

## WHY BRITISH STRUCK

16 November 1945

### WOMEN AND CHILDREN MASSACRED BY MOBS

(15757)

Exclusive to The Statesman from The Times War Correspondent now in Batavia  
NOV 13—It was announced officially this afternoon that Lieut-Gen Nagano, the Jap C-in-C in Java, Maj-Gen Yamamoto, his Chief of Staff, and Lieut-Gen Nakamura, the Jap commander of central Java, will be flown to Singapore on Nov 14 for trial as war criminals.

They were arrested some time ago for having disobeyed the Allied Supreme Commander and for having distributed arms to the Indonesians.

Officers returning from Sourabaya report that the T.K.R. or Peoples' Defence Army, which, together with the civil police, is allowed to carry arms, is playing a smaller part in the fight than is the P.R.I. or Youth Movement of Indonesia.

Most of the Indonesians engaged are boys in their teens who have been whipped up into a state of hysterical excitement. There is no doubt that they have perpetrated some appalling atrocities.

One is always hesitant to report atrocities without careful investigation, but the volume of evidence is becoming overwhelming.

According to a statement by Brig L. H. O. Pugh, who succeeded to the command of the 49th Indian Brigade after Brig Mallaby's death, when the balloon went up on Oct 28 a convoy of 20 military lorries, which was evacuating Dutch women and children from an outlying area to one of greater safety, was ambushed and murderous fire from rifles, machine-guns and grenades poured into the lorries.

#### GALLANT INDIAN TROOPS

Those women and children who were not killed, took refuge in some empty houses where they were defended for 48 hours by the small band of Indian drivers and escorting troops. Eventually they all fell into the hands of the Indonesians.

It is not known if they are still alive. Two or three survivors brought back accounts of the dismemberment of wounded Indian troops while still living, the burning of women and children and the murder, under the most barbaric conditions, of other women and children who fell into the hands of the mob.

Similar accounts have come in from all sides of atrocities committed on Indian prisoners captured by the Indonesians, their deliberate murder, torture, starvation, beating, eye-gouging and amputation of limbs. In one case the murder of an officer was followed by dismemberment, his limbs being hung from one person to another by the frenzied and hysterical mob.

Bodies of British and Indian troops roped together were found floating down river.

Brig Pugh said shooting of unarmed ambulances marked with the Red Cross, whether they contained wounded or not, were too numerous to mention.

#### FOOD PROHIBITED

After the signing of the Hawthorn-Sokarno truce in Sourabaya, negotiations were opened through the Contact Committee to evacuate internees and feed them. Such meagre supplies as had been provided by the Republican authorities ceased when the fighting started. The supply was not renewed and 6,000 women and children were left to starve. In some areas British and Indian troops gave most of their rations to hungry women and children.

As soon as the fighting ceased, efforts were made to take food into the camps from the port area by lorry, but the Indonesian leaders would not permit this with the result that food had to be dropped by Dakotas. The lives of many sick and wounded civilians were saved by the skill of British and Indian medical officers who took them into an Indian field ambulance. Despite a Red Cross flag and its being billeted in the hospital, the field ambulance was ceaselessly attacked for 36 hours.

After the cessation of the fighting Sourabaya was given over to mob rule. Looting and rioting were widespread and the civil authorities were totally unable to maintain order. Junior officials of the Republic were obstructive, truculent and non-co-operative.

After long negotiations it was decided that lorries evacuating women and children should carry Indonesian guards. Indian drivers, knowing full well how their comrades had been ambushed, drove with one guard to each lorry, returning with loads of women and children. On some days they sat waiting to go all day, while futile negotiations went on with Indonesian officials who hedged and procrastinated.

These facts help to explain why it was decided as soon as the decks were clear to give the adolescent Indonesian leaders of Sourabaya a hearty crack. The nonsense had gone on long enough.—Copyright.

17 November 1945

# SOURABAYA MASSACRE

## WOMEN AND CHILDREN PUT TO THE SWORD WHEN INDONESIANS AMBUSH CONVOY

*State 17.11.45*

Exclusive to The Statesman from The Times War Correspondent in Batavia.

