

right and a left wing. Moreover what has been described for convenience as "Left," consists of several small parties, some of whom may be "attracted" to one or other of the larger parties. If the rather more go-ahead Democrats can agree on a policy (and also on an allocation of seats in the Cabinet), with the die-hard Liberals, the two Parties could form a fairly homogeneous Government.

All the members of the present Cabinet stood for election, several for the first time, and were elected. The Communist Party made a poor showing, only 4 being returned (as against 6 in the last House). Of 79 women candidates 15 were elected as against 39.

In a special message General MacArthur declared that the basic issue before the electorate had been the selection of political philosophies; that of the totalitarian extreme Right had been discredited, that of the extreme Left was still at issue. Judged from a distance, the result seems to betoken a slight strengthening of liberal forces in the Lower House.

The results of the election to the Upper House (House of Councillors) are obscured by the return of 110 Independents out of a total of 250. These persons, however, are said to be mainly of conservative tendencies, and it is estimated that the House will consist of 188 Right Wing and 62 Left Wing members. It is to be noted that the Communists have secured 5 seats.

Korea

(See also under "Soviet Union.")

While the U.S. and Soviet Government are discussing possible terms on which to re-convene the Joint Commission, politicians in South Korea are busily stirring a witch's brew of intrigue, disorder, and murder. The supporters of Rhee Syngman, now due back from his visit to the United States, Japan and China, are preparing to welcome the return of the conquering hero. He is pictured as the man who stiffened the American back and extracted a promise of economic support. Demonstrations are to be held urging him to accept the position of head of the Government of South Korea, May Day is scheduled as an auspicious day for the inauguration of this new movement towards independence. It is an interesting pointer on Korean officialdom that the Chief of Metropolitan Police is openly reported to have transferred his allegiance from Rhee, the political leader, to Kim Koo, the militant head, of the Right Party. Kim, therefore, seems to have

strengthened his position at the expense of Rhee.

Meanwhile the Communists have not been idle. They are training small mobile groups of 20 to 30 to foment disorders. Communists have been "infiltrated" into provincial Government departments and into the constabulary and police. On the 17th April, 12 of these policemen, together with 15 civilians and 3 agents from North Korea, were arrested while planning an attack on a police station. Both sides resort to terrorism. The latest exploit is the murder of the children of a worker who had refused to join the Communist ranks.

That life in Northern Korea is not all beer and skittles is suggested by the flow of refugees who are entering the Southern zone, sometimes at the rate of 1,000 per day.

French Indo-China

The arrival at Saigon of the French Ministers for War and Marine, together with the Chief of the Naval Staff, has been the signal for a fresh outburst of terrorist activity. A convoy on its way to Mytho, on the Mekong 40 miles south of Saigon, was ambushed and 44 persons were killed, including two Ministers of the Cochinchinese Government and a French Colonel. Nguyen Van Tam, the Minister of National Defence, who is said to be on the Viet-Minh Black List, was fortunate enough to come through unscathed. Previously, a bomb outrage in Saigon killed six Frenchmen and a number of Indo-Chinese.

Indonesia

On the 31st March, within a few days of the signing of the Linggadjati Agreement, Mr. Sjarir left Batavia in an aircraft especially sent by Pandit Nehru to take him to New Delhi in time to attend the final sitting of the Inter Asian Conference. With him went a number of other senior members of his Government, and this exodus brought to a temporary halt all further high-level discussions with the Commission General. The economic talks which had already started between Dr. van Hoogstraten and the Indonesian Minister for Economic Affairs, Dr. Gani, were suspended and Dr. Gani departed for Madioen, where at the Second Congress of the P.N.I. (Partai Nasional Indonesia) he was elected President of that party, despite its outspoken opposition to the Linggadjati Agreement to which Dr. Gani had but recently put his signature.

On the 10th April, Mr. Sjarir returned from India to find that, disturbed by the growing Indonesian agitation about independent foreign representation—fanned by a section of the Indonesian press—the Commission General had independently released the Notes officially exchanged between them and the Indonesian Delegates during the discussions which preceded the initialling of the draft Agreement. In the Commission's view this correspondence proves their contention that Article 15 of the Agreement shall be considered as providing for the admission of Indonesians to the Foreign Service, but not for independent Indonesian representation abroad until after the formation of the United States of Indonesia. The Indonesian leaders, on the other hand, are dissatisfied and claim that the correct interpretation of Article 15 is as set out in Mr. Sjarir's Note of the 20th November, 1946, that "in future qualified Indonesians will be appointed as representatives of the Indonesian Republic"—although Dr. van Mook had replied to this Note by pointing out that "diplomatic representation in the strictly international sense will not be possible before the formation of the United States of Indonesia." Endeavours to reach an understanding on this question with Mr. Sjarir have ended in a deadlock and, in these circumstances, the possibility cannot be overlooked of neighbouring States deciding to appoint diplomatic representatives direct to Jogjakarta, thus aggravating an already delicate situation. His Majesty's Government and the United States, however, have made it clear that they will extend to the Indonesian Republic the *de facto* recognition accorded by the Netherlands under Article 1 of the Linggadjati Agreement, with continued recognition of the Netherlands Government as the sovereign in foreign and economic relations.

In the meantime attention has been centred on the endeavour to straighten out the more pressing economic problems. These discussions have not been made easier by Indonesian insistence that the Dutch must first lift their blockade of Indonesian ports, nor by the departure of Dr. E. J. van Hoogstraten for Australia to head the N.E.I. delegation for discussions concerning their respective war claims. It is understood that among the many points reviewed have been imports and exports, rice supplies, foreign exchange, and the return of the owners, or their representatives, to factories and estates situated within Republican-held territory. Some

significance attaches perhaps to the fact that the representative of the Anglo-Dutch textile company, *Nebritex* (partly owned by Calico Printers Limited) has been granted permission by the Indonesian authorities to resume control experimentally of the Company's factory at Plered—near Pasarean. At the same time Dr. Gani has given warning that foreign firms will be required to comply with Republican laws and regulations regarding production and distribution. Both sides appear at one in the conviction that all movements of imports and exports must be officially controlled and that certain State trading organisations should be set up with a joint economic planning board. Further discussions are expected to take place as soon as the Indonesian delegates return from Jogjakarta where they have been attending a full meeting of the Republican Cabinet to examine both the developments in connexion with the economic situation and the deadlock which has occurred over the question of foreign representation.

On the 22nd April, the first session of the East Indonesian Parliament was opened at Macassar. Both Dr. van Mook and the Commission General were present. In his inaugural speech M. Soekawati, the Interim President, surveyed events since the Malino Conference of the 16th July, 1946; voiced the expectation that they would soon be able to welcome Borneo into the family of the Indonesian States; and, after re-affirming his Government's intention to perform their share of co-operation in the formation of the United States of Indonesia, expressed appreciation of the manner in which the situation had been handled by Dr. van Mook, who, he hoped, did not contemplate resignation from his post.

An exchange of official visits between President Soekarno and the Commission General has been under contemplation, and it is understood that Dr. Idenburg will be going to Jogjakarta shortly to invite Dr. Soekarno to come to Batavia for this purpose. It has also been announced at the Hague that the Netherlands Prime Minister, Dr. L. J. M. Beel, and the Minister for Overseas Territories, Mr. J. A. Jonkman, will visit Java shortly for discussions with the Netherlands East Indies and Republican Governments. It is also announced that the Netherlands Minister of Finance, Professor P. Lieftinck, will leave for Batavia towards the end of April. After a brief stay in Java Professor Lieftinck is expected to accompany Dr. van Mook on a visit to the United States of America about the 18th