



---

# "OPERATION ASYLUM"

and YOU

---

1947

206

Printed by M. B. Rao, New Age Printing Press, 190B, Khetwadi Main Road, Bombay 4, and published by him for People's Publishing House, Raj Bhuvan, Sandhurst Road, Bombay 4.

Price Four Annas

## Introduction

We give in this book the important documents regarding the countrywide raids carried on by the police on the 14th of January 1947, on the offices not only of the Communist Party of India and the *People's Age*, but of several mass organisations like trade unions and kisan sabhas and purely cultural organisations like the Indian People's Theatre Association and the Friends of the Soviet Union.

The memorandum sent by P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member of the Interim Government (copies of which were also handed to Pandit Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, Acharya Kripalani, Congress President, and others), raises sharply the question of the role and function of the Indian leaders in the Interim Government—in short the duty of the Interim Government towards the Indian people.

To help our readers to judge this question for themselves, we give in brief the political background against which the police raids and the subsequent prevarications must be viewed.

### Indian Threat To Imperialism

Ever since the INA demonstrations in Calcutta in November 1945 and the historic RIN uprising of February 1946, the British rulers of our land knew that the anti-imperialist upsurge was mounting to great revolutionary heights and that Hindus and Muslims were coming together to fight shoulder to shoulder for liberation from imperialism, for freedom, bread and land.

Panic-stricken by the mighty sweep and unprecedented intensity of these struggles, the British imperialists hastily despatched the Cabinet Mission to India to open negotiations with the Indian leaders for the "grant of freedom to India." What their real purpose was in doing so, was clearly expressed by P. J. Griffiths, the leader of the European group in the Central Assembly:

"India in the opinion of many was on the verge of a revolution before the Cabinet Mission arrived. The Cabinet Mission has at least postponed if not eliminated the danger."

(Speech to the East India Association in London, June 24, 1946.)

As everyone knows, after months of negotiations, the Cabinet Mission produced a plan which promised a weak union centre to the Congress and to the League compulsory grouping of six

provinces; and, while seeming to concede the demand of each, intensified the conflict between them. Both were told that if they came to an agreement with one another and with Princes—the ancient stooges of imperialism—and produced a constitution acceptable to all, then the British would ratify it, subject to two further conditions: namely, adequate safeguards for the minorities and Indian willingness to sign an Indo-British treaty.

#### Secret Plans—Military

While carrying on these talks with Indian leaders and making open promises of granting freedom, the British rulers were making secret plans to delay and defeat Indian freedom and to crush any anti-imperialist rising of the Indian people. This was the unpublished chapter of the Cabinet Mission's plan.

These were plans made by the British Generals in the GHQ in New Delhi and detailed instructions were given to top army officers how to put down any popular movement if it broke out despite the desperate tactics of the British imperialists.

Those plans and instructions have been made widely known by the *People's Age*, the English weekly organ of the Communist Party of India.

For it is a fact that week after week, the *People's Age* exposed the secret military plans against the Indian people, as it came to know about them. They were meant to expose to the Indian leaders the grim reality behind the promise of freedom, to warn our entire people that by plans like "Operation Asylum" and the Hyderabad "Embrace", the British imperialists were in fact preparing to shoot down our people and dig into our country instead of granting freedom and quitting India as they were promising.

#### Secret Plans—Riots

While they made these military plans to crush any united struggle of the people, they also made plans to divide the masses of Hindus and Muslims and set them at each other's throats. This was the plan of fomenting, conniving and intensifying communal riots.

General Sixsmith admitted quite openly before the Spens Inquiry into the Calcutta riots that he did not want to bring the troops in at the early stages of the rioting in Calcutta because there was a danger of Hindu-Muslim riots changing into an anti-Government riot. In short, that the British deliberately let the riots go on for quite sometime because unless mutual hatred became intense and blinded the people, there was the danger of Hindus and Muslims joining to fight the British instead of cutting each other's throats.

And this the British did not only in Calcutta, but everywhere, all over the country.

#### The Communists' Role

All these secret plans, their military and riot plans were fearlessly exposed by the Communist Party through speeches, handbills, periodicals and pamphlets.

Day after day, these devilish tactics of digging in by the British rulers were exposed to our people. It was a proud privilege and a patriotic duty and the Communist Party discharged it, confident that our great people, both Hindus and Muslims, would see the British trap in time.

In order to reach out to as many people as possible, the exposure of these military plans were published in book form under the title *Operation Asylum* and sold openly and widely in September last year, the month when top Congress leaders formed the Interim Government at the centre.

These exposures were reprinted by several nationalist dailies like the *Bombay Chronicle* and the *Free Press Journal* and even by foreign journals like *Australian Guardian*.

In the preface to that pamphlet Dr. G. M. Adhikari, the Consulting Editor of *People's Age*, had called upon the Indian leaders of the Interim Government to see the "kind of war" that the British were planning and to repudiate these murder plans publicly.

The Communists in the trade-union and kisan movements fought the riot plans of the British and led mighty united struggles of workers and peasants, both Hindus and Muslims, Caste Hindus and Untouchables.

#### Lying Denials and Delay

This widespread exposure and the anti-riot united struggles of workers and peasants by and under the leadership of the Communist Party were shattering the very bases of the British secret plans.

The British Generals of the GHQ were red with rage that their devilish plans had been exposed. As early as August 24, they hastened to issue a communique to hide their guilt and pacify the people. They declared that the plans "are not and never will be directed against the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of India" and that they were intended to train the army to put down "lawlessness" and thus fulfil its "obligations" to stand by the "constituted authority".

