

Peace - The Eleventh Hour

The shadow of the atom hangs over the efforts of the United Nations to hold the peace. In Britain, atomic research at Harwell in Berkshire was stopped up, as plans were made for cuts in the armed forces to speed economic recovery. Taking the place of men in uniform, may come an army of scientists to whom the nation would look for its defence. But strife, whether by the atom or less modern methods of destruction, still added up to human misery. For peace had not broken down racial hatreds which have smouldered over the centuries. In India, the age of the common man was still to come. Curfew is imposed in Delhi as communal hatred reaches fever pitch.

Muslims called for compulsory military service for every youth in Pakistan. In Delhi, Gandhi stated boldly that war between the two Dominions was bound to come. The uneasy marriage of Moslem and Hindu has turned back the pages to one of the grimmest eras in India's history.

Muslims found refuge in a Delhi mosque. Casualties from the rioting in the capital were more than 1,000.

The novelty of independence has worn thin. More Indians have been killed in the past month than in all the riots during the past 50 years. As the massacre went on, the East was wistfully saying goodbye to the reign of the British. It was certainly not India that was uppermost in the minds of many delegates as the Queen Mary neared New York for the UNO assembly. Aboard, Russia's Andrei Vishinski with daughter Zena and delegate Gromyko, he made it clear that (with America's George Marshall) he would hold the centre of the stage at this most momentous meeting.

Molotov's deputy, opened up smoothly with this comment -

Outside the UNO building were the usual greetings. But unless suspicion was stifled the 11th hour for the new diplomacy was near. Ostensibly Russia's liberal use of the veto had pricked America into command tactics. On Vishinski's come back was a bitter onslaught on what he called the warmongers of the Western Powers. Secretary Marshall's shadow boxing with Vishinsky boiled down to this. Russia was determined to break down what she regards as American interference in Soviet spheres of interest. Mr. Marshall was equally determined to curb Communist expansion wherever American influence existed. Obdurate Russians and the world looked at the facts. America still leads in atomic research, and, moreover, possesses a store of atomic bombs.

How long it would take Russia to catch up no UNO member knew. To the world, it was patently clear that power politics were still discreetly fashionable. But as the battle of international politics went on, the news from UNO didn't catch all the headlines.

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