

## British women appeal to Indian P M for justice

### INDIAN MRA WORKERS STILL ILLEGALLY HELD

### Dame Flora MacLeod leads petition



JANAKI VARADHAN



USHA CHANDIRAM

DAME FLORA MACLEOD, 88-year-old Chief of the Clan MacLeod, appealed to Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, to use her influence to see that justice be done for two Indian MRA women workers kidnaped and now being held against their will.

The Clan Chief's urgent appeal on 11 October to the 49-year-old woman leader of five hundred million people was supported by British women from political, business and trade union circles. (Text on page 2).

The two young Indian women, Miss Janaki Varadhan and Miss Usha Chandiram, of Bangalore, both of age, who of their own free will have been working full time with Moral Re-Armament for the last two years, were forcibly seized by Madras police on 2 September. Efforts by Rajmohan Gandhi, as leader of MRA in India, to have them freed have been frustrated despite the issuing of three writs of *habeas corpus* by the Mysore High Court to their fathers who are allegedly holding them.

On 10 October Justice K S Hegde of the Mysore High Court, after Mr Chandiram was absent for the third time from court and failed to produce his daughter, directed the Commissioner of Police in Bangalore to

locate Miss Usha Chandiram and have her produced in court. Mr Varadhan was also absent and failed to produce his daughter in court. He filed a counter affidavit.

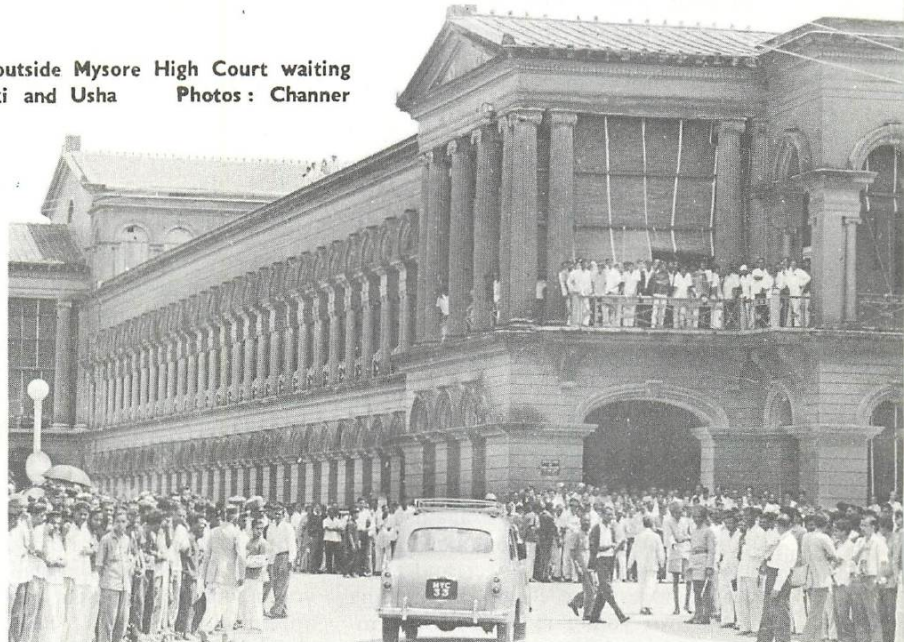
Rajmohan Gandhi wrote in *Himmat* the Indian newsmagazine of which he is Chief Editor, (23 September) that the police action against the young women in Madras was

'inspired by political pressures.'

In his affidavit filed on behalf of Miss Chandiram, Gandhi reproduced the text of a letter to three ladies working with MRA, written by Miss Chandiram on 24 September and smuggled out of her place of detention.

In the letter Miss Chandiram stated: 'I don't know how I'm ever

Crowds outside Mysore High Court waiting for Janaki and Usha Photos: Channer



going to post this as I have no freedom whatsoever. It's hell and I guess it's going to get worse the more I don't give in. And I ain't giving in—no man! I've taken on a job for life and if it means spending part of it in a prison—it's damned hard, but fine . . .

'God, when is this nightmare going to end? If the only way to get my freedom is through the Court I want to fight it that way.

