

# TIGHTENING DUTCH GRIP ON INDONESIA

## INSULTS HEAPED ON INDIAN SOLDIERS

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, April 9.

**W**HILE Indian troops are happy at the prospect of their return home, Indonesian circles are not so happy at their withdrawal. For every 100 Indian troops leaving, it is learnt, 300 Dutch will come in.

They will come in officially as Allied troops for the purpose of doing the Allied tasks, such as to carry out the evacuation of Jap prisoners and Allied internees. But in reality, they will gradually extend their areas of occupation, and in Batavia today they have, after evicting the Indonesians, occupied more buildings.

Indonesians report that recently armed Dutch appeared at their medical school and asked them to quit. Their protests proved in vain, and since they were not armed, they moved out, and appealed to the British authorities, who have promised to inquire into the affair.

### WHO ARE THE EXTREMISTS?

Moreover, patrol clashes with "extremists" and searches for hidden arms and ammunition present opportunities to the Dutch to extend their areas. But who are these "extremists"? They are ardent Indonesians, who are prepared to shed every drop of their blood to retain their newly won freedom and are not prepared to compromise. It appears that they require less provocation than other Indonesians, whose patience one cannot help admiring.

Last evening, when the 'Free Press of India' correspondent asked of an Indian soldier why he carried a gun, he replied that it was because of the Dutch who, according to him, shoot as soon as a shadow appears; he added, "My father always told me to shoot before I am killed by an enemy."

### INSULTS & INSULTS

This young Punjabi could not help feeling so when more and more insults are heaped upon Indian soldiers here every day. Recently, a public cinema was

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## TIGHTENING DUTCH GRIP ON JAVA

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opened by the Dutch, to which entry was allowed to all Allied troops, except Indians but now higher British authorities are moving to cancel the Dutch order.

### THE NEGOTIATIONS

Regarding the recent negotiations between the Dutch and the Indonesians, the 'Free Press of India' reliably understands that they are more of a preliminary nature, that Dr. Van Mook has taken with him certain minimum demands from the Indonesians, and that he will come back with final proposals. Indonesian circles believe that the Dutch are not likely to use force if the negotiations fail, and the matter will be taken up before the United Nations by the Dutch themselves, which may result in Indonesia being placed under trusteeship.

Trusteeship is not likely to interest the Indonesians, in view of several "Big Powers" attempting to exploit their own interests, with the consequent danger to the prosperity of the country.

### COMPROMISE WITH DUTCH?

Hence, the Indonesians are more likely to agree to a compromise with the Dutch, provided their minimum demands are satisfied. It appears that these minimum demands include recognition of the Republic, complete control in the internal affairs and economy of Indonesia, but foreign relations to be in co-ordination with the Netherlands Government.

# INDONESIANS TURN TO CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

## BUT THE DUTCH ARE SPOILING FOR A FIGHT

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, April 11.

**T**HE situation here is not as explosive as in India. The demonstrative phase is over, and Dr. Sjahrir has successfully canalised the spirit and urge of the Indonesian people into constructive and practical channels.

A majority of the men and women, young and old, who only a few months ago were displaying banners, badges and a spirit of defiance, are today working in offices and institutions helping to lay the firm foundations for their seventh-month old Republic. They are planning ahead, which is a natural result of their confidence born out of the recent negotiations with the British and the Dutch.

Informed Indonesian sources reveal that their minimum demands agreed upon include recognition of the Indonesian Republic forthwith in Java and Sumatra alone, while in the other parts of Indonesia, plebiscites would be held to find out the wishes of the local population. This appears fair, in view of the fact that the inhabitants of the Amboina Islands, with their traditional loyalty to the Dutch, would like to remain with them.

### HIGH HOPES

There are high hopes of a settlement in Indonesian circles. Responsible Indonesian quarters state that any difficulties the Dutch might create in recognising the complete Republic would only estrange their mutual relationship. If only the Dutch were to recognise the Republic in its entirety, there would still be a chance of the people going in all out for the Dutch, and even the Dutch language might stay to a certain extent, but now with the proposed recognition of only a part of the Republic, it will only lead to increased bitterness.

### ALLIES' UNHELPFUL ATTITUDE

While Dr. Sjahrir is doing his utmost to consolidate and control all elements, the Allied authorities are by no means helping him by their large troop movements without consulting the Republican authorities. Two days ago, RAF Dakotas carried to Bandoeng 2,500 Dutch troops, with their equipment and large quantities of petrol.

They are being ostensibly moved in to replace the outgoing Indian troops there, but the large numbers of hostile trigger-conscious Dutch troops certainly unnerve the already suspicious local population, and this is not a good turn to Dr. Sjahrir who reposes faith and confidence in the Allies.

But the Dutch seem extremely keen on regaining the prestige they had lost when they failed to offer any resistance to the Japanese invaders, and now display force with American equipment and newly purchased British guns. Imperialist weapons no longer impress Asiatic peoples, and it is an extremely unwise step to show the flag."

### MORALE UP

*In one way, however, clashes with Allied troops give the Indonesians opportunities to test their weapons and measure their strength, and to a certain extent keeps up the morale of the population.*

# JAPS STILL CONTROL PART OF SUMATRA

## INDONESIAN MINISTER'S ALLEGATION

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, April 19.

**D**OCTOR AMIR SHAROEFIGGIN, Indonesian Minister for Defence, who headed the first Government Delegation to Sumatra under British auspices, returned here yesterday after a ten-day tour.

