

"TEBHAGA!" BATTLE-CRY OF SHARECROPPERS OF BENGAL — "TAKE OUR LIVES -- BUT NEVER OUR PADDY"

(See Page 2)

Since the Indigo risings in the Nineteenth Century of the peasants against the horrible exploitation and repression of the White planters, never has there been such a mighty battle waged by the kisans of Bengal than the one which is raging today.

Spread across eleven districts, stirring into action no less than fifty lakhs of Hindu and Muslim kisans, the Tebhaga movement has gripped Bengal's countryside.

It is this Tebhaga movement which is the solid wall of Hindu-Muslim unity which is holding back the flames of civil war in Bengal today. Its growth and success are the biggest guarantees of communal harmony in Bengal today.

"Two-thirds of the crop which we eke out of the soil with our sweat and our blood must be ours"—that is the share-croppers' demand.

And all the lathials of the oppressive jotedars, all the guns and lathis, handcuffs and prisons of the bureaucracy and the police have not been able to weaken the determination of the kisans to win this demand.

"We may lose our lives, but never our paddy"—with this slogan, the kisans resist the police-jotedar terror.



With lathis and brooms, in defence of their crop, a band of kisan women of Jhalpaiguri, who put the jotedars' lathials to flight.



Kisan volunteers in a village in Dinajpur meet to plan out the harvesting of their crop and its defence from the police and the goondas.



Village Volunteer troop—men, women, children—in Jhalpaiguri.



On Guard in Dinajpur—Hindus and Muslims together.

Photos: Daya Rai

PEOPLE'S AGE

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Police Lathis, Bullets For Struggling Kisans

IN Bengal there is a League Ministry, in the Punjab a Congress-Unionist Coalition is in power and in Bihar there is a Congress Ministry.

But the bureaucracy, the police and the zamindars in all the three Provinces are of the same breed.

People's Age has received this week reports of police firings on kisans from all the three Provinces. The facts are almost similar... tenants battling against zamindar oppression, the police rallying to the zamindars' assistance, firing without the slightest excuse whatsoever.

These firings and the heroic resistance to these are landmarks in the history of the national movement in each of the three Provinces.

In Bengal, the firing highlights the great sweep of the Tebhaga movement, which has brought fifty lakh share-croppers into action, uniting Hindus and Muslims and beating out the riot devil.

In the Punjab, the firing is a signal that the old, backward Western Punjab, the prey for so many years of the rapacious toady landlords, is on its feet and has thrown off the black cloak, which kept it in darkness so long. The Western Punjab is no longer the dark Punjab.

In Bihar, the story of the firing given below will tell you how Bihar is turning the corner, how the terrible hate of the Bihar riots is slowly beginning to give place to the united battle of Hindu and Muslim kisans against the oppression of their common exploiters.

India's kisans are on the march.

We salute the memory of the martyrs, heroic sons of our soil.

They died so that their brothers and sisters, their children may no longer live in feudal serfdom.

Pre-Planned Murder In Montgomery

ON January 3, Dilluwala in Montgomery district was the scene of cold-blooded murder.

On that day the Punjab police opened fire on a peaceful kisan gathering that had collected there to formulate their demands for a joint conference of landlords and tenants called by the Deputy Commissioner.

More than 30 rounds were fired.

No kisan heroes, Chaudhri Dhanna, a sixty-year old peasant hailing from the village Mullan, and young Sunder Singh, fell on the ground dead, swelling the ranks of kisan and working-class martyrs. Several others were severely injured.

Among the injured three are now in hospital. They include (Han Singh) Josh, Secretary, Montgomery District Kisan Committee, who is lying with a bullet hole in his left shoulder.

Tenants' Upsurge

Nilbar and Ganjibar, extending over the two districts of Montgomery and Multan, have recently seen the biggest tenants' upsurge ever known in the Western Punjab. For centuries the muzharas (tenants) here have lived under the feudal system, where the landlord's will was the law.

Against this inhuman and ruthless exploitation, the tenants raised their voice this year during the cotton-picking season and organised themselves under the Red Flag.

The tenants refused to pay anything beyond half the crop and demanded division of the produce right at the threshing floor or on the fields.

And in many cases they won their demands although they had to face the severest repression and terror from the landlords' goondas and the police.

At last the Deputy Commissioner of Montgomery was forced to call a joint conference of muzharas and landlords on January 4. He said that he would attempt to bring about an honourable settlement between the landlords and muzharas at this meeting.

The Kisan Committee accepted the invitation and asked the muzharas to collect at the Dilluwala officer's bungalow, the scheduled place for the Deputy Commissioner's meeting, on January 3, one day in advance.

The demands of the muzharas were to be finally formulated and passed at this meeting before being presented at the joint conference. About 3,000 muzharas arrived at Dilluwala from long distances hoping that a settlement would at last be reached. But the officials had planned otherwise.

Police Arrive

Exactly at ten o'clock in the morning two lorries of policemen arrived, armed with rifles. The Deputy Superintendent of Police all of a sudden announced that all meetings of over four persons and demonstrations throughout the district were banned under the Punjab Public Safety Ordinance.

Very few people were aware of this order, but under the instructions of their leaders, the kisans dispersed and sat in groups of four each.

But this could not last long. The police started moving round among the muzharas and threatening them.

The Kisan Sabha leaders realised soon enough that the police was out to provoke trouble and asked the tenants to disperse to the adjoining villages and come back for the meeting the next day.

But before the kisans could do so, the police pounced upon them and started a lathi-charge.

They also arrested Baba Jalwant Singh, veteran Provincial Kisan leader, Tikaya Ram and Gurbachan Singh, President and Secretary respectively of Nilbar Kisan Committee, and twelve others.

At this stage, without any provocation, the D.S.P. ordered the police to open fire. Makhan Singh, Sub-Editor of Jang-e-Azadi (organ of the Punjab Committee of the Communist Party), who was present at the time of the firing, in a statement says:

No Justification

"There was not the slightest provocation, the D.S.P. ordered the police to open fire. Not a single kisan was even carrying a lathi.

"When the leaders asked the tenants to disperse to the neighbouring villages, all the muzharas began carrying out their orders. There was no question of any trouble. But the police, right from the beginning, tried to provoke the tenants by threats and intimidation.

"The kisans were taken aback at this unprovoked attack of the murderers. But not one of them turned back. They guarded the dead bodies for five hours and left the place at night, only after the dead bodies and the arrested leaders had been removed by the police."

ON December 16, in village Barui (Beguserai sub-division in district Montgomery), a police force fired several times at two hundred kisans from the adjoining village of Bishnupur. Everytime they fired, the kisans would fall flat on the ground or hide behind trees and continue to defend themselves with stones and lathis.

The Sub-Inspector leading the firing eventually ran to the police station a mile away, unable to meet the kisans' resistance.

Behind The Firing

Behind this firing is a long story of a battle for 128 bighas of land in Bishnupur Village which the zamindar claims to be his own.

But the kisans have been in continuous possession of this land for the last several decades and were recorded as occupancy tenants in the last survey settlement, completed in 1902.

The present zamindar, Thakur Prasan Singh, claims to be a Congressman, went to jail in August 1942 and has played the host to the Bihar Premier on several occasions. He is reported to have moved Ministerial circles and claims to have been

In Dinajpur District

TWO KILLED, FIVE WOUNDED IN POLICE FIRING

ON the morning of January 4, a huge police force, armed with guns and lathis, raided Jalpukur, Bajitpur and the surrounding villages in Chiribandar Thana (Dinajpur district). They made indiscriminate arrests of Hindu and Muslim kisan leaders, including Lal Mohammed, Khiku Santal, Prasanna Swarup, Khagen, Darshan.

For a long time, the police had been making repeated attacks on these villages, looting, beating without reason. The kisans were determined that this terror should end.

So this time, about 1,500 villagers—men, women and children—refused to submit to the terror, fought back and when the police party took to its heels, chased it for one and a half

miles, not giving them a moment's rest.

Suddenly the police opened fire... a dozen rounds were fired.

Reports so far received indicate that two kisans have been killed, five wounded—one seriously.

The martyr-kisans are Samir Das and Sibram.

One policeman is also reported to have been injured in the clash, while two kisans have been admitted into hospital in Dinajpur town, and the rest of the wounded are being carried to hospital.

Dinajpur town is in ferment. The citizens are wholeheartedly behind the kisans in the struggle. As for the kisan comrades of Samir Das and Sibram—they are prepared to face more terror, but are determined to win.

Demanding an impartial enquiry, the Punjab Kisan Committee in a statement says:

"The whole incident appears to be a conspiracy of the district officials and the landlords. Everything was pre-planned and the object was to terrorise the tenants. The landlords want the line-clear for the ejection of their tenants so that they can thus succeed in saddling the tenants with all their feudal levies, taxes, begar, etc., in addition to their customary exorbitant share of the produce."

BATTLE FOR 128 BIGHAS OF LAND IN BISHNUPUR VILLAGE

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given the line-clear to go ahead with his offensive against the kisans.

Hence the police, the Magistrate and, of course, the goondas—all have been mobilised in this unholy war, against the kisans.

The zamindars had Section 144 and Section 107 applied against the kisans and brought two dozen goondas to terrorise them.

But the kisans of nearly a dozen neighbouring villages came to help their brothers of Bishnupur and, on December 4, nearly 40 bighas of paddy was harvested by an army of 1,000 kisans.

Goondas Flee

The zamindar's goondas and police who had come to stop the kisans from harvesting, were so terrified that they actually jumped into the river and swam away as fast as they could!

The kisans completed the harvesting, singing revolutionary songs to the tune of a band and with Red flag posted at the village entrances.

That same afternoon a bigger police force with a Sub-Inspector and a Magistrate arrived to arrest the kisans, but had to return empty-handed.

From then on a regular battle went on between the police and the kisans. Every few days, the police raided Bishnupur and tried to arrest the kisans, but the kisans rushed out and drove the police away.

On December 16, nearly two dozen goondas raided the house of Narayan Saha and beat up his mother and wife, but had to fly back when other kisans came.

The next day, a police party under an Assistant Sub-Inspector escorted the goondas to Bishnupur village and set them looting kisan houses and beating kisan women. The menfolk were either out in the fields, or away in other villages. And the goondas thought that they could carry out their terror with impunity. Altogether the goondas entered about a dozen houses. But by this time, the women and children of the village organised themselves and fell on the goondas and drove them away. The police had already left the village after arresting five kisans.

Police Chased

But the news of the arrests spread like wild fire to the neighbouring villages and nearly 200 kisans rushed with lathis to snatch their comrades away from the hands of the police.

The kisans chased the police for nearly four miles and overtook them in village Barui.

There the ding-dong battle described above continued with the police for nearly two hours.

The kisans are determined to press their offensive till the authorities are forced to surrender and recognise the right of the kisans over all hakasht land.

Bengal's New Kisan Womanhood

(Continued from page 2.)

mination other kisan women like Rebati, Janaki, Maheshwari, Sarada, Annada, Putulbala, Charubala, Nirada, have come to take their stand at the head of Midnapore's growing kisan legions.

Today it is not they who fear the debauched jotedars; but it is the jotedars with their lathis who fear their broomsticks. And this is spreading from village to village.

