

# UNANIMOUS VERDICT AGAINST REPRESSION AND ANTI-STRIKE LEGISLATION

## Call For Observance Of March 18 As Basic Demands Day



The next big group was that of the railway workers, a strength of 1,30,000, again representing the great awakening among this section of workers which had almost culminated into a general strike on June 27, 1946.

Municipal workers, press workers, tea garden workers, transport workers, mine workers all show further rise in their membership.

The new entrants to the AITUC were the Postal and Telegraph workers, who, after the great strike of July 1946, had a last awakened to the necessity of joining the All-India organization and had broken through the obstacles put in their path by the Government.

Their coming in now opens the way for all Government employees to join the AITUC and make it the common organization of industrial workers and middle-class employees, thus increasing the strength of both.

Other new entrants were the middle-class employees from banks and commercial firms who have written a glorious page in the strike struggles of the country by carrying on protracted strikes in defence of their interests.

Though their full strength is not yet represented in the AITUC their entry once more symbolises the growing unity of the middle-class employees and industrial workers for the common defence of the rights of both.

### Real Strength Greater

The real measure of the strength of the TUC is to be seen in the lakhs of workers whom its Provincial units are able to set in motion from time to time.

The strike of five lakh workers in the City of Bombay, the strike of more than 75,000 workers in the city of Madras and the great strike of 12 million workers in Calcutta, all in support of the Postal strike in July last; or the recent strike of half a million workers in Calcutta in protest against the firing on the Viet-Nam Day; these offer a correct measure of the immense influence that the TUC and the organised trade union movement has secured over the vast mass of workers.

Soon the TUC will have sufficient strength to call forth a nation-wide walk out of labour if Government and capitalists remain adamant to the demands of the workers.

Such strength the TUC never had. Such strength the working-class of India never possessed. Nor did the national movement of the country ever possess this strength to call forth a general strike.

Today the building up of this strength is of fundamental importance not only for the day-to-day struggle of the workers but also for the Indian liberation struggle.

Since the final struggle for power is inevitable sooner or later, and since in such a struggle the working-class will have to play a heroic part, the strength of the AITUC to call forth the entire mass of workers is of vital significance.

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The session of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) which was held in Calcutta on February 17 and 18 was the biggest session on record, 1,100 delegates attending from the different Provinces of British India as well as from the Indian States.

THE session met in the background of the biggest strike-wave that the country has seen and the most widespread ferocious repression that the working-class has undergone.

### From The Firing Lines...

A large number of the delegates had come straight from the fighting front and the firing line. There were many who had come underground from the States or the Provinces, where they were wanted by the police for daring to lead working-class strikes.

There were others who had been exiled from their own province as 'gondas' for having courageously withstood repression and led the working-class.

There were trade union leaders who had a number of cases pending against them, having been charged with every kind of conceivable crime, including dacoity, loot, arson, etc.

Prominent members of the General Council and of the Provincial Committees were already behind the bars.

P. Ramamurthy, the most popular leader of the Tamilnad workers, a member of the General Council; N. C. Shekharan, a member of the Working Committee and Kerala T.U. leader; Kalyanasandaram, leader of the S.T.R. workers and a member of the Working Committee; Ramani, member of the General Council; Balachandran Menon and Ramaswathan, Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively of the MPTUC, C. V. K. Rao, General Council member from Andhra, Nambiar, Labour M.L.A. from B.P.R. and General Council

Further, as a reminder of the period that we are in, 50,000 Calcutta workers were on strike while the session was on in defence of their demands. The militant workers of the Tramway Company, the Dock and Port workers had downed tools and their struggles were the first to receive support of the AITUC.

### Symbol Of Unity

In this background the Trade Union Congress session, according to Calcutta organisers, would have attracted no less than five lakh workers had the TUC been given the permission to hold an open sitting.

But the Bengal Government and the League Ministry would not give permission for an open mass rally, taking advantage of Section 144 which had been promulgated to check communal riots.

The AITUC symbolised the growing unity of the working-class by unanimously electing Communist Dange as its President, non-party N. M. Joshi as its General Secretary, Congressman Khedgikar as a Vice-President, Congress Socialist Peter Alvarez as Treasurer and Forward Blocist Jogtekar as another Vice-President.

It further symbolised it by unanimously adopting all resolutions on questions which vitally affected the trade union movement and on policies of the Interim Government and of the Congress Ministers.

The unity that was forged by the workers in strike battles, in facing bullets, in waging bitter and prolonged strikes in defence of their own interests, was responsible in getting from the Trade Union Congress, composed of different political parties, a unanimous verdict, condemning

imperialist repression, justifying the strikes and protesting against the anti-working-class legislation sponsored by the Congress Ministers.

It further secured from the AITUC a unanimous political resolution, not only stressing the Socialist objective of the AITUC but also sharply putting forward the essentials of a freedom constitution which, it said, could only be achieved through a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage, and warning the workers not to put their faith in the promises of India's rulers.

Since the Madras session in 1945, its strength has increased considerably. The number of the affiliated unions had increased from 400 to 600; affiliated membership had increased from 4,80,000 to 7,30,000.

