

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Europeans and Terrorism.

THE non-official Europeans' attitude towards the White Paper was explained by Mr. F. E. James in his recent speech at Coonoor. This was a mere reaffirmation of the statements made before the Joint Select Committee by their representatives. The non-official Europeans do not object to provincial autonomy so long as the police are left completely unfettered to adopt any measure they like to put down terrorism. Whether this insistence upon untrammelled liberty to the police to handle terrorists is the outcome of a fear that future Ministers would purposely encourage terrorism to stalk abroad is not clearly stated. But perhaps that is at the back of the mind of those who, like the European Association, plead for non-interference in the work of the police. Has this fear any foundation in fact or is it only imaginary? Does experience lend any colour to it? As is well known, since the introduction of the Montford reforms Indians have been in charge of Law and Order in several provinces and never has a complaint been heard that the Minister's attitude led to any deterioration in the working of that important department. If Indians as executive councillors have so well maintained the peace of the country, why should it be supposed that they would behave differently in years to come? Is there any reason to believe that general public opinion itself to which the Ministers would be responsible would come to be perverted enough to welcome assassination, loot, robberies, dacoities, etc. by terrorists? Thus the demand of the Europeans for the reservation of the police under the Governor's control, apart from the fact that it will reduce provincial autonomy to a mockery, is based on something which has no existence except in their panick-stricken mind.

Mr. James was also inclined to be critical of the Bengalee leaders of opinion for their supposed lukewarmness in checking terrorism. We wonder if his criticism is fair. The fact is that though terrorism is genuinely abhorred, as can be seen from the comments of the organs of even the most advanced public opinion in that province in connection with terrorist outrages, the terrorist is beyond the influence of

reasonable and sober public opinion. Death, long-term imprisonments, disproportionately heavy sentences, harassing restrictions of the kind that are being enforced, e. g. in Midnapur and Chittagong and persecution of the worst variety have no horrors for him. Terrorism is in essence a political problem which will disappear only in proportion as India's political condition improves. The non-official Europeans are really defeating their object of putting a stop to the terrorist cult by their short-sighted agitation for cramping restrictions on provincial autonomy. It is high time they realised this and came forward to support the Indian demand for substantial and far-reaching reforms both in the provinces and at the centre.

Opium-Smoking in Assam.

IT is a matter of common knowledge that the opium-smoking habit is widely prevalent in Assam. With a view to its eradication legislation was passed a few years ago which authorised the introduction of a system of registration of opium-smokers and of the rationing of their dose, the ration being reduced by 10 per cent. every year. These anti-opium-smoking remedies have undoubtedly gone some way in curbing the evil though not to the extent desired. The consumption of opium in the province has been going down and last year it stood at 16,000 seers, which is nearly a fourth of what it was when there were no restrictions of any kind on the use of opium. The problem of how to reduce the consumption still further so as to reach the goal of prohibition as early as possible was remitted for consideration to a committee appointed in March last. It is seen from its summarised report that the consumption per ten thousand inhabitants is 15.3 seers as against 42 seers in some of the worst affected parts. The committee supports the general belief that, as a result of Government action in regard to opium-smoking, the evil is now less widespread in the younger generation, which by itself is not a small gain. The present economic depression too has had its share in bringing about this result. Nothing else can satisfactorily account for the fact that many addicts did not purchase the full ration allowed to them and tried to accustom themselves to a smaller dose.

The committee unhesitatingly favours the continuance of the rationing system, the progressive reduction of 10 per cent. being enforced in the case of addicts under 50. It is a notorious fact that the evil is most widespread in the "backward areas" which badly needed being brought within the per-view of the anti-opium-smoking measures that are being enforced in other parts of the province. It is satisfactory to note that this in fact has been recommended by the committee. Another of its recommendations is that registers should be reopened for the registration of consumers of 45 and over. It is feared in some quarters that this is likely to encourage non-consumers to apply for the ration tick-

which could be financially exploited by them at the expense of the addicts. We hope means will be found to counteract this evil.

British Commonwealth Relations Conference.

So little is known in India about the doings of this Conference that Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, who was himself a delegate to it, must be thanked for taking the public into his confidence, by means of a press interview, as to what was recently done at Toronto. The principal question discussed at the Conference related to foreign policy, and the points for consideration were how far the Dominions were bound by the foreign policy adopted by Great Britain without consultation with the Dominions; how far common consultation was essential and in what respects Great Britain was bound to consult the Dominions before formulating her foreign policy. On none of these points, Mr. Mudaliar tells us, did the Conference pass any resolutions, its object being mainly to educate public opinion on the problems that will engage the attention of the Imperial Conference at its next session. The Conference was divided into four Commissions and a special Commission, which examined the legal implications of the declaration of war by Great Britain on the Dominions and the possibility of neutrality by any particular Dominion in the event of such a war, was presided over by Mr. Mudaliar himself. How the Commission tackled this very delicate and complicated question will be known only when the gist of the discussions at the Conference are published by him, as we are assured he intends to do.

India's position at the Conference was peculiar. She has got no control over her foreign policy nor, with foreign affairs marked out for reservation under the White Paper constitution, does she hope to possess it in the near future. The Indian delegates however took the stand that this made no difference to "the equality of India with other Dominions in the Imperial Conference" which has been already established and they pleaded that it "should continue to be as such". In other words, they demanded that India should be as free as any self-governing Dominion to speak on matters of foreign policy at Imperial or International bodies. It is true that in doing so the Indian representatives would not be able to voice real national feeling but would have to speak to the brief prepared for them by the Secretary of State. How far this dubious position can be reconciled with our national dignity it is difficult to say. Anyhow it is comforting to learn from Mr. Mudaliar that the claim, however queer it may have sounded to his non-Indian colleagues, was not disputed by any of the Dominions.

Same Service Conditions for New Entrants.

INDIAN opinion has never objected to members of the services being secured throughout their official career the rights and conditions of service to which they looked forward at the time of their recruitment. The obvious corollary of this attitude is that the introduction of a new constitutional era in India carries with it full liberty for India to settle different service conditions for those who join the services after its commencement. The White Paper rides a coach and four through this well understood rule, which was strictly observed in connection with the Montford Reforms. This will be clear from the following questions and answers between Mr. Jayakar and the Secretary of State before the Joint Select Committee.

Question: Then you give an assurance at the bottom of that paragraph (183 of the White Paper): "It is intended that these rules"—which you take power to make

in that section—" shall in substance be the same as those now applicable in the case of persons appointed by the Secretary of State in Council before the commencement of the Act." There is no such assurance given in the Government of India Act at present operative with reference to those who were appointed after the date of that Act?

Answer: That is so.

Question: May I just have a reference to that in the present Government of India Act? Those who would be appointed after the passing of that Act will get the same conditions of service as those who were appointed before the Act?

Answer: Mr. Jayakar is quite correct; that is so.

Question: There is no such assurance?

Answer: That is so.

Question: Therefore in this manner (matter?) it goes beyond the protection given by the Government of India Act of 1919?

