

December 28, 1956

**Third World Reaction to Hungary and Suez, 1956: A
Soviet Foreign Ministry Analysis**

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Summary:

Tugarinov wrote this overview of reactions to the events in Hungary and Suez by third world nations. Tugarinov reports that the events in Hungary and the Near East increased the prestige of the United States.

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Contents:

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Third World Reaction to Hungary and Suez, 1956: A Soviet Foreign Ministry Analysis

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To Comrade ORLOV, A.L.

I forward a copy of a note prepared by the Committee of Information, USSR MFA, "The Influence of Events in the Near East and In Hungary on relations of the "Colombo countries" toward England, the USA, and the Soviet Union."

The note has been sent to the leadership of the MFA USSR.

Attachment: On 8 pages.

(Signed) I. Tugarinov

"28" December 1956
No. 1869/2

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The Influence of Events in the Near East and in Hungary on the Attitudes of the "Colombo Countries" Toward England, the USA, and the Soviet Union

I.

The latest events in the Near East and in Hungary led to the appearance of certain new elements in the attitudes of the "Colombo Countries" toward England, the USA, and the Soviet Union.

During the Anglo-French aggression against Egypt, an anti-English mood was sharply strengthened in the "Colombo Countries."

In these countries, demands were put forth for the breaking of relations with England and for the withdrawal of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon from the British Commonwealth. Also, on November 3, the Parliament of Indonesia unanimously took the decision to recommend to the government that it review the question of the breaking of relations with England, should the English forces not be withdrawn from Egyptian territory.

One of the most prominent personalities of the Indian National Congress Party [Chakravarti] RAJAGOPALACHARI, suggested that India withdraw from the British Commonwealth in the event that England rejected the decision of the UN regarding the question of aggression against Egypt. Many Indian newspapers and political parties supported RAJAGOPALACHARI's demand. Analogous demands were put forth in Pakistan and in Ceylon.

The governments of the "Colombo Countries" also officially considered the Anglo-French aggression in Egypt. However, they restrained themselves from taking any actions which might be evidence of a retreat by these countries from the policy which they followed earlier in relation to England. At a press conference on November 2, in response to a question as to whether India might apply these or other sanctions against England, NEHRU answered, "We are not thinking about sanctions." On November 9, NEHRU directly said that India would act incorrectly, if it were to withdraw from membership in the British Commonwealth because of the actions of England in Egypt. The Prime Minister of Ceylon, [S.W.R.D.] BANDARANAIKE on November 12 spoke in a similar vein against a suggestion that India and Ceylon withdraw from the British Commonwealth.

The President of Pakistan, Iskander MIRZA, who recently visited Iran, in a conversation with diplomatic representatives from Arab countries accredited to Teheran, announced that "such a great colonialistic power, such as England, has at its disposal huge military powers, and it is capable of any actions." Therefore, in questions involving England, it is necessary to follow "a more moderate course," and not to take headstrong "adventuristic steps." Such a position on the part of the ruling circles of the "Colombo Countries" is explained first of all by the sufficiently significant degree to which these countries are economically and politically dependent on England. English capital continues to hold a dominant position in the leading branches of the economies of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon, particularly in the plantation economy, manufacturing industry, and also in internal and foreign trade. In India, for example, according to information in our possession, more than 72% of long-term foreign investment is English, and this accounts for more than 30% of all the money invested in the Indian economy.

In India and Pakistan there remain a significant number of English "advisors" and various types of "consultants," and several Englishmen even occupy official government positions.

A decent number of Englishmen remained in the armed forces of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. As in the past, the general staffs of the armed forces of these countries, along with many officers, are trained in England.

A significant part of the bureaucratic apparatus of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon is preserved from the time of English colonial rule, and supports continued ties with England. The main role in the matter of the continued membership of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon in the British Empire is played by the fact that the great bourgeois and land-owning circles of these countries are not interested in breaking economic and political relations with England.

Currently, as England has begun to withdraw its troops from Egypt, expressions of criticism toward the actions of England in Egypt have almost completely ceased in the "Colombo Countries."

And so, the English aggression towards Egypt has not led to any sort of noticeable worsening of relations of these countries with England, although, it is without doubt that in connection with her aggressive actions in the Near East, England's prestige in Asian countries has been damaged severely.

II.

