

The Viceroy-Gandhi Correspondence

Continued from last issue

LORD WAVELL'S REPLY

New Delhi,
15th August, 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter of 27th July. your proposals are:

(i) that you should undertake to advise the Working Committee (a) "that in view of changed conditions mass Civil Disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August, 1942, cannot be offered," and (b) "that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by Congress" provided

(ii) that His Majesty's Government (a) declares immediate Indian Independence, and (b) form a "National Government" responsible to the Central Assembly, "subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India."

2. His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. But proposals such as those put forward by you are quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis discussion, and you must realise this if you have read Mr. Amery's statement in the House of Commons on July 28th last. They are indeed very similar to the proposals made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942, and His Majesty's Govern-

ment's reasons for rejecting them are the same as they were then.

3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail I should remind you that His Majesty's Government at that time made it clear:

(a) that their offer of unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was made conditional upon the framing of a constitution agreed by the main element of India's national life and the negotiations of the necessary Treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government;

(b) that it is impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the constitution, by which meant alone a "National Government," such as you suggest could be made responsible to the Central Assembly. The object of these conditions was to ensure the fulfillment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the depressed classes, and their treaty obligations to the Indian States.

4. It was upon the above conditions that His Majesty's Government invited Indian Leaders to take part in an interim Government which would operate under the existing constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over, responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of Government, and that until hostilities cease and the new constitution is in operation, His Majesty's Government and the Gov-

ernor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between His Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing financial arrangements can only be reopened at the instance of one or the other.

MINORITY PROBLEMS

5. It is clear in these circumstances that no purpose would be served by discussion on the basis which you suggest. If however the leaders of the Hindus, the Muslims and the important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe good progress might be made. For such a transitional government to succeed there must before it is formed be agreement in principle between Hindus and Muslims and all important elements as to the method by which the new constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. Until Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now I doubt if I myself can do anything to help. Let me remind you too that minority problems are not easy. They are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance.

6. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional government would last, would depend on the speed with which the new constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they can arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the constitution no unnecessary time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in agreeing to Treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. There again the primary responsibility rests on the Indian leaders.

Yours Sincerely

(Sd.) WAVELL.

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EDITORIAL

War And Peace

The entire world today lies almost prostrated from the effects of the present war. Cruel black death, maimed bodies, ruined homes, devastated cities and countries seem to be the only victors of the war. The world to-day presents a pathetic picture of man's vengeance to man; millions of men have died and have been maimed; whole continents have been tortured, starved, neglected and devastated, yet the solution to a definite lasting peace does not seem clearly forthcoming.

Everywhere the world over, the pangs of the war have created chaos and confusion; whole nations of a hundred million people have been declared unclean and unfit for human society. The whole of Europe and Asia will have to start life almost from the very bottom, and will have undoubtedly to undergo further privations and misery.

The occupation of Europe by the Germans with its consequent devastation and ravages have been followed by the counter-occupation by the Allies, the occupation and counter-occupation of Asia, and its claim of Islands by the Japanese have been equally devastating and ravaging. Life and living has become meaningless to entire continents, entire nations have ceased to think; and await the end in despair, be the victor or

Education

Send Your Child To School

Send your child to school. This is our first appeal for the year since we have been constituted to our people all over the Colony: especially those who inhabit the sugar estates and the outlying districts of the Colony. Every child of school-going age (up to 14 years) must be in the Primary School. No excuse, no reason, no explanation can be accepted for not sending your child—the citizen of tomorrow to receive even the elementary education offered free by the State. Too often "disgusting" parents manufacture patent excuses for not sending their children to school. We are convinced of this, and it is not without reason that the B.G.E.I.A. passes every year at its Annual Conference—a RESOLUTION asking Government to enforce rigorously the Compulsory Education Ordinance. Not that we love Caesar less but we love Rome more. We are persuaded to think that IT IS CRIMINAL to deny innocent children—the pillars of tomorrow even an elementary education.

