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Question: Dr. Jagan, you said that the British Government's stand at the Independence talks was unprincipled. Can you please explain?

Answer: Firstly, the British Government quibbled about my Government having a majority of seats and the Opposition having a majority of votes. The fact is that the present British Government, now seemingly unpopular, was elected on a minority of votes. An examination of the statistics shows that of the last eighteen governments in the United Kingdom, only five were elected with a majority of votes. Incidentally none of the latter got more than 55 percent of the votes.

Secondly the British Government is hypocritical when it talks about the wishes of the majority. What about Nyasaland, the Rhodesias, Aden, etc.

Right now the British Government is forcing the Colony of Aden to accede to the Federation of South Arabia. Is this being done with the consent of the Adenese people? Certainly not! The decision to accede was made by the Aden Legislative Council all of whose members were elected by a total of 5,000 voters out of a total population of 220,000. At the last election, the major opposition party refused to contest the election on the ground that the franchise was so restrictive as to forbid all unskilled workers from taking any part in it. Incidentally, a few weeks ago, all of Mr. Bayoomi's (the leading Aden Minister) twenty candidates for twenty seats at the municipal.

General elections due to be held in January 1963 have been postponed for a year. Replying to a debate on Aden in the House of Commons on November 13, 1962, this is how Mr. Nigel Fisher, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies put it:

" There can be only two results of a general election: either the People's Socialist Party would win, in which case the merger of Aden with the protectorate States would be off, or one of the more moderate groups would win, in which case the merger would go ahead, with just the same result as our present policy, except that we should have lost a year. If the P.S.P. won, it would at once start agitating for Aden to merge with the Yemen. That outcome would be totally unacceptable both to the Protectorate and to Her Majesty's Government.

As my right Hon. Friend pointed out, we, too, have our interests in Aden, and I really do not see any reason why I should not say this and say it bluntly. It must be perfectly obvious to Hon. Members on both sides that Britain is vitally interested in the Aden bases. They are quite essential to us for the defence of our oil interests in the Persian Gulf, for the discharge of our treaty obligations in the Middle East and for our whole system of Commonwealth communications and defence."

This is simply a case of might is right. It has nothing to do with the wishes of the people nor with the consent or active support of a substantial majority of the people.

In Britain, the British Government now in office has suffered a succession of electoral defeats at by-elections and in spite of this it is proceeding to negotiate a treaty with Europe which will affect the sovereignty of Britain. It can now truly be said that a substantial majority of the British people are opposed to the policies of the British Government. There is civil disobedience against its nuclear policy, there is objection to its economic policy, there is objection to its Common Market policy, yet that government elected by slightly less than a majority of votes cast does not think it necessary to refrain from doing what it considers necessary because the

opposition disagrees with it. In a recent House of Lords debate on the question of Britain's entry into the Common Market, Lord Hailsham, the Government's spokesman rejected Opposition Members' suggestions for a new general election or for a referendum as a means of settling this issue which incidentally was not a specific one at the last generalelection. This is how the Noble Lord stated it on November 8, 1962:

"The truth of this matter, I think, is that you cannot - it is not that one does not want to, but you cannot - turn a General Election in this country into a referendum. It is not a referendum and most of us would dislike the introduction of a referendum as a specific...."

Yet we hear talks here about elections before independence and referendum

In the United States of America, the President was elected by a minority of total votes cast. He has put through reforms which required him to use Federal Troops to establish the government's policies in the face of hostility from leading Southern Democrats of his own Party and the overwhelming majority of the white population in Mississippi and elsewhere.

in the voting system.

The majority of the population of Southern and Northern Rhodesia are hostile to the existing governments which move from one period of emergency to another. Yet the British Government does not conceive it a duty to save the majority of the people of these territories from a tyrannical parliamentary minority in whose elections they have little or no say. Both Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia are opposed to Central African Federation. Dr. Hastings Banda's Party - the Malawi Party - received 95% of the votes at the 1961 Elections. In Northern Rhodesia Mr. Kenneth Kaunda's Party, the United National Independence Party, won 80% of the votes at the elections held a few weeks ago. Both of these parties had campaigned on a platform of breaking away from the Federation. In spite of the overwhelming desire of the people of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia the British Government continues to maintain the Federation as a political entity.

Question: Why did you charge the British Government for abdicating its responsibility?

Answer: Because the British Government refused to resolve the deadlock in ~~our~~ case, whereas in a parallel situation in Trinidad, I understand, the Opposition was more or less told that Trinidad was going to become independent, and the Opposition could take it or leave it. To resolve the deadlock, The Guyana Government delegation at one stage told Mr. Sandys to use any independent Commonwealth territory's constitution as a model if he did not like the Trinidad and Jamaica models which we largely adapted. At another stage, I said that provided our existing British and Commonwealth system of voting was retained, he could arbitrate on all outstanding issues, once he was prepared to use as his yard-stick sound political principles, British constitutional practice and Commonwealth precedent.