Of this 7½ lakh membership 1,90,000 belonged to the cotton textile group.

Here the largest addition came from the handloom weavers, who have been recently awakened to organisation to fight yarn shortage created through black-marketing operations of merchants and trades.

### All-Round Increase

The handloom weavers of Andhra and Tamilnad, together with the increase in membership of the textile unions in various centres have brought the total membership of textile workers affiliated to the AITUC to the big figure of two lakhs.



# CARRY FORWARD UNITY ACHIEVED IN CALCUTTA

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for the success of the freedom struggle and any weakening of that strength constitutes the weakening of the national movement itself.

The enemies of the people and the working-class are already making desperate efforts to split working-class unity so that a united action on an all-India scale is rendered impossible.

The headmen of the Railway Board in the AIRP attempted to expel the S.I.L. Labour Union to split the ranks of railway workers and forestall the developing general strike.

The imperialists and the vested interests would have certainly liked similar disruption in the AITUC and would have welcomed every effort to undermine its prestige and its strength. They would have liked the various political groups to come to a clash with each other and thus blunt the weapon which the working-class has forged through immense sacrifices.

The problem before the AITUC was how to reply unitedly to the brutal imperialist suppression of working-class struggles. The problem was complicated because the bureaucracy was screening itself behind Congress Ministries who were permitting this repression. There was bound to be some vacillation among Congressmen on this issue, but the AITUC did voice a unanimous protest against bureaucratic repression and also criticised the policies of Congress Ministries.

Another important and vital question which was likely to create differences was the one relating to the anti-strike legislation by Congress Ministries and the Interim Government. These measures are not only anti-working-class but anti-people, since they are intended to stifle the growth of the working-class movement which is a very important part of the national movement.

Here also there were bound to be vacillations. But once again the TUC unitedly condemned these measures and raised its voice effectively in defence of working-class rights.

In its resolution on Industrial Disputes legislation of the Government of India, the AITUC unanimously protested against the attempt made in the Bill to deprive the working-class of its right to strike and declared—

"The main object of introducing the Bill is stated to be the necessity of maintaining peace in industry. The Council desires to point out that to avoid strikes, one must go to the root cause of strikes. All-round improvement in the working and living conditions of the labouring class, including the grant of decent living wage, provision of proper housing and the introduction of social security measures, alone will establish peace in industry."

## Boycott Bill Rejected

Equally emphatic and unanimous was the verdict of the AITUC on the Bombay Industrial Relations Bill.

The resolution among other things stated that—

"By giving Government approval and recognition only to those unions which agree to give up the right to strike, the Bill militates against the interests of a free and genuine trade union movement."

"By maintaining Labour Officers even where workers have formed their own trade unions and by not compelling of such unions and collective bargaining with them, by imposing compulsory contribution and declaring strikes illegal and against workers' interests, the Industrial Relations Bill hampers the growth of a genuine trade union movement."

This resolution was opposed by Mr. Mappara of the Hindustan Mazdur Sevak Sangh, an opposition which only served to emphasize the verdict of the AITUC. Out of the 1,100 delegates present only two voted for Mr. Mappara's opposition.

The AITUC further sharply criticised the Interim Government's Five Year Labour Programme and expressed its keen disappointment with it. The resolution stated:

"The AITUC strongly disapproves the reluctance shown in the Programme to reduce the profits of the employers under the plea that less profits will mean smaller savings available to the State."

"This attitude on the part of the Government will lead to the con-

clusion that the employers should be enabled to make the highest possible profits so that they can pay the largest possible amount to the Government in the form of taxes."

"Another vital defect of the Programme lies in the emphasis placed on industry's capacity to pay as a condition for improving the standard of living of the working-class. In the view of the AITUC no industry has a right to survive if it cannot maintain its workers in decent living conditions."

"A living wage and satisfactory conditions of life and work are the basic rights of every wage earner, and all other considerations must be subordinate to the prime necessity of making these available to him."

In short the AITUC, though it used mild words, condemned the Five Year Labour Programme as a programme without substance, a programme which had afforded no relief to the workers but only given specious promises.

## Demand For Living Wage

In its place the AITUC demanded immediate fixation of a living wage for all wage-earners, provision for decent housing and social security measures.

Laying down principles for national reconstruction, the AITUC demanded nationalisation of land and of key industries and the removal of the profit motive from strategic spheres of production. Without

the local executive authorities to suppress activities in the interests of the employing class."

The session also condemned all curtailment of civil liberties, and paid its homage to those who had been killed in the firings.

Such was the unanimous verdict of the central organisation of the working-class against the policy of repression sanctioned by Congress Ministries of Bombay, U.P., Madras and C.P.

The session sharply condemned the repression against the working-class movement in the Indian States and congratulated the workers of Travancore, Hyderabad, Gwalior and other States for conducting their struggles, despite severe repression.

The session congratulated the workers on the unity they have shown in standing together in the face of communal riots, and the active role they have played in fighting them back.