Poverty—the age old reason has always been advanced for not sending the children to the nearest Primary

School. This we know has often been exaggerated. We are also painfully aware of the fact, that many of our people cannot resist the desire to accumulate even at the expense of their children. They still send them to work under distressing conditions for a few paltry cents when they should be in school. It is also within our knowledge that intelligent and well-to-do Indians keep their children in the rice-fields and cattle pasture. It is simply shocking to find good-looking young people of our group, well-dressed, and possessing even an intelligent appearance, unable to read or write. We must stop this nonsense. We must make it our business to round up such people, and not leave them to themselves. They are the people who caused the stigma of illiteracy to dog our footsteps all the time. They are the people who provide the data to our detractors to convince Downing Street that their being such a high percentage of illiteracy among Indians, the introduction of UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE forthwith will be a faux pas.

Continued on page 3

vanquished. The end of the present war is in sight but the soul of man has become numbed by the ordeals that the war demanded and extricated from him.

Every war of world wide importance promised that this would be the last of its kind and that the arch enemy would be so destroyed that never again would he be able to rise and create the havoc among men as he had been able to put into motion.

The world has witnessed with the present war that it must count not only with those aggressors who brought about the present debate but new ones and must organize to meet such a situation. This war has promised a Utopia for man on earth but against this stands the mockery of the hope of man from the last war.

Through the entire ages and history of man he has searched for his

Eutopia, on earth and a lasting peace but has not been able to achieve it. It seems that the more man is being civilized the more his civilization reacts against his very soul and is leading him to become an unbeliever. Religion which once controlled the soul of men seems to be fast losing its grounds as man asks himself the question Oh God, why this calamity on earth for the destruction of man and his well being? The churches and all they stand for would soon disappear from the face of the earth unless they can prevent future wars and its consequent destruction.

Wars would continuously visit us from time to time unless entire nations change their attitude towards life and adopt an ideal whereby there would be enough for all, opportunity for all, work for all, comfort for all and respect for all.

A Reply To H J B of The Sunday Graphic

Mr. H.J.B.'s publication (Under Money and Mechanization) in the Sunday Graphic of 8/4/45; was some what shaky and glaringly unbalanced. It is true that the Forkman will be out of a job for drilling as the machines are doing it better and cheaper which will tend to give better wages and cheaper sugar. Already workers are being told on Sugar Estates, "No work for you try and go back from where you come". These are the words that are being uttered daily to workers who have been living for a year or so in a Sugar Estate, so when Mr H.J.B. talks about shortage of Labour he is dishonest to himself or he does not know what he is saying, and further does not know existing conditions. It is the intention of the sugar kings to let Government see that more sugar cannot be produced because of shortage of labour;

Mr. Raatgaver in the same paper elsewhere said Sugar is sold at 1 cent per lb. below pre war price while Rice has been increased to 2 cents per pint above pre war price.

Does the Raatgaver know that sugar is receiving a hellish lot of outside help which goes to the Sugar people themselves while rice which receives a hellish lot less goes to Government and not the val producers of rice? Does Mr. Raatgaver know that in pre war days, the local consumers were paying more for sugar than foreign people while it was made locally; the people in this colony were paying more for sugar than the people abroad, that is to say sugar was made and sold to England cheaper than the local consumer here. So Mr. Raatgaver must be careful how he makes his statements.

Mr. Raatgaver will not support rice although he will admit its importance. I wonder why? Coming to Mr. H.J.B does he remember the last profit made by Sugar, does he know the amount of profit made, at one Sugar Estate which had umpteen stocked stores? I mean Albion that was published in the Labour Advocate under Caption Sugar economy let him read and see the amount of Salaries paid out to Sucker of Blood and parasites while the poor workers die from want.

I am wondering whether Government is not thinking of some sort of protection to Sugar Estate workers, such as a minimum wage bill and guarantee of employment and so protect those that are under paid; the workers are living from hand to mouth and the sooner Government can see of fostering other industries the better. Government should think of encouraging people to rear cattle, and small farming and stocks, so that every farmer can own their own

machineries to produce Rice, Butter and other crops to compete with world markets.

I know if machinery can be given to farmers on any easy payment plan, it would be a blessing and encouragement to self-supporting families. The farmers should be given such opportunities then Government would be said to be doing their duty. Government should start early with the Drainage and Irrigation Schemes and pay no attention to what sugar says for sugar is responsible for the backwardness of this colony.