Answer: Yes; it goes beyond the Government of India Act for this reason; we felt that the changes now contemplated were much greater than the change contemplated in 1919; therefore if we were to get good recruits in the next five years we must make the assurance as strong as we could.

Can it be said that the reason with which Sir Samuel Hoare justified the departure is at all convincing?

Indians in Ceylon.

THERE is an agitation in Ceylon which will adversely affect the Indian vote which needs careful watching. Under the present constitution in Ceylon, he is entitled to be put on the voters' register who is either domiciled in Ceylon or who, not being so domiciled, has yet resided in Ceylon for not less than five years and gives an undertaking to the effect that he proposes to make Ceylon his home and renounces his right of domicile in another country. An Indian in Ceylon should either be domiciled there or have lived for five years and formally renounced his Indian rights and promised to make Ceylon his future home. The justification for this procedure was that the vote should not be given to a floating immigrant population which has no abiding interest in the country. It was presumed that the immigrant Indian had no abiding interest in the Colony and so should be kept out of the electoral roll. It appears, according to the *Ceylon Daily News*, that this purpose of restricting the Indian vote has been to some extent defeated. As there was no definition of domicile applicable to the electoral law, Indian aspirants to the vote preferred to declare themselves as domiciled and avoided the cumbersome and uncertain alternative of admitting themselves as "undomiciled" and producing proofs of past and future residence, etc. It is now proposed that the loophole should be closed and the intention of the law made really effective, when the constitution of Ceylon is revised next. In so far as there is a hiatus between the intention of the law and its operation, there could be no objection raised to bringing the one into line with the other. But has a case been made out to persist in the present intention of the law? Considering the special status of the Indian immigrants to Ceylon, is there a need to keep them out of the electoral roll? If, as the *Ceylon Daily News* would have it, large numbers of Indian immigrants have smuggled themselves into the electorate, have the interests of Ceylon suffered thereby? If not, there is no justification to restrict the Indian vote. Restrictive legislation must have compelling justification.

Articles.

FEDERATION.

DIFFICULT fully to define or explain, it is yet true to a larger extent than one would like to believe that the political constitution of a country is the expression of its people, their preferences and prejudices, and the forces and sentiments that animate them. Political science and political principles seem unfortunately to play a lesser part in shaping it. Political science, like the physical sciences, has studied facts and evolved and formulated certain generalisations. But these seem to have no determinative influence on current political evolution. Notwithstanding the enunciation of political doctrines of universal validity, no two constitutions in the world are alike. The most tragic and the most recent instance of the failure of political principles to sustain a constitution is furnished by contemporary Germany. No constitution bore more the impress of political principles of the most advanced and satisfying kind than the Weimar Constitution. But where is it today? Germany, which produced the model of a democratic constitution, is now under heel of a dictator, who has as much respect for democracy as the worst tyrant of the middle ages. German "democracy" threw up a dictator, who promptly stamped on it. The ingrained character of the people prevailed over the principles of the *Pundits*.

India is no exception. Her aim and goal is Dominion Status! democratic self-government. If that was all and there were no complications, it would not have taken a week for a couple of political *pundits* to draw up an immaculate democratic constitution for India. From that point of view the round table conference method was a blunder; it was undemocratic. A conference of the kind must in the nature of things consist of representatives of the various political interests in the country, including the British. People were invited to it because they differed and the constitution was to be based on their agreement. A referendum, followed by the acceptance of the majority vote, would have been democratic. The undemocratic method of the conference was suggested by no less an Indian leader than Pandit Motilal Nehru, who ranked next only to Mahatma Gandhi in the Congress hierarchy. It was not enough to aim at self-government; it should be attained through self-determination. The national convention, promoted by the late Dr. Annie Besant, answered the purpose better. But apparently, self-determination had to be diluted in favour of Indo-British cooperation. Hence the demand for a round table conference. And the demand was almost universally acclaimed in India. The British method was the Royal Commission. It would take evidence and make recommendations. It was semi-judicial in its outlook and findings. But a round table conference must in the nature of things consist of differing elements and arrive at conclusions by the play of persuasion, bargain, negotiation and compromise. Its

results were limited to the greatest common measure of agreement that its members may be persuaded to reach.

The selection by the Government and not election by the people of the personnel of the Conference was also, strictly speaking, undemocratic. But it was all along an academic objection, never taken seriously by anybody of influence and weight in the country. The Government had informally consulted the representative bodies and more or less accepted their nominations. There were no doubt publicists who had advocated the election of the personnel of the Conference by the members of the various legislative councils in India but the suggestion was not taken up by Indians themselves. It is fatuous to challenge the representative character of the members of the Conference, at any rate at this stage of the proceedings. It was true that the Congress declined to attend the first session of the Conference but it was represented at the second.

At the Conference were represented the three British political parties, the Indian Princes, Indian nationalists, communalists and minorities and special interests. The Labour Government was in office in England but not in power. Right through the British Conservatives, whether in office or out of it, held the trump card. Whatever be the dictates of political doctrine or the justice of India's plea, India's progress towards Dominionhood largely depended on the extent to which the Conservative Party in England, which always dominated the House of Lords, and frequently the Commons, could be persuaded to move. To the British, particularly the Conservatives, India's gain was Britain's loss in the best of circumstances. The material interests of Britain did not stand to gain by Indian self-government; the reverse was inevitable. It would have been a mitigation of the loss if the Indian people had voluntarily and cheerfully offered Imperial, rather British, preference in the widest sense. But India was solidly opposed to it. The only compensation for the sacrifice of material interests that Britain could have was the satisfaction of the moral conviction and the discharge of a moral obligation. India was entitled to self-government and Britain had made several solemn pledges to promote it. Few individuals, and certainly fewer organised nations, will be too eager to keep moral obligations at the sacrifice of material interests. But once in a while the improbable happens, as under Lord Ripon and Mr. Montagu. Britain more than any other country has had such moments of moral elevation.

But in the discharge of moral obligations, it is much easier to part with power in favour of a friend than of a foe. If the power that Britain relinquished was transferred to, say, the Indian Liberals, there would have been less reluctance on the part of Britain. The Indian Liberals, though zealous in the cause of Indian advancement, were not antagonistic to the British, had cherished no animosity towards them. They did not consider the British Government in India, with all its faults and crimes, "satanic."

In yielding up power to the Liberals, Britain would only be facing the inevitable family process of children having off and not a family quarrel, the bitterest of quarrels, with threats of reprisals. But the Indian nationalists at the Conference frankly admitted that they had no large following in India, and that there was no ghost of a chance of their being returned to power in India. Theirs was to sow; others would reap. The Indian Congress was the most popular political body. And the Congress, under Mahatma Gandhi, had, intently or otherwise, stigmatised the Government as "Satanic." It had declared a boycott of British goods; it had attempted to discredit the Government; it had talked of repudiating the public debt and did not hesitate to discriminate against the British vested interests. It talked of independence. To the British it was no longer a case of the establishment of democratic self-government in India but of safeguarding their vested interests, of making India under self-government safe for Britain. The British were tantalised between keeping moral obligations and safeguarding their material interests which would be in peril under a Congress Government in India inescapable under an unadulterated democratic system.

