exemplified by the interaction of the two groups during the SI congress in London in July 1955, in which PSP member Madhav Gokhale suggested a joint ASC-SI commission be set up to outline proposals for decolonisation.<sup>187</sup> Rather than encouraging discussion on decolonisation, the commission triggered intense debate between

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<sup>181</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1106, 1111

<sup>182</sup> ‘Fraternal Address by Wijono’, Report of Fourth Congress of the SI, 1.

<sup>183</sup> ‘The Statement of the ASC on Dependent Territories, *Janata*, 11:42, (18 November 1956), 12.

<sup>184</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1109.

<sup>185</sup> ‘The Statement of the ASC on Dependent Territories, *Janata*, 11:42, (18 November 1956), 12-13; Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1106, 1125.

<sup>186</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1110-1112.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid*, 1114.

the European socialists “over the primacy of minority... rights”, in which the British Labour Party and SFIO began to broach the idea of minority rights, with the war in Algeria particularly influencing the SFIO’s support for them, which coupled with Anglo-French intervention in Egypt, brought “the frustration of Asian socialists to a boil”.<sup>188</sup> Ultimately, the ASC was therefore unable to garner any support or agreement from the SI over national rights.

The ASC also implicitly believed European socialist parties had a predisposed allegiance to the West, which countermanded the preference some Asian socialists had for a “third force” of neutrality. Indeed, the ASC sceptically viewed the SI as committed to the West in the bipolarity of Cold War geopolitics, meaning any Asian participation would be forsaking the “right to be neutral” from East-West conflict.<sup>189</sup> By extension, a major problem in establishing cordial European-Asian socialist relations was the “liquidation of European domination” in the “Third World”.<sup>190</sup> The ASC, rightly so, suspected European socialists of also supporting colonialism in some form. Mohamed Sopiiee and Ahmad Hussein fervently argued the ASC should not “accept European socialists as comrades”, as they could not be trusted to cooperate with colonial peoples to help them achieve their political and economic freedom because metropolitan socialist parties in Britain and France were too politically involved in their home countries, many of which continued to perpetuate colonialism.<sup>191</sup> Indeed, European socialists took an ambivalent view that colonial powers were trustees of “backward” colonial territories, helping guide them towards their own self-government, which meant independence of “Third World” colonies in the 1950s was “irrelevant for the foreseeable future.”<sup>192</sup> Indeed, the British Labour Party in particular had even openly embraced the UN (and previously League of Nations) trusteeship system.<sup>193</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that when Labour MP Clement Attlee suggested a liaison between the ASC and SI was essential for socialism to flourish globally, his remarks were met with vocal opposition from Ahmed Hussein and Pakistani socialist Mubarak Saghu.<sup>194</sup>

Based on the evident differences between the socialists in Europe and Asia, the ASC ultimately took the decision to have a close relation with the SI, but confirmed it would function

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<sup>188</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’ 1115-17.

<sup>189</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 6.

<sup>190</sup> Oskar Pollak, ‘New Goals for International Socialism’, *Janata*, 11:22, (24 June 1956), 3-4.

<sup>191</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Mohamed Sopiiee, Report of the First ASC, 18-19, 28.

<sup>192</sup> Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1111.

<sup>193</sup> Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 412.

<sup>194</sup> ‘Second Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 35.

independently of it.<sup>195</sup> In declaring this position, the ASC was clearly advancing its own “third force” position by disassociating itself from Western socialists, as well as Cominform communists, but in the process was isolating itself from potential allies in the West who could otherwise aid the ASC as it navigated the early Cold War.

However, although the ASC declared functional independence from the SI, the two organisation operated closely in tandem, which evidently brought Asian socialists into closer contact and co-operation with their European counterparts. Not only did the SI welcome “the development of the Asian socialist parties”, at the Third Congress of the SI in July 1953 a number of decisions and resolutions were adopted to entice co-operation between the SI and ASC.<sup>196</sup> Notably, the congress proposed to exchange delegates with the ASC, grant scholarships to comrades to study socialist movements of other countries, hold joint conferences, exchange information, jointly publish socialist literature, and frequently report on the activities of the SI and its members to the ASC.<sup>197</sup> The proposals were subsequently adopted by the ASC at the second Bureau meeting in August 1953.<sup>198</sup> Moreover, a number of resolutions regarding decolonisation espoused by the SI at its Third Congress corroborated with the resolutions of the ASC. Notably, condemning the Apartheid policy in South Africa, a more co-operative approach to resolving conflict with the Mau Mau in Kenya, insisting on the need for a negotiated agreement to permit the people of Morocco and Tunisia self-governance, continue progress towards self-government in Malaya, and urging “full democratic self-government for the States of Indochina”, all resonated with the aforementioned resolutions made during the first ASC.<sup>199</sup>

Evidently, any differences between Asian and European socialism were “correct only in a limited sense”.<sup>200</sup> Ideologically, the SI and ASC were closely aligned, much more so than with the Cominform, as Swedish socialist Kaj Bjork reputed; there was a clear distinction between the strict uniformity of the Cominform versus the co-operative principles of the SI, which were based on the common values of its members.<sup>201</sup> Despite any emphasis on the unique aspects of Asian socialism, be it the fusion of Marxism with Gandhism or Buddhism or the agricultural

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<sup>195</sup> ‘Second Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 35-36.

<sup>196</sup> ‘On the International Situation’, Report of the Fourth Congress of the SI, 2

<sup>197</sup> IISH, Socialist International Archive, ARCH01340, 3372-3, Inv. No. 5, ‘Socialist International Information, Volume III’, 3:30-31, (25 July 1953), 523 (hereafter: SI Information).

<sup>198</sup> SI Information, 3:36, (5 September 1953), 539.

<sup>199</sup> ‘Documents of Resolutions adopted by the Third Congress of the Socialist International’, in *Janata*, 8:28, (9 August 1953), 16.

<sup>200</sup> Julius Braunthal, ‘Asian and European Socialism’, *Janata*, 8:28, (9 August 1953), 5.