When Kendemari's kisan women fought back the police, Kisan women of the neighbouring village of Muhammadpur sent a word to their Kendemari sisters:

"What you have been able to do, we certainly will do. So long we thought we women had no courage, but now we find that the broomstick and the cooking knife can instill enough courage in us."

ANOTHER STEP DOWN THE ROAD TO SURRENDER

Whip-hand To Imperialism; Stage Set For Fresh Congress-League Conflict

The All-India Congress Committee has passed the Working Committee's resolution accepting the December 6 Statement of the British Government.

In the first open skirmish between the Congress and imperialism since the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's Plan, the Congress leadership retreated and bowed down to the imperialist will. For the December 6 Statement was a clear challenge to everything that the Congress leadership had said about the Constituent Assembly and the Cabinet Mission's Plan.

THE Statement bluntly denied the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly, making it quite clear that the final word lay with His Majesty's Government.

Further by stating that a constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population is not represented will not be enforced, it encouraged the obstructionist tactics of the League leaders and commanded the Congress to bring the League into the Assembly.

Thirdly, the Statement definitely stated, what was perhaps already contained in the May 16 declaration—that the sections for the Provinces, that decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote of representatives and not by Provinces, and that the grouping procedure was compulsory.

It once again gave the League leadership the whiphand, enabling it to use the sections as a pressure against the All-India Constituent Assembly and pursue the game of partition to the farthest limit.

The London Statement had thus removed all equivocation and cleared the ring for a showdown between the Congress and the League, while retaining the initiative in the hands of imperialism.

Retreat Before Attack

The All-India Congress Committee, under the leadership of the Working Committee, has not only not accepted the challenge, but decided to beat a retreat before this imperialist insolence. The resolution put before the AICC is much milder than the December 22 statement of the Working Committee and accepts the London Award.

On the question of sovereignty it only makes mild protest saying:

"The AICC is firmly of opinion that the constitution of a free and independent India should be framed by the people of India on the basis of as wide an agreement as possible. There must be no external interference whatever by any external authority..."

Barring this bald statement, it says nothing against British insolence.

On the question of groupings, the resolution accepts the London Award and agrees to "advise action in accordance with the interpretation of the British Government in regard to the procedure to be followed in the sections."

Thus it will advise the North-West Frontier Province, Assam, etc., to join the respective sections.

In these sections, the League representatives, who are committed to Pakistan irrespective of the wishes of the people, have the majority. They will do their utmost to compel the Union of Assam with Bengal, or the grouping together of Sindh, the Punjab, the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan.

How does the AICC resolution propose to protect the freedom and self-determination of these

Provinces and guard them against the menace of compulsory grouping held in the London Award and the Cabinet Mission's Plan?

Rights Of Provinces

Not by appealing to the people of the Provinces concerned not to compel each other; nor by demanding a plebiscite of the adult population; but by indirect begging for these Provinces and people the same concession or veto that has been promised to the League under the December 6 Statement:

"The Congress cannot be a party to any compulsion or imposition against the will of the people concerned, a principle which the British Government have themselves recognised."

This refers to the guarantee given to the League that

no constitution will be enforced on unwilling parts and is a plea that similar guarantee should be extended to the Provinces or minorities in sections.

"In the event of any attempt at such compulsion, a Province or part of a Province has the right to take such action as may be deemed necessary in order to give effect to the wishes of the people concerned."

Faith In Manoeuvring

So that the Provinces of Assam or N.W.F.P., or the Hindu minority of Bengal and the Sikhs of Punjab—can at any time threaten to walk out and bring all section proceedings to an end.

This is the Working Committee's counter-blast to the December 6 Statement.

Instead of a straightforward fight against the Imperialist Plan based on the democratic appeal to the people of all communities—the Working Committee pins its faith on constitutional manoeuvring and hopes to turn the December 6 Statement against the League as well as imperialism.

In reality where does it lead? It leads to playing straight into the hands of imperialism and this is precisely what imperialism wants the Congress to do.

This veiled demand for veto in sections instead of fighting

the sections outright—will unleash full blast Congress-League conflict and war at every step in the all-India as well as sectional Constituent Assemblies, leaving the initiative in the hands of imperialism.

From where comes this utter blindness? From a pathetic faith in the Constituent Assembly, in the Imperialist Plan, from the exigencies of a policy which seeks to avoid battle with imperialism at all costs.

The Working Committee leaders no longer parade the Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body; they are no longer able to do it in face of the London Award and the proceedings of the first session of the Assembly. But they still want to parade it as a big instrument of liberation; as a big lever for winning freedom and what not.

A Fond Illusion

In his opening address to the AICC, Acharya Kripalani said:

"Whatever might be the intention of the British Government or their documents, we have now the Constituent Assembly. It is a machinery which can help us and we must take advantage of it."

In moving the resolution, Pandit Nehru said:

"Our fight had taken a new form with the meeting of the Constituent Assembly and our aim should be to see that the

Assembly was not postponed or shelved....

"The significant point about the Assembly was not whether it was sovereign or not, but that it could not be dissolved by the British Government except by the use of force....

"The primary point to bear in mind was that the Constituent Assembly had begun to function since December 9, and though it was not the Assembly of our ideals, yet it could be utilised as a weapon to achieve our independence."

The Right-wing leaders are nursing a fond illusion and hoping against hope that somehow through the Constituent Assembly, they will be permitted to draw a freedom constitution which the British will be forced to accept. This at a time when they have been forced to retreat in the very first skirmish.

Wooing The Princes

As yet the Princes—the heavy artillery of imperialism—have not moved into action. The Right-wing leadership is struggling hard to secure their cooperation in drafting the "freedom constitution". It is wooing them by restraining all popular action in the States and it hopes to manufacture freedom fighters out of the Princes and Diwans like Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer.

Any sane man will realise that this quest of freedom in co-operation with the Princes and under the Imperialist Plan will involve the Congress leadership in endless compromises with them, sacrificing every fundamental principle till nothing remains of freedom, except the ashes left by civil war.

A Bankrupt Outlook

Much worse and far more dangerous than this illusion was the bankrupt outlook of the leadership towards the Muslim League. Barring Sjt. Shankar Rao Deo, every leader, Right and Left, conveniently forgot that the League does not consist only of Mr. Jinnah or his lieutenants, but includes lakhs of down-trodden Muslims who are as anti-imperialist as anybody else.

Ignoring this basic fact, Acharya Kripalani described the League as an ally of British imperialism. Pandit Nehru indirectly referred to the League as an enemy of the Congress.

The national leadership refuses to learn by experience. It has not yet learnt anything by its latest discomfiture at the hands of imperialism. Otherwise it would have been clear to it that imperialism was exploiting a fatal weakness in the national armour—the alienation of millions of Muslims from the national struggle and the Congress.

Identifying the League with imperialism is a dishonest way of escaping the question.

The Way Out

The Congress leadership will break through the present stalemate only when it unhesitatingly supports the partial joint struggles of Hindu and Muslim workers and peasants against vested interests—struggles which kill separatist consciousness and forge common bonds; if it declares that each national unit will have full self-determination; and taking into consideration the hold of the League leadership, offer a joint front for struggle against the Impe-

A PATRIOT'S NOTEBOOK

Bring Them Back

EARLY in November instructions were sent by General Headquarters in New Delhi calling for the setting up of special "demob machinery" (arrangements for demobilisation) in case there was a "sudden rush", due to the Interim Government demanding "the early withdrawal of all Indian Army units overseas."

This information has just been sent to me by a correspondent, who has close links with the demobilisation arrangements of the Indian Army.

State news, today....but it is important to know this, for it shows in what a panic GHQ was at the time about the Interim Government insisting on the withdrawal of our troops.

But today, my correspondent adds, those instructions have been countermanded, as GHQ has persuaded the Interim Government to keep our troops abroad in the British colonies and occupied territories and in return for this "service," the British will pay the cost of their maintenance abroad!

Today instead of arrangements being made to receive back Indian troops, troops are actually being SENT abroad to Malaya and to Japan, while those in Greece, Palestine, Iraq, Burma, etc., are destined to stay put....doing imperialism's dirty jobs for it.

I would like to see the old Generals of GHQ in a panic again, the "Be Prepared" instructions going out again for special "demob machinery," and this time, having to be ACTED UPON, as our Indian boys come back home to defend their own soil and NOT help British imperialism to suck the life blood out of other peoples.

Indian Troops In Burma

TALKING of the withdrawal of our troops from abroad, a friend who has just arrived from Burma and who is in close contact of the leading members of the Anti-Fascist Burmese Freedom League (AFBFL) has brought some interesting news.

He tells me that one of the things that General Aung San had been commissioned by the AFBFL to discuss

privately with Pandit Nehru was the question of the withdrawal of Indian troops from Burma. Their presence in Burma is a constant irritant to the Burmese people and Aung San was asked to press for their recall in the interests of Indo-Burmese unity and solidarity.

I do not know what exactly the two leaders decided on this issue, but my friend from Burma is anxious that we in India should realise how strongly the Burmese people feel about the continued presence of Indian troops in their country.

"You talk of the unity of Asia", he writes, "but you allow the British to continue to divide us by acquiescing in the use of your soldiers against your fellow Asians."

"Truly National" Navy

A LETTER from New Delhi reveals the following facts about the latest moves of Naval Headquarters with regard to the "growth" of the Royal Indian Navy:

● A British Royal Navy Commander has just been appointed as the boss of a new "security" department of the RIN. His jobs, put in plain English and shorn of their military phrasas, are:

* To prevent the RIN ratings from mixing with the people, particularly with political parties.

* To organise a spy system with "loyal" ratings giving him information of any "trouble," any literature, papers, etc., circulated among the men.

● A large number of short-term commissions are being given to domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians, while applications from Indians are being rejected.

● British officers are being recruited into the RIN, ostensibly as "EXPERTS", but with the object of keeping the imperialist grip firm over our Navy. Recently TWENTY-THREE such "experts" have been signed on, but on the intervention of Pandit Nehru, FOUR were actually stopped from sailing to India at the French port of Marseilles and sold to a nation and sent home.

● British women naval officers who should all be demobbed by April 1947 are being retained as "civilians"

on the fantastic salaries of Rs. 300 to Rs. 400.

● The British are trying to palm off on the RIN three war-damaged cruisers and are demanding to be paid for them at their "book-value"—sheer profiteering, considering their rotten condition.

All five facts summed up mean just this:

Naval Headquarters is doing its damndest to keep the RIN safe for the British.

Who said we were going to have a "truly national" Navy?

And who said—the Admirals were packing up their beddings?

Business And The INA

IN Calcutta, the INA Relief Committee has been contacting a number of leading Indian Big Business firms asking them to employ ex-INA personnel. But they have found to their surprise, that those who were the most vociferous campaigners for the INA among the business sections in the past, are today making one excuse after another and refusing to employ INA men.

The Birla Brothers themselves have, as far as is known, employed only two. It seems that about half a dozen INA Air Cadets (trained in Japan) were taken on in Birla's Bharat Airways. But the British officers of the Airways objected to their enlistment, and one by one the whole lot have been dismissed.