The Princes had their own interests to serve. Under the comprehensive and pervasive powers of paramountcy, the British Government of India had encroached on their rights of various kinds. They had a grievance against the Government. Their chief objective was to regain their autonomy, and to preserve from attack or diminution their autocratic rule in their States.

The communalists and the special interests were keen on getting the maximum of scope and protection for their own particularist interests. The communalists realised that in the central government of India they would not be in uncontrolled authority as they would be in some of the provinces and were, therefore, really keen on having provincial autonomy and were comparatively indifferent to central responsibility. To them the communal gains were more important than national advancement.

It was only the small band of Indian nationalists at the Conference who were zealous of national advancement. They had no special and narrower interests to serve. While everybody asked what he would get, the nationalists were bent on securing the maximum advance for the nation as a whole. Naturally and inevitably it fell to this noble band to take the initiative, to plead with those who stood for sectional interests to reconcile their conflicting demands with one another and with national interests in order to evolve a common understanding and to get a move on. In so doing they were driven to make sacrifices of ideals which they held dear.

II

The goal of the nationalists was democratic self-government for India. As has already been pointed out, with the best good-will, England was not, could not, be over-zealous to part with power even if it

was in favour of Indians friendly to her. It was more difficult to do so in favour of un-friendly Indians, represented by the Congress. The more solid and conciliatory opinion was in India the more hopeful were the chances of persuading the British to part with power. The British enemies of Indian freedom were bound to exploit every difference among Indians and every unfriendly utterance against England for their own purpose. Efforts were made in India to bring the Princes and peoples of India together and frame a common demand, but without success. The Princes refused to join the Nehru Committee and the Muslims rejected the Nehru Report. Whether this was due to the machinations of the British or to the perversity of Indians, the result was the same.

Undaunted by these failures in India, the nationalists felt the imperative need to make yet another supreme effort in London to bring about a united front. To secure Muslim support, separate electorates had to be agreed to. It was the first great departure from the truly democratic doctrine. It was first introduced by the British Government in 1908. It was acquiesced in by the nationalists in 1916 at Lucknow, in the hope that it would soon be discarded by the Muslims themselves. The nationalists were sorely disappointed in the event. They tried to eliminate it in the Nehru Report but the Muslims would not agree. Ultimately, they yielded. Democracy had to be diluted.

Dominion Status was incomplete without the control of the Indian army. In view of the treaty obligations of the British Government towards the Indian Princes, it was likely that the British Government would make it an excuse for refusing to transfer the control of the army to Indian hands. That could only be checkmated by persuading the Princes themselves to absolve the British from the obligation. A federation of Indian States with British India would facilitate this consummation. The Nehru Committee realised it and attempted to secure the cooperation of the Princes and their peoples to draft a federal constitution. But the Princes refused to attend and the project fell through. But the Committee referred to the need for federation in its Report.

The Princes wished to shake off the tyranny of the Political Department in India and the British Indian nationalists were equally anxious to win swaraj for India. Here was some common ground between the two. Federation discovered a way to achieve their common purpose. Federation made self-government for India easier of realisation. But it meant another great departure from democracy. The Princes were not ardent worshippers of democracy; they wanted to release themselves from the control of the paramount power but they did not want to subordinate themselves to their own people. They did not seek to change masters; they wanted to be free. They would not permit any interference with the internal autonomy of their States. Nor would they agree to their subjects, whom they ruled autocratically, to rule them (the Princes) by being elected to

the federal legislatures. They would themselves nominate the States' representatives to the federal chambers and not permit their subjects to elect them.

This attitude of the Princes suited the British very well indeed. Even Liberals like Lord Reading, not to speak of the Conservatives, were opposed to handing over of power to their opponents in India, the Congressmen. If they must part with power, they would do so in favour of their friends. The nomination of the States' representatives by the Princes gave them the security that they sought. The constitution could not then be captured by the "wild elements" of the Congress, who threatened to repudiate obligations and drive Britain out of India. Here was common ground between the Princes and the British.

Another safeguard that the British bought was the friendship and subservience of the communalists, the minorities and the special interests by means of the Communal Award, which deliberately sacrificed the national to the sectional interests. Britain wanted effective friends in India. British Indian Liberals were friends but ineffective friends. The Princes with their nominations, the communalists and the minorities under the Communal Award could be effective friends.

The nationalist Indians went to the Round Table Conference to achieve as much as possible of democratic swaraj. The forces against them were too much. They agreed to dilute democracy in order to get the maximum at least of self-government. Ultimately, they were offered a constitution which was not even self-government, so over-loaded was it with safeguards for the British, the Princes, the communalists and the special interests. The problem that faced the Conference underwent a sea-change. It was no longer the simple one of framing a democratic swaraj constitution for India but of safeguarding vested interests of every kind, however undemocratic and anti-national. It was no longer a question of facilitating the transfer of power from London to Delhi, but of distributing the power in such a way that no policy distasteful to the vested interests, British or Indian, could ever be pursued. Defending the White Paper in the Commons on the 27th March last, Sir Samuel Hoare said, "if they analyse the proposals, I think they will agree with me that it will be almost impossible, short of a landslide, for the extremists to get control of the federal centre. I believe that, to put it at the lowest, it will be extremely difficult for them to get a majority even in a province like Bengal."

For this debacle the nationalists at the conference were not to blame. Considering that the British had no over-powering incentive to part with power in the best of circumstances, the Indian National Congress, by its mischievous talk of independence, repudiation of obligations, boycott, and the expropriation of vested interests, had only made the transfer of power more difficult. The Princes and the communalists and the minorities thought more of their special spoils than the national good.

It is small wonder that the White Paper constitution is what it is—the unsatisfactory resultant of the undemocratic and anti-nationalistic forces operating in India.

III

There have been publicists who did not hesitate severely to criticise the nationalists who participated in the Conference for their consent to the nomination of the States' representatives in the federal legislature and the need to obtain the consent of a host of Princes to amend the constitution. These are its worst blemishes, according to the critics, who, in consequence, advocate the rejection of the White Paper constitution. It need not be denied that these are very bad blemishes from the democratic point of view. But these are not the only serious blemishes. The safeguards and the Communal Award and the Poona Pact are equally so and there are many others. But these critics have not concentrated the same fire of their criticism against them as against federation. The fact that under the Communal Award representatives will be elected and not nominated is certainly a democratic relief. Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that the communal electorates throw up the worst of the communally-minded and un-democratic candidates. Nor is there any prospect of these communal electorates being temporary. They too can be eliminated only with the consent of the communities concerned. There is as much hope of this happening as of the Princes giving up their nominations. The composition of the White Paper Councils is wholly undemocratic and there is not much to choose between the communal electorates and the nomination by the Princes. Nevertheless some critics have concentrated their attack on the latter and apparently acquiesced, though presumably reluctantly, in the former. The fact that the nationalists acquiesced in communal electorates in Lucknow some years ago does not make them any more democratic.