At a Press Conference this evening, giving a picture of the conditions in Sumatra he said that they were similar to what existed six months ago in Java. Local feelings against the Japanese remained strong owing to the fact that the Japanese continued to control certain areas even after British occupation. He added that at present the Japanese were controlling only high roads. Nationalist feelings were as strong as in Java, but still remained in a demonstrative stage.

Dr. Sharoefiddin had met leaders of all opinions in Sumatra, and he said that he was highly hopeful of unified action. He also advised the National Committee of Sumatra to act in the light of the experience in Java.

### TROUBLE AHEAD

To a question put by a correspondent, Dr. Sharoefiddin replied that if Dutch troops are landed in strength, it would result in clashes in view of the strong nationalist sentiments prevailing there.

Mr. Haji Rasjidi, Indonesian Minister for Religious Affairs, has been left behind in Sumatra to co-ordinate all elements there and hold watching brief for the Republic.

### FOOD SITUATION

Dr. Sharoefiddin added that the food situation was not bad in Sumatra and the main difficulty here, as in Java, was the transportation of available stocks of food. Hence, he said, the prices were high.

About the recent shooting of two Australian officers near Buitenzorg, he said: I look upon it as a foul murder. TRI (Indonesian Nationalist Army) were not in the area where the attack occurred, but were sending a search party to investigate the incident in co-operation with the British. Dr. Sharoefiddin said the policy of TRI had ever been to fight only defensively. If a political settlement were reached he thought TRI could co-operate with Dutch forces to suppress lawlessness.

# **Madame Kartini's Anniversary**

## **Celebrations In Indonesia**

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, April 21.

The Indonesians today celebrated their first big social function since the foundation of the Republic eight months ago. It was the birthday anniversary of the late Madame Kartini who strived for the emancipation of Indonesian women more than forty years ago.

Madame Kartini was a pioneer in women's elementary education and many schools were founded in her name all over Java.

It was a colourful gathering with Javanese and Sumatra costumes. Tributes were paid to Kartini's great work.

### **INTEREST IN INDIA**

Dr. Maria Ulfa Santoso, woman Minister for Social Affairs who attended the celebrations told the Free Press of India representative that Indonesian women were closely studying the progressive Indian women's movement.

As in India, in Indonesia too women are taking an equal part in the national struggle. "We here have a deep desire to establish contacts with Indian women," she said. As soon as facilities are available she expects to visit India and she looks forward to meeting Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for whom, she said, "I have great admiration."

## **Indonesian Interest In Delhi Talks**

### **New Proposals For Java Expected**

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, April 30.

At a Press Conference this morning Dr. Soewandi, one of the Indonesian delegates to Holland, said that the Netherlands Government will now make proposals which he expects will be on the basis of or in resemblance with Dr. van Mook's ideas.

Mentioning that the delegation met and discussed with several progressive groups in Netherlands, he said: "The people of Holland on the whole are more sympathetic to our struggle. The Dutch here still remember their old position before the war. They are all agreed on the principles but it is only a question of form and time."

He also said that people in Holland were poorly informed of the conditions in Indonesia and the delegation's visit had helped the Indonesian Government to understand exactly the standpoints of the Hague and vice versa.

Certain high circles in Indonesia are of opinion that the formation of an Interim Government at Delhi would considerably strengthen their struggle.

The delegation have brought back with them three Indonesian students to advise their Government regarding the political tendencies in Holland. The students had worked with the underground during the German occupation and one of them was the member of the Hague Parliament.

The delegation is reporting to the Republican Cabinet today and the *Free Press of India* understands that the main hurdle during their talks had been the hesitancy of the Hague to recognise the Republic of Indonesia.

# INDONESIANS STAND UNITED

## Futile Attempts To Sow Discord

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BANGKOK, May 28

Wishful propaganda and war-rongering continues unabated all over Batavia engineered by interested parties. The aim is to create a split between Dr. Sjahrir and Dr. Soekarno and generally among the Indonesians and hustle the Republic into a war before the accomplishment of the task before the United Nations.

Dr. Sjahrir is flying to Jogjaarta tomorrow to meet the President, the vice-president and the Minister of Defence. Here, after consultation, they will give the final touches to the counter-proposals they are offering to Van Mook. The Cabinet of the Indonesian Republic will also be enlarged to meet the demands of the new situation and the eventuality that may come of the complete breakdown of the negotiations.

Dr. Sjahrir assured the Free Press of India correspondent this evening of his confidence in the Republic pulling together till the Indonesian objective is achieved. But at the same time, there is no denying that the recent retrograde proposals of Van Mook are forcing a large section of the population to adopt a sterner and less conciliatory attitude towards the Dutch.

While travelling in the interior, the Free Press of India correspondent noticed a sincere desire on the part of the Indonesian leaders to decide the issue by peaceful means if possible; and there is no doubt a similar desire on the part of the Dutch. Only the situation demands a franker and more realistic approach from the latter. It is the essence of the situation that such an approach should materialise quick, as the sands are running out.

Meanwhile, the F. P. I. Correspondent reliably understands that military interventions are likely in Sumatra soon in view of the increasing influence of the communists which naturally has an unnerving influence on those interested in oil and rubber. There are very few Dutch forces in that area and the main troops are Indians. Though the withdrawal of Indian troops from Indonesia is "proceeding according to plan", in view of the recent developments and tendencies, and particularly in consideration of the Republican rice offer, our troops should be withdrawn speedily if Indian Indonesian friendship is to be built up and retained. The Indian troops themselves, all without exception, do not want to stay.