The Bahamas Abdication from Elba

London's Colonial Office stiffly announced: His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor has resigned, effective on April 30, as Governor and Commander in Chief of the Bahamas. The resignation, said the Government, need occasion no surprise: the Governor's "normal tenure" of five years is almost up. The Bahamas have enjoyed a greater measure of prosperity since the Duke took office.

On Nassau's palm-fringed Government House a barrage of phone calls and cables descended. For half a day the Duke of Windsor was not at home to any queries. Then he donned a dapper, grey check suit, pinned a red carnation in his lapel, and with his well-dressed Duchess at his side, gallantly went forth to meet the press and explain his second abdication.

There was not much to explain, really. On April, 30, when he had asked to be relieved, his normal five-years tenure would still have three months to run. (The newsmen had heard the rumour that the Duchess could not stand the heat of the Bahamian summer. But the Duke said nothing about that.) Some distant day, said the Governor, he and the Duchess would like to return "I have a deep affection for the Bahamas..."

Even with the woman he loved, the onetime King-Empress who had ruled over a domain on which the sun never sets could not be very happy ruling 29 islets, 661 days and 2,387 sandpits. In public, however, he was always correct. Only in private did he say "This Elba!" and she echo "This St. Helena!"

It had been a long time. When they first came, there had been that embarrassing scene at the Emerald Beach Club when Nassau high society had formally welcomed the Duke and snubbed his Duchess. The colonials

Labourer Struck By Locomotive

DIES IN NEW AMSTERDAM HOSPITAL

Lutchman, a labourer at Pln. Blairmont West Bank, Barbice who received extensive injuries to his head and upper lip in a locomotive accident on Saturday night last died at the New Amsterdam Hospital on Sunday afternoon.

The locomotive attached to Pln. Blairmont was proceeding from Rampoor to Blairmont with labourers and as Bush Lot was reached Lutchman, it is stated attempted to cross the track when he was struck and run over by the engine.

Lutchman was hurried to the New Amsterdam Hospital where he died. A post mortem examination was performed by Dr. M. O. Luck.

Obituary

We regret to chronicle the death of Mr. Mahase (Charlie) a very popular young man of Pln. Versailles who passed away quietly at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, on Tuesday 17th April, 1945, after a short illness of only a few days.

Mr. Mahase who was 32 years of age was in perfect health up to a few days before his death. His sudden death was really a shock to his many friends and relatives among whom he was so socially connected. The hundreds of Hindoo, Muslim Christians that attended his funeral was in itself enough evidence of his popularity and friendship among his people.

Mr. Mahase has left to mourn his loss, his wife, 2 sons, 4 daughters, 2 brothers, 3 sisters and his uncle Mr. Bissoondeo, head driver of Pln Versailles. He was buried at Pln, Versailles, according to Hindoo rites.

The "Indian Opinion" begs to tender its sympathies to the relatives and friends of the deceased.

had to be more British than the British "Both the Duchess and I love to travel," the Duke said, and added: "Nearly five years in Nassau is the longest time I have spent in one place since my adolescence, and the longest I hope to spend any place in the future. We have no immediate plan beyond going to New York and probably to my ranch in Canada."

Said the Duchess: "With the world as it is, one could not make a decision now. But we should definitely visit France. Our possessions are scattered all over France. We must see what is left..."

To one more question the Duke answered:

To be Continued

Education

Continued from page 1

Our girls must be educated. Too long have we suffered from an educated manhood and an illiterate and ignorant womanhood we want to build on firm ground then we must get rid of this baneful dualism of an educated manhood and ignorant womanhood—a dualism which has disastrous effects on personal and national character, SEND THE GIRLS TO SCHOOL. Keep them in school at least until they have obtained the PRIMARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE We have suffered a serious set-back as a result of that Swettenham Circular. Capital has been made of this in the Franchise Commission Report. Let us rub our eyes and read the stars. What place has the illiterate youth in the New Order. What mother can the illiterate and ignorant young lady make in the New Order: EDUCATE A MAN AND YOU EDUCATE AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATE A WOMAN AND YOU EDUCATE A NATION Would that our people can see the truth—the golden-text embodied in this famous slogan. Let us therefore turn over a new leaf, let us shake off slumber and lift the curtain from our eyes and follow our contemporaries who would starve and deny themselves many things just to see their children—the men and women of tomorrow take full advantage of the Education offered by the State.