It has been said that the nationalists should have refused to agree to nomination by the Princes. They might have similarly declined to agree to communal electorates at Lucknow and in London and to the Communal Award and the Poona Pact. The last was fashioned by them, without the pressure of the Government, but certainly much against their democratic grain. They might have disagreed with the safeguards which are a flat negation of democracy and most of which are, besides, certainly not in the interest of India. They might have declined to work the Montagu constitution because it also was not democratic, thanks to the reserved departments and the official bloc.

It may be that, constitutionally speaking, it was open to the British Government to transfer its obligations towards the Indian States to a democratic British India, and that the consent of the Princes was not necessary to the change and that, therefore, there was no inevitability of federation to make dominion status possible. This may be the true doctrine. But if the Princes kicked against it and the British Government was not disposed to displease them and not

willing to assert its constitutional right, the nationalist Indians at the Conference had no help. If the British Government was so minded and was genuinely anxious to promote democratic government in India and had no fear of anti-British forces capturing the constitution, they could "persuade" the Princes to toe the line and also abolish separate electorates, weightages and other anti-democratic features of the White Paper constitution. They have the power but not the will, or even the desire.

Considering the disposition of the forces against them, it was not weakness on the part of the nationalist members at the Conference that they bowed to the inevitable gracefully. The history of the communal electorates has a lesson which may not be ignored. The Muslims had set their heart on such an electoral system. The Government, if it did not egg them on to it, at least sympathised with the demand. Ultimately, the nationalists themselves had to agree. Then they wished to abolish it. The Muslims again ran to the Government. Every effort on the part of the nationalists to abolish them only drove the Muslims further away from them and more into the arms of the Government and widened the breach between the two. The net result has been that the Muslims, and now others with them, have separate electorates and there is more suspicion and antipathy between the communities. It would perhaps have been wiser to have gracefully conceded to the minorities what they wanted and retained their confidence. Similarly with the Princes. It was not only the wish of the Princes that they should nominate the State's representatives but it was also the interest of the British Government. The trump card being in the hands of the Government, the Princes would have got what they desired, whether the nationalists agreed or opposed. It was better to agree gracefully to the inevitable than to submit to it after an antagonising squabble.

The nationalist members of the Round Table Conference deserve thanks for their great efforts to forward India along the path of Dominionhood. It was no fault of theirs that the net result is neither a federation, nor self-government nor democracy but a confederation of safeguards against democratic Swaraj.

IV.

Notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the Indian nationalists at the R. T. C. the achievement of the Conference was poles asunder from the hopes they set out with. The Hoare constitution has been condemned as wholly unsatisfactory and even in some respects retrograde. Even such Liberal leaders, as Messrs. Sastri, Paranjpye and Chintamani, have not hesitated to wish that they were saved from the Hoare constitution. No tears will be shed if it was dropped. Nevertheless it is noteworthy that the last session of the U. P. Liberal Conference did not recommend its rejection. It is significant that the resolution on the White Paper was moved by Mr. Chintamani himself and spoken to by Dr. Paranjpye. Apparently they could not persuade the other delegates to share their view. Even those, who would

reject the constitution if they could, do not hope that all progressive parties in India will unite, if only for this one purpose. Mr. Sastri who had no illusions about the Hoare constitution has not advocated its rejection but has been calling upon people to send the best persons to work the new constitution.

But supposing the impossible happened and the Hoare constitution was scrapped. What next? Not even the rejectionists will give a guarantee that for a decade or so they will be content to live under the Montagu constitution. Agitation is bound to grow more intense. But unless there is a radical change in the situation in India or England or both, is there any hope of a better constitution than the Hoare one materialising? What are the prospects of a change in India? Unity conferences have failed to create unity; instead, every effort has left the situation worse. If the communities in British India alone can and will combine, the unity can be used to better purpose than the rejection of the White Paper. Referring to the Indian demand for constitutional reform during the War, Lord Meston in his address on the "White Paper: A Middle View" read before the East Indian Association, said: "Those of us who hoped to postpone an answer till after the war were finally shaken out of our ground by the Lucknow Pact of Christmas, 1916, when the Hindu and Muslim leaders, after generations of aloofness, met on the common platform of a demand for reform. It was impossible to carry on as if these voices had not been heard." If India will speak with one voice, why, she can have swaraj.

Similarly, there may be some hope for India if the Labour Party came to power in England with such a majority as to overawe the House of Lords. If that happens, that Government can scrap the Hoare constitution and frame a new one so radically different as to satisfy democratic requirements. The Morley constitution did not stand in the way of the Montagu one, nor has the latter stood in the way of the Hoare constitution. Each of these was not a mere amendment of its predecessor but was cast in a different mould altogether. So also, there is nothing to prevent the Labour Government from scrapping the Hoare constitution and fashioning another wholly different.

The further argument that under a federation as contemplated by the White Paper the affirmative consent of a large number of Princes was necessary to effect a constitutional change loses much of its force because the White Paper does not contemplate vesting in the federation the power of amending its constitution, except in a small particular. The power has been retained in the hands of the British Government and Parliament. No amendment of the constitution is possible without the active consent of the British Government. And if that Government is bent on an amendment, it can be trusted to "persuade" the Princes to agree, thanks to its power of paramountcy. The acceptance of the inevitable Hoare constitution does not prejudice its denunciation in favour of a better one when a suitable opportunity occurs.

[The right and prudent course seems to be to make it clear that the Hoare constitution is wholly unsatisfactory, that the agitation for swaraj will not abate a jot because of its enactment, that it will continue with ever-increasing strength till the demand is fully satisfied and that whatever constitution is enacted in the meanwhile, it will be utilised to the full only to forward the cause of Swaraj.]

P. KODANDA RAO.

DEMOCRATIC SWARAJ PARTY.

SINCE the Poona Conference discontent among a certain section of Congressmen against the intransigent policy of Mahatma Gandhi has grown apace. The divergence of policy between him and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has created a further rift in the Congress lute. If civil disobedience and council-boycott of the Mahatma was disagreeable to dissidents, so was the class-war policy of the Pandit. They shrank from requisitioning a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to urge a change in the Congress policy. The personal influence of the Mahatma would again carry the day against all opposition to him and the Poona Conference would be repeated. They were, therefore, obliged to organise themselves into a new party.

Such success as attended the party is due as much to the preoccupation of the Mahatma with Harijan work as to the personal devotion and driving power of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. The Mahatma's voluntary (or involuntary?) abstention from political work and sole devotion to Harijan work has facilitated, if it did not invite, the formation of new political parties in opposition to his policy. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta with apostolic zeal for the new cause went about Maharashtra whipping up support for it. And Mr. N. C. Kelkar, the veteran leader of Maharashtra, came out of his retirement to bless the new move in a speech informed by highminded patriotism, commonsense, realism and frankness. He regretted and repudiated the political leadership of the Mahatma and all that it meant. He gave the new party its *motif* and its programme.

