

Havana Conference Is Shaping

By John M. Goshko
Washington Post Staff Writer

Cuba is making elaborate plans to focus world attention on Havana when Africans, Asians and Latin Americans meet there in January to discuss "the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism."

Washington observers expect Prime Minister Fidel Castro to use his role as host to press Cuba's claims to a front-rank position in the affairs of the underdeveloped world.

Greatly aiding the Cuban bid for attention has been the indefinite postponement of the Afro-Asian summit meeting that had been scheduled to begin Nov. 5 in Algiers.

Unlike the Algiers meeting, which was to have been a gathering of heads of state, the Havana conference will be attended by representatives of non-governmental or quasi-official organizations. But even though on a much lower level, the Havana conference is expected to provide the same

sort of forum that had been planned for Algiers.

Planned as an extension of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference held last April in Ghana, the Havana meeting is expected to draw delegations from the same countries that were supposed to have been represented at Algiers.

However, the inclusion of delegations from Latin America will give the Havana conference a more openly pro-Communist and anti-American

cast than would have been the case in Algiers.

Almost all the Latin American groups sending delegations are outright Communist organizations or groups generally regarded as Communist fronts. The principal exception is Chile's FRAP, a coalition of leftist parties that includes the Chilean Communists but is not monolithic in its composition.

Red Rivals to Attend

Also included in the 60-odd countries involved in the con-

Up as Castro's Own Show

ference will be delegations from the Soviet Union and Communist China. As a result, many observers think that the Havana meeting could become another battleground in the struggle between the two Communist giants for influence within the underdeveloped nations.

Certainly the agenda provides ample opportunity for such a clash. It ranges clear across the spectrum of third-world problems to cover everything from the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Re-

public to Arab enmity toward Israel.

But the biggest punching bag will be the United States, as evidenced by the agenda's talk of "intensification of all forms of struggle including the armed struggle of the peoples of the three continents against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism headed by North American imperialism."

Castro's Own Show

It is on this score that observers expect the conference

to become largely a Cuban show. The Castro government has long been desirous of such a conference as a means of demonstrating that it is considerably more than an isolated Communist bastion within the Western Hemisphere.

To this end, the Cubans are expected to pull out all the stops in identifying themselves with radical third-world aspirations in every corner of the globe. At the same time, the Cubans are obviously hopeful of winning strong

Afro-Asian backing for their struggle against the United States.

Reports from Cuba indicate that a massive priming effort already is under way in Havana to impress the visitors with the "accomplishments" of the Castro revolution. As a further dramatic touch, the week-long conference has been scheduled to begin Jan. 3—right on the heels of the sixth anniversary celebrations of Castro's coming to power on New Year's Day in 1959.