## Warning Against Riots

The session warned the workers that riots were the direct result of the imperialist policy of playing one community against the other; that the riots only helped the employers to weaken

The call to observe the Basic Demands Day is the first halting step which the AITUC is taking to give an organised and country-wide expression to the demands of the workers. It is a call for the unity of the entire working-class of India and the observance of common action that might take place in the coming period.

By giving this call the AITUC has advanced one step further in unifying the growing struggles of the workers and coordinating them.

The call must be welcomed as a step on the part of the central organisation to give the isolated struggles a common direction and a common purpose which was needed so badly to ensure success for them.

This unity on the immediate issues facing the T.U. movement was followed by a unanimously accepted list for the General Council, though after a lot of negotiations, on the question of electing new office-bearers for the ensuing year.

It certainly was not a small thing that Congress Socialists and Congressmen should unitedly protest against the recent happenings under Congress Ministries or under the Interim Government; that they should take a united stand along

# AITUC SESSION REVIEWED

such nationalisation of key industries, which was advocated by the National Planning Committee presided over by Pandit Nehru, Indian economy cannot be geared to the needs of the people.

The AITUC further demands immediate taking over by the State of such important industries as textiles and jute, where in the profit motive in production is resulting in chaos, thus imposing hardships on the workers as well as on the people.

The AITUC further denounced the attempts of the mill-owning capitalists to restore the 9-hour day by creating a cloth shortage, and declared that the prevalent cloth shortage is due to abominable working conditions and profiteering by the mill-owners.

It, therefore, appealed to the people not to fall into the trap of the mill-owning capitalists, and declared that any attempt to restore the 9-hour day will be resisted by the workers with all their might.

It sympathised with the people in the hardships caused by shortage of industrial goods and appealed to them to join hands with the workers in overcoming the chaos created by the capitalists.

## Repression Condemned

The AITUC further reminded the Provincial Ministries and the Interim Government of the promises that they gave to the workers at the time of the elections, and requested them to immediately undertake legislation for a living wage and other working-class rights.

The brutal repression unleashed by imperialism and reaction was condemned unanimously by the AITUC in the following words:

"The AITUC views with grave concern reports from various parts of the country of indiscriminate firing by the police on workers while the latter were engaged in their struggle for improvement in their basic working conditions."

"Firing was resorted to in Calcutta, Golden Rock, Kolar, Goldfield, Railam, Amalgar and Cawnpore, resulting in the death of more than 50 persons including women and children and injury to more than 400. Among the killed were some prominent leaders of the Unions also."

"Having given careful consideration to the reports from the Provincial units and the trade union officials, this meeting has been concerned in condemning these firings."

"In any event, the Government concerned should have appointed an independent Committee of Enquiry in each case. The General Council cannot find any justification for the refusal, which amounts to giving a free-hand to the police and

the workers' might and unity, smash their struggles, continue the present divisions and divert their attention from the growing anti-imperialist movement.

The session unanimously adopted a resolution on the objectives of the AITUC declaring once more a Socialist State to be its aim and demanding—

Immediate withdrawal of all British troops and complete independence of India;

Abolition of Indian States and landlordism;

Self-determination to linguistic units;

Fundamental rights of the people, including the right to strike;

Living wage and nationalisation of key industries and taking over by the State of British industries and banks;

Control of profits; and—

A fully democratic constitution based on adult suffrage.

The AITUC asked the working-class not to pin its faith on the plans of British imperialists or the vested interests, and declared that only a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage can draw a freedom constitution for India.

One of the most important resolutions passed by the AITUC concerned the Basic Demands Day. In this resolution the AITUC supported the strike struggles of the working-class and congratulated them on carrying them on heroically and courageously.

## Basic Demands Day

The resolution repudiated the mischievous and malicious propaganda that these strikes are artificially engineered and regards this as an attempt to justify repression against the workers in order to render help to the employing class.

The resolution further calls upon the workers to realise that no radical improvement in their economic conditions is possible unless the workers, through their unity and strength, win their basic rights and secure legislative sanction for them, thus compelling the owners to implement these rights.

The AITUC, therefore, called upon all industrial workers, as well as the middle-class employees, to effectively voice their demands for basic rights, such as a living wage, social security, right to work, no retrenchment, by observing March 18, 1947, as BASIC DEMANDS DAY throughout India.

party which headed the big working class...

It was because of the immense strength of the Communist Party, though leading big working class unions, it was because the Communist Party everywhere had come forward as the staunchest defenders of working-class interests leading even the wrath of national leaders on them, that there could be no successful anti-Communist bloc in Madras.

Various left sections, some Forward bloc leaders among them, had already begun to move towards party splits.

Just as the TUC the Forward Bloc Congress group, therefore, refused to be any attempt to concede to the kind of anti-Communist bloc.

Some other groups who were joined and the group of near-party members led by Dr. B. J. Reddy played an important role in fighting all those who would have otherwise liked to disrupt the TUC by fanning anti-Communist.

## Disruption Fails

It is unfortunate that the Congress Socialists still attempted to form an anti-Communist bloc opposing the cleavage of a Communist bloc.

Instead of joining hands with the Communist and other trade unions in advocating a common policy in the crucial days facing the T.U. movement, the Socialists concentrated more attention on preventing a Communist bloc getting into the Presidency and trying to force an unprincipled bloc with other groups.