Big Business is clever. It is all right to back the INA when the INA is right in the political stage, for then backing the INA means getting the stamp of patriotism for all one's "business" activities, legal and illegal.

But it is quite a different matter, when the INA is no longer near the frontlines and employing political-minded soldiers may mean an increase in the militancy of the workers, and the strengthening of their battle for a decent human existence.

Oh yes, the British Empire is here.

Ramesh Chandra

THE BIGGEST BATTLE OF TODAY -HINDUS, MUSLIMS TOGETHER

Significance Of The Tebhaga Struggle

The biggest people's battle of today has been completely blacked out from the daily Press, controlled as it is by vested interests.

A mighty upsurge is sweeping through the villages of eleven districts of Bengal—Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Dacca, Pabna, Jessore, Khulna, 24-Parganas and Midnapur—as vibrant as was the pulsating spirit of the common people in our metropolitan cities like Calcutta and Bombay during the INA demonstrations or the RIN mutiny, as significant of the new spirit of our people, their will to fight, their refusal to submit—another big landmark on the road to the post-war Indian Revolution.

THE issues are simple. Forty-one per cent of the peasants of Bengal are mere share-croppers (called *adhiars*), cultivating about 50 per cent of the land. They are the fighters of the day. They are fighting because they could not live otherwise.

They have no tenancy rights; they can be thrown out at will. They have to take the crop they grow to the landlords' (jotedars) barns and see it disappear, half as rent, another part as interest at 100 to 300 per cent for the loan of paddy they are forced to take to be able to eat and live during lean months from the jotedars themselves, and still another part as illegal exactions of about eleven different sorts.

At the end the *adhiar* is left with hardly a mound of paddy per bigha he has cultivated with his labour day and night.

Jotedars' Greed

Even this did not satisfy the zamindars and jotedars.

Monopoly over land gave them in the past Rs. 10 crores as rent. Famine did not melt their hearts but only whetted their greed. In 1943 alone they made illegal profits of Rs. 150 crores by hoarding food-grains.

They began a campaign of mass ejections of tenants, transforming them into share-croppers or day-labourers, producers of food not for their own families, nor for the people, but for these parasites to sell in the blackmarket and add to their ill-gotten fortune.

All this broke the traditional patience of the peasants. Since November, in ever growing numbers, they have rallied behind the two slogans of the Tebhaga movement:

First, we shall not leave our land which our ancestors cultivated, and become beggars on the streets or slaves of the jotedars.

Secondly, we shall take two-thirds of the crop, not a grain less—one-third for our family, one-third for agricultural expenses—and give one-third to the jotedar, not a grain more.

Just Demands

Irrespective of all political differences, there is no man who can say that the peasants' demands are unjust, for, they are the most elementary democratic demands. Without them the peasant cannot live a human life and must die gnawed by hunger and disease.

Even the expert Flood Commission, appointed by the bureaucracy as early as 1940, has admitted that the *adhiar* should be given occupancy rights and rent fixed legally at one-third.

Both the Congress and the League accept the *adhiars'* demands as just but the pull of their own vested interests holds them back from active support to the movement. The League Ministry is drifting, as always when any really popular issue comes up.

Great popular pressure is needed to tilt the balance. The Tebhaga movement calls for the support of every Indian democrat, every Indian patriot, and the louder the voice of solidarity is raised the sooner will this great battle be won. Its significance is very great.

FIRST, it is the movement of the peasants; the food producers, against the jotedars, the famine-makers. To help the peasants to win is to ensure that Bengal's countryside will not know famine.

by P. C. JOSHI

Patriotic India rallied behind Bengal in 1943 through the relief campaign; it must rally again in 1947 in solidarity campaign with the struggling *adhiars*, who are fighting the famine-makers, land-grabbing blackmarketeer jotedars.

SECONDLY, it is a joint movement of Hindu-Muslim *kisans* against Hindu-Muslim jotedars. It came soon upon the heels of the Noakhali holocaust when the whole of rural Bengal stood on the brink of a precipice. Would the reactionary vested interests succeed in fanning and spreading the flames of civil war, or the leaders of the toiling peasantry drown it by unleashing the flood of joint struggle?

Blow To Riot-Mongers

It was one of the boldest decisions the peasant leaders took, and they have succeeded in wiping out the shame of Noakhali. The jotedars everywhere have tried their hardest to rouse communal passions and split the peasants but have miserably failed. Every support given to the Tebhaga movement is a big blow to the riot-mongers and real aid to unity builders.

THIRDLY, it is not only the *adhiar* who is in action but every section of the toilers is aiding him inside his village.

Never before has such solidarity been witnessed inside Bengal's villages, no more can the jotedars get for any cash the landless labourers to beat up *adhiars* nor the middle-peasant be utilised against the *adhiar*. All regard the *adhiars'* battle as their own, the first round in the battle of the exploited many in the village against the exploiting few, on whose outcome will depend their own fate.

It is a new stage in Bengal's national life. No more is the Bengali peasant waiting for outside sympathisers to come to his help, but taking his fate in his own hands, moulding his own destiny.

Chronic factionalism has been the bane of Bengal political life, headache for every patriotic Bengali, a symptom of its being confined to the middle-class.

The Bengali peasant has now made his debut in a real big way and his very first contribution has been unity in action, uplifting and heart-ill-

ing—just the way lies salvation, Bengal's and India's.

Democratic Decisions

FOURTHLY, the Bengali peasant is fighting in the simplest way and hence most effectively. There is one elected Village Committee, which takes all decisions democratically. Its word is law for all peasants. It calls upon the entire peasant youth to enlist as volunteers to collectively guard the crops, harvest it and defend the village against zamindars' goondas, who come to attack, burn and rape, but are sent hurling back faster than they came.

The new spirit of resistance to oppressors has permeated the peasant women too who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with their men, their broomsticks are feared by zamindars' hirelings as much as the lathis of the peasant youth.

The new spirit is coming into Bengal's villages through the fire of struggle, new leaders being born from the ranks of the people themselves, it is a sure guarantee of greater struggles

for new life for our toiling people and in our country.

Anti-Imperialist

FIFTHLY, the biggest significance of the Tebhaga struggle lies in its historic anti-imperialist character. It is peasants' revolt against the land-tenure system which the British imperialists imposed through the Permanent Settlement, expropriating the peasants on the one hand and creating parasitical landlords on the other; a system that has made 'Sonar Bangla' the land of famine.

The Indigo revolt against British planters was the Bengali peasants' first elemental revolt against British occupation of our country almost at its beginning.

The Tebhaga struggle of 1947 is a bigger peasant upsurge against the creatures of British rule in the final phase

of the growing Indian Revolution.

When the peasant of our enslaved country in its onward march to national liberation begins the battle for land and sees in the battle for his land, the battle for 'my motherland', the stage for final struggle for realisation of independence and building a democratic life of happiness and prosperity comes on the agenda.

Reign Of Terror

The imperialist bureaucracy realises this, sees its own doom in the Tebhaga struggle and has let loose a reign of terror, more severe than the worst terror Bengal has known before which was against the terrorist upsurge of the 'thirties.

Hundreds are being arrested in every district; all leaders driven underground; meetings banned; armed police pickets burn houses, molest women, fire indiscriminately and use zamindars' armed goonda gangs as their auxiliaries.

The League Ministry dare not own up responsibility for bureaucratic crimes without risking its own base in the Muslim peasantry. Premier Suhrawardy promises to make "inquiries" rather than openly and vigorously call upon the bureaucrats and the police to behave. Naturally these expert torturers of our people have free run.

What is expected of a popular Ministry is active intervention on the side of the struggling people, while non-intervention serves as direct aid to vested interests and as a go-ahead signal to the police.

There is no mincing words. There is no time to lose. January is the decisive harvesting month. He who gets the harvest wins the first round of battle. The Bengali peasant has staked his all, the safety of his home, the honour of his women, the life of his young sons.

He needs our support, of us all, of every section of our toiling people, of all patriotic elements. It will force the issue in his favour and we would have done our elementary fraternal duty towards a heroic detachment of the Army of the Indian People for Land and Liberty.

I call upon every Communist and Party unit to organise the

most broad-based solidarity campaign in support of the Tebhaga struggle through meetings, resolutions and letters:

● Send messages of solidarity to the Bengal Kisan Sabha (249, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta). They will see to its publicity within Bengal best.

● Rain letters and messages on Premier Suhrawardy, Writers' Building, Calcutta, calling upon him to cry halt to police terror and pass executive orders enforcing Tebhaga and stopping ejections.

I appeal to every organisation of our toiling and fighting people, particularly the Kisan Sabhas, Trade Unions, Student Federations and Women's organisations to actively help and organise the campaign.

Last but not the least, I appeal to Congressmen and Leaguers to speak in support of one of the greatest joint Hindu-Muslim actions of the day. Lakhs of Bengal peasants have joined together irrespective of all differences behind a common demand. They look to every Congressman and Leaguer who dreams of and works for Hindu-Muslim unity, to support them.

A New Bengal In Birth

Bengal—famine-ridden, riot-infested, faction-torn—that is becoming an old story; a new Bengal is being born through the Tebhaga struggle, Hindus, Muslims together fighting the famine-makers, fighting against all odds, fighting with courage, men, women and all, against the creatures of British rule—degenerate, soul-less parasites—the jotedars and zamindars, their goonda gangs, aided by the police and the bureaucracy.

To take the story of Tebhaga struggle to the people among whom we live and work is to rouse their own spirit for their own battles in the great war to win bread, land and liberty, the holy war our ancestors began which we are called upon to finally wage and win.

Against the smoky background of smouldering civil war, it is the glorious dawn of a great joint struggle of our common people.

THE DELHI AICC SESSION

(Continued from page 4.)

rialist Plan on the above and other democratic demands.

But this will mean that the leadership must give up its compromising policy, snap its ties with vested interests and give up its hostility to self-determination. The compromising leadership will not do this. It will, therefore, lead the country into still further disruption and compromise of national honour.

Its acceptance of groupings at the behest of the British Government will neither placate the League leadership nor create confidence in the Muslim masses. It does not create the common band of freedom; but on the other hand enhances faith in the obstructionist policy of the League leadership, which in turn develops more faith in reliance on the British.

Failure Of Left

The Left this time mustered a big vote against the resolution; 162 voted for Nehru's resolution of the London Statement and 53 voted against. The big vote disclosed acute discontent in the Left and other ranks over the Right-wing's

policy of compromise with the Imperialist Plan.

On the basic question of Congress-League conflict—the Left echoed the same anti-League feelings as the Right and confessed its own helplessness. To show such utter lack of faith in the Muslim masses constitutes a serious crime in those who swear by Socialism and class struggle.

The Left further failed to see that compromise today means suppression of the growing anti-imperialist upsurge. Pandita Nehru and Pant talked about the Constituent Assembly as an instrument of freedom.

Bullets For Toilers

What could be a more weird comment on their statements than the fact that when they were leading the Constituent Assembly, the workers in Cawnpore were being indiscriminately shot dead in the streets and a twenty-four hour curfew was being enforced under a Congress Ministry, for the first time in the history of strikes.