Recently, in reaction to the events in Hungary, there has been a significant increase in speeches hostile to the Soviet Union in the "Colombo Countries." These speeches are found in their most extreme form in Pakistan and Burma.

In the ruling circles of the “Colombo Countries” an analogy was made between the English- French-Israeli aggression in Egypt and the participation of Soviet forces in the suppression of the counter-revolutionary revolt in Hungary. In particular, a November 14 declaration of the Prime Ministers of India, Burma, Indonesia, and Ceylon reads, “each of them has independently already expressed their uneasiness about these events (in Egypt and Hungary—Committee on Information) and their strong disapproval and their chagrin in connection with the aggression and the intervention of great powers against weak countries. This is a violation of a condition of the UN Charter, and also a direct violation of the spirit and letter of the Bandung Conference declaration and the principles expressed in it.”

In the above-mentioned declaration, The Prime Ministers of India, Burma, Indonesia, and Ceylon demanded that Soviet forces be quickly withdrawn from Hungary, and that the Hungarian people be granted the right “to decide for themselves the question of their future and to create the government that it wishes to have, without any sort of outside meddling.”

The “Colombo countries” adhered to this position—which is basically unfriendly toward the USSR—during the U.N.'s consideration of the so-called Hungarian question. The Pakistani delegation, occupying a position on the Hungarian question which is openly hostile to the Soviet Union, even was one of the co-authors of a five-country resolution which called for intervention in the Hungarian matter. According to information received from our Chinese friends, the government of Burma considers the application of sanctions against the Soviet Union in relation to its actions in Hungary a possible step.

In the memorandum of the Indian Government handed to Com[rade]. GROMYKO on 17 December 1956, the current position of the Soviet Union is judged in its essentials, and it is asserted that “the events in Hungary shatter the belief of millions of people, who had begun to view the USSR as the defender of peace and rights of the weakest people.”

It should be noted that the evaluation of the Hungarian situation by the “Colombo Countries” corresponds to a significant degree with the Yugoslavian point of view on this question. According to information in our possession, NEHRU and [Burmese Prime Minister] U BA SWE support close contact with Yugoslavia on the Hungarian question.

In this connection it is necessary to point out that NEHRU, in his speech to the Indian Parliament on 20 November 1956, underlined that TITO is in a position to give a correct evaluation of events in Europe and that India, in working out its foreign policy program, to a certain degree is led by his evaluation. Besides this, NEHRU, speaking about Tito's speech in Pula [Yugoslavia— ed.], noted that to him many points in this speech seem correct.

The Government of India is in full accord with the position of Yugoslavia regarding [overthrown Hungarian leader] Imre NAGY. And so, NEHRU, in his conversation with CHOU ENLAI which took place on 3 December 1956, expressed India's disagreement with the actions of the Soviet government on this question. According to NEHRU, “facts of this type are extremely unfavorable for the USSR.”

Recently, many political parties, organs of the press, and a range of leading political figures of the “Colombo countries” have begun to speak very critically of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, pointing out in this regard that the events in Eastern Europe bear witness “to the insincerity of the Soviet Union” and about its unwillingness to consistently adhere to the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

The following comments from the Indian press are representative of these opinions.

According to the newspaper "Indian Express," Soviet policy, which preached its devotion to the principles of "panch shil" [Ed. note: This refers to the "five principles"—of mutual respect, nonaggression, noninterference, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence—espoused by Nehru to apply to Indian-Chinese relations, and to international relations generally.] is now unmasked. The influential newspaper "Hindustan Standard" wrote in November 1956 that the Soviet government "by its actions in Hungary has made the most vulgar mistake in the post-Stalin epoch. The trust and good wishes which it received in recent months have quickly disappeared, and now, after this there may follow even more serious events."

The Prime Minister of Burma U BA SWE said directly that the policy of the Soviet government is directed toward undermining the foundations of the United Nations.

NEHRU, touching on the situation in Hungary, announced at the opening of a UNESCO conference on November 5:

"Now we see that the five principles are just words which have no meaning for certain countries that assert the right to resolve problems by means of overwhelming force."

In his 20 December 1956 speech at the American United Nations Association, NEHRU asserted that Hungary "had been forced to function in a way which contradicts the will of the residents of the country."

Judging by facts in our possession, one of the reasons for the cooling off in attitudes toward the Soviet Union in the "Colombo countries" is found in the not entirely exact fulfillment of our trade obligations by Soviet enterprises, which causes dissatisfaction in a range of countries. So, for example, Burmese business circles express serious complaints relating to delays in the delivery of most Soviet goods and violations of terms in the fulfillment of contracts.