## Insult Is Their Reward

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, June 1.

Field Marshal Auchinleck's Indian Army is daily facing more and more insults and humiliations at the hands of the Dutch authorities. Some Indian officers were invited to-night to a variety show held under Allied auspices, and were given tickets, but when they reached the hall, they found that there were no seats for them to watch the performance; even an Indian Colonel was treated in the same way, while British and Dutch officers with their girl friends had reserved seats.

These humiliations are heaped on the heads of Indian troops in the presence of Chinese and Indonesian elite.

Without Indian troops there would be no Allied authority here, and it is common knowledge in the Indian Army that they have made more sacrifices, both officers and men, in Indonesia than in Burma.

Political storms are gathering rapidly in these troubled skies, and a majority of the Indian troops here are reluctant to stay and involve themselves in any Dutch-Indonesian incidents.

According to the latest indications, Indian troops are likely to remain in Java and Sumatra till February 1947.

# INDONESIAN REVOLUTION GOING LEFTIST

## People Out To Depose Sultans

### SJAHRIR'S EFFORTS FOR COMPROMISE

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, June 3.

**D**R. Sjahrir, who was due to return here yesterday has been delayed till tomorrow. He is staying at Soorakarta where several leaders of the people were arrested and released recently by the Ministry of Interior for activities connected with the agitation to depose the 24 year old Sultan, known as "Suhunan".

For sometime past, the nationalist revolution is taking an extremely leftist turn with the increased agitation for deposing Sultans and in Sumatra several Sultans have fled or have abdicated. But the Java Republican Government is anxious for national consolidation and wants to avoid the deposition of the Sultans at the present moment.

#### PREMIER FOR COMPROMISE

Although the willingness of Soorakarta rulers to abdicate was known widely Premier Sjahrir is engaged in bringing about a compromise between the parties, urging upon them a postponement of the issue till the Republic is firmly established and internationally recognised.

Soorakarta has an area of nearly 5,000 square miles and a population of 2 millions. A large percentage of the population is poor and the political consciousness of the people is high at the moment. The movement for the deposition started as early as 1910. The State retains a large measure of Javanese culture and art including 'Bathicks' for which Soorakarta is famous.

#### SJAHRIR'S COUNTER-PROPOSALS

Dr. Sjahrir is returning with counter-proposals, which, it is reliably understood, are not far different from the formula arrived at with the co-operation of Clark-Kerr, the British representative, except that they have been considerably strengthened with a view to meet the view points of all the elements in the national life of Indonesia.

The Indonesians are not prepared to compromise in a plebiscite in Sumatra where they emphatically maintain that they control the territory. Sumatra is the richest part of Indonesia and it would be necessary for anyone who wishes to control Indonesia to control Sumatra.

Moreover, the leaders of Indonesia are mostly drawn from Sumatra and it is futile to expect that the people will allow Sumatra to stay away out of the Republic—away from Java. The real test would be for an international body to determine whether the Republic controls Sumatra freely or not.

#### SUMATRA—THE MAIN PROBLEM

The latest proposals of Dr. Sjahrir are fully backed by all parties including delegates from Sumatra and Sumatra still remains the main bone of contention between Sjahrir and Van Mook in the negotiations which will take place in the coming weeks.

Regarding the supply of rice to allied areas, the Java Republican authorities are still keen to fulfill the promise, but are hampered by both allied military movements south of Patavia as well as the inefficiency of certain Indonesian officials who are now being sacked. Dr. Sjahrir discussed this with the Cabinet and Dr. Soekarno at Jogjakarta and all have affirmed that the promise which the British still regard as the test of the sincerity of Indonesian offer, will be kept.

It is reported that an Indian merchant was murdered at Tjandor near Bandoeng and Indian Police are investigating the matter. The murder took place a few weeks ago and two Indian merchants are suspected of the crime.



# THERE IS PEACE IN JAVA

## REPUBLIC GAINS CONFIDENCE

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

BATAVIA, Aug. 22.

During a five-day tour of the interior of Java, the Free Press of India correspondent noticed increasing confidence in the Republic on the part of the people, and both officials and public leaders are more conscious of their strength than they were six months ago. The Republic appears more stable, and it would be difficult to supplant the present Government either by force or by a "coup d'etat."

Except for textiles and consumer goods, the people can obtain everything, and seem generally happy. Government, and particularly the police department, are more orderly than in most countries, where stable governments are in existence for hundreds of years. Civic consciousness and the sense of duty are at a high level. There are no disorders and civil commotions, which are common everywhere else in the world.

Soldiers bearing arms are well-disciplined, and night shootings, for which Batavia was world famous, are totally absent. Armed bandits and dacoits, who are making conditions in Singapore, Malaya and Burma intolerable to the common citizen in spite of their powerful governments, are not in evidence in the interior of Java.

All communities live in concord, and only those who surreptitiously break laws and do not hesitate to cause breach of security, live in perennial danger of Government action.

Of course, incidents on a smaller scale do occur, but they do not call for outside intervention, since even bigger incidents in India, Burma and Malaya do not certainly call for any such intervention.