<sup>201</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Bjork, Report of the First ASC, 20.

character of Asian economies, Asian socialism clearly presented “common features” with the SI and any differences were “dwarfed by the sameness of principle, ideas, aims and interests.”<sup>202</sup> Whereas “differences in approach to the great issues of humanity” once separated Asian socialists from their Western counterparts, now they were “imbibed with the fundamental ideas of socialism common” to all socialists and peoples.<sup>203</sup> Indeed, and importantly for the ASC, prominent European socialist parties such as the SFIO and the British Labour Party could proudly claim to have resolute anti-imperialist positions since before the First World War, particularly the Labour party which continuously “confronted Conservative government of the time united on colonial issues, particularly after Suez.”<sup>204</sup>

Moreover, a number of Asian socialist parties encouraged closer relations with European socialists, reflecting the belief held by Sophee that in order to achieve world peace, Asian socialists must co-operate with metropolitan socialists.<sup>205</sup> Some ASC member parties were even active members of the SI, including the Japanese Socialist Party and Socialist Party of Israel, both of which had voting powers in the SI, as well as the PSP and Vietnamese Socialist Party who both engaged within the SI as “consultative members”.<sup>206</sup> In all, four out of the nine founding parties of the ASC were actively involved with the SI. Indeed, Matsuoka profoundly argued at the first ASC that Asian socialists should not “ignore friends outside” the continent, as they had potential allies in the SI, and thus there would be opportunity for co-operation with Western socialists, even if they had not “quite grown out of antiquated colonialism”.<sup>207</sup> Such co-operation between Asian socialists with metropolitan socialists was evident when the ASC recommended all Asian governments ratify the ILO agreement on minimum standards of social security and expressed a desire for closer relations between socialist youth groups in Asia and the International Union of Socialist Youth.<sup>208</sup> Engagement with these groups meant the ASC implicitly encouraged closer relations with Western-dominated international socialist organisations too, despite its proclaimed “functional” independence.

European socialists reciprocated co-operation and engagement with the ASC to tackle global issues, as exemplified by the SFIO’s attempt to respond to conflict in Algeria. Whilst the ASC

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<sup>202</sup> Braunthal, ‘Asian and European Socialism’, *Janata*, 8:28, (9 August 1953), 5.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>204</sup> Miles Kahler, *Decolonisation in Britain and France: The Domestic Consequences of International Relations*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 164, 231.

<sup>205</sup> Third Plenary Session, Report of the First ASC, 48.

<sup>206</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 6.

<sup>207</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Matsuoka, Report of the First ASC, 17.

<sup>208</sup> ‘Three years of ASC’, 34; ‘Resolutions at 3rd Bureau Meeting, May 1954’, Three years of ASC, 40.

urged the socialists of Europe to “express their solidarity with North Africa’s urge for freedom and independence”, Imlay has highlighted how attempts were made by the SFIO to reconcile the minority rights of white settlers in Algeria with the national rights of the majority Muslim population, which essentially sought the end of colonial rule of the European minority but respected Algeria’s multi-ethnic makeup.<sup>209</sup> Indeed, despite the actions of Mollet’s government in escalating violence in 1956-1957 – which also led to the split of the SFIO in 1958 – many leftist members of the SFIO supported the need to establish freely and democratically elected governments in Algeria were “an assembly based on parity... composed equally of European Frenchmen and of Muslim Frenchmen” could be elected, as well as in Tunisia and Morocco, where the French were obliged to “launch economic and social action on a considerable scale” to improve standards of living and quality of life across the Maghreb.<sup>210</sup>

In addition, the ASC received fraternal support from European socialists in non-colonial countries, notably Germany, Austria and Sweden. The (West) German SPD became a “leading proponent of closer ties between the SI and the ASC”, notably sending its own delegation to the second ASC led by Chairmen Erich Ollenhauer, who thereafter travelled across Asia to connect with socialists of the region, along with socialist Austrian Vice-Chancellor Adolf Scharf.<sup>211</sup> Germany historically had less involvement with imperialism, having not possessed overseas colonies since the First World War and, coupled with its divided status since 1945, thus shared “national aspirations” with colonial peoples with the hope of its own reunification, as well as expressed concerns for minority rights from the legacy of Nazism.<sup>212</sup> Swedish democratic socialist Kaj Bjork also appealed to the ASC at its first congress, hoping it would facilitate cooperation and unity between socialists in the world, particularly those in Europe, despite the reservations of some of its members.<sup>213</sup> Even socialist parties based within the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence also engaged directly with the ASC, notably the Social democrats in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, who appealed to the ACB for the oppressed peoples behind the iron curtain to also be considered and remembered in the ASC’s campaign for the liberation for all dependent peoples.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 6, 1; Imlay, ‘International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1117

<sup>210</sup> Kahler, *Decolonisation in Britain and France*, 162; ACB Newsletter, Issue 17, 6-8.

<sup>211</sup> Imlay, International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1122. ‘Second Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference’, *Janata*, 11:35, (20 September 1956), 4.

<sup>212</sup> Imlay, International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s’, 1121-22.

<sup>213</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Bjork, Report of the First ASC, 20.

<sup>214</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 6, 9.

Evidently, the ASC had a close relationship with the SI, not just ideologically with shared values of democratic socialism and anti-imperialism, but also through the number of instances in which Asian socialists actively engaged with European socialists, and vice versa. However, such co-operation with European socialists was potentially detrimental to the ASC. Although it claimed to function independently of the SI, by engaging with Western socialists and other organisations, and corroborating with resolutions and beliefs of the SI, the ASC alienated itself from its more left-wing socialist elements, who had a deep-rooted mistrust of the West. Ultimately, the relationship the ASC had with the Cominform and SI presents two realities. Firstly, in the realpolitik of the Cold War, shunning communist regimes and movements, could prove fatal for socialist parties once communist parties grew in popularity and power, as they did in Vietnam, Laos, Korea, the Republic of Congo and Afghanistan. Second, the ASC struggled to uniformly define its relationship with the SI. Whilst seemingly cosy up to Western Socialists through co-operative talks between organisations and parties, the ASC simultaneously alienated its more left-wing Western-sceptic members, who had suspicion of Western socialists and ultimately facilitated internal divisions. Both of these realities overall limited the ASC in its attempt to navigate the early Cold War.

### ***Ideological Disillusion***

Despite solidly defining its ideological foundations on the basis of democratic socialism, the ASC increasingly faced ideological disillusion throughout the early Cold War. In one instance, the fact that Asian socialism gave “equal weight” to the importance of democracy and an economic system based on a dynamic application of planning and nationalization, meant the ASC did not “face up to the fact” that nationalisation and radical planning ultimately contradicted the freedoms declared as an integral part of socialism.<sup>215</sup> By extension, advocating dynamism over gradualism countermanded democratic socialist principles, predominantly held by Western socialists, which were based on “middle-class electoral reformism to provide the emancipatory vision” of a socialist state.<sup>216</sup>

Notably, the divergence in Soviet ideology in the mid-1950s following Stalin’s death in March 1953 sparked “series of disillusionment” within the ASC caused by a change in relations between the USSR and socialist countries.<sup>217</sup> At the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party in

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<sup>215</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 3.

<sup>216</sup> Gary Dorrien, *Economy, Difference, Empire: Social Ethics for Social Justice*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 2010), 307.

<sup>217</sup> ‘Asian Socialists Resolve to Meet the Challenges of Times’, *Janata*, 11:40-41, (11 November 1956), 2.