The most important and operative deviation from the official Congress policy was the abandonment of the boycott of the legislatures. It may be noted that civil disobedience of the mass variety has already been formally abandoned by the Congress itself. The official policy of individual civil disobedience is honoured more in the breach than in the observance; it is practically dead. It could not be otherwise with several members of the Congress Working Committee, its chief executive and the Mahatma himself keeping out of jail, though for excellent and most sensible reasons. The resignation of Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj and Dr. Muhammad Alam of their membership of the Congress Working Committee on the ground that such membership was incompatible with the moral obligation to seek the jail gives as it were the finishing blow to individual civil disobedience. The inference was inescapable that even to the Congress high command, going to jail was not the supreme consideration and that there

were other tasks which, if only for the moment, took precedence over the jail. In that respect the new political party was not obliged to make any wide departure and tear itself away, as it were, from the Congress policy formal or operative. It did not in so many words rule out civil disobedience for all time. In form and practice there is thus no tangible difference between the Congress and the Democratic Swaraj Party with respect to civil disobedience. The only difference—and it is not negligible in practical politics—is that the new party's adhesion is more platonic than vital. It gives up civil disobedience, rather "suspends" it with lively satisfaction, while the Congress will hang on to it, if only in name.

To minimise the divergence between the Congress and the Democratic Swaraj Party the latter adopted the creed of the former regarding its goal. The attainment of "Purna Swaraj" or "independence" by all peaceful and legitimate means is the policy bodily taken over from the Congress. But Mr. Kelkar was careful and candid enough to point out that in so far as it is contemplated to secure a constitution by an Act of the British Parliament, independence in the sense of breaking away from the British Commonwealth was unattainable, except to the extent and under the circumstances contemplated by or implied in the Statute of Westminster. Dominion Status gave the "substance of independence" with the right, at a pinch, of secession. A dispute regarding the ultimate ideal, independence or dominion status, is at the moment wholly unnecessary and even harmful. Either is yet far, far away.

A question which greatly engaged the attention of the Conference was its relation to the Congress itself. The hope was in vain of persuading the Congress to change its policy as long as it was dominated by the Mahatma with his civil disobedience and the Pandit with his class-war. As a matter of fact, the dissidents were driven to the length of forming a new party because of their despair of converting the Congress. Nevertheless they decided to be within the Congress fold, (if and when possible in view of the Government's ban on certain Congress organisations,) taking care however to stipulate that no resolution of the Congress was binding on the Party unless and until it was adopted by it. The Party has, perhaps unconsciously, flattered the Indian Princes by imitating them. The Princes said their States would be units of the federation but no federal law was applicable to them unless and until it was re-enacted by them for their States. The resolution was a compromise between those who had a sentimental loyalty to the Congress, those wished to exploit the popularity of the Congress for the benefit of the new Party, and those who, if they loved the Congress policy little, loved non-Congressmen less. The new party is thus open only to Congressmen, actual or potential.

The only operative difference between the Congress and the Democratic Swaraj Party is council entry. The Congress still holds by the boycott of the legislatures. The new Party proposes to capture all elected bodies, from village panchayets to the federal legislatures. This move is most commendable. The boycott of the councils by the Congress

was one of the Himalayan blunders of the Mahatma. It has done incalculable harm to the country. It is time that all sensible and patriotic people gave up this insane and ineffectual policy. The case for council-entry could not be better put than it was by Mr. Sastri in his speech the other day in Madras.

They must bring into those Councils wise, courageous and patriotic men. They should not withdraw from them out of deference to the disapproved theory of non-co-operation. They should never, at any time, take their hands away from public affairs. None could do the best in administration, in finance, in legislation, in the shaping of the people and in the building up of a nation, who was contented every now and then, to go into a condition of coma and come back to life again after losing hold on all affairs. He hoped the lesson had been fully learnt and that they would come back again into the political life with patriotic and honest ideals. Its best intellects and its strongest hands should not always be locked in the prisons of inaction. Only that nation was bound to succeed which would face its own trials and its own difficulties. They must learn by their own experience and by the experience of other nations and they must never go into a state of coma again. If their future interests were to be served, they must conquer the Councils even though they found that the Councils were not promising.

The Party rightly denounced the White Paper constitution as wholly unsatisfactory and unacceptable, unless radically modified. It however took care not to mix up council-entry with its disapproval of the White Paper. The Montagu constitution was unsatisfactory enough. Its boycott was however unwise. These are two different questions. Now that the party has decided to give up council boycott, it follows that it will give effect to it immediately as occasion arises. Should the present Montagu councils be re-elected pending the inauguration of the Hoare constitution, the Party will attempt to capture them. The Party wisely declined to shelve the council-entry question with a view to concentrating on the rejection of the White Paper.

It is a happy augury that simultaneously with the move in Bombay Mr. Satyamurty in Madras was able to organise a party with the principal object of capturing the councils, whether under the Montagu or Hoare dispensation. Another move of the kind is reported from Calcutta. It is fervently to be hoped that these new protestants from the suicidal policy of the Congress will gather strength and bring the country back to sanity and useful, if unheroic, and unspectacular, service.

AGREEMENT WITH LANCASHIRE.

THE representatives of the cotton textile industry in Lancashire, before returning home, succeeded in arriving at a private understanding with those of the Japanese industry, though the details of this understanding have not yet been published. They failed, however, to reach a similar agreement with the whole of the Indian industry and had to content themselves with arranging a pact between themselves and the Bombay Mill-owners Association, the mill-owners of Ahmedabad and other

up-country centres having stood out of it. The terms of this pact seem so simple and altogether unexceptionable that one wonders why there should be such a keen controversy between Mr. Mody, on the one hand, and Messrs. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Khaitan and Sriram, on the other. The concession that the Bombay Mill-owners Association is prepared to make is that it will not ask, so far as British imports of yarns and piece-goods are concerned, for the retention of the 25% surcharge that is being collected on all import duties since October of last year when Government will be willing remove it. This surcharge, although it has a high protective value, was never intended to give protection to Indian manufacturers. It was an avowedly temporary measure dictated solely by fiscal considerations, and the Government is under a pledge to remove it as soon as its finances permit. The import duty will then have to be restored to its original figure, and the Indian cotton industry will have to do without the additional tariff protection that it is now quite accidentally enjoying. The Bombay Mill-owners Association will really be making no concession at all by agreeing that when, in the opinion of the Government, time comes to abolish the surcharge it will not stand in the way of such abolition. For the matter is wholly outside the control of the Association. Even if it were to ask then for the levy of a 25% import duty on Lancashire goods either by itself or in conjunction with up-country interests, it would most certainly fail to attain its object. It is most unlikely that the Tariff Board should have proposed such a heavy duty or that the Government would agree to it. To men like Messrs. Kasturbhai and Khaitan no duty would be too high. They think that "even the existing duty of 25% on Lancashire goods is not wholly effective." They can never have enough of tariffs either against British or Japanese goods. But it is quite inconceivable that the Indian public will allow itself to be penalised in this way in order to afford complete security to our industrialists. As a matter of fact it is very doubtful if the Government of India will consider the financial condition of India to have improved sufficiently during the currency of the Bombay-Lancashire agreement, i. e. within the next two years, to be willing to bring to a termination the special measures it took in September, 1932; and, among these measures, the abolition of the surcharge on customs duties holds third place, restoration of the remaining out of salaries of officials and removal of the surcharge on income-tax having a prior claim. Mr. Ramsay Scott has in fact declared his belief that it is highly improbable that the Government will find it possible to remove the surcharge on import duties while the pact lasts, and that the offer of the Bombay Mill-owners Association not to oppose such a step can therefore only have a moral value. In giving such an undertaking the Association has really given nothing substantial, and if what it has taken in return for it is not equally in the nature of a gesture it has struck a very good bargain indeed.