Such a tactic was praiseworthy when anti-Communist was at its height, but the class struggle had not revealed who stood where.

As well, when the Communist Party, it had already led the biggest strikes in the Indian union movement, which means that the anti-Communist bloc was moving towards working class common front with the Communist and other trade unions. It was in this following Congress Socialist leaders were turned into the right wing of the Congress and other economic strikes, it was an opportunity to attempt to form an anti-Communist bloc alongside the TUC.

It was, in fact, a repudiation of the very struggle by which all Congress Socialists swear.

The Socialists had to pay a rather heavy price in their attempt to lead a heterogeneous bloc against the Communist. Having found that they could not prevent Dr. Reddy from becoming the President, they concentrated all attention on getting the maximum number of seats on the General Council in the name of all non-Communist.

They got 46 per cent but in distributing them among various groups they eliminated many honest trade unionists. Some Congressmen, who were towards the Socialist bloc, and attacked them as opportunists and place-hunters.

## Resentment Against CSP

From the non-Communist list the name of even Brijlal Babu, the outgoing President of the AITUC, was conspicuously dropped. The Vice-President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, who was a delegate to the AITUC session, was also dropped from the list. A strong resentment against the CSP led the Socialist Party into the TUC.

It is very unfortunate that a group which is perhaps the biggest Left force inside the Congress should lend itself to the suspicion of being opportunistic and failing in its duty of combining with other Left forces for common ends. The political policy of the CSP, its leadership under the TUC has, at least no credit to the party and a no new allies for its policy.

The TUC, to give a common policy and also elected its office-bearers with one voice because the working class movement itself had made it almost impossible.

By evading a common policy of working-class interests and by frankly criticising the calling of the Congress Ministers, the session of the AITUC has registered the advance towards strengthening and coordinating the struggles of the working-class.

One hopes that the Congress Socialists will take serious note of the criticism made by the AITUC session against their labour policy because the AITUC undoubtedly presents the real voice of the working-class.

In any case in the coming critical months when the workers are threatened with mass retrenchment and unemployment, when big battles in defence of working-class interests will be inevitable, the working-class needs the AITUC as its guiding centre if the fight is to be effective and successful. And not only the working-class but the people of India also.

A final struggle for power is inevitable and its nature will depend on the part played by the working-class. All-India action of the working-class, which the TUC can organise will be the most effective aid which the working-class can render to the freedom movement.

To preserve the unity of the AITUC to make it an effective instrument of leading the working-class and through it to lead the Indian people to the final liberation movement is the common task of all parties inside the AITUC and wherever workers find an independent, it remains a crime against the workers.

The unity achieved in Calcutta must be strengthened through the election of the new leadership. The election of the new leadership must be a united and strengthened by united actions in defence of working-class demands so that the Indian working class is not left defenceless when enters the most critical period in its life, and it can play its proper role in the coming battle for national independence.

And recall that anti-Communist bloc, on the basis of the Madras session, but without success.

For, in the last year, anti-Communist bloc more and more unprincipled itself as the bankrupt policy of opposing the vested interests against the working-class and compromising with imperialism and repudiating socialist struggle.

In the year 1946-47 the Communist Party took the main thrust of repression, arrests and firing, yet it unprincipledly led by it had increased in strength, and all honest men, including its opponents, could see that it was no longer possible to pursue a policy of unprincipled opposition to

FIRST FRUITS OF ATTLEE DECLARATION IN PUNJAB

Imperialism's New Strategy To Curb Popular Upsurge, Whip Up Communal Strife

by ROMESH CHANDRA

Events have moved fast in the Punjab. The call of the League movement has been followed double quick by the resignation of Khizar and the Governor's invitation to the League to form a Ministry.

CLOSE on the heels of this has come news from Lahore of anti-Pakistan demonstrations by Hindu and Sikh students being fired upon by the police and a hartal of Hindu and Sikh shops in protest. The Congress leader Dr. Gopichand Bhargava has given a call for an anti-Pakistan Day. The Akali Party threatens that it will fight "Muslim domination".

The latest news is that communal clashes have begun and the caretaker Ministry has refused to accept any responsibility for the present situation.

The crisis is drawing to a climax as we go to press.

What is it that has turned the Punjab into a cauldron of fire? The League leadership claims as it has won the Ministry the use of the strength of the movement it had launched.

The Congress and Panthic leaders likewise believe that it was the League movement which frightened Khizar into "surrender". They are shocked at his "betrayal" because they were totally unprepared for it.

What is the reality? Police Raj Shaken

There is not the slightest doubt that the League movement shook the old Punjab police structure to its very foundations.

The widespread character of the movement, exemplified most vividly in the mass participation of thousands of women in the processions and meetings in burgas, the great majority of them participating for the first time in any sort of political activity; the anti-imperialist zeal and courage of the Muslim masses; the fearlessness with which men and women faced tear-gas; the demoralisation and the disintegration which began to take place in the police ranks themselves as a result of the powerful sweep of the movement—all these were factors which helped the Punjab bureaucracy realise that they were faced with a new situation, which required a new solution.