Russia, the party agreed to pursue greater “cooperation with the Social Democratic parties”, which became part of a broader change in “Russian direction” as Khrushchev’s regime pursued more liberal policies, albeit with “limit and bound”.<sup>218</sup> These policies included the decision to dissolve the Cominform in April 1956 on the basis that it no longer “corresponded” to the new conditions of the current international system, a decision which was whole heartedly supported by democratic socialists, and particularly by India and Yugoslavia who previously viewed the Cominform as a tool of Soviet imperialism and as a menace to peace and co-operation between states.<sup>219</sup> Moreover, one of the more striking changes in Soviet policy was the “shift from West to East in both Soviet activities and expectations”, seen through the state visits and meetings, but also through Soviet academic studies increasingly focused on Asian and African affairs.<sup>220</sup>

Indeed Kimche has highlighted how the Soviet Union’s change in “attitude to the non-communist countries of Asia and Africa began to change after Stalin’s death”, just two months after the first ASC at Rangoon, as Moscow scrapped its “two camp” policy and welcomed closer relations with countries such as India, Burma, Afghanistan and Egypt, which had subsequent implications for the ASC and its members.<sup>221</sup> The major changes in Soviet policy meant there was seemingly less hostility between the USSR and democratic socialists, particularly in Europe and Asia, and thus less need for such staunch opposition to the Soviet Union on the part of Asian socialists as Khrushchev was evidently liberalising the USSR’s policies and outlook. However, de-Stalinisation of Soviet policy also led to a number of “Third World” post-colonial socialist regimes distancing themselves from the Soviet Union by the early 1960s, as some advanced more radical Marxist policies or conversely aligning themselves more with the West, such as Indonesia.<sup>222</sup> Hence, Asian socialists could no longer simply oppose relations with the Soviet Union, as de-Stalinisation ultimately ended the limited and partisan outlook and perceptions of Soviet communism.

Changing dynamics within the Eastern bloc of the Cold War further influenced ideological disillusion. Having severed ties over ideological difference, the USSR’s rapprochement to Tito’s “dissident Yugoslavia”, culminating with Khrushchev’s visit to Belgrade in May 1955, ended the rupture between the two countries, and subsequently brought the Soviet Union into

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<sup>218</sup> Oskar Pollak, ‘New Goals for International Socialism’, *Janata*, 11:22, (24 June 1956), 3; ASC Information Bulletin, 1:6, (March 1957), 5.

<sup>219</sup> V.G. Cabagi, ‘The End of the Cominform and After’, taken from the ‘Bulletin of Institute for the Study of the USSR, June 1956’, reproduced in *Janata*, 11:31, (2 September 1956), 10, 12.

<sup>220</sup> Walter Laqueur, ‘Moscow Studies Asia’, *Janata*, 12:7-8, (8 December 1957), 7.

<sup>221</sup> Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, 85.

<sup>222</sup> Berger, ‘After the Third World?’, 16, 21.



closer relations with Afro-Asian countries “with whom the Yugoslavs were already on the best of terms”.<sup>223</sup> Similarly, an improvement in relations between Afro-Asian countries with the PRC after the Bandung Conference in 1955 extended Afro-Asian solidarity to the communist regime, particularly as the conference proved to be a mutually “educative process for both communist and anti-communist participants” and strengthened ties between Asian socialists and the PRC.<sup>224</sup> Evidently, the coming together the USSR and PRC with Afro-Asian countries during and after Bandung demonstrated how false the ASC’s claim was that anti-colonial struggle, solidarity and peace could only be achieved through a universal movement of social democracies, and thus ideologically disillusioned advocates of this belief. Coupled with the change in Soviet foreign policy, these shifts in Cold War dynamics and ideology thus had a significant impact for ASC in its attempt to navigate the early Cold War.

Further ideological disillusionment was prevalent with the ASC’s relationship with the SI. Reports on the Fourth Congress of the SI in July 1955, which a number of ASC members attended, demonstrated how alienable the SI was to Asian socialists, particularly those aligned further left within democratic socialism. Speeches delivered by European delegates at the Fourth Congress such as Morgan Phillips, Hugh Gaitskell, and Guy Monet were intrinsically Eurocentric in their content, addressing issues relating to the progress of democratic socialists in Europe, concerns over Russian aggression and influence, and economic integration of European economies.<sup>225</sup> Little attention was given to socialist development in the “Third World” the SI’s previous interest in expanding its socialist connection beyond Europe. Even a look at the itinerary of the Congress highlights oxymoronic aspects of the SI Congress, specifically regarding formal dress code and the dinner service offered. One invitation extended by the chairman of London County Council offered a buffet dinner with Dinner Jacket dress code, whilst the final dinner of the Congress offered a three-course meal with options including “Turtle Soup”, “Salmon trout meuniere” and “lamb cutlets”.<sup>226</sup> Evidently, the extravagance of the Congress is in stark contrast to the grass-root anti-colonial plight Asian socialists were embarking on, whilst the content of discussions and speeches clearly demonstrated the Eurocentricity of the SI.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, 84.

<sup>224</sup> David A. Wilson, ‘China, Thailand and the Spirit of Bandung (Part II), *The China Quarterly*, No. 31, (July-September 1967), 96.

<sup>225</sup> See Fraternal Addresses by Morgan Phillips, Hugh Gaitskell and Guy Monet in SI Archive, No. 247, Report of the Fourth Congress of the SI.

<sup>226</sup> See a selection of unaddressed invitations and itinerary cards in Report of the Fourth Congress of the SI.

<sup>227</sup> Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism*, 423.

Even the ASC itself seemed to diverge from its strongly held anti-capitalist principles. The pamphlet publicising the second congress of the ASC particularly exemplified a shift in principles as conference allowed the advertisement of cosmetic products, clothing, manufacturers, tradesmen, cigarettes and transportation services, across fifty-two pages of the ninety-nine-page pamphlet.<sup>228</sup> Allowing such a capitalist-driven commercialised input into the pamphlet reporting on socialism in the Third World was a clear contradiction to the socialist principles the ASC supposedly held regarding the exploitative nature of capitalism. With the increasingly ambiguous outlook of Soviet policy towards socialist movements and states, along with the ideological disillusionment with the SI, due to its Eurocentricity and extravagance, establishing clear-cut relationships with other socialist movements and communists became ambiguous as the ASC evidently lost sense of its ideological premise which ultimately affected how it navigated the early Cold War and also enticed internal divisions between ASC members.