The Education Committee of B.G.E.I.A. will be willing to consider any appeal for financial assistance by genuine poverty-stricken people and may even supply books, clothes, etc necessary to have the child equipped for school Education is still the pivot

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Letters to the Editor

Plantation Farm
East Bank Dem.
9th April, 1945

The Editor
The Indian Opinion
Georgetown

Dear Sir,

Please allow me space in your columns of the Indian Opinion to support the letter of Mr. Didar Baksh of the 7th April 1945.

We should have great pleasure to

around which all our important problems revolve

THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
B. G. E. I. A.
SUGRIM SINGH (CHAIRMAN)

see an Indian trying to uplift his brethren in adopting such measures for the benefit of all concerned. The entire East Indian community should congratulate Mr. Didar Baksh for his sound advice and effort he is making to have domestic affairs and disputes of East Indians settled among themselves rather than put it a Court of Law or before the sugar estate managers. His opinion is an age old custom of the "Panchayat" system which was done by the East Indians from India.

I must now say that the working of the Farm Jamaat of Pin. Farm E.B.D. is of the same principle from December 1941 to 1945 and to date. The Executive Members of the Committee of this Jamaat have dealt and are dealing with all domestic affairs and disputes of the Muslims, for not one of them have reached the magistrates' attention nor the Estate Authorities.

A. W. Boulter Esq. when manager of this estate, N. Lowe Esqr. and C. A. Campbell Esq. Manager present on this estate, having seen the principles of the Committee of Management of this Jamaat, the way they are handling domestic affairs and disputes among the Muslims, have approved of same, and their sayings are, let it be settled in the Committee.

Mr. George Biki and Mr. Sheik Shabrattee of the Immigration Department Kingston, had an opportunity in seeing the books etc. and the way the Jamaat Principles are being managed and said, this is one of the best ways in which it is being run and they would be very glad to see all East Indians adopting this principle

Yours faithfully

G. MOHAMAD

Hon. Secretary the Farm Jamaat
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Australia's Basic Wage Rates

The basic wage rates in Australia quoted by Dr. Edith Summerskill, M. P., in her article "Australia's Fine Motherhood Homes," published in "Labour Press Service" on October 18 last, are those for unskilled workers of either sex.

This is made clear in a letter we have received from Mr. O. Schreiber, President of the Australian Trade Union Secretaries' Association. Dr. Summerskill gave the basic wage as £4 '7s. for adult males.

Mr. Schreiber, pointing out that this is the rate for unskilled workers, says that there are an almost negligible number of workers without a margin. Under the Australian Industries Arbitration system wages are ordinarily fixed by the Court to provide (a) an amount to cover the cost of maintaining a man, wife and one child [child endowment starts with the second child], and (b) an amount for skill and sometimes hazards of an occupation.

The rates of pay, continues Mr. Schreiber, vary from industry to industry, and are as follows in these cases:—

Shipwrights, £7 8s. per week; carpenters, £7 9s.; aircraft, £6 15s; compositors, £6 14s; cabinet makers, £6 13s; engineers, £6 15s; piano-makers, £6 16s, French polishes, £6 13s; bakers, £7 9s, painters, £6 16s 6d. electricians, £7 1s. in some cases, plus holiday pay, a week's sickness and annual leave.

These are minimum rates for 44 hours, day work.

—"Labour Press Service"

U.S. Envoy In India

WASHINGTON, Mar. 17 (AP)—It was announced today that Mr. William Phillips has resigned as President Roosevelt's personal representative in India where he served with the rank of Ambassador. The announcement gave no reasons.

Last summer, it was reported in the Senate, Mr. Phillips incurred British antagonism because of reports that he had urged complete freedom of India in a letter to President Roosevelt.

H.E. Returns From Barbados

His Excellency the Governor has returned from his weekend talks with the Comptroller of W.I. Development and Welfare and his Advisers, in Barbados. It is understood that, apart from the discussions with the Development and Welfare authorities concerning British Guiana's most important projects, the Col. Treasurer who along with the Director of Education, accompanied His Excellency also conferred with Parties interested in the rice trade between this country and the island.

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