

AGGRESSIVE IDEALS OF TAJ BIBI

Thinking Allowed...

By HASINA SAJUN

Taj Bibi, the young candidate elected to the Provincial Assembly of Sind, is a surprising mixture of aggressive ideals and sincere humility.

Her vision of the rôle of Pakistani women after this national crisis is of a rising mass of hard working, courageous, zealous women, the epitome of simplicity. She foresees the women of Pakistan achieving all and much more than women in other countries in the post-war period. She mentioned Japan especially.

Granted that Pakistani women possess such sterling qualities. But what of the opportunities...? Where are the opportunities? Ask the hundreds of graduates and you can see that the opportunity is non-existent, I told her.

She was optimistic about being able to get a Bill passed in the Assembly fixing a quota for women in every industrial organisation. Taj Bibi felt that women must tackle other technical jobs like assembling of radios, T.V. sets, machinery, and jobs like driving vehicles. She even mentioned driving of trains.

Taj Bibi says: "We will create opportunities. We will set up training centres." She feels that the women of Pakistan, the educated women, must show enthusiasm. They should have a revolutionary reaction after what our country has gone through, realising how much work needs to be done. "No lukewarm doled up ladies can tackle this job....."

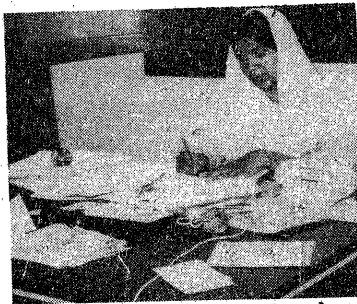
Blind worship at the altar of fashion is not only worthless to those who can indulge in them but worse for those who also think that this means progress. To set an example to the less fortunate the fashionable women



must give up frippery and ostentation.

Where there is a will there is a way. It was never more true than in her case, she said. She comes from a very poor home. She had a difficult time persuading her parents to allow her to study. Against all odds, with the help of free books and scholarships, she attained her M.A. in Urdu, then in Political Science and is now tackling her LL.B. She was born in Karachi in 1946.

Even till today she studies without the basic amenity of electricity, living in the Hub River road area. She is a founder member of the PPP. She had studied their manifesto and felt here was the right party.



Here were the people whose ideals and aspirations were the crying need of today.

She feels that Mr. Bhutto has proved that he has the interest of the people at heart. She feels her election to one of the seats reserved for women in the Assembly is a proof of it. She feels that the Begums who were elected year after year to the Na-

tional Assembly could only talk of what the poor needed. They could not possibly ascertain their problems, being removed so far from the grim realities.

Miss Taj Bibi will be leaving for a tour of Sind and will be accompanied by two legal advisers. She hopes to be able to find ways and means to overcome the problems faced by women who run industrial homes, maternity homes, schools and colleges. She hopes to convey to the women steeped in the culture of the purdah system how to stand up for their rights. Many of the women who are without the protection of menfolk of their immediate families have more often than not lost their rights to scheming exploiting persons.

Taj Bibi hopes to set up Khawateen branches of legal advisers in the bigger towns who could give free advice and legal support.

Knowing that she has taken active part in trade union activities and been the President of the West Pakistan Students Federation, I asked her about the activities of the labour and students and their mood nowadays. And didn't she agree with me that they are getting out of hand....?

She was sure that both our labour and our students are sincere workers but the mischief-making elements instigate them to do wrong and go beyond the framework in which they really need to work.

Taj Bibi finally appealed to the journalists and the publicity media in general not to neglect the poor and to make sure that they give proper coverage to their undertakings and help them in the fight for justice.