### AMERICA LOSING GOODWILL

Towards foreigners the people of Indonesia are more cordial and less suspicious; the British are held in great regard, and the Dutch are not believed; but it is a great pity that America is gradually losing the goodwill of Indonesia, and even lip sympathy is not paid to the great American traditions, and American slogans, which formerly used to adorn most walls, have now been substituted by others.

Instead the Russian ideology is growing among the masses, and the "noble delegate from the Ukraine" is becoming increasingly popular, perhaps only surpassed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, whom President Soekarno taught his people to respect and revere.

Paying a tribute to Pandit Nehru at a mass rally on the Independence Day anniversary on Saturday last, Dr. Soekarno explained the significance of "Jai Hind".

Indonesia is not without political difficulties, and their "Masjumis," Muslim Conservatives, are causing delay in the formation of a stable Cabinet. Their differences with other parties, particularly the Socialists, are more personal than ideological. However, since they are all united on the subject of their Republic, and since the Indonesian youth is united, these difficulties do not at all appear formidable.

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## **BRITISH WANT INDIAN REBELS**

### **Indonesians Evade**

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

SINGAPORE, Aug. 26.

According to a high Indonesian authority, British military authorities have demanded of the Indonesian Defence Headquarters the handing over of all ex-Indian soldiers who revolted in Christmas Island at the beginning of the Japanese war. The Indonesian reply stated that the Japanese authorities did not hand over any list of such personnel, nor were the Indonesian authorities aware of any such personnel living in their territory.

# A New Unity Forged Abroad Among Indian Soldiers

## THEY FIGHT FOR THEIR COUNTRY OUT THERE IN INDONESIA

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

BATAVIA, Oct. 29

**A**NOTHER Indian National Army is writing history in that island fortress of freedom, Java, in defence of the Indonesian Republic.

The story of these gallant Indian soldiers, who number 600 must now be told as Pandit Nehru has assured the Assembly that the Government of India will not tolerate any subterfuge or delay in the withdrawal of Indian troops.

Among these gallant men are Punjabis, Madrassis, Pathans, Maharrattas — Hindus, Muslims and Christians, once again proving that outside British control Indians of all communities tend to unite.

The British dub them "deserters" and the Allied H.Q. in Batavia allege they were enlisted. But even they admit that some of the Indian soldiers were unwilling to wage war against Indonesians.

I met them often in the spacious lounges of Hotel Merdeka in Jogjakarta, in their camps, and several fronts. Greeting me with a "Jai Hind" or "Azad Hind" they always behaved with dignity and the only desire they expressed to me was that India should be told the truth about them.

### CANNOT BE SUPPRESSED

"It is true that some were attracted by material things. But the choice between two bigger issues lay in us and we chose the more honourable one. We decided that aspirers of freedom cannot become freedom suppressors," they said.

Exactly a year ago in the raging battle of Sourabaya, a ribboned Rajput hero of Burma who lay dying with an Indonesian bullet in his heart exclaimed to me: "Ham Dutch ke liye kion marna hai, Sab? ("Why should we die for the Dutch Sir?")

The British always completely ignored the spirit that pervaded, and still pervades, Indian troops in Java.

Indonesians have not formed an army with these men; but they are mostly fighting alongside Indonesian guerillas and are sometimes attached to regular Indonesian units and every Indonesian, whether general or soldier always spoke highly of them to me: I have seen a 20-year-old Pathan, a fine figure of a youth, admired by doughty youngmen from Celebes for the way in which he led them in battle at Goroed near Bandung.

Dozens of them were killed in bat-

tle; some of them have been recaptured by the British, but most of them still serve the Republic with a steadfast heart. They are not willing to return home till the Republic is firmly established.

Though they are scattered all over Java, they have established contact with each other, and have banded themselves, in spirit at least as one army.

It is not likely that they will be handed over to the British authorities, and unless the Government of India takes prompt action, these men may be left behind when the last Indian troops leave by the end of November.

# INDONESIA'S CALL TO PT. NEHRU

FOR the sake of India's honour and even in the interests of morale and discipline in the Indian Army itself, India should withdraw her troops from Indonesia before it is too late. One is often asked in the Far East: "If the Indian people and their leaders are powerful enough to extract freedom from the British, are they not equally powerful enough to effectively prevent the use of Indian troops in Indonesia?" Have the Indian nationalists acquiesced into their use in Indonesia betraying not only the people of India but the entire people of Asia?" writes the Batavia correspondent of the "Free Press of India," summing up the feelings of Indonesians and Indians themselves in Java.

In similar terms, I have often been accosted by Indonesian kisans during my tour of the interior. It is a challenge beset thrown at leaders like Pandit Nehru and not at a newspaper correspondent.

Another question asked by Javanese is: "Why are these 'protectors of cows' slaying human beings including women and children?" They were referring to the Gurkhas who are gradually replacing Indian troops and Javanese knowledge of Sanskrit is sufficient to understand the term 'Gurkhas'. This question should have been addressed to the Maharaja of Nepal.

During their eleven months' stay in Indonesia, Indian troops have learnt many things. But one thing they are determined about is that they will never again unsheathe their swords except in a noble cause. In such a mood they are used against their wishes to fight the 'extremists' with the consequent results of large-scale desertions and insubordination.