NOVEMBER 14.—Following is a summary of an official report compiled by staff officers from eye-witness accounts of the ambushing of a convoy taking internees to Sourabaya on Oct 29.

When fighting broke out in Sourabaya, it was decided to evacuate as many women and children as possible from the Darmo area. On the morning of Oct 29 a convoy of 17 lorries of the 123rd Indian Company, RIASC, under the command of Capt Chopra, organized and successfully completed two journeys evacuating about 400 women and children.

On the third journey the convoy met a roadblock in the form of a pole across the road. No Indonesians were in sight at the time, and Capt Chopra got down and tried to remove it. While doing this he was machine-gunned. He is now missing, believed killed.

This was the signal for general shooting to break out. The troops in the trucks replied and defended the convoy for two hours, first from the trucks and then from nearby houses where they had managed to get some of the women and children.

The Indonesians used grenades and set fire to six trucks while women and children were still in them. Their screams could be heard above the shooting. Two women and two children were seen killed with swords.

After two hours, one of the vehicles needed in returning to our lines five women and six children. One woman and two children had been shot dead.

Eight sepoy escaped and returned several days later. About 150 women and children have not been seen since. It is possible that some are being held by the Indonesians. Their fate will only be known when peace returns to Sourabaya.

### NEW PREMIER'S PLANS

In a statement this morning Shariar, the new Republican Premier, said, "The Government of Indonesia having successfully weathered the storm and stress attendant upon the initial stages of its assumption of power, feels the time is now ripe for the institution of several necessary measures aimed at democratizing the administrative structure of the country."

The first measure is the formation of a new Cabinet vested with ministerial responsibility and free from any taint of collaboration.

The second measure will be the holding, at an early date, of elections to the National Assembly, to which body the Cabinet will be responsible.

Thirdly, "in order to stimulate and foster the growth of sound political thinking, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia has called upon

the people to organize parties to represent all shades of political opinion in the country. The nuclei of some such parties were in existence before the Jap occupation and had to remain quiescent during the period of Jap rule. Both the Dutch and the Japs were equally hard on Communists and political parties which stood for complete, untrammelled independence. The Republic of Indonesia will ban no political organization so long as its tenets or actions do not run counter to recognized democratic principles."

The first task to be tackled by the new Cabinet will be the Sourabaya situation. Shariar has already appointed a commission of three members of the Working Committee to go down and investigate. They may be joined by Amir Sjarifuddin who, as commander of all Indonesian armed forces, regards it as his main responsibility to end the present bloodshed. He proposes to do this by strengthening the legitimate T.K.R. and disciplining the recalcitrant elements.

British and American observers who attended the recent Youth Congress at Jogjakarta report that both Sokarno and Sjarifuddin tried to persuade the young men to concentrate not on fighting but on reconstruction, less glamorous than fighting but more important and requiring equal character.

These observers, incidentally, were impressed by the discipline of the thousands of youthful delegates from all over the Indies and by the order which seemed to prevail in the town where no British and Dutch were present and the law was entirely in Indonesian hands.

### JAP GENERALS ARRESTED

At an informal ceremony at the HQ of the 23rd Indian Division (his morning, Lieut-Gen Nagano, C-in-C of the Jap 16th Army, and his Chief of Staff, Maj-Gen Yamamoto surrendered their swords to Maj-Gen Hawthorn.

The latter spoke sternly to them. "You have, in my opinion, deliberately and dishonourably failed to carry out the terms of the surrender imposed on your nation by the Allied Powers," he said.

"In general terms, you have failed to maintain law and order in Java, which I ordered you to do on my arrival here. You have surrendered your forces to unauthorized persons without my orders. You have deliberately handed over your arms and equipment to unruly elements in the country and thus enabled them to cause

(Continued at foot of next column.)

bloodshed and loss of life to Allied troops under my command.

"In the name of the Supreme Allied Commander, I now order your arrest. You will both surrender your swords to me, after which you will be flown to Singapore, under escort, where your conduct will be thoroughly investigated and action taken against you as directed by the Supreme Allied Commander."

After they had handed over their swords, the two generals were taken under arrest to the airfield where they were joined by Maj-Gen Nakamura, the Jap commander of central Java.

All three were then flown to Singapore.—Copyright.