

Persia

El Aris (see last week's *Summary*) arrived in Tehran on the 18th March, and has had long conversations with Reza Rusta and Jodat of the Central Committee of Trade Unions. He has now left Tehran for Abadan, accompanied by Borisov and Malfettes. Mr. Harries, who had flown to Abadan on the 15th March and intended to leave for Isfahan on the 18th, may by now have rejoined his colleagues.

Saiyid Zia un Din Tabatabai, who has been detained in *résidence forcée* since the 20th March, 1946 (see *Summary* No. 337 of 26th March, 1946), was permitted to leave prison on the 18th March and go to his house, where he remains under guard. He is said to be seriously ill.

On the occasion of the Persian New Year (*No-ruz*) on the 21st March His Majesty the King sent a telegram of cordial greetings to His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Persia.

ASIAN RELATIONS CONFERENCE

The Conference (see *Summary* No. 383) opened in Delhi on the 23rd March. The following countries are reported to have sent delegates on behalf of cultural organizations to take part in the discussions: Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal, China, the Philippines, Burma, Siam, French Indo-China, the Malayan Union, Indonesia, Ceylon, and the Mongolian, Azerbaijani, Kirghizstan, Armenian, Georgian, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan republics of the Soviet Union. The Chinese Government originally protested at the inclusion of Tibet among those countries invited to attend the Conference, but an assurance was given them that the Conference was non-official and non-political, and that the invitations had no bearing upon any country's territorial or political status. The Chinese Government particularly requested that the question of Tibet's national status would not be raised at the Conference. They also requested that the Tibetan representatives should form part of the Chinese delegation, and a press report states that two "representatives of the Tibetan communities" are included in the Chinese delegation.

The following Governments are reported to have sent observers: Turkey, Lebanon, Palestine, Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet,

Nepal, Bhutan, Egypt, China, Siam, Indonesia, Ceylon. The Arab League, Great Britain, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand have sent non-governmental observers.

The press reports that Mr. Nehru, in his inaugural speech, emphasized the potential contribution of a united Asia to world peace, as contrasted with the moral bankruptcy of the West which had led the world into wars and conflicts and was threatening further wars. "The idea underlying this Conference," he said, "is in no way aggressive or directed against any other continent or country. . . . Ours is the great design of promoting peace and progress all over the world." Mr. Nehru stated that, as a result of Western imperialism, the countries of Asia had been largely isolated from each other, but that to-day this isolation was breaking down.

Although Mr. Nehru is described as the Vice-President of the Conference all invitations have gone out over his name, which has also been prominent in press references to it. Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League appear to attach some sinister significance to these facts, and, in spite of the large representation of non-Indian Muslims, are refusing to attend the Conference themselves.

THE FAR EAST**Japan**

The Japanese Premier has published a message of thanks to General MacArthur for the sympathy towards Japan's plight and the understanding of the Japanese people shown in his statement on the urgent need of an early peace treaty. At the same time fears are being expressed in Japan that the withdrawal of the forces of occupation might be the signal for a burst of activity by extremists both of the Right and of the Left.

In the Allied Council the Chairman, Mr. Atcheson, who has been on a visit to the United States, stated, according to a Press report, that American businessmen were ready to assist in the development of Japanese economy and of international trade. So are British businessmen, it may be added, on whose behalf His Majesty's Government have for some time past been urging the need of the resumption of private trading at the earliest time practicable.

Korea

March 1st is known in Korea as Independence Day because on this day in 1919 patriotic leaders, inspired by President Wilson's doctrine of self-determination, "demonstrated" and demanded, with disastrous results, independence for their country. It was feared that there might be serious disturbances this year, but, though there were minor clashes between Right and Left throughout Southern Korea, the day passed off comparatively quietly. A plot to issue a proclamation of a "Korean National Provisional Government" was discovered on the 3rd March and nipped in the bud.

According to the Central News, Tokyo, the arrival of Liu Yi-wan as Chinese Consul-General in Seoul has been followed by negotiations between the Chinese Government and the U.S. authorities for the re-opening of trade. Korea needs tobacco, rubber, hemp and piece-goods from China and has ginseng (a medicinal plant highly prized by the older Chinese) and marine products to offer in exchange. Cultural and commercial relations between Korea and China have always been close.

It is stated that the U.S. Military Government have decided to authorise the use of national flags by Korean ships in the near future.

General Christiakov has replied to General Hodge's letter of the 24th December, 1946, suggesting terms on which the Joint-Commission might be reconvened (see *Summary* 376). While couched in comparatively friendly terms, the reply detailed conditions which would bar various groups from participation and repeated the desire to exclude individuals who had compromised themselves by active opposition to the Moscow decision.

French Indo-China (see under "France")

Reports from Indo-China suggest that the military situation has been stabilised. The total French force available on the spot is said to be 120,000 which is regarded as adequate. Garrisons in Tonking have been relieved and communications restored. In the extreme south of the Province not only is Hué secure but a column—no doubt using Route Coloniale 9—has struck across from Quangtri on the coast to Savannaket on the river Mekong in Laos. By this action, it is claimed, the Viet-Nam line of communication between Tonking and Annam has been cut. It was reported in the Cochinese Assembly that the new

State Army, which is significantly stated to be for the purpose of fighting Viet-Nam guerrillas, would consist of four regiments and five squadrons or a total of 20,000 men. Ten per cent. of the effectives would be French, and training of Cochinese officers would be carried out at Dalat.

Indonesia

On the evening of 25th March, the long and difficult period of negotiation for a peaceful settlement between the Netherlands Government and the Indonesian nationalist leaders—which had all too often trembled on the brink—ended happily in the formal signing of the Linggadjati Agreement at the residence of the Commission-General in Batavia. The signatories to the Agreement on the Netherlands side were Professor Schermerhorn, M. van Poll and the Lieutenant-Governor-General, Dr. van Mook (M. de Boer did not sign, having already tendered his resignation from the Commission-General); and on the Indonesian side Mr. Sjarir, Dr. Gani and Messrs Roem and Soesanto.

After the Agreement had been signed, Professor Schermerhorn, in a short speech, stressed the importance of the step which this event marks in the history of the two nations, since it sealed the determination to pursue a policy of peaceful co-operation; he also drew attention to the pitfalls which inevitably lay ahead and pointed out that the beginning of the gigantic task on which they were embarking was not to be found merely in the letter of the 17 Articles of the Agreement, but in the spirit in which they are interpreted—a spirit which alone has made possible the present moment. Replying, Mr. Sjarir agreed that the signing of the Agreement marked an important step forward and expressed the hope that in practice it would act as a shining light in the path of peace. Dr. van Mook brought the ceremony to an end in a speech in which he dwelt on the necessity to maintain a constructive outlook, regarding their quarrels as belonging to the past and looking forward to a future dominated by mutual friendship and co-operation.

The events immediately preceding the signing of the Agreement are not without interest, the more especially since the ill-timed action of the Dutch military authorities all but brought about yet another deadlock.

On the 13th March, Mr. Sjarir returned to Batavia after attending the Provisional