But they knew that these big words could not hide their bloody intentions, that their lies could not fool any Indian. For every Indian knew that there was never yet any freedom move-

ment in India, or anywhere else, which the imperialists had not condemned as "lawlessness." And any Indian who read the exposures could have little doubt that their aim was to crush any and every anti-imperialist demonstration in blood.

That is why the British GHQ decided to lie low till the affair had blown over. They knew that any immediate prosecution would rouse a countrywide protest such as had made them hastily drop the INA trials. That is why they did not take any action for 6 months and only then planned the attack and launched the prosecution.

#### Smoke-Screen Laid

And even when they attacked six months afterwards they dare not do it openly but first put up a popular smoke-screen to carry through their bureaucratic attack.

The British GHQ dare not ask the Interim Government to order a prosecution for leakage of military secrets, for the question would immediately have been raised as to the nature of those secret plans, the very thing that would have exposed the GHQ.

So they bypassed the Interim Government, and induced the Bombay Government to order a prosecution against the *People's Age*. But a mere prosecution would not have served the purpose in view; namely a countrywide attack on the working-class and peasant movement.

And so, the Central Intelligence Department, the imperialist spy department, planned and organised the countrywide raids and searches well in advance. But once again a cheap trick was adopted. The Intelligence Bureau would keep everything ready but would not move till it had received a formal request from the Bombay Police for help. Thus central responsibility could be denied but central action could be taken.

That is how the raids and searches in six major towns in Bombay, Bengal, U.P., Orissa and the Punjab came about on the 14th of January.

These raids were carried out simultaneously, as if at the pressing of a button, in the early hours of that day, though the Bombay Police had obtained permission only the previous day, i.e. 13th of January, from the Chief Presidency Magistrate to investigate the offence of leakage under the Official Secrets Act.

All this makes it quite clear that the imperialist bureaucracy initiated, planned and organised the attack, but took care at every turn to shelter itself behind the popular ministry in the province and the Indian leaders in the Interim Government.

#### Meaning of Attack

Though these raids and searches were carried out on the plea of a prosecution against the *People's Age* for leakage of official secrets, the raids on mass organisations unconnected in any way with the publication, and the omnibus seizure of documents wholly irrelevant to the prosecution made one thing clear for all to see—it was to secure the fullest up-to-date inside information about these organisations.

Their aim was not to discover evidence for the prosecution already launched but to secure material for a future round-up of Communist Party, trade union and kisan leaders.

The political meaning of these police actions will stand out clearly, if we remember the traditional bureaucratic tactics on the eve of a national struggle. In 1920, 1930 and again in 1940, when the bureaucracy was faced with the possibility of a struggle launched by the Congress, it struck the first blow against all radical elements who stood for uncompromising struggle against imperialism and tried to immobilize the most fighting sections of our people—the organised workers and peasants. Today once again the imperialists were facing a similar situation.

The Congress leadership was declaring that the Constituent Assembly would function as a sovereign body and would go ahead and frame a constitution for a "Sovereign Independent Republic" of India. The League was refusing to enter the Constituent Assembly and the Princely stooges were being moved into position to oppose the progressive declarations of the Congress leadership.

In such a situation, the British bureaucracy sees clearly what many Indians also see, that there must come a time quite soon when the British Government and the Congress leadership will fall out, on the question of ratifying the constitution drafted by the Constituent Assembly. The Congress leadership would then be faced with the choice of an abject surrender or abandoning the barren path of compromise and unleashing a struggle against the British imperialists.

It is to prepare for that day, that the British bureaucracy is acting from now, to get full information, behead the working-class and peasant movement by rounding up its leaders and crush the most organised and fighting sections of our people in isolation so as to better combat the Congress-led movement later.

This is the real meaning of these raids and searches. The attack on the Communist Party is only a preparation for an assault on the working-class and peasant movement and on the Indian freedom movement as a whole.

### The Role Of The Congress Leaders

It is against this background that the role and duty of the Indian leaders in the Interim Government must be judged.

We give the communiques issued by the Interim Government, which will show that while certain members of the Interim Government, like Pandit Nehru, never knew about this game of the British GHQ and the Central Intelligence Bureau, at least two members—the Defence Member Sardar Baldev Singh and the Home Member Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel—knew about it in the initial stages when the prosecution was planned.

Instead of pulling up the bureaucracy and taking the British Generals to task for making these murderous plans against the Indian people, Sardar Patel came forward in the Central Assembly to defend the bureaucracy.

He declared that some documents of the Defence Department were “stolen” and asked whether the Central Government was wrong in advising the Bombay Government to order a prosecution. Sardar Patel knew very well that there was no theft of documents but it was the exposures made by the *People's Age* that made the GHQ thirst for blood. He knew that those plans were treacherous plans made by the British Army of Occupation against the Indian people. Still he chose to defend the bureaucracy and wanted to shut out all discussion under the plea that the matter was *sub-judice*. He did not want Syt. N. M. Joshi to drag the skeleton out of the British Army's cupboard.

### Dangerous Signs

These are dangerous, ugly signs. The real question that Sardar Patel evaded is the only question that every patriotic Indian will ask, whatever his political persuasion. That is the question which the *Tribune* of Lahore, a nationalist paper, put squarely before the people in an Editorial:

“The articles (in the *People's Age*) aimed at revealing the methods that the Army was likely to adopt ‘in dealing with future unrest in India.’ What was meant by future unrest in this case was clearly nationalist unrest and the plan to suppress it was definitely a bureaucratic plan. It is certainly not the job of a National Government to hunt up and penalise those who have been responsible for the unearthing of a plan of a hated bureaucracy.”

That is the question which Sardar Patel and the other members of the Interim Government have to answer. Must they not instead of defending the bureaucracy pull it up for its unwarranted attack on the people's liberties? Must they not protect the people from police harassment? They did not. The *Free Press Journal* bluntly declared:

“People had hoped that with the advent of the Interim Government, the days of intimidation by police searches were over. Tuesday's incidents (i.e. the all-India raids) have shaken that confidence.”