Recently, representatives of certain political circles and organs of the press in the "Colombo countries" have spoken in favor of a review of the policy of these countries toward the Soviet Union. And so, the newspaper "Hindustan Times," which is close to the Indian government, wrote that events in Eastern Europe and the Near and Middle East "oblige India to review its foreign policy."

At the same time, it must be noted that the relationships of the "Colombo countries" with other countries of the Socialist camp—and particularly with the PRC—have recently undergone further development. Bearing witness to this, for example, are such facts as the extremely friendly reception which CHOU EN-LAI was given in India, and the journey of U NU to the PRC, which took place during the sharpening of the situation in Hungary.

III.

Recent events in Hungary and in the Near East and the position of the USA during these events have made possible an increase in the prestige of the USA in Asian countries.

The general tone of the coverage of the events in Egypt and in Hungary in the press of the "Colombo countries" was extremely favorable toward the USA. The statements of a number of press organs included positive evaluations of the role and actions of the USA in settling the conflict in the Near and Middle East, and also in regard to the question of the situation in Hungary. In this way, the USA was assigned the role as the most active supporter of a peaceful settlement of the situation in Egypt.

The fact that the reelection of President Eisenhower received a favorable reaction in the "Colombo countries" is also noteworthy. Many newspapers in those countries, including those of leftist orientation, expressed satisfaction over the re-election of EISENHOWER as President, viewing it as a "firm guarantee of the maintenance of peace."

Recently, in the press of the "Colombo countries" there have appeared reports of a possible change in the positions of these countries toward the USA. In particular, in certain reports of Indian newspapers it has been mentioned that it makes sense for India to revise its foreign policy so as to move closer to the USA.

Regarding this, the fact that the USA over a short period of time has taken real steps toward a rapprochement with India has special meaning. In January 1956, the government of the USA announced that it had rescinded a previously taken decision to reduce economic aid to India by 10 million dollars, and, besides this, had decided to provide India, free of charge, 100 thousand tons of steel products required for restoration and reconstruction of the Indian railroad network. In March 1956, the government of the USA gave India 26 million dollars for the purchase of various types of machinery, and in August 1956 concluded with NEHRU's government an agreement to provide India agricultural products worth 360.1 million dollars, of which 65% would be given in the form of a loan and 15% in the form of a grants.

The government of the USA is also trying to broaden its political contacts with India and to draw India closer to the USA on a range of international questions. With this goal, the government of the USA, according to information for the Soviet Embassy in Delhi, made it clear to the Indians that the USA wished to renew negotiations towards conclusion of an Indo-American treaty on friendship, trade, and navigation.

The above American measures are received favorably by the Indian government, which is interested in receiving necessary economic aid from the USA. NEHRU himself manifests a certain inclination towards rapprochement with the USA. It is deserving of attention that precisely after the events in Hungary and in the Near East, NEHRU agreed to accept EISENHOWER's invitation, and visited the USA in December 1956, even though he earlier, as is well known, had avoided a trip to the USA for a long time.

As is well-known, the joint communiqué about NEHRU's negotiations with EISENHOWER, published 20 December 1956, does not contain any concrete agreements. At the same time, it mentions that both sides affirm the existence of a broad area of agreement between India and the USA, who are linked by tight bonds of friendship, based on the compatibility of their goals and adherence to the highest principles of free democracy."

During his visit to the USA, in one of his speeches (20 December) NEHRU strongly lauded America's "morally leading" role in the Middle East crisis and the events in Hungary.

It is entirely possible that, as a result of NEHRU's negotiations with EISENHOWER, a real improvement in Indo-American relations will take place, and that could negatively impact the relations of India with the USSR.

Judging by reports in the press, in the near future an increase in American aid to Pakistan, Burma and other "Colombo countries" will be proposed. The Burmese government, which has previously refused aid from the USA, has already at the present time entered into negotiations about receiving American loans. There is reason to suggest that in the near future there could take place a certain strengthening in the relations of the USA with the other "Colombo countries."

Genuineness affirmed:
Deputy Chairman, Committee of Information,
USSR Foreign Ministry.

Correct: [signed] I. TUGARINOV

"28" December 1956
Attachment to No. 1869/2