'Janaki's sticking it out I'm sure. I think she'd want to fight it out straight too. Because we have been brought here illegally and are being kept here illegally . . . that night (2nd) I was lied to—they said I could go—double-crossed me, pushed me into the car driven by two plainclothesmen and brought me here. No amount of screaming helped.

'I want to be free. I want to be free . . . Please do something . . . I want to be able to say real soon, Boy! that was an experience! But thank God for it—now comes the real job—I want to use everything to save this country's freedom.'

Both affidavits filed for Miss Chandiram and Miss Varadhan reproduced sentences from letters written by the two young women earlier this year which anticipated their forcible removal from the work of Moral Re-Armament and urged legal action should their fears materialise.

In May Miss Varadhan wrote: 'I want to use my life with Moral Re-Armament to save my country from corruption, division and hate. Of my own choice and free will I join the force of Moral Re-Armament as a full-time worker. Some people will dislike this decision, including my relatives and it may even be my parents. But I know what I am doing and I am 21 years of age. If the need arises I hereby fully authorize you to act on my behalf in any legal matter so that my decision is not altered by force.'

Both affidavits allege that the whole sequence of events in Madras (where they were forcibly seized on 2 September by police) starting with the complaints of the two fathers regarding the influence of MRA on the young ladies and the registration by the police of complaints under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the registration of cases against Mr Gandhi on the bases of those complaints, was merely a cover and a device to invest the illegal kidnapping of the two young ladies with a semblance of legality.

## APPEAL BY BRITISH WOMEN TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

Initiated by Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod

WE HAVE WATCHED INDIA WITH ADMIRATION and deep respect. We admire the constitution which she formed for herself, binding together a vast concourse of people of diverse languages and backgrounds. India adopted what she judged best in the constitution of Britain and other countries and has always upheld the rule of law domestically and internationally.

We were therefore filled with consternation to learn that two young women, Miss Janaki Varadhan (22) and Miss Usha Chandiram (18½), both of age by Indian law and engaged of their own consent for the past two years in the work of Moral Re-Armament, have been forcibly arrested in Madras and confined incommunicado in their fathers' homes in Bangalore since September 2nd.

Rajmohan Gandhi as leader of Moral Re-Armament in India, has petitioned successfully that a writ of *habeas corpus* be issued demanding that the young women be produced in Court. The writ, issued by Mr Justice Hegde and Mr Justice K Bhimiah, Judges of the Mysore High Court, has been twice ignored and the fathers of the two women have failed to produce their daughters in court.

Through the name of Mahatma Gandhi, India has been associated with the fight for freedom—a tradition which his grandson is now carrying forward in India and the world. At a time when critically important elections are ahead, the eyes of the world are on India. We appeal to you, both as a woman and Prime Minister, to see that justice is done.

*Among the first signatories:* LADY IRONSIDE, widow of Field Marshal Lord Ironside; LADY CHAPMAN, wife of the Chairman of the Jarrow Conservative Association; LADY GARROW, wife of the Socialist Chairman of the Northumberland County Council; LADY RICHMOND, widow of Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond; LADY ELEANOR COLE, Kenya; the joint Committees of the Women of the Hour (London and Edinburgh), a business and professional women's association; MRS NELLIE CRESSALL, Councillor in Poplar, London, for 47 years; MISS SAIDIE PATTERSON, former Chairman of the Northern Ireland Labour Party; MRS J S WORRALL, Lady Mayoress of Sheffield, 1965-6; and MRS SALLY TURPIN, widow of the former Mayor of Bethnal Green.

### DIARY OF EVENTS

**2 September** The young women were seized by the Madras Police. The Police Commissioner alleged that the women, both of age, were not freely working with MRA and wished to return to their parents. He produced no evidence to sustain this view other than complaints against Gandhi from the fathers of the women.

**6 September** Following an appeal by Rajmohan Gandhi the Acting Chief Presidency Magistrate of Madras, J H Osman Ali Khan, directed that the young women with their fathers should appear in Court on 15 September for the matter to be clarified.