This mighty mass upsurge was an expression of the acute discontent of the vast mass of the common people.

Med At Upsurge

The Public Safety Ordinance, must be remembered, was promulgated at a time when national tension was receding, and was aimed entirely at curbing the

The tenant upsurge which was sweeping the Western Punjab—the traditional base of British imperialism. The growing strike wave led by the N. W. R. workers, which was embracing in its fold all types of Government servants as well.

The immediate future held the prospect of the tenant upsurge reaching its climax with harvesting of the new crop April, and of mass action by railway workers and all Government servants following the publication of the Pay Commission report.

The aim of the Punjab bureaucracy was to prepare the necessary machinery to crush this upsurge in blood.

The Ordinance failed to achieve its purpose. Strikes and trespassings continued with a fervour. The efforts to create communal riots were foiled. Im-

perialism's eternal Ulster threatened to become a powerful base of anti-imperialist revolt.

The bureaucracy realised more and more that without the help of the feudal elements in the League this mass upsurge among the tenants (the majority of whom were Muslims) or among the railway workers could not be crushed. Something more than tear-gas and bullets was needed.

It was in these circumstances that the Attlee declaration came and hastened to its fulfilment a process already begun.

Why Unionists Swung

The Attlee declaration's devilish "offer" to transfer power to the Provincial Governments existing in June 1948 made the Punjab Ministry a key deciding factor in the battle for and against Pakistan.

In 1948, when the imperialists had thrown in the deciding weight of their sly Unionist Party in order to help the Congress to form a Ministry, they did so as a key part of their general all-India policy to lure the Congress into the false belief that it could safely accept the vicious, undemocratic grouping clause of the British Plan (which had already been prepared by Professor Coupland) and yet retain the unity of India.

In 1947, with the Congress already safely entrapped in the coils of the British Plan, the

formation of an "independent" North-West group which in reality would remain a British military and economic base, has become both a dire imperialist strategic necessity and also an essential prerequisite for their continued domination of the whole of India through partition.

It was for this reason that it became necessary for the imperialists to shift their balance-holding stoges—the Unionists—from the side of the Congress to the side of the League, in any event before June 1948.

Pressed For Time

That the shift took place so soon was because of the reasons described above—the immediate prospects of the harvest and the consequent mass tenant uprising and of the vast working-class upsurge following the Pay Commission's report.

In order to crush these, it was necessary to have the support of the League leadership as the majority of those participating in the upsurge in the Punjab were Muslims.

The bureaucracy also cleverly foresaw that the immediate overthrow of the Ministry, if carefully highlighted through Khizar's statements as a question of the establishment of Pakistan in June, 1948, could throw the whole Province into communal war, and fulfil their heart's desire which had been foiled till now.

The story of the negotiations with the Muslim League are a sordid tale, which, when fully revealed, will rouse the Muslim masses to indignation at the

shameful cringing toady ways of some of their leaders.

It is being said that Feroz Khan Noon wrote a letter from jail to one Jenkins (not the Governor) the head of the Political C.I.D. in the Province—quite obviously the brain behind all the atrocities being committed against the League masses those very days.

It was a sweet and fawning letter, we are told, recalling the past friendship of the writer and the recipient and appealing to him to end the impasse.

Jenkins was immediately deputed by the bureaucracy to meet Noon and start negotiations.

The two "friends" talked. They decided to bring the Khan of Mandot into their "conference" but took good care not to call in men like Mian Iftikharuddin who would obviously spit on the very idea of making a deal with the head of the hated O.I.D.—the biggest enemy of the Punjab people.

In the meanwhile the arch-reactionary Nazimuddin of Bengal conducted negotiations through Wavell with the Governor, the other Jenkins.

Shameful Retreat

Even from the terms of the agreement which were publicly announced, it was clear to any but the blindest that they were a shameful retreat on the part of the League leaders.

The ban on processions was to continue.

The ban on meetings was lifted, but could be reimposed at any time by Magistrates.

The satyagrahi persons were to be released but not all—those who had committed "violence" were to be kept inside jail.

And above all, the Ordi-

nance and its hateful provisions would remain—only it would be called an "Act".

But the terms NOT announced, the terms of the pact made by Noon and Nazimuddin with the Sahibs were even more shameful.

They agreed themselves to introduce the repressive Act in the Legislature if the Governor ordered his agent Khizar to retire in their favour.

They agreed to take in at least one Unionist into their Cabinet; to provide for certain specific Leaguers named by the bureaucracy in the Cabinet; and to exclude from the Cabinet men with an anti-imperialist record.

Cover For Police Raj

What it amounted to was that in return for the Ministry, the League would agree to form exactly the same cover for Police Raj which the Khizar Ministry had become—and because of its greater popular base, it would serve that purpose even better.

Thus the resignation of Khizar is not a victory for the League masses as it is being played up as being, but a studied move on the part of the bureaucracy:

FIRST, to continue their Police Raj in a new way, as in the old way it was no longer possible to crush the growing popular upsurge;

SECONDLY, to unleash a new round of communal conflict in the Punjab and throughout India; and

THIRDLY, as its ultimate objective, to help in the task of carrying out the partition of India and the consequent continuance of the British military and economic stranglehold over India in all but name.