### Smoke Them Out

The prosecution against the *People's Age* is not an ordinary prosecution against a paper and its Editor. It is an attack by the British Generals who made the murder plans against those who dared to expose those plans.

The British Generals want to shelter themselves behind the popular Indian Ministers and escape the holy wrath of the Indian people.

Indian leaders in the Interim Government, like Sardar Patel, instead of punishing the authors of these diabolical plans are protecting them from punishment.

The issues before every patriotic Indian are simple.

Will our great people let these British Generals escape?

Is it not the duty of the leaders in the Interim Government to publicly repudiate those plans, search out the men in the GHQ who made those plans and kick them out?

Should not the Interim Government, instead of defending the bureaucratic action against the *People's Age*, order the withdrawal of the prosecution and the release of Dr. Adhikari?

The prosecution against the *People's Age* and its Editor Dr. Adhikari is not the trial only of a prominent Communist leader. It is Indian patriotism itself that is on trial. It is a challenge to every Indian patriot by the British GHQ and the hated imperialist bureaucracy.

Let our people take up the challenge and raise the demands “WITHDRAW THE PROSECUTION AGAINST THE PEOPLE'S AGE”, “RELEASE DR. ADHIKARI”, “KICK OUT THE BRITISH GENERALS”.

In the days of the INA trials, the Indian people inflicted a big defeat on imperialist insolence. It can be done again.

That way we can win the first round in the people's battle against the British plans.

That is the way to put popular pressure on the Indian leaders in the Interim Government, to fight the common enemy—the British—and not sections of our own people.

That way lies victory to our common cause—freedom from the hated British domination.

Bombay, February 16, 1947

A. S. R. CHARI

## P. C. JOSHI'S STATEMENT ON THE RAIDS

P. C. JOSHI, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, has issued the following statement to the Press :

The countrywide raids against the Communist Party and the arrest of our Editor Dr. Adhikari and Sub-editor Romesh Chandra are a political scandal with an Interim Government at the Centre and popular ministries in all provinces. The public is left confused with the official explanation that it was a routine police affair and that our paper, the *People's Age*, committed breaches of the Official Secrets Act. Nobody is taken in by it and it all appears a mystery to the patriotic public. We want our countrymen to know the facts because the issue is very big and demands their immediate intervention.

By the time the war was over the British imperialists realised that they could no more hold India the old way. A new unprecedented popular upsurge was rising to a crescendo. The great RIN revolt was a signal warning of what was in store for them and to their rule over our land.

They despatched their Cabinet Mission to draw Indian leaders on to negotiation and thus start the endless process of bargaining and haggling to divert world attention from Indian opposition to British rule to a display of Indian differences and neatly postpone the day of Indian freedom. That was only one part of their post-war plan, the political.

Simultaneously their G.H.Q. in New Delhi began making practical plans to drown every popular struggle in blood. They were put down in a series of circulars and handbills marked "Top Secret" and meant only for the senior and reliable British officers and given the code names like "Operation Asylum", "Embrace", etc.

They contain detailed and gruesome instructions on how to transform every cantonment into a safe British base from which to quell any popular rising around. Secondly, they also contain instructions on how to transform a united Hindu-Muslim uprising into Hindu-Muslim civil war.

We considered it our foremost patriotic duty to expose the military plans of the British rulers against our people and their struggles. We only carried forward the best traditions of the Indian Press which has always exposed all "official secrets" that

9

showed up the repressive and disruptive policies and plans of the British rulers. To charge us with breach of "military secrets" is fantastic. We have only carried the knowledge of the military plans of British foreign power against the Indian struggle for freedom to our own patriotic people. We have deliberately exposed what really constituted imperialist conspiracy against Indian freedom.

It was hatched in the British-bossed and British-manned General Headquarters and it meant that Indian blood shall flow on Indian soil as long as they stay in New Delhi. To warn our people against them was the best anti-imperialist service any Indian journal could do. The central organ of our Party did it. Why should the exposure of the anti-Indian plans of the imperialist GHQ be considered a crime under a popular ministry? The Bombay Ministry owes an explanation to the people and not our Editor who should be bothered with having to appear before a court, nor should our Party be burdened with the unwanted task of having to organise a campaign for his release. It will not redound to the credit of the Ministry if we are forced to it.

We welcome the denial of its own responsibility by the Central Government in the latest press note. But their wishy-washy press statement clears nothing about a very shady affair. One Mr. Ryan who claimed to be the Assistant Director of the Central Intelligence Bureau led the large army of police officers that raided our Central Headquarters and the Bureau is under the Home Department led by Sardar Patel himself. Again the day-long searches neither at the Party Headquarters nor at any provincial and district office of the Party were conducted in a manner as if the police officers were only after copies of the wanted pamphlet but with such a thoroughness as is only seen when a political party is sought to be illegalised.

These countrywide raids and the arrest of our Editor are an imperialist feeler to see if patriotic India will swallow the illegalisation of the Communist Party.

I would appeal to Pandit Nehru who leads the Interim Government and its members to read the pamphlet *Operation Asylum* and get copies of the original circulars from the GHQ. I am sure he will come to the conclusion that it is the GHQ and not the CPI that has to be put in the dock. There is urgent public necessity that in the next session of the Central Assembly he should make a statement that the Interim Government repudiates these criminal circulars and secondly that the British officers responsible for them have been sacked from the GHQ. All these military plans were secretly made just before the installation of the Interim Government. The matter needs very serious attention

by the Interim Government and the Indian people need an assurance against any future use of such plans.