Mahrats, Rajputs, Punjabis, Sikhs and even Gurkhas have often expressed eloquently in their 'majlis' their anxiety to return home and desire not to fight the Indonesians who are fighting for their freedom. Many commanding officers have been worried over this and Indian commanding officers have not hesitated to bring this to the notice of the higher authorities.

These fine Indian soldiers are much misunderstood. In India they are jibed at by their own people for their role in Indonesia, the Indonesian hates them, the Dutch insult them, the Chinese distrust them and the British are growing to dislike them for their spirit of independence. Hence their morale is poor.

## SEVERAL DEAD

Three famous Indian Divisions came to Indonesia. A large number

have lost their lives in the paddy fields and among the brickrums of the cities. Quite a big proportion has returned home but there still remains one Division and a part of another.

It is to retain this component till the end of February next that a SEAC General is now persuading Field Marshal Auchinleck at Delhi. Under the original agreement, they are to quit Indonesia by the end of October this year. It is well known that the Dutch are unable to marshal all their forces before December.

Are the Indian people and Indian leaders consulted? Are promises made on the floor of the legislatures going to be ignored? Is the unanimous will of the Indian people demanding the withdrawal of Indian troops from Indonesia going to be respected? These are the questions rising in the minds of the Indian soldiers serving in Indonesia. They expect that their Commander-in-Chief whom they will gloriously follow unto death in any battlefield will not let them down now. Otherwise, the consequences will be terrible for the Indian Army, India and her people.

It is morally incumbent on the Indian Government to withdraw their troops from Indonesia after the way Dr. Sutan Sjahrir, the Indonesian Premier, came to their rescue by offering half a million tons of rice especially when a great part of the civilised world took up the attitude: "What if a few millions die?"

But it would be interesting to study the other's point of view also. Oil interested parties are worried about the sweeping socialistic ideas now prevailing in the Indonesian area of Sumatra. They want speedy action to prevent oil wells and rubber estates becoming completely nationalised after which it would be

difficult for their former owners to establish themselves. So, they urge the British to take action early enough.

## OTHERS HATE IT

The British are short of manpower in this theatre and the few British troops so far used in Indonesia have expressed *ad nauseum* and in unmitigated terms, their unwillingness to take up arms against Indonesians. Then, instead of using American or Australian troops, they realise that without much compunction they could continue to use Indian troops. Those, who have at heart the interests of Indian troops, should not permit this.

Now, the militarists come to the rescue of politicians by inventing incidents. So it is likely, they will prepare an 'arocly' story describing Indonesian excesses against large numbers of Indians in Sumatra which would necessitate the use and retention of Indian troops. In reality, there has been no such excesses against Indians in any part of Indonesia except where the persons concerned were guilty of spying or acting against the interests of the Indonesian state.

Whenever, Indians have been arrested on suspicion or on other grounds, they have always been released and evacuated to British territory by the Republic on my representation to them. Indian residents in the interior of Java live happily except with one worry over the uncertain times and the consequent decline in their business.

Perhaps to this end, the Indian Representative in Singapore leave for Sumatra on July 17. In a few days after that, "10,000 Indians persecuted by the Indonesians in Medan" will be in the news! He will report to Government of India who will be satisfied and agree to the use and retention of Indian troops! As a result, Indian troops will be hated to an increasing degree just as the Jap troops who are reported to be used by the British to fight the Indonesians in Sumatra. One cannot, with any definiteness, say what would happen to the rice offer!

It is understood that the Indian Representative in Singapore is touring only allied occupied areas in Indonesia in a Dutch plane as a fully accredited *ad hoc* diplomatic representative to the NEI Government. It is well known in Batavia that even the British Consul-General is still in the capacity of a neutral observer and has not so far presented his credentials to the NEI Government. Then why this departure in the case of his Indian understudy? But, it is heartening to learn that this Indian Representative will not either meet Indonesian leaders or visit the Indonesian territory. Yet, a report will be produced on "the conditions of Indians in Indonesia."

# INDONESIA HIT HARD BY POST-WAR CURRENCY

(From Our Special Correspondent)

BATAVIA, (By Air Mail).

**A** PART from the many other difficulties Indonesians are beset with, with the return of the Dutch, they are hit hard by the present currency situation. There are four currencies in vogue with different standards of acceptability and exchange value. The workers are paid in the Dutch guilder which when they exchange into the former Jap currency for purchases in the bazaar involves them considerable loss. The problem of international recognition, which is closely related to the settlement of the political issue, is in the way of the Republic's evolving its own system of currency.

The poorer classes of Indonesians are hit the hardest by the present currency situation in the British or Dutch occupied areas of Java. Four scrips are current: The Japanese guilder, the NICA (Netherlands Indies Civil Administration) guilder, the British Malay Dollar and the Indian rupee.

While the country awaits political solution, the currency situation is undoubtedly deteriorating although the NICA authorities are hopeful. The Indonesian worker, in the beginning, was averse to accepting the NICA guilder for his wages. Coolies working in the Tanjeonpriak harbour area have been on strike for more than a month since they did not wish their wages to be paid in NICA currency as the Indonesian government has made it an offence to trade in that currency. But, though one is prepared to starve, he is unwilling to see his wife and children die of hunger.

And so, most of the Indonesians working under either the British or the Dutch, have been accepting the NICA currency only to convert it every evening into Japanese guilders before they go to the 'pasar' to buy food for themselves and their families. Over a month ago, when the NICA guilder was introduced, they used to get 33 Jap guilders for every NICA guilder, but now in the black market where they exchange they are not able to get more than 18 Jap guilders for every NICA guilder which naturally worries them and hence they are demanding of their employers increase in wages. Certain employers have increased the wages while certain others are proposing to pay them either in Jap guilders or in currency more stable than the NICA guilder.