What has it to place on the other side of the ledger? The Lancashire industry promises to allow the Indian (and not only the Bombay) industry to

participate in any special advantages that it will itself receive in Empire and other overseas markets. What the net result of such a concession will be no one can foretell, but it must be admitted that it has in it potentialities of giving a great fillip to Indian manufactures just in the direction where they are fast losing ground. It is very important that Indian goods should recover their export market, and if Lancashire's good-will and active help enable them to do so, it is worth giving much to attain this result. It behoves the Indian cotton textile industry to take the fullest advantage of the opportunity that now offers to it. Lancashire also promises to continue to make more extensive use of Indian raw cotton in her mills. This too is all to the good so far as it goes, though we can never expect the British takings of our cotton to be very considerable.

Perhaps objection will be taken in some quarters to the admission made by the Bombay Mill-owners Association that "under present conditions, owing to lower costs and other factors operating in foreign countries, the (Indian) industry required a higher level of protection against them than against the United Kingdom." It will be said that the principle of imperial preference is hereby accepted. But this is a superficial view. It is true that when in 1930 a higher duty was levied on Japanese cotton textiles, the representatives of our industry avowed themselves to be in opposition to a differentiation to the advantage of any Empire country; they said that they had to acquiesce in differential duties only because otherwise they could receive no protection whatever. They were in favour of a uniform rate being levied on the manufactures of all countries only if the rate was determined by the selling price of the country that produced at the lowest level of cost. The problem that faced the legislature was something like this. The Government of India proposed a uniform duty of 15% for the goods of both British and non-British origin. On the Imperial Government making representations in behalf of Lancashire, however, the Government of India proposed 15% for British goods and 20% for non-British. This was a clear case of imperial preference. Indian Nationalists wanted to do away with this preference by levying 15% on both British and non-British goods. The representatives of the industry also were in favour of doing away with differentiation provided the higher duty was levied on both. It was clear that what they were anxious about was that as high a duty as possible should operate in as wide an area as possible. Whether it involved imperial preference or not was a matter of supreme indifference to them. The public surely does not desire to bring about uniformity in this way. The right course would be to determine what the selling price of any particular goods should be in our country. If the costs of production are more in one country than in another, the rate of duty on the productions of the former country need not be as high as on those of the latter. If the rate in Empire countries is less on this principle than that in non-Empire countries, the resulting variation is not really a case of giving imperial preference at all. It is only a case of not imposing an unnecessary sacrifice on the industrialists of Empire

countries and on the consumers of our own country. We are not therefore disposed to quarrel with the part of the agreement which relates to this matter provided it is rightly interpreted. We do not lay any store whatever on the political advantages which it is supposed will flow from conciliating Lancashire. But, speaking economically, the pact appears to be at the least harmless and at the highest capable of yielding solid advantages.

GERMANY QUILTS THE LEAGUE.

IN one of his latest public speeches, President Daladier asked the question: "What does Germany really want?" The answer has come more promptly than had been expected; the Hitler Government has decided to quit the League and the Disarmament Conference, the Reichstag is to be dissolved, and new elections will take place on the 12th of November.

The news has come as a thunderbolt, but a great many papers remarked that the present situation would at least have the merit of being clearer and that Germany's real intentions would thereby express themselves more frankly. Nevertheless, the two proclamations and the Fuhrer's broadcasted speech leave a most ambiguous impression. Of course, the French have noted with the greatest relief and satisfaction the passage where Hitler says: "Only a madman could believe in the possibility of a war between his country and ours." Yet on the other hand, nothing is more disquieting than the renewed desire of Germany to re-arm, and to eventually use her army, in a manner which it is only too easy to guess.

What are and what will be the reactions in Germany itself? It appears certain even now that the elections will be still more easily "managed" than those of March last to return a favourable majority to the Hitler Government. Germany will be represented as a persecuted victim. The German population, however, had not been expecting Hitler to appear as a victim in a defensive position, but rather as a triumphant benefactor.

Another disappointment for the Germans has been Herr Goebbels' failure. This young Minister of Propaganda had come to Geneva with the plan of acting as a diplomat, seducing, manoeuvring and obtaining practical results. He proposed to present himself as an angel of peace by comparison to alleged French bellicism. He was hoping to ruin the French reputation and to secure the support of the English and Americans. But the scheme proved to lead to a blind alley; and all this very largely explains Germany's sudden change of tactics and Hitler's extraordinarily friendly declarations to the French in his speech.

One of the excuses given by the Germans for their gesture has been Sir John Simon's speech; Sir John Simon is supposed to have humiliated the Germans by addressing them as he would have addressed a colonial people. But, as a matter of fact, there was disappointment chiefly at not having succeeded in utilizing England against France. The English have such a long experience of the "divide and rule" policy, that they are not so easily lured into the trap themselves. In the same manner the subsequent flatteries to France are intended to separate France from England, which might have most useful consequences for Germany at a later stage.

But certainly the most important reason of the German attitude has been the fear of submitting their armaments to international control. Quitting

the League was the only way to escape control in the given circumstances.

"During the previous ten days," says M. H. de Korab, in *Le Matin*, "the German delegation had tried by every possible means to obtain the legalisation (even partial) of the defensive armaments forbidden in part 5 of the Versailles Treaty. All the technicians in Geneva know well that Germany already possesses those armaments." It was therefore impossible for her to sign a convention which would automatically have revealed grave fraud, already known unofficially for the greater part but which would have been publicly confirmed by any regular measure of international enquiry or control.

Germany endeavoured therefore to obtain legitimacy for the possession of secret armaments by a new concession which would have had a retro-active effect. So that if satisfaction had been given to her regarding tanks, cannons and aviation, the world would have learned with surprise that the German industry, as by a magic wand, had somehow managed to provide the country with all these prohibited armaments in less than 24 hours!

But the Conference very wisely decided to come to definite agreement on three essential points before discussing any technical questions. These three points were: non-rearmament, test-period and control. This was enough to scare the Germans away, and peace is compromised anew.

While the Germans are complaining of being treated with exaggerated and unflinching rigor, it is perhaps interesting to recall some of the concessions which have been granted to them since the signature of the Versailles Treaty.

As regards financial matters, the German payments, settled by the Reparations Commission in April 1921, have been successively whittled down by the Dawes Plan (April 1924), the Young Plan (June 1929), the Hague Agreements (January 1930), the Lausanne Agreement (July 1932), which had been preceded by the Hoover Moratorium of June 1931.