**9 September** The Public Prosecutor of Madras State petitioned the High Court to quash the ruling of the Chief Presidency Magistrate.

Later Mr Justice K S Ramamurthi of the Madras High Court quashed the order of the Chief Presidency Magistrate, saying the young women were out of the jurisdiction of the Madras Presidency Magistrate. They were with their parents in Bangalore, Mysore State.

**4 October** Rajmohan Gandhi filed affidavits with the Mysore High Court petitioning that a writ of *habeas corpus* be issued.

# 'There was urgency about the way you spoke'

TWO THIRDS OF CARDIFF'S dockworkers were in a crowded canteen one morning this week when the Secretary of the dockers, Sam Hill, mounted a chair to introduce the cast of *It's Our Country, Jack!*

Card games were shoved aside and breakfast nearly forgotten as they listened to the convictions and songs of the cast.

Afterwards a member of the dockers' football team commented, 'It was like a bolt from the blue. There was an urgency about the way you sang and spoke. We respond to that.' A dockers' leader, who met MRA a few months ago, said, 'Whenever there is a dispute here, I think, "What would the people in MRA do?"'

'Good Morning Wales', the country's popular BBC programme on 11 October featured Padmini Kirtane of Poona, singing 'Cool Water', a song from the show.

The BBC Overseas Service has recorded another cast member, Conrad Hunte, for broadcasting to the Caribbean. On 8 October he spoke to the crowd at half-time at the Cardiff City—Hull City football match.

The Chairman of the Monmouthshire County Council headed an enthusiastic audience at the première in the Welsh capital—the third port city visited in the last three weeks.

Welcoming the cast in Cardiff, Alderman R D Williams, last year's Mayor of Barry, said, 'If the spirit that has flowed through this cast could flow through Great Britain, our economic and spiritual ills would vanish. Wales will welcome you with open arms.'

The *South Wales Echo* in a review said *It's Our Country, Jack!* was 'a brilliant show'. It wrote, 'The show is not lacking in technical brilliance or humour. As entertainment it is excellent and the enthusiasm is catching.'

The *Guardian*, Port Talbot, wrote, 'This lively and colourful musical showed the need to make not only our country great once more, but to stand united with all men regardless of colour and creed.' The cast were out 'to contradict the idea in so many people's minds that our country is a self-centred nation and to convince them that the rest of the world will want to follow.' It concluded that the singing of the Welsh National Anthem by the cast was 'an appropriate end to an enjoyable and inspiring programme.'

The *South Wales Evening Post* wrote: 'A lively musical show studded with forthright cameos . . . It was the sheer enthusiasm of the performers which made this a show well

worth seeing. There was a snap about their dance routine and they went into their musical numbers with a crackle and pop that got over to the audience.'

Thanking the cast for their visit to Port Talbot, the Mayoress, Mrs W H Lewis, said, 'You have sown a seed. It is up to us now to see it goes on. It is very refreshing to have such good ideas, such clean living, such clean-looking people. I am proud to have met you.'



Jyoti Subramaniam and Padmini Kirtane, now with MRA in Britain Photo: Strong

## £300 given by cast

THE FIFTEEN-NATION CAST of the musical revue *It's Our Country, Jack!* raised £300 between them to help Rajmohan Gandhi's campaign to free the two Indian MRA workers illegally held.

A spokesman for the cast said this week in Cardiff that they had sent the money to aid 'the courageous stand that youth, and particularly Janaki Varadhan and Usha Chandiram, are making for the freedom of India and the world'. Miss Padmini Kirtani of Poona, a member of the cast, said, 'As an Indian I am grateful to see British youth and people sacrificing for other people's freedom.'

Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma, has launched a 'Free Janaki and Usha' fund in India through his paper *Himmat*.

## THE FIGHT TO SERVE

*Dr Paul Campbell, speaking at the meeting at which Dame Flora MacLeod initiated the Petition to India's Prime Minister.*

ALL THROUGH HISTORY those who have carried forward the flame of liberty have had two battles to fight. One is to change men's minds, hearts and attitudes and to develop the social, political and economic conditions in which freedom can be exercised. The other is the fight for the freedom to carry forward this service to the human family.

