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EDITORIALS

Showdown in Kashmir 145

What About Trone's Report? .. 147

WEEKLY NOTES 148

OUR DELHI LETTER

Next Budget Vaguest ever 149

FROM THE LONDON END

Mild Election Fever 149

FROM THE WASHINGTON END

New Tax Proposals 152

SPECIAL ARTICLES

More of Public Enterprise and
less of threats to Industrialists
— D. Ghosh 155

World Factors and Our Foreign
Trade 156

The Role of Industry in our
Economy
— Nalini Ranjan Sarkar 158

MONEY MARKET

Conditions Uncomfortable 166

STOCK EXCHANGE

Dalal Street Hesitant 164

COTTON MARKET

Millowners Protest and Warn .. 167

CURRENT STATISTICS 167

SHOWDOWN IN KASHMIR

MEDIATION having shown little chance of success, General McNaughton of Canada, who had been appointed as mediator, has thrown up the sponge and the Indo-Pakistan dispute on Kashmir goes back to the Security Council. But it does not mean that there is a return to the *status ante* where the United Nations Commission had left it. On the contrary, during the intervening months when the truce called for by the UNCIP and agreed to by both parties had been in force, things had happened in Kashmir, of which neither the United Nations nor the world outside seem to be sufficiently aware. Not only that; the foreign press and interested propaganda have misrepresented the case so successfully and so ineptly have been the public relations conducted by our own Government that, instead of the correct situation being duly appraised by the world outside, deep misconception prevails about the actual developments. We are held responsible for obstructing a settlement, and are almost regarded as aggressors. Our motives are unsuspected and we are constantly accused of staling or delaying a plebiscite. The insinuation is obvious. India is accused of withholding a settlement of the dispute because the outcome of the settlement may be unfavourable to her.

This is manifestly an absurd situation which is quite intolerable and must be ended. Since we have no territorial aspirations in Kashmir, and are not afraid of losing Kashmir if the Kashmiris themselves, of their own accord, want to transfer their allegiance to Pakistan—otherwise all our pledges would be unmeaning—we will naturally welcome a just and fair verdict if the Security Council is prepared to face the consequences and give it. What really stands in the way of the Security Council facing the issue squarely and boldly? Why has it been persistently shelving the main issue? To say that that is the technique of handling international disputes, or that it does not serve any useful purpose in the world of affairs to go into questions of justice and fair play, and that it is better to accept realities for what they are, is to deny totally all that the United Nations are supposed to stand for. Such specious arguments cannot deceive any one. Sufficient time has elapsed and enough evidence has accumulated to make it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Security Council is afraid of pronouncing judgment because it is dominated by political groups who are determined to fish in troubled waters, and to turn every occasion to their own advantage, which is to advance their own mean little ends, however grandiosely they may clothe them in mouthful phrases. They are, evidently, afraid of treating the Kashmir dispute on the merits of the case and are determined to comprise their own ends by preventing it being treated on merits. This is not a wilfully mischievous interpretation—put on the motives and actions of the Security Council by disgruntled elements. This is the open

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charge levelled against the United Nations by Pandit Nehru than whom there is no greater champion of the principles that the United Nations stand for, nor a more ardent supporter of the UNO as a political body. What with the dilatoriness of the Security Council itself, what with the malicious and mischievous misrepresentation of the foreign press, and the stream of propaganda by Pakistan, which arouses such welcome response in the outside world, the Kashmir issue has indeed reached the breaking point. The exasperation felt by Pandit Nehru and expressed in strong enough language at his last press conference in Delhi conveys some idea how grievously the Government of India have been wronged and how perilously near they themselves are to a show-down.