As far as military clauses are concerned, important concessions from the Peace Treaty have been made to Germany, first by the increase in the effectives of the Schutzpolizei, and afterwards by the anticipated evacuation of the Rhénanie (Rheinland) which ended in June 1930. Lately, again, the principle of equality of rights has been recognised and proclaimed.

This simple enumeration speaks for itself. Yet the preceding concessions, which complied with Germany's revendications and were meant to facilitate her collaboration in the work of peace, seem to have had rather the opposite result, and created aggressiveness and growing intransigence.

There is no doubt that the psychology of the new Hitlerian Germany must also be taken into account. Germany is isolating herself more and more in her nationalist passion. Hitler's autocracy has cut her away from the rest of the world. Alfred Rosenberg, one of the theoreticians of the nationalist creed, said during the recent Nuremberg Congress: "We are established on a triple basis which cannot be shaken: unity of our people, racial conception of culture and consciousness of German duty." There is not much place for international spirit in this exclusive programme.

Hitler's friendly references to France in his last speech can hardly relegate into definite oblivion such passages of "Mein Kampf" as, for instance: "The implacable and mortal enemy of the German people is and will remain France, no matter who governs or will govern it, whether it be the Bourbons, the Jacobins, the Napoleonists, the clerical (?) Republic

or the Red Bolshevik." And: "In France today, the Stock Exchange, the Jews who support it and the national State are reigning together. That is why France is by far the most terrible enemy. This people, who is slipping more and more towards négrification (sic), represents by its links with the Jewish tendencies to world-hegemony, a terrible danger for the White Race in Europe." "As far as the future can be foreseen, there are in Europe only two allies for Germany: England and Italy."

And when a new Professor of military science, M. Banse, writes about "military eugenism" that "the methods and aims of the new military science are meant to create and establish an unshakable faith in the ethical grandeur of war as well as in its profound utility," it is natural that the French should remember past experiences and feel compelled to move rather cautiously.

Yet the French people have no greater desire than peace, and it is certain that the present government will do everything in its power to preserve it.

In the meanwhile, what is going to happen in Geneva? Some nations are in favour of proceeding with the work notwithstanding Germany's absence, while others are inclined to press for adjournment. It is announced today that the Conference will resume its discussions on the 26th October. This means that active diplomatic negotiations are expected to take place during the coming week. What can be expected from the League itself? The preceding example of Japan's withdrawal does not justify much hope on that side. In *Le Matin's* Geneva correspondent much too critical when he says that "the best energies melt away in this atmosphere?" or nearer the truth when he supposes that "scepticism or indifference are justified to a certain extent by the certitude that the conflict will be settled elsewhere?"

The general opinion in France is that, on the one hand, any agreement exclusive of Germany would have but a theoretical value, while, on the other hand, all private negotiations with Germany would be contrary to the spirit of Geneva and appear tactless to the United States as well as to a number of other nations, who are hostile to all resolutions manufactured outside the League.

It must be noted here that the Italians have taken the utmost advantage of this difficult situation. They consider that the German decision should not in any way hinder further negotiations; the latter should be conducted on the basis of the Four Power Pact. Juridically this point of view can find justification through the fact that, according to the letter of the Covenant, no resignation from the League is considered as definitive before two years after it has been notified. Germany, therefore, theoretically remains a member for the present and the discussions on disarmament might be continued according to Art. 3 of the Pact of Rome.

The *Giornale d'Italia* writes that "nothing is lost for the cause of peace, disarmament and European collaboration. The new fact does not create a new situation, but is merely suggestive of novel methods."

These "novel methods" are naturally expected to consist in direct conversation, under Italian inspiration, between the nations who have signed the Four Power Pact and the United States. Some Italians are even wishing that Rome should be the seat of these negotiations. In brief, Italian diplomacy is hoping to find in the present delicate circumstances a favourable opportunity to take up, outside Geneva, on the basis of the Four Power Pact, and perhaps in Rome itself, a leading part as an arbitrator.

Whatever may be the process of its realisation, it is peace that the French people are anxiously praying for.

Paris.

L. MORIN.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, October 30.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE ON INDIA.

WHILST the accusation is often brought against Sir Samuel Hoare that his constant asseveration of the restoration of peace in India indicates either a superficial knowledge of the true situation, or a much too ready reliance upon official assurances, without any real appreciation of the grave anxiety of the country, the widespread disillusionment, and the deepening embitterment. That is a legitimate criticism to level against the Minister constitutionally responsible to the people of England for the welfare of the people of India. No doubt the Secretary of State will be able to marshal a vast array of facts and figures to show that he is substantially right in his conspectus of affairs in India, but when all that is done there are always the palpable and the intangible things which anyone of recent experience in India and sensitive to atmosphere, and often to the unspoken emotion would interpret in quite a different sense. Hence it is that one hears widespread complaints of the widening gulf between rulers and ruled in India.

Nevertheless when talking with that engaging frankness that has given to Sir Samuel a reputation for honest dealing that is all too rare in public life, he expresses himself bluntly and to the point. For instance, addressing a Conservative gathering last night in his own constituency of Chelsea, he said that if they believed some of the criticisms made in the Press and elsewhere they must imagine him to be "one of the most miserable worms in the world, one of those weak, sentimental, and futile people without any will of their own, spoon-fed by Socialist policy, and completely remote from the difficult facts of the situation. I am particularly amused," Sir Samuel continued, "when they speak of me as spoon-fed by the Socialists' policy. Unlike some of my critics, I have never wandered from the Conservative fold. It is because I want to conserve what really matters in the relations between India and Great Britain that I have adopted the line that I have. I have tried to face the facts, free from illusions, sentiment, and prejudices, and tried to see the wisest course for a strong Conservative like myself. It is our duty to conserve India as a friendly and contented unity of the British Commonwealth of peoples."

Some of this will be unpleasant reading for Mr. Winston Churchill, who can hardly congratulate himself upon his own political consistency, and whose evidence to be given before the Joint Select Committee has been postponed till next Monday.

GERMANY VERSUS THE WORLD.

Though it was known towards the end of last week, when the German Foreign Minister returned from Geneva to Berlin, to obtain the instructions of his Government, that is of Chancellor Hitler, upon the latest proposals before the Disarmament Confe-

rence, that the relations between Germany and the other members of the Conference were strained, it was nevertheless suggested and hoped that in the course of further discussion a greater approximation of views would be attained and an agreement for disarmament in which Germany would participate would be secured. It was therefore with the utmost disappointment and surprise that the world came to know on Saturday afternoon, not only that Germany had refused to participate any further in the Conference, but that she had renounced her membership of the League itself. Nor was this disappointment and astonishment confined to non-official circles. At Geneva and in the European Chancelleries views of frank incredulity were at first expressed, and the information received was regarded merely as a newspaper scoop, to which no credibility could be given. As the news was confirmed widespread dismay and resentment were expressed. The danger that energetic recriminations would be hurled by the contending parties against each other, resulting in a disastrous inflammation of international sentiment, caused abnormal efforts to be made, even in Germany according to her lights, to prevent the stampeding of public confidence throughout Europe, and for a little while the situation caused the gravest anxiety in responsible circles. Fortunately both the Governments and the Press sought to restrict the evil within certain limits, thereby preventing the most serious complications. But the fact remains that if the Disarmament Conference is able to proceed with its work, it must produce a convention without the direct and immediate assistance of Germany, and to which Germany may not assent, and it is equally a fact that Germany has given notice of her intention to leave the League at the expiry of the necessary period of two years. Technically she remains a member of the League during that time, and it is open to her to participate in its activities until her retirement is actually due to take place. She nevertheless remains bound by all the obligations involved by membership of the League, and the question that now arises is whether the Locarno agreement can still be held to bind her, in view, on the one hand, of her renunciation of the League, and, on the other, of the fact that Locarno is based upon the Covenant and the mutual obligations involved by League membership.