As we go to press, terrible (Continued on page 7)

A PATRIOT'S NOTEBOOK

'Liberator' Louis

THE Great Day has been announced. On March 23—the "Liberator" Lord Mountbatten will arrive to "transfer power" to Indian hands!

I have just heard a story about the "Liberator" and I am sharing it with you, so that you may prepare yourself for his advent.

The famous United States General Joseph Stilwell was well known for his contempt for the British army chiefs in the East with whom he had to work during the war. He thought them out and out reactionaries with stupid, out-of-date ideas.

Well, once shortly before he left China, he was giving vent to his feelings on this subject, when someone interrupted and said:

"But General, you must admit that Lord Louis Mountbatten is a damned good fellow with a lot of charm."

Stilwell replied:

"That is why he is so GODDAMNED DANGEROUS".

There was another "charming" man called Cripps, but his "charm" was washed off for India in 1931.

Then came the "charming" Lord Wavell. But Nationalist India saw through him at last. His "charm" melted, and he got the sack.

And now comes the "charming" Lord Louis—the most "charming" of them all—oh, therefore, "the most god-damned dangerous". Look out for Louis, the "Liberator"!

LOUIS is a type of his own—the new imperialist of 1947.

But the old British die hard.

On February 24, the House of Commons heard about one of the old ones

of the pre-'charm' period! Reuters reports that the Labour M.P. Tom Driberg asked Arthur Henderson, Under Secretary of State for India, a question about the search of a certain British military officer named Captain Jones on January 14.

Why was he searched?

Driberg alleged—and Henderson did not contradict him—that a Military Intelligence Officer went to interview Captain Jones had had his "suspicions" aroused by the fact that the Captain had in his possession:

"A novel by the Russian writer, Dostoyevsky;

"A Russian ballet programme.

The ballet programme was actually seized as incriminating material!

There is Military Intelligence for you—a brood of barbaric, ignorant, whisky-swilling Bishops.

Under Whose Orders?

And, just by the way, Henderson alleged that Captain Jones was searched in connection with "Operation Asylum"—"the leakage of secret military information which became the basis of articles in the Communist Press."

And, he might have added, "the entire operation of January 14—all the raids on Communist, Trade Union and Kisan Sabha offices, the arrest of Dr. Ambedkar—was conceived and planned by the same Military Intelligence—the same brood of savages—who went behind Captain Jones' ballet programme, because it had the word 'Russia' written on it!

When Driberg asked Henderson if Military Intelligence had not supposed to have any Intelligence (i). Henderson

replied: "The officer concerned is under the control of the Government of India."

A neat little joke, Henderson must have thought he was making—or may be, he just trotted out a routine answer without knowing he was being funny.

But whatever it is, the fact remains that once more the British Government threw in the face of our Interim Government its responsibility for January 14.

What Punjab Nehru even now speak up? Progressives throughout the world are already hard put to it to explain the apparent contradiction between, on the one hand, the democratic nature of the Congress and the obviously intense love for democracy which Pandit Nehru has, and, on the other hand, Sardar Patel's proclivity taking the responsibility for the India-wide attack on the Communist Party.

The story about the ballet programme will only add to this discomfiture of these progressive friends of India and our national movement. They will want to know and rightly:

Why cannot Nehru sack this gang of Bishops, which calls itself Military Intelligence?

Stop Your Dancing!

TALKING of ballets, the Interim order of the Bombay Government is to ban three of the ballets of the Indian People's Theatre Association: one depicting the heroic struggle of the Kashmiri people against autocracy; another in memory of the INA Revolt, and a third a singing call for unity and against

all the common middle-class, working-class and Kisan folk who have seen these ballets being performed are shocked at this ban on their performance.

The one thing common to all these ballets is their stirring anti-imperialist

The Anti-Riot ballet has been shown in the thick of the riot-days in both Hindu and Muslim areas in Bombay, and people have wept when they saw it and sworn to fight out the Riot Devil. Wherever this ballet was shown, it did more to restore peace than all Home Minister Molerji Desai's Ordinances put together.

The ballet on Kashmir is a beautiful dance, typifying the glorious spirit of the Kashmiri people which finally won against the terrible violence and repression indulged in by the Maharaja and his Political Department bosses.

This ballet has been shown dozens of times all over Bombay for the last eight months, and has done excellent work to win support in Bombay for the cause of Sheikh Abdullah and the people of Kashmir.

The ballet of the INA Revolt is a proud and moving dance drama and tells in a simple way the tale of those days of February 1944 when the ships flew the Three Flags of India.

What does it do to people? Instils them to violence? Nonsense—the ballet has been shown a number of times already and the Bombay Government knows that what it does is to stir deep anti-imperialist feeling and pride in our Motherland—and that is all.

Since when has this become a crime under a Congress Ministry? The imperialists used to ban national songs because they were afraid of them.

One can understand the White Police Commissioner hating the anti-imperialist of I.P.P.A.'s ballets. One cannot understand C.P. Molerji Desai allowing this to happen.