### ***Internal Divisions***

Extending from ideological disillusion, the ASC was plagued with internal divisions between its members, which subsequently hindered its ability to navigate Cold War issues with unity. One such division was solely down to ideological differences between member parties. Asian socialism in itself was not homogenous, with socialist ideas varying between the countries of Asia, reflecting Sharrett's observation that the "socialist movements represented at Rangoon diverge considerably in background and status".<sup>229</sup> On the surface divisions were manifest by ideological differences, however such differences were determined by the underlying individual colonial experiences of countries. Indeed, the different beliefs in defining freedom, as highlighted by Sjahrir, varied between socialist parties due the political context within their home country. Whilst some socialists viewed freedom as meaning of human beings to free from exploitation by fellow human being, such as socialists in Indonesia, Burma and India, others still viewed freedom as a means to be free from foreign domination, such as the socialists in Japan, Indochina and Malaya.<sup>230</sup>

Such divergent perceptions of freedom reflected how the individual experiences of the home country pertained to a socialist party's beliefs and priorities. For instance, the problems facing socialists in Japan and Israel were very different to the rest of Asia, as Japanese socialists faced

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<sup>228</sup> IISH, INT 1095/20, G.G. Parikh, 2nd Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference, Bombay 1956, 1-30, (hereafter: 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the ASC).

<sup>229</sup> Braunthal, 'Asian and European Socialism', *Janata*, 8:28, (9 August 1953), 5; Moshe Sharett, 'Significance of the Asian Socialist Conference', *Janata*, 8:16, (17 May 1953), 5.

<sup>230</sup> 'First Plenary Session', Sjahrir, Report of the First ASC, 10-11.

the rebirth of imperialism in the form of US hegemony whilst helping develop the economies of Asia, whereas Israeli socialists faced the task of furthering the development of an industrial society based on socialism.<sup>231</sup> Japan was a particularly unique case in the ASC, given its recent history as a modern, industrial and well-developed former-imperial power, yet still viewed as racially inferior by the West, meaning it was midway between the “advanced nations of the West and the so-called backwards areas of the East”.<sup>232</sup> Evidently, whilst anti-colonialism united through its “emotional force”, it was equally divisive by the way in which Third World countries had their own distinct perspectives on colonialism and anti-colonialism deriving from their individual colonial experiences.<sup>233</sup> Thus whilst the emotions entailed with anti-colonialism were unique to the Third World, they also differed depending on the country in question.

Differences in economic principles also arose between ASC members “advocated the Marxist class struggle” and those who believe in a more gradualist way to achieve the socialist state, as aforementioned.<sup>234</sup> Specifically, the economic and political beliefs of the ASC did not always reflect the reality of ideological divisions within its own party members, most notably the Japanese Socialist Party and the Indian PSP, both of which were internally divided over approaches to socialist reform.<sup>235</sup> Moreover, there were opposing views regarding economic and agrarian policies between members of ‘Committee B’, particularly as the recommendations made were based upon the agricultural policies of Yugoslavia, Israel and Japan, all of which had more advanced capabilities and resources than other countries in Asia which were more based on peasant agricultural economy.<sup>236</sup> Evidently, therefore, the socialist movements in Asia had “grown under different conditions in different parts of Asia” and thus there was a lack of mutual agreement between ASC members over economic ideology and policies.<sup>237</sup>

ASC members also notably disagreed over the issue of neutrality and engaging with the power blocs, specifically regarding whether or not “Third World” countries should maintain neutrality or engage with one of the blocs.<sup>238</sup> Leftist Japanese, Burmese, Indian and Indonesians socialists all favoured no military co-operation with the West or the Soviet blocs, and advocated that the

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<sup>231</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 42.

<sup>232</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Matsuoka, Report of the First ASC, 16.

<sup>233</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, xiii.

<sup>234</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 3.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>236</sup> ‘Second Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 38.

<sup>237</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 45.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

ASC uphold a position of neutrality.<sup>239</sup> Indeed debates over alignment went beyond the meetings of the ASC. At Bandung, Nehru “attacked the very idea of alignment”, particularly countries such as Japan and Pakistan which were militarily aligned with the US, but was vigorously rejected by Turkey, Pakistan, the Philippines and Iraq on the pretence that non-alignment did not fit within the narrative of forming relations with Great Powers.<sup>240</sup> Such embittered disagreements highlighted how, for “Third World” countries and the ASC, debates over alignment was synonymous with opposing views on the defence of newly independent states against an encroachment of neo-imperialism.<sup>241</sup>

Within the ASC some delegates did not take such staunch opposition to aligning with one of the power blocs, particularly the Israeli Mapai Party and the rightist Japanese socialists rejected neutrality. Rightist Japanese socialists believed the ASC should “be realistic and take into consideration the geographical and economic factors”, specifically regarding the reality of Soviet aggression in Asia, and thus favoured retaining relations with the US, whilst Israeli socialists maintained that Asian socialists should not lift up morality so high in their plight against imperialism and for global peace to make it impossible to function and, by extension, nor should the ASC be uncompromising in its stances towards rearmament.<sup>242</sup> Evidently non-alignment and neutrality proved to be divisive issues for the ASC, which ultimately reflected the “two diametrically opposed attitudes to the Cold War among Afro-Asian countries”, which ultimately dictated socialists’ beliefs regarding neutrality.<sup>243</sup> The view advocated fervently by countries such as India and Burma saw the rivalry between the US and Soviet blocs as “a constant threat to world peace, a sword of Damocles hanging over the head of humanity” which must be neutralized through an “area of peace” which can be established by Afro-Asian leaders, whereas the opposing view of countries such as Egypt saw alignment as a source of opportunity in which the cold war was “a triple blessing” where Afro-Asian countries were always ensured support, particularly economic aid, from either power bloc as they contend for political gains in the Afro-Asian world.<sup>244</sup>

In addition, the ASC was beset with inter-state rivalry and hostilities between its member parties. Notable hostilities existed between the Egyptian and Israeli delegates, stemming from

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<sup>239</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 47.

<sup>240</sup> Miller, *The Politics of the Third World*, 14, 31.

<sup>241</sup> Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, 25.

<sup>242</sup> Third Plenary Session, Report of the First ASC, 48.