Christ was killed in an effort to stop His work. Lincoln was cut off. Buchman had this battle all his life. It is the history through the centuries of the struggle for the moral

and spiritual rearmament of humanity. By the very nature of man and man's love for that nature it cannot be otherwise.

Rajmohan Gandhi's battle is true to this great tradition. His bid for liberty and law has become a national and world issue. It is on this issue of the freedom to live for and fight for the Moral Re-Armament of our nations that Gandhi is taking his stand. The whole world will be grateful.

To wage this world-wide struggle with increased intensity is our one hope for the future of humanity.

## Canada

THREE HUNDRED uniformed cadets from the College Militaire Royale, one of the military academies of Canada, were among an audience of 2,000 at last week's showing of *Up With People* at the Canadian Force's Base in St Jean, Quebec Province.

This performance was the third given in French-speaking Quebec. Two days earlier, after a tour of the English-speaking part of Quebec, the cast performed at Valcartier, home of the famed Royal 22nd 'Van Doos' Regiment.

Last month *Up With People* was performed in Canadian military bases in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

## Brazil

BRAZILIANS—from the Rio slums, colleges, the military and business community—met in the new MRA training centre at Petropolis. They saw presentations of *Dynamite '66* and MRA films.

Host of the day's conference on 5 October was Air Marshal Guedes Muniz, President of the Steel Company of Guanabara. Among those attending were Professor Boaventura, who came officially at the request of



## DON'T GIVE IN TO BLACKMAIL

JAMES COULTER, an Australian wartime flying-boat pilot, said last weekend in London that there was a 'conspiracy of blackmail to pressure Britain and Australia into giving up Commonwealth and world responsibilities.'

the Minister of Education; Colonel Cavalcanti de Albuquerque, the government appointed administrator of the Port of Rio; and 30 young workers from the Jacarezinho slum area of Rio.

## Germany

Showings of *Sing-Out Deutschland* began this month for troops of the Second German Army Corps in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the Bavarian Alps.

General Greiner, Deputy Commander of the First Mountaineer Division, said to his men after a performance of the show, 'This evening, the hour we have just lived through, has given us soldiers a certainty that we do not need to fear for the future of our country. Since 1956 it has been our task to build up the spirit and the will to defend in the German youth.'

'These forces propagate the idea that Britain and the Commonwealth are back numbers,' said Coulter. 'Then they tell Britain that without the Commonwealth she has no right to be heard.'

'Certain people tell us in Australia we are so small it does not matter what we do. They tell India she is so large, her problems so great, that she had better concentrate on herself. These voices,' he said, 'tried to blackmail Japan for her past.'

'In the Far East, India, Japan and Australia are in fact three bases on which the tripod of progress for Asia and the world can be built,' said Coulter.

'If we listen to the voices of blackmail we will leave the world stage to those with an ideology out to conquer the world. Britain has a unique part to play in bringing an answering ideology. Communism has reached the cross-roads and doesn't know where to turn. This is the hour for free men and free nations to speak out.'

Coulter arrived this month in London from India where he took a party of 53 Australians and New Zealanders to work at the invitation of Rajmohan Gandhi.

## 'STAY WITH AFRICA' CALL

SOUTH AFRICAN Andrew Peppetta, director of the African musical revue *Harambee Africa*, appealed to the British people to maintain their links and responsibilities on the African continent.

Speaking at a large meeting in the Royalty Theatre, London, last month, he said, 'Sometimes we are fooled by those power-hungry minority groups who like to use the mistakes of the past and get to positions of power themselves and point dirty fingers at this great nation of yours and say

therefore, because of those mistakes, "Let us push freedom out of history; let us push Britain out of existence."

'My answer to that is: Let the men of God, the men of courage who have enough guts to stand up for what is right, say, "No, we will not damn this country on its mistakes. But we will look on its greatness and encourage it to move forward now into the next phase in history. It can take the whole of humanity forward so that we can enjoy the liberty which it has pioneered for Africa and the world."'