We are confident that all sections of the patriotic opinion will support us in our appeal to the Indian Government and Bombay Ministry.

The continued legality and growing strength of the Communist Party is an asset in preparations for the final struggle. Our differences with Congressmen are minor compared to the over-riding need of a Joint Freedom Front for final struggle. The British hope to stay in India by using one Indian party against another. To indulge in cross-fire is to play the British game. We hope Congressmen will see this as easily as we do and join hands with us in demanding that the Bombay Ministry withdraw the unjustified prosecution against our Editor, that the Interim Government openly disown the British military plans and the top British bureaucracy warned to give up all dreams of trying to get the Communist Party banned.

Bombay,  
January, 17, 1947

## P. C. JOSHI'S MEMORANDUM TO SARDAR PATEL

Bombay, 23rd Jan. 1947

To  
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,  
Home Member,  
Government of India,  
New Delhi.

MEMORANDUM FROM P. C. JOSHI, GENERAL SECRETARY,  
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA, ON THE COUNTRYWIDE POLICE  
RAIDS, SEARCHES AND ARRESTS ON 14TH JANUARY AND REQUEST-  
ING THAT IMMEDIATE ORDERS BE ISSUED TO THE POLICE FOR  
WITHDRAWING PROSECUTIONS, RELEASE OF ARRESTED PERSONS,  
AND RETURN OF PAPERS ETC. SEIZED BY THEM.

Dear Sir,

I am sending this memorandum on behalf of our Party through Mohan Kumaramangalam, a member of our Central Committee, who is fully posted with the facts and will answer any questions that you might like to put on this matter.

On 14th January, as you know, the Police Criminal Investigation Department both of the Centre and the Provinces, jointly carried out countrywide raids and searches, arrested several Communist and Trade Union leaders and seized a whole mass of documents, papers, letters, books and pamphlets.

The only explanation given for this by the police is that the Special Branch of the C.I.D., Bombay, was investigating the leakage of certain official secrets, namely the publication by our weekly, the *People's Age*, of certain military plans made by the British Army GHQ to crush any popular demonstrations and uprising.

### NATURE OF RAIDS

That this is only a screen for the most widespread, unwarranted attack on several popular organisations will be clear from the following brief list of the organisations, whose offices were raided by the police, often with a provocative display of revolvers and guns.

- 1) The *People's Age* (English) and its four language editions in Urdu, Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati.

- 2) The daily *Swadhinata*, Calcutta.
- 3) The Communist Party of India, and its branches all over India—in Bombay, Calcutta, Aligarh, Orissa, Delhi and several other places.
- 4) *Trade Unions*: Almost every Trade Union in Delhi such as waterworks workers', textile workers', railwaymen's etc., Trade Unions in Orissa and even the office of the Reception Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress in Calcutta.
- 5) *Kisan Sabhas*: Kisan Sabha in Aligarh and other places, and the All-India Kisan Sabha office in Calcutta.
- 6) *Students' Organisations*: The All-India Students' Federation and the Bombay Students' Union in Bombay.
- 7) *Cultural Organisations*: Even purely cultural organisations like the Friends of the Soviet Union were attacked, the residence of the FSU Secy. in Lahore being raided and searched.

No one can seriously contend that all these organisations could have had anything to do with the publications in the *People's Age*.

#### **FISHING SEARCH, MASS SEIZURE OF DOCUMENTS**

Even the manner in which the searches were carried out and the omnibus seizure of all papers and documents will make it abundantly clear that the raids and searches were carried out not for the purpose of investigating a case already launched, but was a wide, fishing search.

The police seized as much material as possible, most of which was completely irrelevant for the case under investigation but would be useful to disorganise the activities of our Party, fish out material for launching a big case in the future, or prepare grounds for illegalisation of our Party, the old dream of the imperialist bureaucracy.

1. In Bombay, a police force of over fifty including more than a dozen officers led by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, CID, Bombay, and Mr. Ryan, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Department of the Government of India, searched the Central Headquarters of the Party for over 9 hours and seized documents and papers, whose complete irrelevance to the leakage of any military secret can be seen from a glance at the attached list.\*

2. In Calcutta, the police searched the person and residence of Somnath Lahiri, a Communist Member of the Constituent As-

\* See pages 22-25.

sembly, and seized a copy of his speech in the Constituent Assembly, and other papers relating to his work in the Constituent Assembly.

#### **WHOLESALE ARRESTS**

We send a complete list of persons arrested by the police and you have only to read it to know that several Communist leaders were arrested for no conceivable connection with the publication in the *People's Age*.

#### **WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE ?**

The communique issued by the Government of India only says that the searches were not made under their order, but were made on a requisition made by the Bombay Police under Section 166 of the Cr. P. C. We wish, however, to draw your attention to the following facts :

- 1) The official secrets, if at all they can be so regarded, were in respect of military plans made by the GHQ in New Delhi and as such, the Bombay Government had no direct interest and would not order a prosecution except on a requisition emanating from New Delhi.
- 2) The offences under the Official Secrets Act are non-cognisable and the police have no power to investigate the offence except under orders from a Magistrate, and such power was given to the police only on the 13th January, only a day previous to the raids.
- 3) It would obviously be impossible for the Bombay Police to have initiated and coordinated such countrywide action, except through prior arrangement with the Central Intelligence Department. In fact, the presence of Central Intelligence Department officers from New Delhi in Bombay and other places to lead the raids shows that the Central Intelligence Department planned it well ahead.
- 4) The powers of the police under the Cr. P. C. are severely restricted and they are specially enjoined to restrict a search only to specific things.