<sup>243</sup> Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, 22, 24.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid*, 22-23.

the pre-existing tensions between Arab states and Israel since the creation of the Jewish State in 1948. In the opening session of the first ASC, Egyptian delegate Ahmad Hussein launched a scathing attack on the Israeli delegation for its country's part in engaging in conflict against neighbouring Arab countries, stating; "since I believe that socialism is justice, I cannot recognise Israel", and subsequently refused to be seated at the same table as the Israeli delegates.<sup>245</sup> Hussein's stance was also supported and applauded by Lebanese socialist Nassim Majdalan, further highlighting the deep-seated dislike held towards Israel by Arab countries. Indeed, "Israel's relations with the Arab countries presented a special problem" as Israel, a modern democratic and socially progressive country was in a state of conflict and hostility with neighbouring Arab states which are, in themselves, economically and socially underdeveloped and politically reactionary".<sup>246</sup>

Hostilities between Egyptian and Israeli socialists climaxed with the Suez Crisis in November 1956. With the second ASC taking place simultaneously as the Crisis unfolded, Asian socialists rallied against the West, stating that "a dangerous violation of peace has occurred", and subsequently condemned the tripartite assault against Egypt, and urged the complete withdrawal of foreign troops, the UN to issue sanctions against the antagonist belligerents, and a restoration Egyptian sovereignty in line with the status quo *ante bellum*.<sup>247</sup> Whilst the conference strongly condemned the "unprovoked and cynical aggression by Britain and France against Egypt" and denounced such actions as an "attempted revival of the outmoded and immoral gunboat diplomacy and of imperialist intervention", it also specifically condemned the Israeli invasion of Egypt.<sup>248</sup>

By recognising and supporting Egyptian nationalization of the Canal, the ASC essentially took an anti-Israel stance regarding the conflict, and reaffirmed divisions within the ASC between its members.<sup>249</sup> Consequently at the second ASC, Sharett attempted to defend his country's invasion of the Sinai Peninsula as "an act of self-defence following many armed attacks onto Israeli territory" by neighbouring Arab countries, including Egypt.<sup>250</sup> Whilst Sharett endeavoured to reconcile Israel's position in stating there was "no justification... for foreign

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<sup>245</sup> 'First Plenary Session', Hussein, Report of the First ASC, 28; Ran Kochan, 'Israel in Third World Forum', Michael Curtis and Susan A. Gitelson (eds.) *Israel and the Third World*, (New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1976), 249. 247-270

<sup>246</sup> Oskar Pollak, 'New Goals for International Socialism', *Janata*, 11:22, (24 June 1956), 4.

<sup>247</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:4, (November 1956), Microfilm 5486, IISH, Amsterdam, 1, 3.

<sup>248</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:5, (December 1956/January 1957), 3.

<sup>249</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:4, (November 1956), 5-6.

<sup>250</sup> 'Asian Socialists Resolve to Meet the Challenges of Times', *Janata*, 11:40-41, (11 November 1956), 3

intervention” in Suez, the Israeli invasion nevertheless negated its relationship with Asian socialists.<sup>251</sup> Ironically, due to the absence of any Arab socialists at the second ASC, resolutions made at the conference were subject to manipulation by the Mapai Party as the only Arab-Israeli delegate present, including its dismissal of a resolution that framed Israel’s membership in the ASC as a “bar to Arab socialist parties” joining, on the grounds that it would result in the Mapai Party’s expulsion from the ASC.<sup>252</sup>

Overall, the Suez Crisis “further complicated and deepened the relationship between the Cold War and decolonisation” for the ASC, as exemplified by President Eisenhower’s opposition to the tripartite invasion his intervention to force the British-French-Israeli forces to withdraw on the basis of both American antagonism towards European imperialism, and fears of “Soviet intentions to gain regional advantage by supporting Nasser and the forces of Arab revolutionary nationalism”.<sup>253</sup> As a consequence of the Cold War framework within which the Crisis took place, a criticism was drawn within the ASC against members who continued to have a close association with Western countries, notably India, as the British assault on the Canal Zone cemented the ASC’s criticism and opposition towards India’s membership in the Commonwealth of Nations, and affirmed that India should leave the organisation immediately to sever its ties with the imperial power.<sup>254</sup> Evidently, for the ASC the Suez Crisis highlighted how there was not a simple “choice between the Communist and Capitalist systems”, but that the ASC had to contend with the pragmatic factors of the Cold War itself, which determined the attitude of Afro-Asian socialists and their subsequent divisions.<sup>255</sup>

Internal divisions thus played a major part in dislodging the unity and solidarity of the ASC. It ultimately meant there was no homogenous policy regarding the position the ASC should take in relation to co-operation with the SI and Cominform, nor could it established a unified common economic policy, as Asian countries differed in their approaches to economics according to their individual experiences. Thus internal divisions, by extension of ideological disillusion, significantly limited the ASC’s attempt to navigate the early Cold War.

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<sup>251</sup> ‘Asian Socialists Resolve to Meet the Challenges of Times’, *Janata*, 11:40-41, (11 November 1956), 3.

<sup>252</sup> Kochan, ‘Israel in Third World Forum’, 249.

<sup>253</sup> Bradley, ‘Decolonisation, the Global South and the Cold War’, 481.

<sup>254</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:5, (December 1956/January 1957), 3.

<sup>255</sup> Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement*, 23.

## *Politics at Home*

Whilst Imlay highlights how “Asian socialism was never a monolithic bloc”, he focuses on how the ASC projected an image of unity which was subsequently received to be true by European socialists.<sup>256</sup> Less attention is given to the underlying differences that existed between Asian socialists themselves, relating to both aforementioned ideological disagreement as well as domestic political issues within home countries. Domestic politics had a detrimental effect on the ability of socialist parties to establish and implement their policies, and generally navigate the emerging Cold War. Indeed, the CIA report ahead of the second ASC degraded the significance and effectiveness of the conference, describing it as “small and ineffectual” as, given its voluntary association, the real impact of views expressed from central debates were entirely dependent on “the political influence of the member parties” within their home countries.<sup>257</sup> Only three parties of the ASC actually wield political influence in their respective countries; the Socialist Mapai Party in Israel, the Socialist Party of Burma and the Japanese Socialist Party, which also meant they were often preoccupied with domestic problems.<sup>258</sup>

Indeed a number of socialist parties faced domestic opposition in their home countries, with some even facing violent hostility. Notably, the Socialist Party of Vietnam came under opposition following the partition of Vietnam at the 1954 Geneva accords, in which The South remained in a precarious situation subject to terrorist attacks by suspected communist supporters.<sup>259</sup> In a report to the ASC, chairman of the Vietnamese Sociality Party Pham Van Ngoi denounced the government of South Vietnam for attacking his party and accused the Ngo Dinh Diem’s administration of being a “tool of American imperialism”, as prominent members of the party were being persecuted and imprisoned without reason by Diem’s US-backed regime.<sup>260</sup> Although the party continued to strive for democracy and economic and social security in the South, it was enthralled in conflict with the political aspirations of the Soviet-backed Viet Minh from North Vietnam, their communist supporters in the South, as well as Diem’s government.<sup>261</sup> Indeed, the Diem Government suppressed two socialist papers, including the party’s own *Minh-Tan*, and when elections were held in 1955, the Diem

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<sup>256</sup> Imlay, *International Socialism and Decolonisation during the 1950s*, 1109.

<sup>257</sup> CIA, *Brief on the ASC*, 3-4.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>259</sup> ASC Information, No. 4, (1959), 10.

