

Belgrade and Bandung

IT is an elementary rule of logic that no proposition can be entertained unless its contradiction is also meaningful. The point is sometimes forgotten in considering the higher aspirations of non-alignment, a word which is itself a negative and logically contingent on what it opposes, alignment. The straight-forward economic good sense of non-alignment in the days when the world was rigidly divided in two blocs has become dated simply because alignment itself is in a state of some disintegration. This is certainly not an argument for returning; to old-fashioned alignment, but it does indicate the inadequacy of mere non-alignment. There are now not two, but at least four main groups in the world — the two old-style empires centred on Washington and Moscow, and the two relatively new spheres of association, the Belgrade and Bandung powers. Between these four groups, there are a growing number of powers who benefit from the increased mobility made possible by the loosening of Cold War loyalties — Pakistan is the best example, France a more famous one; and, on the other side of the fast-fading cleavage of the fifties. Rumania is pursuing a policy of movement, playing Moscow off against Peking. Ceylon has put a new meaning to 'non-aligned' that illustrates the erosion of old positions — Mrs Bandaranaike is non-aligned as between Peking and Delhi. It is clear that the crucial term 'non-aligned' no longer describes a determinate position — we need now to know who a country is non-aligned between.

Last October, President Nasser and Mrs Bandaranaike, with India's support, suggested a new conference of the 'non-aligned' on the lines of the 1961. Belgrade Conference, and in November, they were joined by Marshall Tito and Emperor Haille Selassie. In the same month, President Sukarno countered by demanding a new conference of what he calls (in a disarming! y proactive way) 'newly emerging' nations, and China with characteristic energy set off to canvass support. Pakistan promptly offered support to the Bandung notion, and decried the idea of non-alignment (for fairly

obvious reasons); in December, when Ayub Khan visited Ceylon, the shrewd Prime Minister agreed that while sponsoring a new Belgrade, she thought a Bandung was also a very good thing (so keeping India at arms' length). Last month Belgrade ambassadors met in Cairo, this week they are meeting in Colombo, and early next month the first preparatory meeting for a new Bandung takes place.

But! what is it all about? Both sides have clearly shifted the precise emphasis of their unifying ethos away from the days when militant anti-imperialism, the 'third force' and an independent foreign policy were not clearly differentiated. Whereas the old non-aligned seem to be moving towards a straight neutrality of the ordinary variety, a neutralism which links them with a wide range of powers including prosperous Europeans like Finland, Sweden or Austria (at substantial loss of the old anti-colonialist fervour), Bandung is moving towards pure anti-imperialism, without worrying too much about 'peaceful co-existence', the key premise of non-alignment. Since decolonisation has proceeded far in the past five years, the Bandung attack has shifted to 'neo-colonialism', certainly an important obstacle to development but very hard to define and consequently hardly clear enough to unite so diverse a range of countries. Decolonisation, along with the East-West thaw, has thus tended to leave high and dry many of the old positions — what before seemed between the two Goliaths a very significant David, is now jostled by a new host of competitors for power and influence.

The desultory lead up to the present Colombo conference, the apparent boredom of the world press, the discussion at Colombo on who is to be invited to the Heads of State meeting, all illustrate the general shifts in the world since 1961 and before. On present prospects, it seems unlikely that a second Belgrade will be able to offer to its participants or the world at large much more than the next Bandung will. Whereas the first will present little more than a series of polite platitudes that avoid all the serious

estions in the interests of unity, the second will, - similarly avoiding points of serious controversy, offer a slightly more fizzy cordial. None of this is particularly helpful and is expensive in terms of the energy and time of busy Ministers (not to mention the scarce resources of the participating countries). Nor is it a case for choosing an equally irrelevant and outdated 'alignment'; the old games of offering stark alternatives — East or West, alignment or non-alignment — is only escaped by denying the relevance of the dichotomy. But perhaps Colombo, and beyond it Cairo, will encourage more movement in the foreign policy of those Governments which, in some cases, have used 'non-alignment' as an excuse for avoiding a foreign policy.

Legislature vs Judiciary

A Correspondent writes :

THE issues involved in the conflict between the Uttar Pradesh Assembly and the State High Court have been clearly spelt out in the President's reference of the matter to the Supreme Court. These issues are, first, whether the Lucknow bench of the High Court was competent to entertain and deal with a petition against a sentence imposed by the Assembly for its contempt; second, whether the Assembly was competent to direct the production of two judges of the High Court before it and to call for their explanation for its contempt; third, whether the full bench of the High Court was competent to entertain and deal with the petitions of the two judges and to pass interim orders restraining the Speaker of the Assembly from implementing the Assembly's orders; and, finally, in general terms, whether a judge of a high court who deals with a petition challenging any order of a legislative assembly imposing a penalty for its contempt or who passes any order on such a petition commits contempt of the legislature and whether the legislature is competent to take proceedings against such a judge.

In effect, the conflict is between the Articles of the Constitution which define the powers, privileges and immunities of Parliament (Article 105) and State Legislatures (194) and their Members and the