General McNaughton explained that his proposals had been inspired by two main considerations. The first was that any measure of agreement already achieved between India and Pakistan should not be discarded. This is only commonsense and understandable. The second consideration which guided him is much more weighty. It goes to the root of the problem and explains why we have fared so badly at the UNO. The mediator felt that he should concentrate "on appropriate arrangement for the future *rather than pronounce judgement on the controversial issues of the dispute*" (italics ours). The exact words used by him deserve to be noted very carefully. He does not say categorically that it was beyond the province of the Security Council which had appointed him to pronounce judgement but thought he would rather not do it. True, the task of mediation is not helped by trying to apportion blame. Granting all that, it raises, nevertheless, a fundamental issue.

Why did we at all take the Kashmir issue to the UNO? Have not the military operations been confined to Indian territory? No one has accused India of complicity in any operations on Pakistan soil. In what tense, then, was the dispute beyond the competence of the Government of

India to solve, so that a reference to an International body was needed? What brought the UNO into the picture was the complicity of Pakistani forces in the raids on Kashmir carried out by the tribesmen in the first instance. This was stoutly denied for many months and then, frankly admitted by Pakistan herself. Our sole purpose in seeking the aid of the UNO was to have a verdict from this international body on this very question of aggression. Since the Security Council has consistently avoided this question and failed to answer it, there is little reason to continue this farce of international arbitration. Pandit Nehru accepts all these, but he argues, never the less - with little logic—that but for the intervention of the UNO, Kashmir operations would have flared up into an open war between India and Pakistan. While his naive faith in international arbitration may win our Prime Minister plaudits from other countries of the world,—even that it does not—what prevented Kashmir dispute from developing into an open war is a question of fact that hardly admits of two opinions. Was it not the speedy despatch of forces, the efficiency and energy with which the Indian Army acted just in the nick of time in Kashmir which stopped the raiders? It is the signal success of these operations which disillusioned those who had thoughtlessly banked on hopes for an easy victory. If the Government really believe that it was the UNO and not the presence of Indian troops in the Kashmir valley which averted a war, they should at least know that no one outside the precincts of the External Affairs Ministry share their belief.

As we said before, the Kashmir dispute drags on interminably in the Security Council, but there has been no return to the *status ante*. While the UN Commission were carrying on investigations and terms of the cease-fire were being debated and its acceptance kept; hanging the forces of aggression did not relent except for a short while to throw the defunders off their guard. Subse-

quently even while supposedly observing the terms of the truce to the letter, the Asad Kashmir forces were strengthened by the Pakistani Army and transformed into an army of considerable strength. It was a mere rabble that was stopped on its march on Srinagar, a rabble helped with equipments, trucks and armaments, but not the disciplined modern army that Azad Kashmir forces are to day. All this happened while the dispute was before the Security Council and the facts have been attested to by members of the Commission sent out by that Council. If Pandit Nehru still deludes himself, that it was the Security Council which stopped a war from breaking out or that it will ever tackle the dispute that has been referred to it, he is entitled to his personal opinion. But the country will not assurdly be with him in the pursue of such a naive belief.

The President of the Republic has re-affirmed, and so has Pandit Nehru, our stand on Kashmir—a restoration of those conditions under which a free election can take place to ascertain the wishes of the people of Kashmir. To that task, we are committed and must now address ourselves, without allowing ourselves to be detracted from it by being draped into devious disputations that promise no results. Half of Kashmir is still under the occupation and control of Pakistani forces and is being administered by Pakistani officers. The exact nature and character of this occupation and administration may raise juridical disputes but the facts can hardly be disputed. We are in effect asked by the Security Council to accept it as *fait accompli* and to condone this act of aggression.

There is no doubt, another side to the story. Every dispute has two sides or there will be no dispute. Just as we have no doubt that the presence of Pakistani forces in Kashmir is an open act of aggression, Pakistan herself has little doubt that the accession of Kashmir to the Indian Union is an eye-wash and the Indian forces Kashmir are aggressors. Since we are willing to abide by the decision of the Security Coun-

cil, let this Council pronounce its verdict. That would put the professions of both the disputants to the test and would be one way of ending the present tension. What has happened instead is that we have virtually accepted partition

and have resigned ourselves to it, though no one ever mentions it in so many words. To maintain the *status quo* would be to put our seal on the fact of partition, whatever learned jurists may say about it!

don or to modify projects which alone could ensure cheap and abundant supplies of electric power.