## CHARACTERISTIC OF IMPERIALISM

The background to the present situation offers interesting study and works itself into a strange pattern characteristic of declining imperialism. Soon after the British arrived here, they obtained large stocks of Japanese guilders and for nearly four months this was distributed ex gratia amongst their troops. Each officer was paid 300 such guilders per week while the other ranks received a hundred per week. I reliably understand that fifty to sixty million guilders was the total value of such ex gratia distribution. It should be remembered that when British troops entered Burma, it was made a courtmartial offence to trade in Jap rupees which the troops had captured in large quantities. During the three and half years of occupation of Indonesia, I am informed that the Japs did not put into circulation more than 1600 million guilders.

## ADVANTAGEOUS TO FOREIGN TROOPS

What were the results of this ex gratia distribution? It placed immediate and easy purchasing power in the hands of troops and since they were getting the money free, they just threw it away and never bargained for a price.

PRICES SOARED RESULTING IN INFLATION. AN ORDINARY CHINESE LUNCH WHICH FORMERLY COST AT THE MOST EIGHTY GUILDERS NOW BEGAN TO COST FIVE TO SIX HUNDRED GUILDERS. But the reverse result of this economic assault should not be forgotten. Troops purchased at considerably cheap prices gold ornaments and other jewels in addition to large amounts of goods like fountain-pens, wrist-watches and silk. At one time, several army post offices were unable to handle the increasingly large number of free gift parcels going home. Restrictions were placed but with no avail. After the reconquest of Sourabaya, troops did not have to pay even for the goods in the absence of the shopowners who had to disappear for a period owing to the fury of allied attacks from land, air and sea—otherwise known as "all forces at our command." This process of draining the country's wealth was to a certain extent helped by the Japanese who had stocked in large dumps even goods like ladies' silk stockings and which fell into the hands of the allies as booty once they set foot upon former Jap terrain.

## VIOLATION OF TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT

Early in March this year, on a proclamation in the name of the C-in-C, Allied Forces in Netherlands East Indies, the NICA guilders was sponsored as the legal currency of the country. Immediately Sjahrir

protested that it was a violation of a tripartite agreement that no new currency would be introduced in the country pending a political settlement. Dutch authorities promptly denied any such agreement while the British were unable to recognise any sovereignty here other than the Dutch. Perturbed local Indonesian circles thought it meant intervention in internal affairs on the part of Gen. Stopford, the new allied C-in-C in the place of Gen. Christison who had endeared himself to the Indonesian people.

But more advanced Indonesian students of imperialism see behind this new move more an agreement between Hague and London than a mere change of commanders. They see in it an attempt to win the confidence of the financial world on the part of the Dutch so as to enable them to acquire loans and credits to achieve their political aspirations, to rebuild import and export and to finance the humanitarian enterprises with regard to their evacuees in Australia. The missing links will be supplied by the gradual selling of British equipment in Indonesia to the Dutch. Besides the sterling and the guilder, the rupee may also be involved as most of this equipment now being sold has been in the possession of the Indian Army.

#### CURRENCY WITHOUT BACKING

The Dutch authorities say that the NICA guilder is a fiduciary issue sufficiently backed by reserve in their hands while the Indonesian finance experts are of the view that the currency has no other source than the printing office. According to the latter, this money does not come from the public in exchange of its services to the public. Hence, this money has an inflationary tendency.

"The money circulated by NICA is not conditioned as a means of exchange. As a means for the fixation of price, the money must have a fixed value. In order that the money has a fixed value, the amount of circulated money must be in proportion to the requirements of the public as a means of exchange."

INDONESIANS HOLD THAT THEIR REFUSAL OF NICA MONEY IS NOT ON POLITICAL GROUNDS ONLY BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT IS AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR NATIONAL ECONOMY AND HENCE THEY ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT IT AS A MEANS OF EXCHANGE EVEN THOUGH IT MAY POSSESS AN INTERNATIONAL RATE OF EXCHANGE.

#### POLITICAL ISSUE BARRING CURRENCY SETTLEMENT

The Republic has under contemplation introduction of its own currency but the difficulty seems to be international recognition, which is closely tied up with the political issue. But the money which does not have international rate of exchange will not be a hindrance to international trade. What is required for international trade is not the existence of paper money with international rate of exchange but the existence of goods to be exchanged. The prices of the goods to be exchanged can be fixed with the dollar or the pound or other currencies. With the existence of goods for export, the Republic can obtain foreign value pro rata which can be used as means of exchange in foreign countries. In the home country, it is not necessary for the money to have a foreign exchange value but what is needed is the money which the public will accept as a means of exchange.

#### REPUBLIC STRENGTHENING RESERVES

The Indonesian Republic has sufficient gold and value to issue a currency according to informed sources. But they are anxious to strengthen this reserve and all efforts are being exerted in that direction. The Poemoeda Putri Indonesia (Young Women's Organization) has already commenced collecting gold and other ornaments from voluntary donors to the State.