All these facts make it abundantly clear that the Central Intelligence Department initiated, organised and coordinated the all-India action, and it seems from Pandit Nehru's statement that these were done behind the backs and without the "knowledge or consent" of the members of the Interim Government.

#### **WHAT WAS THE CRIME ?**

What, however, was the crime committed by the *People's Age* or



our Party? It is true that we exposed certain secret military plans made by the British Army GHQ and its various commands.

They were all plans made before the popular ministries took office in the Provinces and the new Interim Government was formed at the Centre.

They were plans made against all parties, against the Indian people as a whole. They were so patently aimed against the Indian people that prominent nationalist papers like the *Bombay Chronicle* (May 26, 1946) and the *Free Press Journal* reprinted our articles.

What these military plans are, will be clear from the following brief summary:

i) "*Operation Asylum*": This is the code name given by the British Army GHQ to a plan which they have formulated to put down and crush any popular anti-imperialist movement in India following any breakdown in the negotiations at Simla.

The introduction to the document says that the GHQ envisages industrial troubles, inter-communal troubles and *anti-Government disturbances which may lead to open insurrection*. It also said that anti-Government disturbances are likely to take place from March to May, 1946, soon after the elections are completed, or after July-August, 1946, after the assumption of power by popular ministries. The British Army authorities, therefore, proposed in the plan the formation of firm bases from which mobile striking forces could crush a popular rising. It will be clear the "*Operation Asylum*" is planned to be put into force by the British Army even after the popular ministries take power.

ii) *Battle measures*: In December 1945 the Eastern Command issued detailed individual instructions to Army Officers on when, where and how to fire on unarmed crowds.

iii) *Dummy manoeuvres*: Certain exercises were practised in the Army in which an unarmed batch of soldiers with dhoties, curtas and Gandhi caps advanced, shouting "Quit India" and another batch of soldiers, uniformed and armed, practised how to lathi-charge and fire on the mob.

iv) *Instructions re. Martial Law in aid of civil power*: This was a special book of instructions of which 10,000 copies were distributed to Army Officers, in which the Army is told

- a) to fire on the mob with steadiness;
- b) forbidding firing with blank cartridges; and
- c) prescribing firing on the leaders, as the best way in certain cases of cowing a mob; and drawing attention to the fact that commissioned officers of the Army can, in certain emergencies, order firing *without communicating with the Magistrate*.

The Army was thus being taught to be blood-thirsty and operate even independently of the civil power.

v) *Army Training Memorandum*: In this instructions were given how to escape punishment for unwarranted firing and the formula which was asked to be used by officers ran as follows: "The attitude of the rioters was such that in my opinion there was a danger to life and property and that nothing short of firing would prevent it."

vi) *The "Embrace"*: This was the technical code name given to a series of exercises carried out in Hyderabad by which the Nizam's military and the British Army jointly practised how to put down an all-India freedom revolt, using the British cantonments as bases for counter-attack. Such exercises were to be carried out in every State. What is remarkable in the plan was that officers were taught how to transform a joint Hindu-Muslim uprising into an inter-communal riot by means of clever propaganda.

We also attach a copy of all the articles published in the *People's Age* in this connection.

#### *A PATRIOTIC DUTY TO EXPOSE*

We got information about these military plans of the British Army against our people. We satisfied ourselves that they were genuine and we realised what a danger it was to our people, irrespective of party persuasions. We warned our people openly, and fearlessly of these plans made to crush them and the freedom movement.

In doing this, we carried forward the best traditions of our freedom movement.

We felt it our patriotic duty to expose these nefarious plans against the Indian people and their struggle for freedom. We regarded it as important as Puckle's Secret Circular against the Congress, which was cyclostyled and distributed at the Bombay AICC under instructions from the AICC Secretariat on 8th August, 1942.

And so we published the articles beginning from April up to September 1946 exposing everyone of these plans, as we came to know of them. We even collected the exposures and published them in pamphlet form under the title *Operation Asylum* and sold it openly and widely, more than 6 months ago, to reach out and warn as many people as possible.

In the introduction to that pamphlet, Dr. G. M. Adhikari, one of our foremost leaders, had made an appeal to the Interim Government to publicly denounce these secret plans made by the British Army top officials.

Those plans still hold good and are likely to be used as long as the British Army GHQ exists and the British armies remain on Indian soil.

Our appeal to you is, therefore, that in view of the nature of the plans, the time when they were made, the British Army authors of it and their plot against the Indian people, you should:

- 1) Order the Police to immediately withdraw all the pending prosecutions in this matter and direct return of all papers.
- 2) Send for the original secret plans made at the GHQ and insist and secure the dismissal of the British officers who were responsible for making such blood-thirsty plots against our people.
- 3) Publicly condemn and repudiate these plans.

In fact, we understand that no case under the Official Secrets Act can proceed unless the Central or Provincial Government lodge a complaint or specially authorise an officer to lodge such a complaint.

In the circumstances, I hope that you will assert the power of the Interim National Government against such British secret plans, pull up the police for having taken such widespread all-India action and order the immediate withdrawal of prosecutions and return of papers and property seized in these raids.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,  
Sd. P. C. JOSHI  
General Secretary

## CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HOME DEPARTMENT AND P. C. JOSHI

I

### REPLY TO JOSHI'S MEMO

No. 7/1/47-Poll.(I)  
Government of India  
Home Department

From  
G. V. Bedekar, Esquire, I.C.S.,  
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

To  
Mr. P. C. Joshi,  
General Secretary, Communist Party of India,  
Raj Bhuvan, Sandhurst Road, Bombay No. 4.

New Delhi, the 6th February, 1947.