It is the same story all over—Amalner, Coimbatore, Golden Rock—bullets for workers and peasants, against the army of Indian revolution, to satisfy the list of compromisers.

It is true that the compromisers are making the Constituent Assembly into an instrument of "liberation". Failing to see this, the Left could not give an alternative lead. That lead could only be one of unshinuing the State's people's struggle intensifying and spreading the partial struggle of workers and peasants, and compelling the Ministries and the Interior Government to take their stand on the side of the masses.

This together with the programme of winning the Muslim masses and offer of joint struggle with the League could be the only concrete

lead. This would break all the bridges built by the Right for compromise and unleash struggles all round making any compromise impossible.

The Congress leadership has taken one more step down the inclined plane of compromise and surrender. Whether as a result the League will join the Constituent Assembly, it is difficult to say.

The League leadership will not accept the Congress acceptance of the London Statement as genuine, and is likely to object to the Congress stand on no compulsion. Actually it wants compulsory grouping of Provinces without even a chance to opt out. It will desperately try to keep out of the Assembly till it gets such an assurance.

In any case, it is not likely to lose anything by a policy of wait and see. The London Statement definitely encourages it to hold out.

Whether the League comes in or not—disruption is the only result of the policies pursued by the two organisations.

Fight Compromise

The Congress policy of compromise with the Imperialist Plan, and failure to secure confidence of Muslim masses, and the League policy of only obstructing the Congress at every step, irrespective of the interests of Indian freedom or of Muslim masses, only lead to further disruption and help imperialism to keep its stranglehold over India in fact. Both policies disorganise the growing struggles of the people—which clear the road to freedom.

It is the common task of progressive and Leftist in both the organisations to oppose these policies, to defeat them and clear the road to joint struggle against the Imperialist Plan

BRITISH BID TO GAIN STRANGLEHOLD OVER INDIA'S ECONOMY

Bait Of Capital Goods To Win Over Indian Industrialists

Indo-British negotiations for the settlement of India's sterling balances will soon be under way. A British mission is expected here in the middle of this month to initiate preliminary talks with the Finance Department and the Reserve Bank of India.

OUR total credits lying with Britain today amount to nearly Rs. 1,620 crores, having been reduced during the last few months by over Rs. 100 crores on account of large purchases of foodgrains for India in the sterling areas and mainly because of purchases by Indians of shares in England of British companies like the ICI and the Dunlop.

These balances have accumulated because, during the war, Britain forcibly squeezed out of India, without payment, a large amount of goods and services, inflicting huge privations and sacrifices on us.

Today they have great importance for us. We have all along been pressing for complete and full payment of the entire balances and also for their convertibility into dollars.

Anglo-U.S. Conspiracy But having kept them out of our reach all through the war, British imperialism is still denying us their benefits. It has been planning shame-facedly to write off the whole or a part of these balances and also opposing any demand for their convertibility into dollars.

An Anglo-American joint conspiracy was hatched in July last to wipe out the sterling debts. As a part of the terms of the Anglo-American Loan Agreement, both British and American Governments agreed between themselves that England's accumulated debts in each country be divided into three categories:

- 1) Part to be paid immediately;
2) Part to be released slowly in instalments beginning in 1951;
3) Part to be written off.

The settlement with the creditor countries, depending upon the "circumstances of each country," was decided to be attained on the above lines within one year of the ratification of the Anglo-American Agreement.

Mr. Fred Vinson, the then Secretary to the United States Treasury, even hinted that definite proportions had actually been agreed for the three categories into which the balances were to be divided.

Plain Denial In any case, through this joint agreement the fate of these poor countries like India was meant to be sealed and the arrangement was a plain denial of all we had been rightfully demanding.

even to secure industrial partnerships at favourable terms to British capital. This has already been seen in the recent past with Argentina, where Britain refused even to open the issue of sterling balances till the future of British-owned railways in Argentina and the future of meat supplies to Britain were considered a part of the negotiations and ensured as a part of the final upshot.

Vantage Points

As the London Economist, organ of British imperialism, frankly admitted on September 21:

"It is no secret that the Argentine Government wished to first reach agreement on their sterling balances, leaving the other two questions for separate discussion, and only the threat of final rupture (emphasis mine—P. S. G.) convinced them that the British viewpoint was one of principle and not of mere bargaining expediency."

In the case of India too, the same game is being tried, and the hold over sterling balances is being exploited for the "principle" of ensuring British hold over Indian economy.

Sir T. Ainscough, ex-British Trade Commissioner for India, frankly narrated the vantage points British capitalists possess over Indian capitalists, while addressing a meeting of British capitalists in March 1945:

"...Giving full weight to our unique experience of Indian trade and the peculiar needs of the country, our vested interests in the market, our unrivalled business contacts, and the reputation to which

by Prem Sagar Gupta

must now be added advantages from our debtor position (emphasis mine—P.S.G.) it is surely not too much to hope India may once again become our greatest export market."

And the whole course of the negotiations of the present mission is frankly outlined by the London Times in an editorial on December 24:

"The United Kingdom delegation may be expected to make the most of the fact that the balances were primarily the outcome of the quite abnormal and inflated conditions during the war. The Indian exporters for their part will be anxious to ensure the maximum release of the balances in order to finance the industrial development planned for the new India."

"It is not unreasonable to hope that these two viewpoints are not divided by a gap so wide as to preclude agreement on a long-term spread of repayments of the debts."

The Hindu of November 21, quotes a British Treasury spokesman as having emphasized that:

"Britain would insist upon scaling down, and that interest on balances would be no higher than one-half of one per cent and lastly that the movement of capital would be strictly controlled, special permits being granted subject to British currency interests."

Bait Of Capital Goods

Thus the British game clearly is to gain the following points on pain of complete repudiation of the sterling balances:

- Secure a considerable scaling down;
Fund the rest over a long period;
Secure participation for British capital in Indian industries.

And today there is real danger of the British game succeeding. Indian industrialists have made immense profits during the war and have today at their disposal huge funds seeking im-

mediate investment. They are dying to get a supply of capital goods, whatever little they can.

It is this very bait of supply of capital goods that Britain is offering to the Indian industrialists with a view to achieve its avowed objectives.

As a result of the Anglo-American Loan Agreement, by refusing to allow sterling to be converted into dollars, Britain has already assumed the position of a monopolist supplier of capital goods to Indian industrialists.

By refusing to release any capital goods, Britain is trying to force India into an acceptance of its own terms.

Industrialists' Game

The Indian industrialists too are already succumbing to British pressure.

Behind the back of the Indian people, Indian capitalists, like Birla, Tata, Walchand Hirchand and numerous others, have already entered into shameful partnerships with British capitalists, giving them a share in the capital, for joint exploitation of the Indian market.

Their spokesmen like A. D. Shroff (one of the signatories to the Bombay Plan) and K. C. Mahendra (former head of the Indian Purchasing Mission in the U.S.A.) have already publicly urged the acceptance of a scaling down on the grounds of expediency.

The Indian bourgeoisie is keeping quiet over the issue of buying off and nationalising British investments in India, lest their British counterpart get offended and refuse them even the small supplies of capital goods.

Some of them, the top-rank, are even publicly decrying the retention of British investments in India. Mr. G. D. Birla has declared:

"I do not believe this (i.e. British capital) will ever be expropriated. The British firms will carry on."

Birla's mouthpiece, the Eastern Economist, discredits the liquidation of British assets in India, somehow wanting us to believe that "the whole of the sterling balances can therefore be easily wiped out" in the process.

Some of the Indian industrialists are even paying 3,000 times the nominal value for British companies wanting to sell their assets in India all with a view to gain personal profit. In such cases, of course,

they do not even mind the serious depletion their dealings might cause in the sterling balances, for which otherwise they show great concern.

Thus the Indian industrialists, motivated by selfish interests of minor profits in the near future, are planning a complete betrayal of national interests.

Through their representatives, the Indian industrialists will bring strong pressure on the Interim Government to bargain and compromise with the British Government. It is against such pressure of the Indian and British vested interests that the Interim Government supported by the mass of Indian people has to fight.

The sterling balances are a national asset; they accumulated as a result of sacrifices of the mass of our people, even costing us 35 lakh lives in the Bengal famine, and no class of Indian industrialists and vested interests has any right to negotiate on behalf of India with a view to agree to their scaling down or to use the national assets in a wasteful way.

Interim Govt. Must Act

The Interim Government should forthwith take over all British investments in India and nationalise the main industries like jute, coal and plantations, dominated by the British capital.

The sterling balances may not be with us but these sterling investments are within our reach and like what the U.S.A. or Canada has done, they should be immediately bought off at a nominal price as part payment of the sterling balances.

That will stop a huge annual drain of goods from India by way of interest, profits and home charges, etc. That will establish Indian ownership and control over important and basic Indian industries, coal, jute and plantations.

For the rest of the balances, the Interim Government should use India's economic sanctions (our position in British trade, etc.) to force Britain into a full payment to us in the form of capital goods.

The rate of payment or the number of instalments in which the whole payment should be made, can be negotiated with Britain and fixed in the best interests of the people and the economy of both the countries.

Priority from India's point of view should be given to the type of machinery required for the establishment of heavy industry in India.

That is the only way to defeat the conspiracies of British imperialism and the betrayal of Indian industrialists. That is the only way to secure full payment of our balances and pave the way for the development of basic and heavy industries in India.

WHERE STANDS THE LEFT?

REPRESSION, GROUPING & Smti. KAMLADEVI

SMTI. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya is a prominent member of the top-leadership of the Congress Socialist Party. One of the ex-Presidents of the All-India Women's Conference, it is she who expresses the CSP's point of view inside the women's movement.

At the recent session of the All-India Women's Conference at Akola, Smti. Kamladevi had occasion to express this point of view on a number of occasions. Here is a report of what she had to say on two important issues which came up before the Conference.

Repression

One of the main resolutions moved at the Conference was the one on "Repression". It read as follows:

"This Conference views with concern the recent actions of the police and military in resorting to lathi-charges, firing and other encroachments on the civil liberties of people. This Conference, therefore, demands:

- (a) Wherever such incidents take place the Provincial Governments or State Authorities must immediately set up a non-official committee to enquire into the action of the police or military.

"(b) Whenever women have been involved, women must be included in the non-official enquiry committee.

(c) Since every citizen is entitled to her or his political opinion, nobody holding any particular political opinion, should be penalised for doing so.

(d) All the remaining political prisoners, such as RIN, INA and others, who are convicted, must be forthwith released. Further, cases pend-

ing against political workers must be withdrawn."

Undoubtedly this was a resolution which embodies the feelings of all patriots, who want to put a stop to the police terror against the fighting workers, peasants and other struggling sections of our people.

One would have expected that such a resolution would have the full support of all Congress women, and for that matter, of all women in the Conference, with the exception perhaps of the one or two Maharajah and loyalist wives of toadies and officials, who are still in the AIWC.

And, in fact, the resolution did meet with almost universal support—even the Rightist of the Right women supporting it.

Opposition

But—there WAS opposition. As soon as the resolution had been seconded, up shot Smti. Kamladevi to announce boldly that she OPPOSED the resolution.