## IMPLICIT FAITH IN NEHRU

All hopes were directed to and confidence is reposed in one man who has always stood as their fearless champion and who is now at the helm of affairs in India. Millions in Asia look forward to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to translate common ambitions and dreams into realities. Every utterance of his is awaited, applauded and closely studied for new values.

In Jogjacarta, the poorest "thani" (Kisan) pronounces Nehru's name with awe and respect and one cannot fail to discern in his face a faint look of hope as he repeatedly examines his tattered clothes.

President Soekarno proudly wearing the uniform of an Admiral of the Indonesian Navy urged his people at a mass meeting of eighty thousand to rest their hopes in India and in Pandit Nehru, in particular. Never, in recent times, have the hopes of millions of Asian peoples rested on one single Asian as they rest today on the Congress President.

In the heart of Indonesia one learns with no little surprise how Panditji's ideas and thoughts have penetrated into millions of homes without their ever having seen him or known him intimately.

## NEED FOR REPRESENTATIVE

It is time for India to determine her policy with respect to Indonesia. Otherwise, she will soon find to her utter dismay that the goodwill generated towards her in Indonesia in spite of the aggressive role of Indian troops will gradually evaporate and that the Red Star will, to an increasing degree, be entrenched in the hearts of seventy million Asians in place of the Star of India.

Even under the present circumstances, India should officially send a representative to Batavia in a neutral capacity to keep in touch both with the Indonesian Republic as well as the Dutch authorities. If Australia could have one, surely there is nothing to prevent India having one and it is in her own interests that India has to be in touch with events in Indonesia.

# UNO MUST ACT IN INDONESIA

By FREE PRESS OF INDIA CORRESPONDENT

BATAVIA, (By Air).

The negotiations between the Dutch and the Indonesians are not only carried out under the threat of Anglo-Dutch military might. The far greater menace of the economic blockade of Indonesia by the Allies continues, as the Free Press of India dispatch explains. Very naturally the patience of the Indonesians is commended, and the compelling question is raised if the UNO will act in the matter with speed and with justice. India is a member of the UNO: and it is only natural that Indonesians should wonder whether India has any trust in that replica of the old and discredited League.

IT IS A TRIBUTE to the Indonesian people that they have held out during the last eight months in spite of the economic blockade imposed on their country by both the British and the Dutch in the name of the United Nations. Does the United Nations Organisation approve of this? It is often asked here if Indians have any trust in the UNO.

Indications here are that at the moment Indonesians have faith in the UNO and are executing without any hitch the disarming and evacuation of Japanese as well as of the Allied prisoners of war and internees. Even high-ranking British officers have appreciated the smooth and efficient way in which the Indonesian Army has executed this task given to the Allied forces here by Gen. MacArthur and passed on to the Indonesian Command by the Allied HQ.

## AVERTABLE CALAMITIES

The Allied forces who came here to do this task have got it done by the Indonesians. Why was not this thought of six months ago? Several hundreds of Indian lives, and many British lives, not to mention thousands of Indonesians, could have been saved, and the destruction of a large number of Indonesians' homes could have been avoided. The punitive expedition in Sourabaya at the cost of human lives over the alleged murder of Brigadier Mallaby, for instance, could have been averted.

Sourabaya will always remain a blot in British military history. Having scattered his small forces without any means of communication in hostile country, whose people, young and old and even women, were armed to the teeth, the British Commander thundered to the Indonesian leaders that he was the ruler of the place and that his orders had to be obeyed. What was the result? Large numbers of Indian troops were massacred. Brilliant soldiers, all

though one has every sympathy for their aspirations. This is unadulterated nonsense. How could the Indonesians have carried on during the last six months without their internal economy and prosperity being much affected, in spite of the Allied blockade and other economic assaults such as causing inflation in banana money, flooding occupied areas with consumer goods and imposing the Dutch Indies guilder by force?

It is ridiculous to suggest that Indonesians have no experienced administrators or statesmen although the Indonesians themselves admit that for some time to come, till they could train their own, they would need foreign technical and scientific experts.

## NOT ALLOWED TO TRADE

Indonesia is not yet allowed to trade. Does not the world want her precious goods so much in demand before the Japs occupied the country? Does not the world any longer require quinine, kapok, tin, rubber, pepper, sugar, coffee, tea, neat's leather, fibre products, spices, and vegetable and mineral oils? Behind the scenes, there is feverish activity to capture the market and constant vigilance is exercised by big Powers over their former commercial interests and the estates of their own nationalities. If they recognise and help to recognise Indonesia's freedom they are likely to retain their trade interests; otherwise, it is quite possible they will have to be satisfied with scorched earth over the dead carcasses of millions of Indonesians.

Indonesians also have lived under the Japs and suffered deprivations of their produce as well as of their populations. Many goods are indispensable for them to lead the life of decent human beings. They badly need textiles to clothe their half-naked population and they need new machine parts to rehabilitate their factories after their destruction during the Japanese invasion. They

first attempt at lifting this unholy blockade.

Why are the Indonesians persecuted in the name of UNO from having contact with the outside world? Are they considered criminals by the UNO because they refuse to accept their former Dutch rulers? If the UNO believes in justice between nations, why does she not permit Indonesia to have contact with the outside world and to tell them of the real state of affairs in this country?

## CHALLENGE TO UNO

Here, in Java, are the germs of a great conflagration which would envelope more than three-fourths of the population of the world and atomic bomb or no atomic bomb, it could end only in one way, the end of Imperialism in the East with the result that the East will once again become the teacher of the West in the ways of peace. The challenge to UNO is here in Indonesia and the power-ridden UNO will meet with an untimely death—perhaps its life will be much shorter than that of the League—if it does not actively intervene.