Unfortunately recrimination has not been absent. There has proceeded an unedifying duel between Baron von Neurath and Sir John Simon, the Foreign Ministers of Germany and Britain respectively, as to whether or not the latter had correctly stated to America and to his colleagues in the Disarmament Committee the nature of the German demands based upon the latest proposals before the Disarmament Commission. Sir John had declared that the German demand had been substantially increased, by which he meant that the original demand to be permitted to have "samples" of prohibited armaments in order to comply with the doctrine of equality of status, had been increased to a demand for rearmament on the part of Germany. It is, however, believed and understood that France, Italy, and the United States who were primarily consulted in the matter, have supported Sir John Simon's version against that of the German Foreign Minister. There has also been an insidious official German attempt to differentiate between Sir John Simon on the one hand and his Cabinet colleagues and the British people on the other. This has resulted in statements by authorised Cabinet Ministers declaratory of complete Cabinet unity on the subject, and the Press and the public have generally rallied to the support of the Government in this matter. Not even the Labour Party supports the German thesis that equality involves the right to rearm, though as Mr.

Lansbury was at pains to point out last night in a broadcast, the present German move, and indeed the existence of the present German Government and national system are the natural and direct consequence of the unwillingness of the other powers, and in particular France, to fulfil their treaty promises to disarm. On the other hand, France points out that for her disarmament is quite impossible without security, that she has had to submit within living memory to two unprovoked German invasions of her territory, and that consistently Germany has not only evaded her own Treaty obligations not to manufacture prohibited war material, of which France declares she has ample evidence, but has sedulously, and especially in Nazi quarters, sought to stimulate the war spirit in Germany. Mr. David Low, the cartoonist of the *Evening Standard*, commented last night upon Herr Hitler's raucous assertion that Germany is all in favour of peace, by depicting Baron von Neurath speaking to Sir John Simon at the door of a large hall, in which a German band is barring away to the tune of "Deutschland Uber Alles," sung at the top of their voices by the Chancellor and the President, "we are anxious for nothing but peace," to which Sir John replies, "I can't hear a word with all this noise going on." And that about represents average opinion as to the genuineness of German peace protestations. In some quarters, too, it is suggested that in view of the obvious failure of the Reichstag fire trial, the vast unemployment problems that Germany has to face in the coming winter, the growing internal dissatisfaction with the Nazi regime, notwithstanding a certain kind of conviction that Germany has again found her place in the sun, under that regime, the Government have deliberately sought to divert attention from the internal situation and to create at least a temporary unity by concentrating effort upon the question of external prestige and status and that it is for this reason that the Government, having taken the decisions above referred to, have announced what is virtually a mock general election since the other parties have been destroyed and no other than Government candidates can be elected, and have also made a gesture of toleration towards the anti-Nazi section of the population. The reverberations of all this will not die away for a long time, and meanwhile the Disarmament Conference stands adjourned till next Thursday.

THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

I am informed that the Indian delegation has been invited to prolong its stay in London for a further week, namely until the 16th November, owing to the fact that the Joint Select Committee is now behind its time-table, and that, with the exception of Sir Akbar Hydari, all the more prominent members of the Committee have agreed to do so. The principal cause of the delay has been the unexpected length of the Secretary of State's evidence and the interposition of certain evidence that had not been anticipated when the approximate time-table was arranged at an earlier stage. One such interposition has been that of Mr. Winston Churchill most unexpectedly in view of the strong line of criticism of the personnel and the purpose of the Committee at the time of its appointment. I have reason to doubt whether his memorandum of evidence, upon which he will be examined next Monday, will add to his credit, nor should it be difficult to expose the shallowness of his pretensions to guide public opinion upon a question of first-rate import-

ance whereof he has next to no knowledge drawn from personal experience.

The extension of the Indian delegation's association with the Committee will not, however, be of sufficient duration to enable its members to meet the Burmese delegation and it has been suggested that this lack of contact is not merely accidental, but has been intentionally sought. I understand further that the British Indian delegates have declined to express to the Committee any view on the desirability or otherwise of the separation of Burma, and that they are content to leave a decision on this matter to the Burmese themselves. Naturally other important questions will arise, whichever way a decision on separation went, and I believe steps have been taken by the British Indian delegation to communicate their views to their Burmese colleagues.

This week the proceedings of the Committee have not been of a very exciting character. Evidence was given on the future administration of the reserved and excluded areas, and the Secretary of State was subjected to a good deal of close examination on the subject, some of the most formidable of which came from Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Joshi. On Tuesday Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M. P., completed her evidence on Indian women's franchise. Miss Rathbone is an independent by temperament, and whether or not one agrees with her on any specific point, one cannot but be impressed by the earnestness and sincerity, and by the sturdiness and tenacity with which she holds to her opinions, which she has formed after careful and detailed study of facts drawn from as many quarters as possible. It is these qualities that attracted to her the respect and appreciation of the Indian women's delegation, notwithstanding certain differences of opinion on matters to which that delegation attached very great importance. On Thursday the Secretary of State presented a further Memorandum modifying in certain respects the White Paper proposals and attempting to clarify the White Paper proposals relating to the Federal Court and the Supreme Court. The discussion on this important question, which was of a very technical character, occupies the whole of issue No. 38 of the Minutes of Evidence. Yesterday began the private discussion between the Committee and the Indian delegates about which it is of course impossible to make any statement. It is believed, however, that the preliminary speeches made on behalf of the British Indian delegation by Mr. Zafrullah Khan and Mr. M. R. Jayakar were directed largely to the question of the Governor's powers. I should doubt whether they departed in any serious measure from the criticisms that have appeared in the responsible Indian Press during recent weeks and that are believed to be summarised in Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's Memorandum of which advance prints are known to have reached the Lord Chairman and the Secretary of State. It is understood that next week two more days will be devoted to these valuable discussions, when I have no doubt that the delegates will make forcibly clear to the Parliamentary Committee the grave importance attached in all Moderate Indian circles to the effecting of substantial modifications upwards in the White Paper proposals, in order, as Mr. Sastri has this week warned us, that a Constitution may be produced of such a character as will attract at least the Moderate elements in the country by reason of its being clearly a further stage towards the achievement inevitably and at no distant date of full and effective Dominion Status.