A murmur of shocked whispering ran through the audience. A SOCIALIST who talks of revolution, opposing THIS resolution?

Smti. Kamladevi argued hard:

"This was a resolution which was meant to condemn the CONGRESS Ministries.

"Hartals are being deliberately engineered by some people to force the Ministries to act against them.

"Why should the All-India Women's Conference take up SUCH issues?"

liberties at the Coonarda Session of the AIWC five years ago, and always prided herself on the fact that she had brought in such subjects into the AIWC and made it turn towards becoming a really fighting platform of women, which was part of the anti-imperialist movement.

But today she saw an attack on Congress Ministries in a resolution, which merely "viewed with concern" the outrageous terrorism of the police and military, which demanded not the hanging of the murderers, but simply an enquiry into each act of terror, which asked that freedom of political opinion be guaranteed and political prisoners, (especially those of the RIN and INA) be released.

Not one single Rightist, liberal or pro-temple delegate opposed this resolution, but it was too strong for Smti. Kamladevi.

Outroled

Eventually the vote was taken. Smti. Kamladevi's opposition won SIX votes including her own, while a forest of hands went up for the resolution—hands which represented all sections of the House, who were all amazed at Smti. Kamladevi's stand and, despite the respect they had for her past work for the Conference, voted against her.

Smti. Kamladevi spoke also very strongly on another question.

An amendment was moved to the resolution on the Constituent Assembly that the following sentence should be added:

pulsory grouping of the Provinces without the wishes of the people concerned."

At the AICC just a week later, the CSP leaders spoke strongly and firmly against grouping, but here, in the AIWC, it was Smti. Kamladevi who rose to lead the opposition to the very discussion of this amendment.

It was a "controversial" issue, she said, why should the Women's Conference decide this, leave it to the leaders.

Of course, here Smti. Kamladevi was backed by a large number of Right-wing Congress and liberal women—but even so, it was only by a narrow majority of 61 to 57 that the consideration of this vital amendment was stopped, thus in practice, stifling the voice of India's womanhood against the very grouping system, against which Smt. Jai Prakash and other CSPers spoke so strongly at the AICC only a week later.

Compromise

Smti. Kamladevi's policy of compromising on every issue, exposing attacks on British terror, and British machinations, is born out of the past failure of the CSP to take a determined stand against the Right-wing policy of surrender to the British.

The Congress Socialists must realise that the way to implement the strong anti-compromise speeches made by their leaders at the AICC is to support the very resolution SWCI KAMLADEVI opposed at the AIWC.

For it is only by fighting the bureaucracy's terror that one can help the revolutionary forces to grow stronger, and it is only by fighting the British Plan, with its most undemocratic and criminal feature of grouping, that one can bring the national movement back on to the path of struggle.

—ROMESH CHANDRA

Aung San's London Mission

-What Will It Bring?

During this coming week, six Burmese statesmen, headed by General Aung San, leader of the anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), will be flying to London to discuss the future of Burma with the leaders of the British Government.

THREE months ago, faced with a critical situation, "nearing rebellion" as one correspondent described it, the British invited Aung San and the AFPFL to enter the Governor's Executive Council; by this they put the responsibility of Government on the shoulders of the AFPFL without in fact transferring power.

The real ruler of Burma remained the Governor and the imperialist bureaucracy. All that happened was that in taking action against the rising people's movement, the imperialists could now take shelter behind the name and authority of the AFPFL.

In these three months, this has become more and more patent to everyone in Burma. As General Aung San said in his Press conference in Delhi:

FIRST, the Executive Council had very limited powers, quite inadequate to enable the leaders of Burma's people to solve urgent problems of rehabilitation of the country which had been devastated by three years of war.

SECONDLY, despite the fact that Aung San was Counsellor to the Governor for Defence and External Affairs, in fact the Executive Council had no powers over the country's armed forces or over Burma's foreign relations.

AFPFL's Demands

It was this incapacity to tackle the urgent problems of the people that led the AFPFL

nearly two months ago to demand:

(1) The British Government to declare that Burma would be given independence by the end of 1947, and that the forthcoming elections would be for a Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free Burma.

(2) The Governor's Executive Council to be transformed into a real National Government.

(3) The Project Boards (economic schemes of the British which were directed to reimpose Britain's economic domination over Burma) to be revised or abolished according to the recommendations of the AFPFL. And in essence it is to discuss

Executive Council, might well provide "the spark to light the flames of unrest and disorder." (Delhi Press conference, January 3).

But is the visit of the Burmese leaders to London going to win these "adequate powers"? Are the British intending to concede the three main demands (given above) of the AFPFL?

All facts go to show that the British Government has no intention of doing this.

Not Representative

FIRST, the delegation that is going to London is NOT a delegation truly representative of Burma's people.

Out of the six members only two are real leaders of the AFPFL, General Aung San and Thakin Mya. The other four are all opportunist politicians, who at one time or another have played Britain's game.

by Mohan Kumaramangalam

these demands of the AFPFL that the British Government has invited the Burmese leaders to London.

Afraid that the situation in Burma might "worsen," i.e., that the growing discontent of the people might force the AFPFL out of the powerless Governor's Executive Council and into opposition, the British are trying to achieve yet another compromise by which they can still use the AFPFL leadership as a screen from behind which to shoot at the rising people's movement.

In fact, here again Aung San has warned that delay in giving adequate powers to the

There are U Ba Pe, old liberal loyalist, though a member of the AFPFL Supreme Executive, and U Tin Tut, formerly of the I.C.S., both of whom, in contrast to Aung San's statement at Delhi, have warmly praised the Governor's "leadership" of the Executive Council and can be expected to echo whatever the British say.

The other two delegates, U Saw and Ba Sein, have always trimmed their sails to the ruling power, first British, then Japanese, and now the British again.

Therefore, the personnel of the delegation itself has been carefully chosen to enable the British to bring pressure on Aung San to retreat from the demands of the AFPFL and come to a compromise.

SECONDLY, in answer to Aung San's open declaration that Burma would not remain in the Empire, the influential Tory M.P. and Burmese "expert" Sir Stanley Reed, has indicated the

line of attack of the British when he commented that if Burma quits the Empire, it will get no economic help from the British.

So also the authoritative London Times has written clearly that the London Conference will discuss "how best the demand for autonomy (NOT independence—M.K.) will be satisfied" and warned that the Burmese would "do well so to shape their acceptance of freedom that they did not forfeit the continued friendship" of Britain. (December 21).

At the same time the British are also building up other elements in Burma who can help to disrupt the national front; in particular they are encouraging the Karens.

Earlier this year a deputation of Karens visited England and recently the liberal News Chronicle commented that there should be a separate Karen region in the future Burma.

Thus from the British end, the London discussions are not meant to lay the basis for an independent Burma, but to further disrupt and weaken the Burmese national movement.

Leadership's Weakness

THIRDLY, the AFPFL leadership itself has already shown that it is not ready or determined to fight uncompromisingly for the national demand—complete independence.

The special financial powers that the British Government retained under the 1935 Constitution for Burma yet remain; and despite the AFPFL's demand for their total abolition both U Ba Pe and U Tin Tut have accepted some compromise, the full nature of which has not yet been revealed. Against this the AFPFL has yet to protest.

Again the AFPFL has also retreated from its original demand for complete withdrawal of the imperialist Project Boards.

So also instead of cancelling the Defence of Burma Rules (to which it was pledged before en-

tering the Executive Council) it is allowing the bureaucracy to use them with impunity to suppress the people's movement.

Finally, the AFPFL has not yet come out sharply against elections being held under the 1935 Constitution which give undue weightage to anti-national elements and vested interests. In addition Aung San in his Delhi Press conference belittled the need to demand the withdrawal of foreign troops, when in fact it is their presence in Burma, which provides the real sanctions for British authority.

Compromise Or Freedom?

Thus the visit of the Burmese leaders to London is not likely to result in any advance of the Burmese freedom struggle but rather in a compromise, a compromise as the London Times has written, based on "Britain's determination to extend to Burma the policy adopted for India."

● There will be enacted the same playing on "divisions among the people," divisions that in fact are being created and encouraged by the British.

● There will be the same retention of final power in British hands, both in relation to the interim period and to the framing of the constitution.

● There will be the same attempt to produce a "Constituent Assembly," heavily weighted in favour of vested interests, an assembly which, like the Indian Assembly, will be incapable of drawing up a constitution for a free country.

The London visit, therefore, cannot lead to Burmese freedom. Only if the AFPFL leaders, relying on their vast influence among their people, cut away from the opportunists and loyalists and from their present compromising policy and head a real mass struggle against imperialism, will Burma be able to win what all Burmese desire, her freedom and independence.

January 7, 1947.

★ INSIDE THE FORCES ★

Memorandum

INDIAN airmen of RAF Station, Vizagapatam, have been suffering from various difficulties for some time past. Their repeated appeals to their officers, through proper channels, having failed to redress their grievances, they have now addressed a memorandum to the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Air Headquarters, India.

Here are a few significant extracts from the memorandum.

"While making this application we fully realise that such applications are against regulations; but as there is no other alternative, we choose this procedure...."

Grievances

"The following are our general grievances.

"Messing—We are not sure that the issued quantity is our entitlement, for the food served is insufficient.... our rations are cut.... weekly for the purpose of adjusting a debt of Rs. 2,000—incurred by the irresponsible personnel who were handling the mess before...."

"Complaints made to the Commanding Officer.... have brought forth the reply: 'Go and report to Pandit Nehru!'"

"The Cook House as well as the dining hall are hygienically unfit and utensils require replacement.... It is pointed out that the Medical Officer has already condemned the Cook House...."

"It is with great sorrow that we point out that the complaints made about food and disciplinary action.

No Amenities

"Welfare—shortage of furniture, bad conditions of buildings, lack of sanitation are some of the factors. No arrangements have been made for Pre-Release Training. The grocery shop is not supplying even the essential stuff...."

"Sports—Materials for indoor and outdoor games do not exist...."

"Racial Discrimination—differences shown in the accommodation, welfare, disciplinary action and privileges between the RAF and RIAF...."

"Life has become miserable at this station and early redress of these grievances will be appreciated."

Copies of this memorandum have been sent to AOC, H.Q. 2(i) Group and O.C. Station Headquarters, RAF, Vizagapatam.

Ananta Singh Greeted

INDIAN servicemen are quite conscious of their role in maintaining the unity of their people and in helping them in their struggle for freedom.

An Indian airman has written the following letter to Ananta Singh of Chittagong Army Raid fame:

"I send my respectful greetings to you and the patriotic sons of Chittagong."

"Although I differ from its policy of August 1942, I regard the Communist Party as a disciplined and a truly patriotic organisation."

"I am sure that your efforts will bridge the gulf that now exists between our two communities, who are fighting against each other at the instigation of another Power."

"We hope to be able to cooperate with you in the near future." (Translated from Bengali).

Relief Funds

INDIAN airmen of Bombay have contributed Rs. 100 to the Travancore Relief Fund. In a letter to the people of Travancore they have congratulated them for their glorious struggle and promised all possible help.

Money is also pouring in from servicemen for the People's Relief Committee for the relief of Hindu-Muslim riot victims of Bengal and Bihar. I hope to publish some details next week.