**IN THE FACE OF THESE TRIBULATIONS, THE PATIENCE OF THE INDONESIANS IS REMARKABLE AND THEIR FAITH IN THE JUSTICE OF THEIR CAUSE IS UNSHAKEN IN SPITE OF FREQUENT EFFORTS TO CREATE A SPLIT AMONG THEM.**

MADRAS INA RELIEF COMMITTEE

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

MADRAS, May 11

Mr. A. V. G. Pillai, the Madras Law Minister, and Mrs. Rukmini Law Minister, Public Health Minister, he

agreed to serve on the reconstruction

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# TELL INDONESIA ABOUT INDIA

(By FREE PRESS OF INDIA REPRESENTATIVE)

BATAVIA, (By Air).

There is great and consuming avidity in Indonesia, among all classes, to learn all about India. But how is that eagerness met?—not by any accredited Indian Consul, which would have been the case, were India an independent country. The haphazard manner in which information about India is furnished, the travesty of our ancient culture and art that is presented by those sent out to entertain troops and other aspects of the problem are brought out in this dispatch by the Free Press of India Correspondent in Indonesia.

He also draws attention to a parallel problem in Indonesia which leads prominent Indonesians to think that the Indian Pakistan problem is in the main an Imperialist invention.

ONE often hears here: "Indonesia India sama sama." It means "India and Indonesia are the same"; it may also mean that the two countries are equal or together. All classes of Indonesians say the same thing, whether they are educated, illiterate, rich or poor.

But why do they say it? I have asked several men in the street, as well as educated friends, the reasons; and all of them tell me that it is because both the countries have been carrying on the same kind of struggle against Imperialism and foreign domination. Our methods may be different at present; but both India and Indonesia are against the system more than against the individuals or groups who exploit the system for their own ends.

## ALL EAGER TO KNOW

There is great eagerness on the part of Indonesians to learn more about India. Leading politicians are keen on knowing the present conditions in India and how our differences are going to be reconciled. Socialists desire to learn if India would become a socialist state immediately after wresting her freedom. Youths ask if we have our own national army, and if non-violence can be a potent instrument against powerful and ruthless imperialists. Educated women and girls, more than keen on making contacts with our sisters and mothers, ply a large number of questions regarding the emancipation of Indian women.

To quench this great thirst for knowledge about India, what are the Indonesians offered? Who is it that could give them any information about India? Why is there no Indian Attache to the British Consulate here, who, in the event of India's freedom being established soon, could become a full-fledged Indian Consul to Indonesia? It is time India and her people thought something about re-establishing contact with a people who are related to them by blood and culture, and contact with whom had been broken by the blending, for all practical purposes, of two powerful Imperialisms, which could survive only by building a

great wall between India and Indonesia.

## UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADORS

In the absence of official representatives, Indian troops and Indian civilians are our unofficial ambassadors. The last belong mostly to the merchant classes cut away for quite a long time from their mother-country and victims of persecution by the authorities for their former association with the Indian Independence League.

As for the troops, the rank and file speak the truth, the little they know about their own country, often expressing it incoherently. Most Indian officers maintain a dignified attitude, and in their zeal, give way to emotion while talking of India's urge for freedom.

But there are a few who pretend to be Indian nationalists, infiltrate into Indonesian society, and gradually radiate Imperialist propaganda. In these congenial climates for Imperialism, one is not surprised to find strange bed-fellows. Indian Communists working for the British Foreign Office! One can understand British Communists doing similar work and sometimes turning their jobs to their advantage.

There are also a negligible number who approach the Indonesians with their theory of Pakistan and plead with them to recognise their religious approach to the Indian problem. Most Indonesian politicians regard it as India's internal affair, and clearly express no desire to take sides. To them, India's struggle against Imperialism is more important and their own approach here is not based on any religious basis.

## ECONOMIC ISSUES

Younger Indonesians look at India's problems from the economic aspect, and realise that once economic issues come to the foreground with the removal of a foreign ruler, these religious differences are bound to disappear gradually. Moreover, of late, with the Dutch proposal to divide Indonesia, they vaguely recognise Pakistan as the pattern-child of Imperialism. In view of their own large po-

pulation of Muslims who still lack education, they would rather tread cautiously on such issues.

Apart from contacts, what literature do the Indonesians receive about India? There is a British Information Centre, which is open to the public, where one often finds pictures of turbaned Indians offering garlands in welcome of their Imperialist rulers. Nothing about the vast advances made in Indian industry, nothing about Indian life, art or culture. Of course, it will inflame and incite the local population if they give news pictures about India's apostle of non-violence and India's eloquent Muslim leader! Least of all about the impending Indian famine!

## CHEAP ARTISTES

And the part played by the "Fauj Dilkush Sabha" in completing the projection of India to Indonesians should not be forgotten. Indian troops invite their Indonesian friends to such shows at the end of which the latter ask the former if that were the standard of Indian dancing and drama. Such cheap artistes who wist their fingers in ugly forms and who shake their hips to please the troops, in the absence of others, become India's messengers of art.

This is how a subject country moves abroad hitched to the wheel of Imperialism with a red banner in its hands written: "IMPERIALISM DELENDAM EST."