

Discussions by Heads of Government

Even these difficulties, however, need not necessarily have led to the confused and acrimonious debates which characterized the early stages of the session and had a depressing effect upon the remaining part of the first half of the session. However, Mr. Khrushchov's decision to exploit the situation created by the collapse of the "summit" meeting, by appearing in person at the Assembly, was largely responsible for the subsequent confusion and sterility of the proceedings. Before he arrived in New York, Mr. Khrushchov indicated that his main interest in attending the Assembly, and thereby precipitating an *ad hoc* meeting of heads of government, was to discuss disarmament. Nothing in the subsequent presentation of the Soviet case to the Assembly seemed to justify this emphasis, however. On the contrary, once he was in New York, the Soviet leader seemed chiefly interested in two subjects, colonialism and the Congo. He appeared anxious to establish the Soviet Union's credentials as the most ardent opponent of colonialism and the warmest friend of the newly-independent states. The timing of this initiative was of considerable importance, in view of the admission to membership of 17 countries, mainly African, in the course of the session. Nevertheless, those members of the Assembly that had been colonies had little difficulty in forming their own views on this subject. Soviet pretence to being the champion of the former colonies of the world was rejected by the Prime Minister of Canada, among others, when he addressed the Assembly on September 26. The main resolution on colonialism ultimately adopted by the Assembly was not that proposed by the Soviet Union but one co-sponsored by a group of 43 African and Asian powers. The resolution, which "solemnly proclaims the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations", was one of the few dramatic accomplishments of the session. It was adopted by 89 votes in favour (including Canada) to none against, with nine abstentions.

Effects of Congo Crisis

Nevertheless, it was probably the continuing crisis in the Congo, rather than the general discussions of colonialism, that served best to dramatize the problems of emerging Africa in relation to the United Nations; and this was the second theme that, together with the deterioration of East-West relations, seemed largely to have determined the course of events in the first half of the fifteenth session. The session met immediately after the Assembly, in a special emergency session in September, had confirmed in broad terms its support for the action the Secretary-General had taken in the Congo crisis on the authority of earlier decisions of the Security Council. Nevertheless, developments in the Congo continued to be a source of dissatisfaction to many members of the Assembly for a variety of reasons. The Secretary-General was subjected to mounting criticism, particularly from the Soviet Union. It appeared that Soviet frustration at the capacity the United Nations had shown for quick and effective action to