<sup>260</sup> ASC Information Bulletin, 1:7, (April 1957), 8.

<sup>261</sup> IISH, Microfilm 5484, *Asian Socialist Conference Publication on Parties' Activities, 1958-1959*, ‘Vietnamese Socialist Party’, 5, (hereafter: *ASC Parties' Activities*).

effectively rigged the electoral system to disadvantage opposition parties, meaning the Socialist Party was side-lined and closely monitored by Diem's "constitutional dictatorship".<sup>262</sup>

Even the domestic politics of the ASC's founding members hindered their respective socialist parties. In India despite the sizeable share of the PSP's election votes in 1955, following the party's split and the formation of the All-India Socialist Party, neither party presented itself as a vigorous or effective force of opposition to the Indian National Congress (INC).<sup>263</sup> Indeed the PSP experienced internal stress throughout 1952-1953 as its members could not agree to co-operate with the INC.<sup>264</sup> Moreover, by the late 1950s, the PSP faced problems in establishing a flexible policy that appealed to the Indian nation, one that would preserve homogeneity whilst facing "the different complexities growing in the different States of the Union".<sup>265</sup> Similarly, the Pakistan Socialist Party faced difficulties in forming its domestic policies because of the "peculiar character of Pakistan politics", in which the party was in a constant battle against supporters of the capitalist economy, the feudal land system and the theocratic state.<sup>266</sup> Pakistani Socialists also were severely handicapped by their historical opposition to the creation of Pakistan before partition took place, meaning they were often labelled as a "party of traitors" by opponents, and the party's Marxist roots, which meant it was "liable to be described as.. Infidel", both of which had detrimental effects on the Party's support and influence in a country where "nationalism and religion were strongly in the ascendant".<sup>267</sup>

In Burma also, political instability meant the socialist party had come under attack. Dissatisfaction with the U Nu's Union Party government led to widespread political unrest, in which communist and reactionary government supporters targeted socialist leaders, including assassination attempts against socialist party figures such as U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein.<sup>268</sup> Although a number of Burmese socialists were part of the leading cross-party political group the "People's League", and members of the party held ministerial posts in government, it still came under fire from a persistent communist threat supported by the PRC.<sup>269</sup> Moreover, Rose has highlighted how, when in government, the party suffered from a "shortage of competent administrators and technicians", inherited as one of many "enormous problems" from the

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<sup>262</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 199-201.

<sup>263</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 4.

<sup>264</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 43.

<sup>265</sup> ASC Information, No. 5, (1959), 4.

<sup>266</sup> 2nd Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference, 49.

<sup>267</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 60.

<sup>268</sup> 'On Burma', ASC Parties' Activities, 3-4.

<sup>269</sup> 2nd Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference, 42.



Second World War and British colonial rule.<sup>270</sup> Likewise, the Partai Socialist Indonesia remained in prolonged conflict with communist and other communalist groups across Indonesia, and subsequently hadn't been able to form a majority government since 1947.<sup>271</sup> By Sjahrir's own account, the PSI had a very low membership of around 13,200 by 1952 (compared to the PKI's 100,000 strong membership), as most politically left-leaning Indonesians joined PKI, meaning the PSI "could hardly be called a party".<sup>272</sup>

The split of the Socialist Party of Japan in the early 1950s had major repercussions for the party's domestic influence. Despite previous electoral success in the aftermath of the Second World War, the party succumbed to rebellion of a number of its Marxists members and split in 1951 over disagreements regarding Japan's security pact with the US, rearmament and foreign relations with former enemies.<sup>273</sup> Although the two wings reunified in October 1955, it was unable to "break past the one-third barrier" and reclaim its position as the governing party in the 1956 elections.<sup>274</sup> However, the party split once again in 1960 due to further internal factional disputes and whilst the ASC hoped the party could continue its reconstruction phase and pursue the cause for democratic socialism in Japan, it remained unable to form a part of government in Japan and declined in popularity in national elections.<sup>275</sup>

Given the domestic issues they faced, socialist parties in Asia were evidently more concerned and preoccupied with building up their own domestic political strength "rather than expending resources" on the ASC.<sup>276</sup> Consequently, being a member of the ASC was viewed merely as means to "enhance the prestige" of socialist parties within their home countries, as opposed to any international recognition of the party or socialism as a whole.<sup>277</sup> The ASC's optimism to advance the solidarity of socialists across the world was an unsuccessful fabricated ambition of its leading figures. In reality many Asian socialists in the 1950s did not have the appetite nor ambition to pursue the cause of socialism on an international scale, as they were more concerned with establishing and development a socialist movement within their own country,

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<sup>270</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 143.

<sup>271</sup> 2nd Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference, 43.

<sup>272</sup> Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, 154-155

<sup>273</sup> Dagfinn Gatu, *The Post-war Roots of Japanese Political Malaise*, (New York: Routledge, 2015), 77.

<sup>274</sup> Carl Mosk, *Japanese Economic Development: Market, Norms, Structures*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 239.

<sup>275</sup> ASC Information, No. 8, (1960), 1-14.

<sup>276</sup> CIA, Brief on the ASC, 4.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*

which ultimately hindered the ASC's ability to successfully advance socialist internationalism in its process of navigating the Cold War.

### *Asian-centricity*

There is a contested argument over an element of Asian-centricity within the ASC evident during its own discussions, debates and policies, which would limit its outlook in navigating the Cold War. Indeed, notable observers of the ASC contended that the conference continuously regarded the importance of socialism in Africa, both its ideological development but also contextual events taking place in Africa. Austrian vice-chancellor Adolf Scharf particularly commented how the Asian socialists were “very anxious to develop their contacts with young movements of the coloured peoples of Africa which are sympathetic to Socialist ideas”.<sup>278</sup> Such a view reflected Attlee's belief that, despite any potential differences in priority issues facing Asian and African countries, “there are more problems which are world problems than those that belong to one particular country”.<sup>279</sup>

Indeed, there is evidence that the Asian socialists of the ASC reached out to their African counterparts, not just in solidarity and support, but also in explicit interest in their struggle for freedom. Through the ACB and its monthly newsletter, the ASC established a connection with the African National Congress (ANC), as Issue 5 of the newsletter concisely reported on the activities of the ANC from September 1953 to August 1954, including its educational activities, organisation at a higher level, council meetings, its future plans and its stance on the issues arising in North and South Rhodesia.<sup>280</sup> Indeed, with its close links to the ASC, the ACB “provided a forum for African nationalists to present their grievances and anti-colonial history to Asian allies for ideological and material reward”.<sup>281</sup> The ASC thus was not entirely ignorant or oblivious to the socialist, and general anti-colonial, struggle taking place within African countries.