Both the Government and industry seem to be obsessed with lack of monetary resources. It is true that India, has unwisely spent vast resources in foreign exchange. True, too that the rate of capital formation has slowed down. Even so, all those who do not indulge in the pastime of knowing more and more about less and less will endorse Dr. Trone's considered opinion that what India lacks is not money or capital but the proper perspective. History is replete with instances of countries implementing industrial expansion with resources far less than what India now possesses.

If Russia could carry through her five-year plans for simultaneous development of industry and agriculture, there is no reason why India should not be able to make, at least, a modest beginning towards industrial expansion; Developments in Japan during the inter-war years strongly indicate that paucity of capital is not an unsurmountable obstacle to industrial expansion. Industry, which has brooded itself into melancholia because of lack of formation of capital, can take courage and comfort from the experience of Japan.

Recent pronouncements by spokesmen of industry indicate that though industry has shed its fears of nationalisation, it has invented another ghost in the shape of lack of capital formation. In a lengthy memorandum submitted to the Government on the various plans, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the official mouthpiece of Indian Big Business, has repeatedly emphasised the gloomy conclusion that the scope for industrial expansion is very limited because of lack of financial resources.

This is a fatal and dangerous moral, and if industry persists in its defeatist mentality, the country will have to say good-bye to all her industrial aspirations. Private initiative is never tired of

(Continued on next page)

What About Trone's Report?

OF PLANNING and of planning experts there is no dearth. Ever since the Bombay Plan of India's eight top-ranking industrialists, the Government, industry, chambers of commerce and economic experts have issued grandiose plans for industrial development of the country. Both the over-all target and the individual targets for different industries and for the various agricultural products have been fixed, examined, discussed and re-discussed in all their aspects. If blue prints could ensure prosperity, India should have been prosperous long ago.

This is now realised by both industry and the Government. Indeed, it is one of the major complaints of industry that the Government have frittered away the country's resources by hunching vast and un-co-ordinated projects which bear no relation to the physical and financial resources of the country nor follow a rational system of priorities. Elaborate facts and figures have been cited by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to prove the lack of co-ordination and of priorities in the various development plans mooted by New Delhi and the provinces.

This is a criticism which is endorsed by Dr. Solomon Trone, the American expert, who helped the Soviet Five Year Plan and who is now in India to advise the Government on the co-ordination of different plans of the Centre and of the provinces. This is also implicit in the recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee urging the Government to appoint a Statutory Planning Commission to guide, direct and co-ordinate India's major plans for economic recovery,

It is an open secret that Dr.

Trone is highly critical of the Government's plans under execution or under contemplation. Is that the reason why Dr. Trone's report, submitted to the Government long ago, has been pigeon-holed? Dr. Trone is a planning expert with a high international reputation. And industry and the public have the right to know Dr. Trone's expert verdict on India's post-war projects. New Delhi will lose nothing by admitting that mistakes have been made; What is more important is that New Delhi must profit from its earlier mistakes.

In the meanwhile, there are disturbing indications that the Government have been cajoled and coerced by industry into making a hasty retreat on the planning front. To emphasise that post-war planning has been spasmodic and unco-ordinated is not to deny the necessity for planning or for priorities. And yet, in their eager desire to placate industry by slashing public expenditure, the Government have announced cuts in the capital budget which would lead to a considerable slowing down in the execution of river valley projects.

Ever since Lenin traced Scandinavian countries' economic prosperity to cheap electricity, it has been a commonplace that Socialism is Communism *plus* electricity. One need not be a technologist or a planning expert to know that the speediest way to industrialise a country is to ensure cheap and adequate supplies of electric power. That is the only way towards "rurbanisation", which alone can relieve the pressure of population on the land by ensuring regular and continuous employment to the rural, landless proletariat. And yet, the Government seem to have been brow-beaten by industry to aban-