Individuals, writers, poets, artists Romesh Chandra

# THE HEAP OF BARE BANGLES

## Story Of Telengana Kisan Women's Resistance To Nizam's Military

This is the story of the great firing at Suryapet (in Telengana, Hyderabad) as told me by Ramullamma, of village Singaram. Ramullamma had gone to Bez-wada with her mother for medical treatment together with some other men who had gone to have their bullet wounds treated. I met her in the hospital and when I heard that she had seen with her own eyes the terrible massacres which the Nizam's police had indulged in, in Telengana, I rushed to listen to what she had to tell me.

**R**AMULLAMMA was not a young woman. She came from the banya community and was not by caste a kisan—but in her own words—"What happened at Suryapet, made even the timid women of my caste come forward and fight and join the Sangham." (The Sangham is what the Andhras of Telengana call their 1-lakh strong organisation—the Andhra Mahasabha).

This is what Ramullamma told me in her words:  
The son of the Nizam, he that is his heir, came to Suryapet, and they brought him to the place where the great firing had taken place. All the people collected together to see what he would do.

### Money Can't Revive Dead

He stood on the spot where our men had fallen and took handfuls of coins and threw them to the people as though they were beggars, he also threw them pieces of cloth. The widow of a man who had been killed was pointed out to him and he poured two handfuls of coins to her hands.

I turned to her and said:  
"My husband died a natural death, but yours was killed by bullets. They were 'his' men that shot down your husband and do you take the money which he is giving you in return for your husband's life?"

I swear to you, Ammagaru, by the light (and she pointed to the lamp in the room) that I did not touch a piece of the money, and it lay scattered on the ground.

Why did the firing take place? It was because of the paddy. For years and years the Sarkar had taken its share and the deshmukhs had taken their share from the people in the village and for years and years we had suffered but we had never fought.

### Patience Has Its Limit

We listened to the nayaks leaders, the word by which the people of Telengana refer to the organisers of the Andhra Mahasabha), but we never did anything, but at last we could bear it no more, Ammagaru, and it was in this way.

The Nizam had fixed the amount of the paddy but first the deshmukh would take three maunds-per-acre for himself, then would come the Tehsildar, the Talukdar, the Awwal and the Doyyam (revenue officials) and each would take his mameol (illegal fixed exactions). They would put it in the bandy (cartage) and then go away. Then they would come back and ask us for more.

They told us that it was the order of the Sarkar to collect all the paddy from the villages. They would force us to bring out the bags from our houses and then enter it in their books.

We did not know what they entered but they gave us only Rs. 40 per bag which we could sell in the market for Rs. 120.

What could we village people do? We would take the money and it would be spent in no time and then our children would starve. Then when the sowing time came where could we get the seed? At Rs. 120 per bag?

Our people protested and said, "Leave enough at least for our children to eat", but the officers would tell us stories of the soldiers who had gone to fight and

who must be sent the grain. Even for sending to the soldiers, would you not set aside three kuzas for the children, Ammagaru?

### "We Were No Longer Afraid"

So this year our people said: "We shall not give all the paddy." They said, "We will pay the deshmukh and Sarkar in cash", and they got together and formed the Sangham.

Then a wonderful thing happened, Amma, we all became one and we were not afraid.

When the deshmukhs came for their three bags, we told them we would not give the paddy. We would harvest it and sell it and give them the money that was their due.

Then the deshmukhs went away and like dogs yelping they went to the Sarkar.

Then we heard the rumours—the Reserve Police was coming. The nayaks warned us; they said tie a damp cloth to your waist, there will be tear-gas. They said, take your catapults in your hands and stand united.

### Hajrah Begum

The Reserve Police came. The men all stood together with the catapults in their hands and damp cloth at their waists. They stood guarding their paddy.

Then the Reserve Police saw that they could not do anything. They called to the men and said:

"We have come only because we were paid to come. Why should you attack us?"

So we gave them milk and the Reserve Police made coffee but we had no sugar in the village to give them, so they drank the coffee without the sugar and went away.

Then came the news that the military was coming. We did not know about the military but the men said: "We shall face them." They did not know that the military is like Yamadoot, the God of Death.

### They Shot Like Hell

All the young women were sent away into the woods and the men again stood together on the top of the rise and the older women were behind them. The military came in their lorries and we waited to see what they would do, but they waited to see nothing. They just shot our people like you shoot birds and the men in the front were on the ground before our eyes, writhing with bullet shots.

And before we could do anything they threw the tear-gas at the men who were at the back. They were blinded and could see nothing. Then the military tied their hands like this under their knees and began throwing them into the lorries.

Ammagaru, we had just seen our men killed before our eyes, how could we see the rest taken away by these demons? We women rushed at the military and tried to snatch away the men they were taking away.

### "We Fight With Bare Fists"

Then there was such a battle as you have never seen in your life. All the women on one side fighting with their bare fists and the military hitting them with their rifles. They hit them here, and here and here. The ear of one woman was crushed to pulp and another's ankle was broken, but they fought and fought. But how long could they with bare fists fight the military? They took our men and drove away.