However, African socialists were significantly under-represented in the conference, particularly in 1953, which was in part due to the lack of established socialist parties in Africa, and the fact that many countries in Africa still remained under colonial rule throughout the 1950s. Hence the majority of the dialogue of delegates in the First Plenary Session was Asian-centric, focusing on the ASC as a triumph of Asian socialism and Asian peoples, and only

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<sup>278</sup> Adolf Scharf, ‘Impressions of Asian Socialist Conference’, *Janata*, 11:48, (30 December 1956), 8.

<sup>279</sup> Second Plenary Session, Report of the First ASC, 32.

<sup>280</sup> For complete overview of ANC's activities, see ACB Newsletter, Issue 5, (January 1955).

<sup>281</sup> McCann, ‘Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian Solidarity?’. 103.

remarked on the observatory interest African socialists showed towards events taking place in Asia.<sup>282</sup> Some delegates did not even make reference to African countries in their opening addresses, notably Israel, Indonesia, the Rights Japanese Socialist delegate, Malaya, Pakistan, the SI, Yugoslavia, and Nepal never once explicitly remarked on socialist movements in Africa throughout the first ASC.<sup>283</sup>

Only the Congress of Peoples against Imperialism made a significant reference to socialist struggle in Africa, and actively stood in defence of the liberation movements taking place in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Madagascar, whilst Tunisian delegate Tayeb Slim explicitly highlighted the colonial oppression still experienced by North Africans in the Maghreb.<sup>284</sup> By the time the second ASC met in 1956, the conference “became more attuned to the global crises of social democracy and escalating Cold War”, resulting in African colonial issues being side-lined in favour of discussions over the Suez Crisis and the Hungarian Revolution.<sup>285</sup> Moreover, the Egyptian victory from Suez placed Cairo as “anti-colonial hub” for African socialists, which was conveniently geographically located for African socialists to travel to, meaning African socialists increasingly looked to Cairo instead of the Asian hubs of Rangoon, Bandung, Delhi and Bombay as the centre of pan-African anti-colonialism.<sup>286</sup> Cold War dynamics thus also facilitated the exclusion of African socialist issues from the ASC and increased animosity between African and Asian socialists.

Asian-centricity was also prevalent in the view taken by certain Asian socialists that Asia was destined to play a role “in the unfolding drama of world history, in the continuing efforts to maintain world peace and the endeavours of mankind to build a better world”.<sup>287</sup> It is therefore unsurprising, as Sharett described, that an “Asian distinctiveness” characterised the proceedings of the ASC.<sup>288</sup> Such distinctiveness prevailed in the ASC’s treatment of the problems facing the international socialist movement, which the ASC claimed were based on the agricultural and backward character of Asian economies, the socialist plight against capitalism, feudalism and communism, and a distrust of Western socialist parties due to their

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<sup>282</sup> ‘First Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 10-28.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 26.

<sup>285</sup> McCann, ‘Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian Solidarity?’, 109.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>287</sup> Report of the First ASC, 75.

<sup>288</sup> Sharett, ‘Significance of the Asian Socialist Conference’, *Janata*, 8:16, (17 May 1953), 5.

respective country's colonial past.<sup>289</sup> Indeed, Attlee highlighted how debates within the Committees of the ASC demonstrated how there were “some problems that are more specifically Asian”, particularly administrative, agrarian and industrial problems which were considered “peculiarities of Asian countries”.<sup>290</sup> Ultimately, such partisan discussions and beliefs can be viewed in retrospect as another example of the Asian-centricity of the conference.

Moreover, throughout ASC economic bulletin meetings, there was a tendency to focus on a select few countries, meaning there was an imbalance of attention given towards Asian members of the ASC. In the documents of economic bulletins between 1955 and 1957, attention was given to the economic situation, structures and changes in Yugoslavia, Israel, Japan, India, Burma and Malaya, as well as observations made in the changes and challenges of the Soviet Union's economy.<sup>291</sup> However, within the eighteen issues of the economic bulletin available in the IISH archive, there was no mention of the economic situation in African countries whatsoever, whilst a great deal of attention was given to the economies of these aforementioned ASC members.<sup>292</sup> In addition, certain Asian members only specified interest in regional concerns. For example, in the first congress of the ASC, the Mubarak Saghū expressed his desire for Pakistan to be involved in any regional security system involving India and Burma, so his country was not left in a state of regional isolation.<sup>293</sup>

There was even an implicit predisposition for Asian socialists to belittle African problems during the meetings of the ASC. On one such occasion the ACB recommended that the best solution to the development problems facing Africa was the creation of a “United States of Africa”, which it justified on the ground that all problems facing Africans were “fundamentally the same”.<sup>294</sup> Such an ignorant stance flouted the complex and diverse nature of African geopolitics in the post-war period, and reflected how Afro-Asian solidarity “was not without a twang of tutelary condescension”, and undoubtedly tarnished the solidarity between Asian and African socialists by alienation of the latter.<sup>295</sup> Indeed, Algerian socialists Saïd Farhi outwardly

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<sup>289</sup> Sharett, ‘Significance of the Asian Socialist Conference’, *Janata*, 8:16, (17 May 1953), 5.

<sup>290</sup> ‘Second Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 32; ‘First Plenary Session’, Koirala, Report of the First ASC, 25.

<sup>291</sup> For concise report on economic activities of ASC members between Jun 1955 and August 1957, see ASC Economic Bulletin.

<sup>292</sup> For ASC discussions on Burma, Malaya and Southeast Asia, see ASC Economic Bulletin, issues No. 4, (October 1955), No. 5, (December 1955), No. 15, (February/March 1957), and No. 16, (May 1957).

<sup>293</sup> ‘Third Plenary Session’, Report of the First ASC, 47

<sup>294</sup> ACB Newsletter, Issue 3, 6.

<sup>295</sup> McCann, ‘Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian Solidarity?’, 99.

criticised the ASC for undermining issues in Africa. He exemplified how Committee C's resolutions on North Africa understated the situation in Algeria, stating it was "a separate and particular problem" to that of Tunisia and Morocco as Algeria was completely annexed by the French and supported by their NATO allies. Joining Algeria with the resolution on Tunisia and Morocco effectively meant the ASC silenced the Algerian voice, and undermined and belittled the plight of Algerian peoples struggle for freedom.<sup>296</sup> Evidently, the ASC thus demonstrated Asian-centricity by the way in which it condescended and undermined the importance of anti-colonial struggles in Africa. Although Asian socialists did extend solidarity and interest in the struggle of African socialists, their closer attention to Asian problems ultimately narrowed their outlook, and by extension limited the ASC's ability to navigate the early Cold War as a united Afro-Asian network.