—(OUR FORCES CORRESPONDENT)

World Labour In Action

TWO COMMUNISTS WIN IN CEYLON ELECTIONS

TWO candidates of the Communist Party were elected at the elections to the Municipal Councils and certain Urban Councils in Ceylon in December 1946.

In the Municipal elections in Colombo, the Communist Party contested 10 out of the 30 wards in the city. In these wards it polled 3,386 votes out of a total of 27,321 votes cast for 43 candidates. This poll represented 39 per cent of the total votes cast in these wards and 59 per cent of the votes received by the winning candidates.

M. G. Mandis, candidate of the Communist Party, was elected a member of the Colombo Municipal Council for the Soduwella Ward, polling 1,287 votes.

Dr. Kumaran Ratnam, a close sympathiser of the Communist Party and backed by the Party, won the election for the Slave Island ward, polling over 2,000 votes out of 3,364 votes in a straight fight.

These two represented the highest votes received by any candidate in the whole elections.

VESTED INTERESTS COMBINE

A feature of the elections was that all the vested interests in the city combined to fight the Communist Party. Impersonation of voters was carried out to such an extent that it received comment in the nationalist press. Money was spent lavishly and

in certain wards open thuggery was directed against the Communist candidates and their supporters, meetings were broken up and mobile loud-speaker vans smashed.

BREAK WITH FRANCO—TUC TO ASK BEVIN

A 4-MAN delegation of the powerful British Trades Union Congress (TUC) will meet Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin to express the TUC's strong dissatisfaction with the Labour Government's policy towards Greece and Spain.

After reviewing the behaviour of the British representatives at the United Nations General Assembly, the TUC General Council at a meeting on December 14 decided to press Bevin into breaking all diplomatic and economic relations with Franco Spain.

The TUC will also ask the British Government's aid in obtaining freedom of organisation for Greek unions.

HALF-MILLION NOW IN

JAVA UNIONS

FREEED from the repressive hand of Dutch rule in the East Indies, more than 500,000 workers in Java are now organised in unions affiliated to the All-Indonesia Central Labour Federation, which supports the new Indonesian Republic.

In an island where industry and mining were checked by Dutch colonial rule in the pre-war years, there

are now 200,000 unionised marine and waterfront workers, 100,000 labourers, 45,000 railroad workers, 60,000 plantation workers, 50,000 postal workers, 10,000 electricians, 5,000 pawnshop employees, 5,000 Government employees and 1,000 bank clerks.

The Javanese unions are now planning to establish closer ties with the growing unions in Sumatra.

GERMAN JOBLESS REDUCED IN SOVIET ZONE

UNEMPLOYMENT in the Russian-occupied zone of Germany was reduced by 47 per cent during the five months ending last September, according to figures released by the four Allied Powers. The number of jobless in the American, British and French zones declined only slightly. The Allied report showed that 1,100,000 employables in Germany were idle out of 17,537,000 registered in labour offices.

The number of unemployed in the Russian zone dropped from 332,000 to 102,000 from April to September. In the American zone, unemployment figures showed a slight dip from 700,000 to 570,000.

Russia's success in handling the unemployment problem was attributed to a superior apprenticeship training programme.

LAND FOR EVERY TILLER IN CHINA'S COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREAS

Step Forward In Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Feudal Revolution

In an interview with the APA Correspondent on December 18, General Chou En Lai, the Communist leader, stated that the Chinese Communists would be able to crush the present Kuomintang offensive in the next six months. Other Communist spokesmen have also expressed similar confidence, even though everyone knows of the strong backing, financial and military, which Chiang is receiving from the United States. What is it that gives the Chinese Communists such supreme confidence? What is the basis of the strength and invincibility of the Red Army of China?

THE answer lies in the new and far-reaching policy of land reform which is being put into force in the Communist-controlled areas.

Last spring the Communist Party decided to give practical shape to the principle of 'Land For Every Tiller'. It is expected that within a short period, most of the land belonging to landlords who deserted it during the anti-Japanese war and are now in exile, as well as land owned by landlords who do not till it, would be distributed among the peasants.

The land reform which is now sweeping across Communist-controlled China has received little publicity abroad. It is, however, of greater historical significance than all the political disputes during the past few months. It is bound to have repercussions among millions of peasants living in the KMT-China also.

KMT Land Policy

The Communists declare that their best ally in their land reform is, ironically enough, the land policy of the KMT Government itself, which is one of ruthless exploitation of the peasant.

The KMT has no doubt a progressive programme of land reform on paper, but in actual practice, the big landlords who control the KMT Government have effectively prevented its implementation.

THE struggle of Viet-Nam in defence of her independence against French imperialism has evoked universal sympathy in India, and one is glad to note that at least on this issue both the Congress and the League Presidents are at one.

It is a pity, however, that Sjt. Kripalani should have lumped all the French people together as being desirous of depriving the Viet-Namense of their liberty, for there is a considerable body of opinion in France opposed to this.

In a statement, dated January 4, he says:

"One would have thought that the recent victory in the French elections of the revolutionary parties would mean a radical change in the French foreign policy as well.

"But imperialism, as we have found to our cost, dies hard and seems to be equally compatible with every kind of 'ism', whether it is Capitalism, Socialism or Communism."

Without for the moment entering into any controversy whether or not Socialism and Communism are compatible with imperialism, let us see what the record of the French Communist Party has been in regard to Viet-Nam.

The Independent Republic of Viet-Nam was established in August 1945, when the entire people rose in armed revolt and wrested power from the Japanese—the French rulers had already, with the outbreak of war in the East, fled the country.

The imperialists, however, could not take this big dent in the wall of colonial slavery which they had erected around the people of the Far East, lying down. French and British reactionaries made common cause, therefore, to crush the new-born Republic.

Communist Pressure

For full six months the struggle waged. The vehemence of people's resistance in Viet-Nam combined with the opposition to the policy of French die-hards which was gathering momentum under Communist initiative, forced the imperialists to beat a retreat. Communist Ministers inside the then French Cabinet kept up a ceaseless pressure urging recognition of Viet-Nam's independence.

Our Correspondent

Mao Tse Tung defined it long ago that the problem of China is basically a problem of ending the century-old landlordism which keeps millions of peasants impoverished.

During the period from 1927 to 1935, the Communists had been practising the policy of confiscating land from the landlords and distributing it among the peasants.

The Japanese invasion of China created a new situation, and in order to build a joint anti-Japanese front of all, the Communists suspended their policy of confiscation of land, but they at the same time insisted that the landlords make substantial reduction in rent and interest.

"Land For Every Tiller"

The present Communist land programme, which is based on the slogan of "Land For Every Tiller," aims at the abolition of landlordism—a landlord is described as a person who collects rent on land but does not work on it. It does not call for the direct confiscation of land, but lays down that:

- (1) Land formerly belonging to the Japanese or to the collaborators should be redistributed among landless peasants.
- (2) Those landlords who during the war years did not reduce rent

and interest should pay back to the peasants the excess rent and interest collected, in accordance with regulations laid down.

(3) Peasants, desiring to purchase land, must be given priority over others.

(4) Landlords who cultivate only a part of the land they own and hire out the remainder must either bring all the land under their own cultivation or they would be deprived of that portion of the land they themselves do not till, which would be distributed among landless labourers.

Big landlords are encouraged to voluntarily contribute uncultivated land belonging to them, for distribution among landless peasants.

Economic Stability

These measures, the Communists assert, have given their areas greater economic stability as opposed to the KMT areas.

In the KMT areas the peasants have to till land which does not belong to them; they have also to pay exorbitant land taxes many years in advance—in some areas 60 years in advance.

In the Communist areas, the peasants have been freed from the burden of landlordism and the land tax too is small.

Events have borne out the truth of the Communist contention that the war of self-defence against the KMT offensive is fought best in those areas where the land reform is best carried out.

Thus, for instance, in the Shansi-Hopei-Shantung-Honan area, where twenty million peasants benefitted from the land reform programme, more than two million peasants have joined the People's Volunteer Corps. In one campaign against the

KMT offensive in a certain North Kiangsu town, more than 10,000 peasants volunteered for transportation and first aid work.

As General Liu Pal-Chu has said:

"The essential factor of our victory is that the morale of our soldiers is ten times higher than that of KMT troops; our fighters, who are liberated peasants themselves, know well that they are fighting a just war, they are defending their own interests."

Increased Production

Another experience has been that once a peasant is in possession of his own land his eagerness to produce more increases beyond measure, and numerous labour cultivators and poor peasants become middle and even rich peasants. Beggars, thieves and robbers cease to exist in the villages.

Over and above this, with the rise in the purchasing power of the peasants, small-scale industries begin to grow.

Land reform is thus a big step forward in China's anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution.

The full realization of the programme of "Land For Every Tiller", will free China's peasantry, who represent more than 80 per cent of its population, and, in the words of Mao Tse Tung, it will "enable China's agriculture to advance from a backward to a modern level, to create a market for industries, to make the change-over from an agricultural country to an industrialised one possible."

are sharply opposed to the policy which the present French Government is pursuing in Viet-Nam. They are fighting for its reversal, but it is unfair to attack them, actually making them a party to it, because they have not yet succeeded!

The elections resulted in the victory of revolutionary parties no doubt, but they did not lead to the liquidation of reactionary parties. And it is the powerful vested interests behind these latter parties who are really guilty.

Viet-Nam, particularly Cochinchina, has long been a profit-paradise for French Big Business. French capital investments, largely controlled by the Bank of Indo-China, have prevented the growth of local industries.

"In Cochinchina," says George Padmore, "the big landowners with plantations of approximately 1,500 acres, controlled 45 per cent of the rice lands. Share-cropping tenants, working pieces of land of about 25 acres, were obliged to pay the landlord between 40 and 50 per cent of their harvests, as well as heavy interest rates on money which they borrowed from him to buy tools and tide them over until the crop."

The Real Culprits

Not to nail down these "powerful rice, cotton and rubber profiteers" as the real culprits who, in pursuance of their own narrow sectional interests, are shedding innocent Viet-Namense and French blood, is to play into their hands, for the vested interests, capitalists and landlords, in every country try to pose as defenders of the nation, patriots fighting for the people.

Communists are the staunchest enemies of imperialism because, fighting for the toiling masses, they know that it is imperialist loot which enables the capitalists to keep their own people down.

There is a tendency in certain quarters to regard the interests of the dominant class in capitalist society as the interests of the entire nation, and it is precisely because the distinction between the exploiting few and the toiling masses is not clearly made that leads one to fall into the sort of error into which Sjt. Kripalani has fallen, namely, of identifying the people as a whole with a class.

—V. M. KAUL



Viet-Nam And French Communists

And an accord was accordingly signed on March 6, 1946, which recognised the free status of the Viet-Nam Republic.

The imperialists had, however, no intention of keeping the terms of the accord. They bided their time, seeking for a favourable opportunity to strike again. But the presence of Communist members in the then Cabinet effectively prevented any precipitate action.

First Anniversary

In August last, Viet-Nam observed the first anniversary of its foundation. In Paris too the occasion was celebrated when 3,000 Viet-Namense gathered in a huge hall, and heard their leader and President Ho Chi-Minh.