*Subject* : Communist Party of India—Searches of offices and arrests of members.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 23rd January, 1947, addressed to Honourable the Home Member, on the subject mentioned above and to say that as the matter is already before the courts and concerns the Provincial Government, the Government of India are unable to intervene.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,

Sd. G. V. Bedekar  
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

II

11th February, 1947.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,  
Home Member,  
Government of India,  
New Delhi.

Re: Memorandum submitted to you by P. C. Joshi,  
General Secretary of the Communist Party  
of India.

Dear Sir,

I have received your Department No. 7/1/47-Poll(I) dated 6th February in reply to the memorandum I submitted to you through Mohan Kumaramangalam.

I hope you have no objection to my releasing my memorandum and your reply to the Press.

I propose releasing it to the Press on Saturday the 15th instant and if you have any objection I expect you to communicate with me before then.

Yours truly,

Sd. Mohan Kumaramangalam  
for General Secretary,  
Communist Party of India.

III

### PERMISSION FOR PUBLICATION

New Delhi,  
13th February 1947.

Dear Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter dated the 11th February 1947 addressed to the Hon'ble the Home Member regarding your memorandum submitted to him through Mr. Mohan Kumaramangalam and to say that the Home Member has no objection to your releasing your memorandum and the Home Department reply thereto to the press.

Yours faithfully,

Sd. V. Shankar,

Private Secretary to the Hon'ble the Home Member.

P. C. Joshi, Esq.,  
General Secretary,  
Communist Party of India,  
Raj Bhawan,  
Sandhurst Road,  
Bombay 4.

## GOVERNMENT OF INDIA COMMUNIQUE ON THE RAIDS

NEW DELHI, JAN. 15

"THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAS BEEN DRAWN TO A NEWS ITEM STATING THAT SEARCHES WERE CONDUCTED IN MANY PARTS OF INDIA ON JANUARY 14 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA," SAYS A PRESS NOTE.

"IN ORDER TO REMOVE ANY MISAPPREHENSION, THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ANNOUNCE THAT THE SEARCHES WERE *not* MADE UNDER THEIR ORDER BUT IN EXERCISE BY THE POLICE OF THEIR POWERS UNDER SECTION 165 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE, ON A REQUISITION MADE BY THE BOMBAY POLICE UNDER SECTION 166 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE INVESTIGATION OF A CASE INSTITUTED AGAINST A NEWSPAPER IN BOMBAY."

### PANDIT NEHRU'S REPLY TO PALME DUTT

(Free Press of India)

LONDON, JAN. 16

"THE POLICE RAIDS ON THE COMMUNISTS TOOK PLACE WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY OR KNOWLEDGE OF THE MINISTERS. THEY WERE DUE TO POLICE ACTION IN CONNECTION WITH INVESTIGATION OF A CASE INSTITUTED AGAINST A NEWSPAPER IN BOMBAY," DECLARES PANDIT NEHRU, IN A CABLE TO THE COMMUNIST LEADER, MR. RAJANI PALME DUTT.

PANDIT NEHRU'S CABLE TO MR. PALME DUTT WAS IN REPLY TO A MESSAGE SENT EARLIER BY THE COMMUNIST LEADER WHICH SAID, "DEEP CONCERN HERE OVER POLICE RAIDS ON COMMUNISTS. CAN YOU INFORM IF AUTHORISED BY INDIAN MINISTERS? ANXIOUSLY AWAITING DETAILS".

THIS EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES IS BEING RELEASED TO THE BRITISH PRESS BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN.

## SARDAR PATEL'S STATEMENT ON RAIDS IN THE CENTRAL ASSEMBLY

By wire from Y. D. Sharma

NEW DELHI, 3rd February, 1947

On the floor of the Central Assembly, Sardar Patel, Home Member, today admitted that police raids on the offices of the Communist Party, Kisan Sabhas etc. on 14th January were carried out with the approval of the Home Department of the Government of India and with the help and coordination of the Central Intelligence Bureau.

Taking up N. M. Joshi's adjournment motion regarding these raids, the President of the Central Assembly remarked that *prima facie* it was a very important matter but he would like the Home Member to enlighten the House about facts.

Sardar Patel, thereupon made his statement and said:

"This matter involves a complaint filed before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, by the Commissioner of Police, Bombay. Certain secret documents of the Defence Department appear to have been stolen between the months of April and August last and there has been some correspondence between the Bombay Government and the Central Government on this matter. Subsequently it was suggested that if the Bombay Government were advised by its legal advisers that it was a proper case for action, that action may be taken. The legal advisers of the Bombay Government advised them that there was a proper case for prosecution under the Official Secrets Act.

"The Government of Bombay accordingly issued an order on December 18th empowering the Commissioner of Police to lodge a complaint under the Official Secrets Act against the editor of *People's Age* in respect of 8 articles which appeared between April 14th and August 4.

"On December 23rd a similar order was made against the publisher and author of the pamphlet *Operation Asylum* which was published in September 1946.

"In connection with these investigations the Bombay police had to make searches."

Adding that besides the documents mentioned above, other materials of a secret nature from the General Headquarters and other Government Departments were alleged to have been stolen, Sardar Patel said that it was found necessary (he then

said that Police Commissioner considered it necessary) that the searches should be made simultaneously; otherwise the materials and persons concerned would go underground.

Sardar Patel explained that in order to coordinate the searches, steps were taken by the Bombay Government and the Central Government to coordinate their action. The Central Government had done nothing for which it could be censured.

Sardar Patel admitted that the Central Government had given advice to the Bombay Government but such advice was given according to Section 165 of Police Act, Bombay, under which the Commissioner of Police is entitled to ask the assistance of the Central Intelligence Bureau to coordinate searches. The Central Intelligence Department, Sardar Patel further added, did nothing more than assisting the Bombay Police in the normal discharge of their duty and it was done so that the object of the prosecution might not be frustrated.