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<sup>296</sup> 'Third Plenary Session', Report of the First ASC, 57-58.

## ***Conclusion – A Third World in a Cold War***

Just over a year after the second congress of the ASC held in Delhi, The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference was held in Cairo between December 1957 and January 1958. On its agenda the delegates reviewed the contemporary international system, the state of imperialism and the people's rights for independence and sovereignty, racial discrimination, banning the use and testing of nuclear weapons, promotion of economic cooperation and cultural exchange, condition for Afro-Asian women and children, and the situation in Algeria.<sup>297</sup> In attendance were representatives from 45 countries, including countries affiliated with the Soviet-bloc (or part of the recently defunct Cominform) such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), as well as the PRC and the Soviet Union itself.<sup>298</sup> Their inclusion in this meeting of Afro-Asian countries exemplified the rapidly changing nature of Cold War geopolitics and relations. The Bandung Conference in 1955 had also previously undermined the work of the ASC, particularly regarding the establishing greater "Third World" solidarity and an official non-aligned movement. The ASC alone was unable to navigate the complexities of the Cold War and implement its policies, and thus by the late 1950s was dying a slow death, becoming extinct officially in 1960.

Throughout its existence, the ASC made a concerted effort to navigate the complex geopolitics and tensions of the early Cold War. Establishing its own principles, aims, concerns and resolutions, its delegates set out to navigate the Cold War by addressing and attempting to resolve the great problems facing the world. Notably, in responding to the threat of another great war, the ASC established profound opposition to rearmament and the testing and use of nuclear weapons. In addition, the ASC expressly supported colonial peoples' struggle for freedom, highlighting not only the oppressive and exploitative nature of Western imperialism, but also the evidential correlation between anti-colonial struggle and global peace, as ASC members substantiated that achieving the latter required the eradication of the former. Moreover, the conference highlighted the importance both of national revolution (and by extension, nationalism) and the economic development of underdeveloped areas for the prospect and future of countries in their plight for freedom from colonial rule. Clearly, it would be too harsh a judgment to state the ASC failed to navigate the early Cold War, nor that its demise was inevitable.

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<sup>297</sup> 'Publisher's Note', *Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference, Cairo, December 26 1957-January 1, 1958*, (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958), 7.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to see how the ASC did not materialise into an established and lasting movement and international organisation like the Bandung Conference or the NAM. However, such hindsight is counterproductive in explaining the difficulties “Third World” organisations like the ASC had in navigating the Cold War. Instead, it is more useful to examine the limitations the ASC faced, and how they pertained to its attempt in navigating the early Cold War. Establishing the ASC’s relationship with the SI and the Cominform, the ideological disillusion of the ASC, internal divisions between ASC members, the impact domestic politics had on ASC members, and the extent of Asian-centricity within the ASC, were all significant limitations on the ASC. The internal and regional sources of these limitations have been hitherto overlooked in historiography, however their significant influence over the ASC’s ability to address its concerns and navigate the early Cold War is evident from this study. Moreover, these limitations were all contextually bound to the influence of Cold War dynamics. Consequently, the ASC was not only hindered by these limitations in themselves, but also by changing Cold War dynamics throughout the 1950s, which ultimately rendered the ASC’s claim that their version of democratic socialism was the only effective means by which to challenge Western imperialism, the power bloc rivalry, and achieve Afro-Asian solidarity as unseemly.

Navigating the early Cold War was no easy feat for any country or international institution during the 1950s. Changing dynamics, conflicting ideologies, power bloc tensions and decolonisation plagued foreign policy dialogue and interactions. Combining the Cold War reality with the internal limitations the ASC faced from its own members, it is permissible to see how the ASC, as a “Third World” movement, had difficulties in navigating the early Cold War period. Overall, it is appropriate to view the ASC as a “Third World” Afro-Asian network which sought to navigate the early Cold War by establishing itself as a principled organisation with the intention and desire to make positive changes in the world, but was ultimately hindered by a number of limitations from within itself, as well as the inescapable influence of changing Cold War dynamics and decolonisation. Ultimately, the negative implications these limitations had for the ASC exemplify the difficulties “Third World” Afro-Asian networks had in navigating the early Cold War.

## *Appendix One.*<sup>299</sup>

### **1. Member party delegates of the first ASC, Rangoon, Burma, January 1953:**

|                                      |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Socialist party of Burma             | Socialist Party of Japan (Right)    |
| Partai Socialist Indonesia (PSI)     | Progressive Socialist Party Lebanon |
| Praja Socialist Party of India (PSP) | Pan Malayan Labour Party            |
| Socialist Party of (Mapai) Israel    | Socialist Party of Pakistan         |
| Socialist Party of Japan (Left)      | Socialist Party of Egypt            |

### **2. Observers and fraternal guests of the first ASC, Rangoon 1953:**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Algerian People's Party  | Socialist International                 |
| Kenya African Union      | International Union of Socialist Youth  |
| The Nepali Congress      | Communist Party of Yugoslavia           |
| Tunisian Destour Party   | Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism |
| Uganda National Congress |   |

### **3. Member parties of the second ASC, Bombay, India, November 1956:**

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Socialist Party of Burma   | Pan Malayan Labour Party      |
| Partai Socialist Indonesia (PSI)                                       | Socialist Party of Pakistan   |
| Praja Socialist Party of India   | South Vietnam Socialist Party |
| Socialist Party of (Mapai) Israel                                      | Sri Lanka Freedom Party       |
| Socialist Party of Japan   | Nepali Congress               |
| Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon<br>(invited but did not attend) |                               |

### **4. Observers and Fraternal guests of the second ASC, Bombay, 1956:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Socialist Alliance of the Working Peoples<br>of Yugoslavia (Sponsored by Communist<br>Party of Yugoslavia) | Popular Socialist Party of Hong Kong             |
| Arab Socialist Regeneration Party, Syria   | Italian Socialist Party                          |
| Arab Socialist Regeneration Party, Jordan  | Social Democratic Party of Germany               |
| Front de Libération Nationale, Algeria   | British Labour Party                             |
| Iraq National Democratic Party   | Popular Socialist Party of Chile                 |
| Singapore Labour Front   | Canadian Commonwealth Co-operative<br>Federation |
| Popular Socialist Community Party of<br>Cambodia   | African Liberation Committee                     |
|  | Movement for Colonial Freedom                    |
|  | International Union of Socialist Youth           |

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<sup>299</sup> The following notes are taken from; Report of the First ASC, 111-112; Three Years of ASC, 4-6; 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the ASC, 64; 'Second Congress of the Asian Socialist Conference', in *Janata*, 11:35, (20 September 1956), 4; 'Asian Socialists Resolve to Meet the Challenges of Times', *Janata*, 11:40-41, (11 November 1956, 3-4).



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