The French Communist Party and the French Trade Union Congress (CGT) offered their greetings at the meeting, but the conservative circles ignored the entire function. Not a word about it appeared in any French paper, except the Communist L'Humanite.

Meanwhile, the militarists continued pouring more troops into Cochinchina, still under their occupation, and the colonial bureaucracy, manned by old die-hards, appointed a puppet provisional Government of Cochinchina. Protests proved futile, but nothing big happened. The time was not yet ripe for the vested interests to launch their full-scale attack.

Then came the last November elections. The Communists emerged as the biggest party but the reactionaries were still strongly entrenched and they prevented the election of a

Communist Premier. Both sides were evenly matched and there was political deadlock which was temporarily solved by the appointment of an all-Socialist cabinet.

Taking advantage of this situation, with the Communists for the first time after liberation not represented in the Government, the imperialists struck.

The Communists, however, have not acquiesced in this shameful policy. They have voiced vigorous protest, the volume of which is becoming louder and louder.

At a meeting recently of the National Defence Committee of the French Assembly, when a member proposed a resolution of Christmas greetings to the French troops fighting in Viet-Nam, the Communists vigorously opposed this 'imperialist manifestation', and ultimately walked out of the Chamber. The resolution was passed as the Socialists abstained from voting.

"L'Humanite" Speaks

The following quotation from the French daily, L'Humanite, makes the stand of the Communists abundantly clear:

"We ask why he (M. Marius Moutet, French Minister for Colonies) is engaged in a pleasure tour of Cambodia losing in hearty toasts to phantom officials and decorative Princesses, the precious time which could have been more usefully devoted to negotiations. The defence of France and French interests demands that the systematic extension of military operations give way to political and diplomatic negotiation with the Viet-Nam Government."

The Communists, there should be no ground for doubting after the factual evidence I have given above,

The Bookshelf

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For a month starting from Lenin Day, from January 21st to February 23rd which is Red Army Day, P.P.H. is offering at special reduced terms some works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

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IS FIGHTING FOR PEOPLE'S GRIEVANCES A CRIME UNDER POPULAR MINISTRY?

Round-Up Of Trade Union And Student Leaders' In C.P.

On December 21, 17 leading trade union leaders and one student leader of the Central Provinces were arrested and detained under the C.P. and Berar Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1946.

In September last the Ministry had passed their 'Goonda' Bill in one sitting lasting just four hours. It was "mainly based" on the Bombay "Goonda" Act which in turn was based on the Defence of India Rules. But within two months, the Shukla Ministry found even that inadequate.

Hence this new Act "based largely on the since repealed Defence of India Rules, the Restriction and Detention Order, 1944, the Collective Fine Ordinance, and the Camps and Parades Control Order" (all of which are war-time measures of imperialism rolled into one).

In November 14, it was passed in the Provincial Assembly to protect the Province from "anti-social elements". On December 21, it was first used against eleven leading Communist organisers from Nagpur, Raipur, Badnera.



H. K. VYAS

Who are these "anti-social elements" who have come under the shocking clauses of this Act? (see Box).

With the exception of one (who is a student leader) they are organisers of the working-class, most of whom have suffered in imperialism's jail for the cause of the working-class.

According to S. Sanyal, District Magistrate of Nagpur, their crimes, "prejudicial to public safety and tranquillity," have been:

(1) A. B. Bardhan—Instrumental in holding a Students' Federation Convention at Nagpur at which a strong protest

by
Our Correspondent

was made against the enhancement of tuition fees.

(2) Mushtaq Hussain—"Took an active part in Communist agitation at Nagpur against the Trades Disputes Bill... Has drawn up a memorandum of demands (of ex-servicemen) which, it is apprehended, will harass the Government."

(3) G. M. Mote—"Guiding spirit of all agitation carried on in Nagpur labour circles by his connivance."

In other words, under a Ministry which came into power to redress people's grievances, fighting for those very demands becomes a 'crime'. What is more amazing is that in a number of cases, the bureaucrats have levelled charges against persons who were never even remotely connected with them (for example, Bardhan, a student leader, is accused of leading textile strikes, Dhanraj, correspondent of the Hindi "Janyug" of guiding student actions, etc.).

Every single strike which has been correctly mentioned in these orders as having been led by one or more of these accused has been a legal one under the law of the land. Almost every one of these has been amicably settled, with the intervention of the authorities themselves. Then why has this offensive been launched?

It is because the old bureaucracy still rules the Province, and is out to smother every single struggle of the workers, clerks and other employees, for bettering their lot.

The Ministry has been appointing Committees of Inquiry, but like the Purank Committee for textiles, these either do not meet or have very little to offer to the workers. The present vicious offensive is, therefore, aimed at stamping out these struggles altogether.

A few days earlier the same bureaucracy had stopped the famous Satara leader (of 1942) Nana Patil from addressing meetings. Under popular pressure they were forced to retrace their steps.

This latest challenge of the bureaucracy also must be ac-



B. N. MUKHERJI

cepted by the people of Central Provinces. It is up to them to stop their Ministry from being led by the bureaucrats against civil liberties, against workers and peasants, against the very election pledges that brought the Ministry to power.

Already leading Congressmen like General Awari, Thakur Niranjani Singh, M.L.A., Satyanarayan Shrivastav (Congress Socialist leader) and the President of the Narsingpur D. C. O. have condemned the arrests.

The liberal daily Hitavada and the Kamptee League Secretary Mr. Mohd. Zahir Waisi have also raised their voices in protest.

C.P.'S BUREAUCRATS AT THEIR JOB

Anti-Working-Class Circulars And Orders

This is what the Additional Under-Secretary to the Government wrote to "All Commissioners of Divisions—C.P. and Berar", on November 23—

"By order of the Governor:

"Rule III-A of the Defence of India, Rules as contained in force by this (Emergency Provisions (Continuance) Ordinance 1945) Ordinance is now available for dealing with the strikes by municipal employees especially those engaged in conservancy services.

"Similarly the Central Provinces and Berar Maintenance of Public Order Act which has recently been enacted by the Provincial Government is also useful for meeting these cases.

"In view of these provisions no separate legislation in connection with sweepers' strikes is necessary. The Deputy Commissioners can now make use of these measures, whenever necessary, to prevent strikes."

Or take the case of the peons and allied workers. On September 6, again "By Order of the Governor", the Under-Secretary to the Government, Central Administration Department, wrote this to all heads of Departments:

"Government has decided that the time has come to tell peons that in their own interests they must dissociate from this union (formed under the auspices of the Communist Party... If they do not follow this advice an order will be served on them telling them that if they do not sever their connections with the union, they will be punished."

Further on October 23, S. Concio, Under Secretary to Government (same Department), warned the peons who had "not yet dissociated themselves from (this) union... Government will have nothing to do with Communist-sponsored associations or have any outsiders meddling with the affairs of their employees."

That is the way the bureaucrats are left free to challenge and even deny the most elementary right of workers to have guidance from non-worker friends, a right denied nowhere else in the world! This is the C.P. bureaucracy in action!

Workers On The March

MILITARY SERVICES WORKERS' CONFERENCE

ABOUT 300 delegates from Poona, Jabulpore, Lucknow, etc., met in the first Conference of the All-India Military Services Workers' Federation at Lucknow on December 22, under the Presidency of S. A. Dange, M.L.A., Bombay.

The Conference demanded of the Interim Government alternative jobs for the 80,000 clerks and 1,50,000 workers who are soon to be thrown out.

It demanded the end of the bureaucratic practice of keeping a section of the workers on the "muster role". These are employed on a 28 days' contract which is renewed after the lapse of every four weeks, thus denying these workers all the privileges of regular service.

It also demanded a minimum living wage, permanency after one year's service, planned wage increase, etc. Dange was elected President for the next year.

BOMBAY GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASTIR

THE Bombay Government's employees are on the march, their peons, taluhs, clerks of all Government Departments in Bombay, their teachers.

During the war his work—collecting war levies, etc.—and, therefore, the people's hatred of him, had considerably increased. Under the Congress Government, the petty village landlords and others threaten him if he conscientiously tries to enforce even its meagre social legislation.

Since the Provincial Government had not expressed their policy regarding 1947-48 the Central Day Committee's recommendations to them and, moreover, since the experience of the Day Committee did not hold much promise, the Conference gave

a call for preparation for strike should negotiations fail to bear satisfactory results. A Committee was appointed to strengthen the organisation.

The Bombay Government's saluhs (village officer), kicked by the bosses and maligned by the people to whom he represents. His Majesty's Government is organising in a number of districts—Nagar, Poona, Thane, Nashik, Khandesh, Satara, Sholapur, Ratnagiri, etc.

During the war his work—collecting war levies, etc.—and, therefore, the people's hatred of him, had considerably increased. Under the Congress Government, the petty village landlords and others threaten him if he conscientiously tries to enforce even its meagre social legislation.

DEMANDS

Symptomatic of his awakening are his Taluhs and District Conferences where he put forward the following demands (passed by the Karjat Taluhs Conference)—

- 1) Enforcement of leave rules;
- 2) Extra wages for over-time;
- 3) Humane treatment from bosses and
- 4) Wage scale of Rs. 50 to Rs. 120, etc.

On December 25 the Conference of all Government Office employees in Bombay met, under the Presidency of Acharya Narayana Das.

It demanded the wage scale applicable to the Central Government staff, 50 per cent dearness allowance, grant of interim relief, etc. Failure to satisfy these demands may lead to strike, the Conference warned.

BOMBAY TEACHERS TO STRIKE AGAIN?

BOMBAY'S 22,000 primary teachers may once again be faced with a strike if the Ministry persists in dragging out or in evading proposals. Some months ago they were granted

a wage increase. It was far from satisfactory and, therefore, unanimously condemned by the Provincial organisation of the teachers. But now even this wage increase is going to remain a paper promise!

The Bombay Information, authorised publication of the Government (November 30, '46), asserts that unless the Local Boards find their way to sharing one-third of the increased expenses (Rs. 68 lakhs) the Government will have no other way out but to bear only two-thirds of the expenses, or at best contribute their share up to the end of 1946.

It is a patent fact that Local Boards cannot increase their revenues to meet this demand and, therefore, the poor teachers have to go without even the meagre rise that the Ministry had offered. Can anyone justifiably blame the teachers if they strike for a living wage?

HUBLI WORKERS READY FOR STRIKE

DESPITE the disruptive tactics practised by the Rashtriya Gini Kamgar Sangh and Section 14A introduced long before the commencement of the strike, over 3,000 workers (including 600 women) of the Bharat Mills, Hubli, are all ready for strike (to begin from January 11).

And the lowest in the entire Province (about Rs. 22 including dearness allowance), with owners demanding about 1,400 workers ever since the union was formed in 1936, with all efforts at conciliation having failed, the men gave a notice of strike on December 25 for two demands:

- (1) They must be shown the accounts for May (there was some bookkeeping) last
- (2) All the 308 workers dismissed since May 1942 must be reinstated.

Who Are The Arrested?

