

INDIVIDUAL TALKS ON INDIA END

Round Table Conference May Be Held Today

MR. ATTLEE CONSULTS CABINET MISSION

LONDON, December 4.

THE Indian constitutional talks were today reaching their climax, which is expected to come tomorrow in the shape, possibly, of a Round Table Conference of the Congress, Muslim League and Sikh representatives with the Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, and members of the British Cabinet.

Today, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, completed their task of receiving the Indian leaders, individually and privately, with the idea of informing themselves fully upon various political points of view.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who yesterday had a long personal talk with Mr. Attlee, today conferred with the Secretary of State for India and members of the Cabinet Mission.

Simultaneously, the Muslim League President, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, accompanied by Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, saw the Prime Minister at No. 10, Downing Street, and also conferred with Lord Wavell, Lord Pethick-Lawrence and the Cabinet Mission.

Between these engagements, Lord Wavell, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Mission reviewed the position among themselves.

The time factor is impelling more and more urgent pace in the conversations, which were initiated by Mr. Attlee in the hope of enabling the Indian Constituent Assembly—which the Muslim League at this moment still boycotts—to start auspiciously in Delhi on Monday, with all parties co-operating in the task of drawing up a Constitution for an independent India.

The Congress Party, represented by Pandit Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, is clear in its mind as to its action. It is committed to participation in the Constituent Assembly and is determined that nothing shall impede the launching of the Assembly on its appointed date.

MR. JINNAH'S PLANS

Mr. Jinnah, whatever the outcome of the conversations, at the moment, has no obligation to be back in Delhi for the opening session of the Assembly on December 9, and rumours were rife in London today to the effect that he might delay his departure.

Mr. Jinnah's Secretary, Mr. K. H. Khurshid, tonight said that no plans had been made concerning Mr. Jinnah's return, which would depend upon the talks.

It is believed that Mr. Jinnah, if time permits, would like to give some attention to the organisation of the Muslim League in Britain, with a view to lifting it to a higher plane.

A bare 48 hours remains in which the existing differences between the Congress and the Muslim League must be ironed out, if both parties are to participate from the start in the Constituent Assembly. The British Government, determined to use every minute available, have requested the Indian leaders not to commit themselves to further outside engagements, as no one at this moment knows what tomorrow and Friday may demand in the way of official talks.

In deference to this request, Mr. Jinnah has told a delegation of all branch Muslim League presidents of Britain that he cannot in the meantime commit himself to their invitation to attend a special function in his honour.

CRUCIAL DAY

Tomorrow, Thursday, will be a crucial day in the talks. The issue is regarded as lying inescapably between the Congress Party and the Muslim League. At the moment there is said to be little or no visible evidence of any approach on the two sides towards each other, but hopes are entertained that the intensive series of discussions which will be launched in the morning may prove fruitful.

The second day discussions in London have been most important,

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MR. ATTLEE'S REPORTED APPEAL TO MUSLIMS

Political Unity In India

(Continued from page 1).

The key meeting being possibly that of the Prime Minister with Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan.

A series of individual meetings between the British Ministers and Indian leaders having been completed by tonight, the idea of a Round Table Conference of all parties naturally arises as the next step. At the moment official quarters are unable to announce that this Round Table Conference has been convened for tomorrow, as the situation is moving so fast that it may change in the matter of hours.

Tomorrow's time-table so far is a flexible one. The Prime Minister early in the morning will consult the Viceroy and his colleagues in order to assess the position and fix a programme. The Indian leaders are lunching with the King tomorrow at Buckingham Palace.

GREAT PUBLIC INTEREST

The present crucial discussions are regarded by informed quarters as of almost incalculable importance in relation to the immediate developments in India and the course of world affairs. Public interest has been reinforced by the sympathetic and understanding appeal made yesterday by Mr. Dean Acheson on behalf of the United States Government. This appeal, according to British official quarters was entirely unprompted and unsolicited by His Majesty's Government.

Yesterday's and today's talks between Mr. Attlee, his colleagues and the Indian leaders have, it is understood, covered fully and frankly their respective points of view and have now reached the stage for a statement on the possibilities of accommodation and compromise. The British Government, in the light of their pledges to the Indian people, necessarily stand in the position not of arbitrators but of mediators. The foundation of a lasting solution, they contend, must still be a voluntary agreement between the major parties.

This would seem to be the Government's conception of the only way in which complete transfer of power from British to Indian hands can be effected in the minimum time with pride and satisfaction to both countries.

It is clear to observers that in the present negotiations the Labour Government is acting on its own responsibility and that it has not called the Conservative Opposition into active consultation.—Reuter.

PREMIER-LEAGUE TALKS

According to the *Associated Press of America*, the Prime Minister held today an eleventh hour, and apparently not encouraging, conference with Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan in an effort to break the Congress-League deadlock.

Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, an informed source said, told the Prime Minister that 90,000,000 Muslims would never agree unreservedly to the complete sacrifice of their political and religious identity, which they believe is involved in Britain's programme for Indian independence.

Mr. Attlee is said to have replied that unless the Muslims played their part in achieving political unity in India, not only would their own aims but the future peace of India, if not the world, be threatened by fratricidal strife.

Mr. Attlee, an authoritative source said, told Mr. Jinnah today that Britain would not reopen negotiations for independence outside the framework of the existing plan.

Mr. Jinnah and his colleague looked discouraged and tired when they left No. 10 Downing Street after the two-hour talk.—A.P.I.

A Reuter report says: Pandit Nehru, before he went to the India Office today, gave Epstein, the famous sculptor, the first sitting for a bust of himself. Pandit Nehru will give another sitting tomorrow and the final one on Friday.

TALK WITH LORD BEVERIDGE

Last night, Pandit Nehru had a talk at his hotel with Lord Beveridge, author of the famous social security plan now being implemented in the British Government's legislation. He is making arrangements, it is understood, to see Prof. Laski, a friend of 20 years' standing.

At the House of Commons yesterday, Pandit Nehru shook hands with Dr. Schumacher, leader of the German Social Democratic Party, who is in Britain as the guest of the British Labour Party—the introduction was made by Mr. Sorensen at Pandit Nehru's request.

The Parliamentary Delegation, which visited India at the beginning of this year, gave a dinner yesterday at the House of Commons to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh.

Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, personal representative of Pandit Nehru, is leaving London for Mexico immediately after the talks have ended between the Indian leaders and the Government. He will travel via New York.

—Reuter.