Regarding the advice tendered by the Central Government to the Bombay Government, Sardar Patel stressed that it was proper advice which the Central Government could give to a Provincial Government.

Contrary to expectations, Sardar Patel did not say that the matter was not concerned with the Central Government as he had said in his official communique published on 16th January. He, however, opposed the admissibility of the motion on the ground that the matter was *sub-judice* as he understood from Press reports that the bail application on behalf of the arrested persons had been rejected by the Presidency Magistrate, Bombay.

N. M. Joshi protested that the matter could not be treated *sub-judice*. The Home Member, however, insisted that the matter was *sub-judice* and no discussion could take place in the House.

The President thereupon ruled the motion out of order.

It may be related that one of N. M. Joshi's motions related specifically to searches in Delhi—a matter which could not by any stretch of imagination be called *sub-judice*.

Although the discussion in the House was gagged, considerable surprise has been caused among pressmen and Assembly members by the fact that Sardar Patel's statement today contradicted the earlier communique of the Home Department and Pandit Nehru's telegram to Palme Dutt stating that the searches took place without the knowledge or the authority of the Interim Government. Sardar Patel's statement today left no doubt whatsoever that the Home Department of the Central Government was consulted beforehand and it sanctioned the use of the Central Intelligence Bureau to organise simultaneous raids all over India.

## PLACES RAIDED BY POLICE ON 14TH JANUARY

### BOMBAY

1. Central Headquarters of the C.P.I. About 50 constables, a dozen officers led by the Deputy Commissioner Special Branch C.I.D. and assisted by Mr. Ryan of the Central Intelligence Department, New Delhi, carried on the search for 9 hours of Raj Bhawan, Sandhurst Road and seized a mass of Party documents.
2. New Age Printing Press, People's Publishing House book shop, offices of People's Age and its language editions
3. R. K. Building and Red Flag Hall—Residential rooms of Communist workers
4. Bombay Committee of the Communist Party of India—office situated in Parel
5. The All India Students' Federation
6. The Bombay Students' Union
7. Residence of S. A. Dange, Communist M.L.A. Police seized all the papers in connection with his work in the A.I.T.U.C. and as member of the Executive of the World Federation of Trade Unions
8. House of Parvatibai Bhor—leading working-class woman leader

### CALCUTTA

9. Provincial Headquarters and office of Swadhinata, Bengali daily of the Party—searched for 6 hours
10. People's Relief Committee
11. Provincial Kisan Sabha office
12. Residence of Somnath Lahiri—Member of the Constituent Assembly. Papers regarding his work in the C. A. were seized.
13. Headquarters and residential commune of the Calcutta District Committee of the C.P.I.
14. Office of the Reception Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress

### LUCKNOW

15. U. P. Provincial Headquarters of the C.P.I.—searched for 4 hours
16. Residence of Mahmuduzaffar
17. People's Book House
18. M.E.S. Workers' Union
19. District Ministerial Employees Federation
20. U. P. Electric Workers' Union
21. The residential commune of the Party's workers

### BENARES

22. Communist Party Office
23. Residence of Rustom Satin
24. Residence of S. P. Tripathi

### AGRA

25. Party Office
26. Residence of B. P. Shukla—Secretary of the Party unit.

### ALIGARH

27. Party Office
28. Kisan Sabha

### MEERUT

29. Party Office

### CAWNPORE

30. District Party Office
31. Residence of S. S. Yusuf—President of the Cawnpore ~~Manor~~ Sabha
32. Residence of Santosh Chandra Kapoor

### DEHRA DUN

33. Party Office
34. Residence of the Provincial Organiser of the C.P.I.

### JHANSI

35. Party Office

### LAHORE

36. Provincial Headquarters of the Party—searched for 3½ hours
37. The Provincial Kisan Sabha
38. Office of Provincial Committee of All-India Trade Union Congress
39. District Office of the Party
40. People's Publishing House
41. Residence of G. L. Khanna—Secretary of the Friends of the Soviet Union, Lahore
42. Residence of B. P. L. Bedi—searched for 9 hours
43. P.W.D. Workers' Union

### DELHI

44. Headquarters of the Delhi Party unit
45. The residential commune
46. The Delhi Students' Federation
47. Central P.W.D. Workers' Union
48. Delhi Electric Supply and Transport Workers' Union
49. G.N.I.T. Workers' Union
50. Shop Assistants' Federation

51. N. W. Railway Workers' Union
52. B.B. & C.I. Railwaymen's Union
53. Textile Mazdur Sabha
54. Municipal Worker's Union
55. Joint Water and Sewage Employees' Union
56. Indian People's Theatre Association
57. Residence of Janardhan Sharma, Advocate

**CUTTACK**

58. Party Office
59. Office of the Mukti Juddha—the Oriya organ of the Communist Party in Orissa
60. Office of Navyuga
61. Residence of Sarat Patnaik, Secretary of the Party
62. Residence of Ramakrishna Pati

**SAMBALPUR**

63. Residence of Shri Dayanand Satapathy

**KARACHI**

64. Communist Party Office
65. Residence of Professor Karwani

**ALLAHABAD**

66. Communist Party Office
67. The People's Book House
68. Residence of Chandrasekhar Saran, Bar-at-Law
69. Residence of Zamirul Huq, Advocate

**PATNA**

70. Provincial Headquarters of the Communist Party

And other places, details about which have not been received at the time of going to press.