B. N. MUKHERJI—Six years in jail in the Nagpur Conspiracy Case; jailed in 1939 and 1941 in the Raipur Conspiracy Case; ex-member, Working Committee, All-India Students' Federation; ex-member, Nagpur Nagar Congress Committee; organiser of People's Volunteer Brigade; member, Nagpur University Court; Secretary, Provincial Committee of the Communist Party.

H. K. VYAS: Ex-Secretary, Provincial Students' Federation; Vice-President, Press Workers' Union; Vice-President, Government Press Workers' Union; Secretary, Nagpur District Committee of the Communist Party.

A. B. BARDHAN: Secretary, Provincial Students' Federation; jailed in 1942; ex-Secretary of the District Committee of the Communist Party.

D. L. JAYAWANT: Pleader, writer; Secretary, Friends of the Soviet Union; President, Poona's Union.

G. M. MOTE: Former member of the Executive Committee of the Gini Kamgar Union; Secretary, Left Consolidation (1939); leading Trade Unionist.

DHANRAJ AGARVA: Correspondent of the 'Janyug' (Hindi Edition of People's Age).

P. MERTA: Secretary, Peons' Union; Vice-President, Hauling Depot Employees' Union; President, Rickshaw Drivers' Union.

SHYAMAL ROY: Secretary, P.W.D. Workers' Union and Rickshaw Drivers' Union; Office Secretary, Local Self-Government Employees' Union.

DR. BHOWANEE: President, Badnera Municipal Committee; President, Textile Workers' Union, Badnera; ex-acting organiser of the trade union leader in the Badnera area.

MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN: Leader of the Hingal-Nagpur Railway workers, Nagpur.

BRITISH DEFENCE PLANS MASK EXPANSIONIST AIMS

Maintenance Of Large Army To Perpetuate Yoke On Subject Peoples

The sensation of the day in England is the decision of the Government to continue conscription permanently in peacetime.

In June of this year seventy Labour M.P.s put down a motion declaring: "This House is of the opinion that military conscription in peacetime is alien to the tradition of this country, and should come to an end as soon as practicable."

There can be no doubt that this motion expressed the opinion of the overwhelming majority of Englishmen. Hitherto, one of the advantages which the British ruling class was able to offer the population of the metropolitan country was exemption from compulsory military service.

This may appear paradoxical, but there are historical reasons for it.

Britain, of course, had her armed forces, in the shape of a powerful navy. But as to land forces, it had been the traditional British policy to maintain only a small army. The British Empire was built up by colonizers, intelligence agents and naval forces rather than by armies.

Britain had a hand in practically all the big wars, in which she won the mastery of the seas. On land, her small expeditionary forces fought in coalition with the armies of other Powers, upon whom the brunt of the fighting fell.

Both in the first and the second world wars Britain had from five to six million men under arms. But these large land armies took little part in the major engagements on the European continent.

Changed Position

Such has been the position hitherto. But at the end of October of this year we find F. J. Bellenger, the British War Secretary, declaring that the British Government "does not intend to leave the armed forces of the Crown in the same parlous state they were in for many years preceding the last war."

What has happened? What makes it necessary to change the old traditional policy? It would be interesting to hear the opinion of Bellenger's colleague, the First Lord of the Admiralty, on this point. But there are things on which the British prefer to keep silent.

However, in this case the reason is generally known: the fact is that the British navy has ceased to be the mistress of the seas.

In 1921 Britain was forced to agree to equality of naval power with the United States; today the latter enjoys a distinct superiority in naval forces.

If it were really the security of the Empire that was in question, the backbone of which had always been Britain's mastery of the seas, this is what should have been discussed.

But that would have also meant speaking of the present line of British foreign policy, which is orientated on an Anglo-American bloc and the attainment of imperialist objectives with the aid of this bloc.

On October 25 Attlee stated in Parliament that the armed forces could not be reduced to the expected figure of 1,100,000 by the end of the year.

The Prime Minister said that this figure had been based on the expectation that many abnormal commitments arising from the war would be liquidated by the end of the year, but while certain of these commitments would be reduced, it was already evident that the liquidation of others by the end of the year would be impracticable.

It was reported in the Press that Attlee had consulted

by
Major-General M. GALAKTIONOV

Churchill, the leader of the Opposition, on the Government's conscription scheme. Churchill fully endorsed it. This throws a vivid light on the political implications of the plan.

The News Chronicle commented on the Government's plan in an editorial on November 8. Enumerating the problems facing the country—to wit: Palestine, the Near East, Trieste, Greece, the occupation of Germany, etc.—the newspaper declared that in the present tense state of world affairs reduction of armaments would merely play into the hands of fomenters of unrest.

Conscription, on the other hand, would put a stop to this evil. When the threat of disorder will have been removed all over the world, the News Chronicle continued, the British citizen might hope to see conscription abolished.

Such comments speak for themselves. The average Englishman is told that he will have to wait until "unrest" and "disorder" in the world are crushed by the force of British arms.

But what unrest and disorders are meant? The national liberation in India? Yes, but not only that. The News Chronicle, with commendable bluntness, enumerates the seats of disorder that are considered dangerous to the Empire.

Here they are, these "abnormal commitments": Palestine, the Near East, Trieste, Greece. Let us add that the "Near East" includes Egypt, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. And this, it appears, is why millions of British soldiers are needed.

It is precisely in these areas that, as everyone knows, British land forces are being concentrated in ever larger numbers.

To Mask Real Purpose

The cry of imperial defence is simply a screen for the expansionist plans which Britain hopes to carry out in partnership with the United States. It is a dodge by which the true nature of these plans is being concealed from the people.

The British imperialists are trying to justify their expansion in the Near East by the need to protect the communication with India through the Mediterranean.

This is designed to mask the fact that the purpose of a large army in peacetime is to perpetuate and increase the yoke on the peoples of India, Malaya, Netherlands India, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq and to extend British domination over other peoples of the Near and Middle East.

But the defence of India has other aspects—in the Pacific and the Indian ocean. About these aspects they prefer to say nothing in Britain.

On October 30 Attlee made a statement in the House of Commons on the reorganization of Great Britain's defences. He asked Parliament to endorse the recently issued White Paper on a central organization for imperial defence.

A new Ministry of Defence has been formed to co-ordinate the work of the War Office, the Admiralty and the Air Ministry. A Defence Committee, headed by the Prime Minister, will have its headquarters in London.

The Government intends to work out joint plans of defence in conjunction with the dominions.

But that is not the whole story, not by a long way. It says nothing about the centrifugal tendencies in the dominions and colonies. It does not mention that the conference of dominion Premiers held last spring rejected a plan for imperial defence drawn up by the Imperial General Staff, and that this was followed by the resignation of the Chief of the Staff.

The dominions are averse to assuming responsibility for defence of the Empire; they are more concerned about their own interests which by no means always and in every respect coincide with the interests of Britain. From the military standpoint, the root of the whole matter lies in the fact that Great Britain has lost her mastery of the seas. Let us return to the situation in the Pacific. In the middle

Let us add that the plans for Canada's defence are likewise being worked out in conjunction with the United States. What is more, the defence of the United Kingdom itself is to be made dependent on the United States by the plan to standardize the weapons of the British army on American patterns.

What then, is the role of the United Kingdom in the defence of the Empire? So far it is confined to the sending of liaison officers to the dominions to take part in the working out of plans of joint defence. A purely advisory role, we see.

Under the circumstances, it is permissible to doubt whether the British soldiers conscripted into the army can buttress up the edifice of the Empire.

Field Marshal Viscount Alan Brooke, former Chief of the Imperial General Staff, said at a meeting of the Royal Empire

"In Africa we have depth adjoining Europe Asia, and so it behoves us to develop belts of industry throughout that five thousand miles in the interests of the tegy as well as economic perity."

So that is it! It must be noted that the British government has found a smart solution of the strategical, as well as economic, problems of the British Empire.

It would be difficult to detect the hidden sting in this proposal if we did not already know that whenever imperial defence is spoken of, it is to be understood to mean plans of expansion. Bearing in mind the concentration of British forces in the Near East, it becomes clear that Brunskill is proposing to create a very convenient "hinterland" for these forces in Africa.

This would also bring the within reach of "a European Power" against which certain Marlboroughs are contemplating going to war.

This scheme would involve the strengthening of Britain's economic control over Africa. Brunskill proposes the formation of an Africa Office, with a view to the penetration of British capital into that country for the purpose of building a war industry. The only drawback of this brilliant project is that it is built on sand.



"NOTHING IN IT! WE HAVE JUST COME FOR HOLIDAY WEEK. HA, HA!" (From Daily Worker, London).

of October Vice-Admiral Sir Denis Boyd, Commander-in-Chief of the British Pacific Fleet, on his arrival in Peiping, made the following statement:

"It is understood that Great Britain has no intention of maintaining large naval bases at Hong-Kong and Singapore, but that Australia will be the fleet's main base. The fleet will be composed of two aircraft carriers, four cruisers, eight destroyers, eight submarines, one submarine depot ship and twelve escorts."

We do not undertake to judge whether this statement fully reflects Britain's plans for her Pacific fleet.

Surrender To U.S.

But one thing is clear, namely that she has been forced to renounce her predominant position in the Pacific and is surrendering the vantage points she has held for centuries to the United States.

To judge by statements made by the head of the Australian Government during the recent election campaign, Australia is working out a plan of regional defence, but is doing so in conjunction not only with Great Britain and New Zealand, but with the United States as well.

It would seem that Australian defence is no longer dictated from London, but rather from Washington.

Society on November 5:

"There is no doubt that modern weapons such as air bombardment, long-range rockets, improved submarines and atomic bombs have seriously weakened Commonwealth security by greatly increasing the vulnerability of its heart, the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, as matters exist at present it is in the United Kingdom that the bulk of the defensive resources are concentrated."

Evidently, in the opinion of Field Marshal Alan Brooke, the ocean is not a sufficient protection against atomic bombs. Symptomatic in this speech is the regret expressed that the bulk of the Empire's defensive resources are concentrated in the United Kingdom. What resources is he referring to?

The answer to this question may, perhaps, be facilitated by an article by Brigadier G. S. Brunskill in the magazine Growth Colonist. It bears the rather unexpected title: "British Africa: Key to Commonwealth Security."

A Smart Solution

"The British Islands," we read, "can never again be so much a Commonwealth base in a war against a European Power. Modern aircraft, bombs and rockets demand the dispersion of war industries to a much greater depth."

If Britain had been capable of promoting the industrialization of the dominions at colonies unaided, she would have done so long ago. Her economic resources are inadequate for the purpose and here too she is dependent on the United States.

It is significant that in this discussion of the British plans for imperial defence a word is said about collective security of the democratic nations or about the United Nations Organization.

If the new weapons are such a serious threat to the security of the British Empire would not the wisest and most logical course be energetically to support the proposal for general reduction of armaments made by V. M. Molotov on behalf of the Soviet Union? But influential organs of the British Press do not think

But what, one asks, is deriding the success of UN not the attempts to convert this organization into an instrument of Anglo-American bloc? What is preventing consolidation of international security, if not the expansionist policy of this bloc? Sound-minded people in Britain are denouncing that this policy be abandoned in favour of a sincere and honest attempt to promote international co-operation.

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