## NAMES OF THE PERSONS ARRESTED ON JANUARY 14

**CALCUTTA**

1. Prabhat Das Gupta, Sub-editor, Swadhinata
2. Hasan-uz-zaman, Proof-reader, Swadhinata
3. Nanda Lal Roy
4. Khoka Roy, Member of the Secretariat, Bengal Provincial Committee of the CPI
5. Abdulla Rasool, Office Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha
6. Bagla Guha Office Secy., Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha
7. Haripada Mukerjee, Office Secy., Calcutta Dist. Committee of the Party

8. Sunil Kundagrami, Machine-man in Swadhinata Press, a Party Member
9. Ramen Sen, working in the office of the Provincial Committee of the Party
10. Pulin Dutta, compositor in Swadhinata
11. Subodh Roy, working in National Book Agency
12. Somnath Hore, Artist, Party Member
13. Randhir Dasgupta, Member of the Chittagong Dist. Committee of the Party
14. Sushil Dutt Roy
15. Ramesh Chowdhary
16. Sunil Dutt Roy
17. Nityanand Chowdhary, Secretary, 24-Parganas Dist. Committee of the Party
18. Kumud Biswas, Secretary, Calcutta Dist. Committee of the Party
19. Gopal Acharya, Vice-President, Tramway Workers' Union Calcutta.
20. Mrs. Pankaj Acharya (wife of Gopal Acharya), Organiser, 24-Parganas Dist. Committee
21. Nihar Dasgupta, Sub-Editor Swadhinata
22. Nani Bhowmic, Sub-editor Swadhinata
23. Bishnu Mukerjee, Sub-editor, Swadhinata
24. Markendya Jha
25. Ratan Lal Singh
26. Sauja Roy Chowdhury
27. Sudhangsu Dasgupta, Organiser, Calcutta Dist. Committee
28. Mrs. Dasgupta (wife of Sudhangsu Dasgupta)
29. Biswanath Mukerjee, Member of the Central Committee of CPI
30. Ramen Bannerjee, Sub-editor, Swadhinata
31. Dr. Sumiti Bannerjee
32. Nikhil Chakravarty, Correspondent, People's Age
33. Mrs. Renu Chakravarty, Organiser Calcutta Dist. Committee
34. P. C. Chatterjee

**BOMBAY**

1. Dr. G. M. Adhikari, Editor People's Age
2. Romesh Chandra, Sub-Editor, People's Age

*Our Recent Publications*

**YUGOSLAV MUSLIMS' MESSAGE  
TO INDIA**

The content of this short booklet is the appeal of the leaders of Muslims who live in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (one of the six Republics that together constitute the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia), addressed to the Muslims of our country.

It traces the history of the freedom struggle of the Muslims in Yugoslavia along with their brothers the Serbians, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Jews etc., how from internecine strife and feudal anarchy to the united resistance against Fascist slavery the democratic consciousness of the people grew which resulted in the voluntary union of all nationalities in Yugoslavia into the glorious edifice that is the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

A lesson and a source of inspiration for Hindus and Muslims of India, that they can also bury their differences and come together on the basis of common interests and build up the glorious united front of the Indian people to win freedom and democracy.

*Price Annas Two*

**INDIA TO-DAY**

**By R. Palme Dutt**

"We welcome the publication in India for the first time of Palme Dutt's book 'India To-day,' It was originally published in England in 1940, but banned in India. . . . The author has now revised the book and brought it to-date.

" . . . But we welcome Dutt's book not only as a survey of past history but for its masterly handling of the problems that face India today; and the optimistic outlook that is so characteristic of the school of thought to which he belongs. . . ."

---Professor P. A. Wadia

The book is the most complete and the best guide on India. It is the history of our fight for freedom---its past achievements, its present problems, its future prospects. An indispensable handbook for every freedom-loving Indian, to whatever party or political creed he may owe allegiance.

**Over 500 Pages**

**Rs. 7-8**

## RESURGENT INDIA AT THE CROSS ROADS

By G. Adhikari

The year 1946 opened with the great INA demonstrations, the epic R.I.N. uprising, the magnificent strike struggle of the S.I.R. workers. The year 1946 ended with bloody civil-war, with Noakhali and Bihar.

How this sudden changeover came on the Indian political scene? What are the parts played by the double-dealing imperialist conspirators and the compromising national leadership in it? In this background, what are the prospects for the year 1947? What are the tasks of all patriotic parties today?—All these questions are discussed by the author.

It also includes a diary of events of 1946.

*Price Annas Three*

## INDO-BRITISH BIG BUSINESS DEALS

By Arun Bose

This booklet blows up the myth of Indo-British business partnership and exposes the real nature and role of Indo-British joint firms in existence. It shows how British Big Business has got into commanding positions in order to delay, as long as possible, the establishment of heavy industries in our country. It lays bare how Indo-British business partnership is breeding ideas of Indo-British political and military partnership in Big Business circles. Here is the revelation of a plan for the perpetuation of the economic and political enslavement of India. It further indicates the alternative path to the real industrialisation and freedom of our country.

*Price Annas Fourteen*

## INDIA AND UNO

By Mohan Kumaramangalam

Ably led by Vijayalaxmi Pandit the Indian delegation made history in the second session of the UNO.

Unlike the previous delegation it voiced India's true interests and achieved a signal victory on behalf of India and South Africa.

Unlike the British stooges in the first session of the UNO, this delegation supported the true democracies of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

What were the achievements of the Indian delegation? Did its work help to strengthen our freedom movement and build up the solidarity of the world's freedom-loving peoples with India?

This booklet attempts to answer these questions.

*Price Annas Eight*

PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Raj Bhuvan, Sandhurst Road  
BOMBAY 4





PATRIOTS ALL!  
Beware Of  
"The OPERATION  
ASYLUM"  
The British Plot  
Against Our  
Independence!

"Some documents  
have been stolen."

LIST OF  
PARTY  
MEMBERS  
FILES

Charles Jones  
Feb. 4, 41