Not a single man was left in our village and not a single boy. And when we looked around, the ground where the great fighting had taken place was strewn with the broken bangles of the women who had fought. Then the women broke down with grief and we wept for our men. Then one of us looked at the broken bangles and said:

"Let us collect these broken bangles so that when some one comes, it may be a witness

of what happened on this day." We collected all the bangles clotted with the blood of those who had fought and they made a heap so high.

All the while the fight had been going on we had prayed and prayed for help to come from the East (from Andhra) but no one came.

And now the women looked at the paddy ripe in the fields and they looked at their empty hearths and they wept for the men who had died. Three days passed and the women who had eaten nothing grew so weak that they swooned with a breath of air. Then at last a nayak came with a flag and a car and he tried to give us some help.

There were some who crushed with their grief said: "It would have been well if we had never listened to the nayaks and never seen their faces." But they only said this, Ammagaru, because they were overpowered with grief.

### Stout Hearts Cannot Be Tamed

Some of our men had been locked up in Suryapet and they were released later but one hundred of them, those with stout hearts, we have not yet seen.

But the people are strong today. We have our Sangh and no one works in Suryapet today without being paid; no one does forced labour. And the nayaks are with us, with the people, safe with the people.

Here Ramullamma clasped both her hands to her breast and said: "We shall hide them in our hearts if the need arises."

## ★ IN THE STATES ★

### Bikaner Party And After

**I**MEDIATELY on his return from Delhi after the much-vaunted dinner party at the Bikaner House, at which plans were reported to have been perfected to "foil Bhopal's game" and to "bring about a settlement between the patriotic-minded Princes and the Congress leaders," the Ruler of Bikaner got down to settle it with his people.

Repression was intensified, scores of workers were thrown into jail, including the Vice-President of the Praja Parishad, Dr. Kundanlal, to add to many already inside jail.

The number of the arrested has now swelled to 350.

Having failed to lay their hands on Choudhary Hanuman Singh, the kisan leader of Dushwakhara, they threw the entire family of his brother, Choudhary Bega Ram, in jail, including his 88 year old mother and eight little daughters.

The Ruler refused to treat any one of the prisoners as a political, forcing Syt. Bega Ram to go on hunger-strike. His condition and the condition of his aged mother—who followed him—on strike, are reported to be serious.

From February 20, the other 350 prisoners in Bikaner jail have also joined them in hunger strike.

The Ruler's Ministers who went to see them in jail have said, "Let them die if they want to."

Here is the real 'patriotic' Ruler of Bikaner, with his mask off, a blood-thirsty murderer of our people.

The President of the Bikaner Praja Parishad has appealed to the people of India to bring pressure upon the Government to save the lives of Choudhary Bega Ram, his brave mother and other workers. Let every honest man and paper answer his call.

### Talk Of "Rift"

**S**IR V. T. Krishnamachari, the Dewan of Jaipur, has, in a statement to the A.P.J., paid compliments to the Nawab of Bhopal, fully "associated" his State with "the statement issued by His Highness the Chancellor of the Princes' Chamber" and, pointing out that all such talk

was baseless, declared that there was "no split or division among the States." (Times of India, February 24, 1947).

He was followed pell-mell by the representatives of Gwalior and Indore at Delhi. They have strongly repudiated the "suggestion made in a section of the Press" regarding them, alleging that they were against the resolution of the Princes' Chamber or their Chancellor's leadership and wanted to have independent negotiation with the Congress leaders.

They affirm "that the resolution passed by the Committee of Ministers was unanimous." (Times of India, March 1, 1947).

Will these clear statements put an end to the wishful babble of a section of the nationalist Press and the Congress leadership that there is a "rift" in the ranks of the Princes—rift between the reactionary Rulers led by the Nawab of Bhopal and the "progressives" led by the ruler of Bikaner, Jaipur, Gwalior, Indore, etc.—all despicable creatures of the British?

### Hunger March In Gwalior

**U**SING communal riots to divide and wreck people's movements, as taught by their British masters, has become a common practice with the Princes these days.

During the last few months, the youthful Raja of Gwalior has given special proof of his ability in this direction with the help of a band of his Hindu Sabha guards.

Thus, on February 11, the sacred, communally-strung town of Bilhisa in Gwalior State woke up to see an almost unimagined sight, as 5,000 men, women and children, workers, kisans and towns people, Hindus and Muslims, thronged through its streets with huge Red Banners demanding food and cloth and punishment to hoarders and blackmarketeers.

It was a "hunger march" organised by the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party.

The demonstrators met the District Collector and made him agree to the following demands:

- \* Increase in wheat ration;
- \* Immediate supply of ration-cards to everybody;
- \* Nation shop for each ward;

\* Promise to refer to the Government their demand for an Ordinance against hoarders.

Nobody should have felt surprised at the dirty antics of the Raja's Hindu Sabha (Hindu) guards to break up this grand demonstration of the Gwalior people, headed by 1,500 women.

But unfortunately even the leaders of the State Congress instead of supporting the processionists, joined hands with the Hindu Sabha in its attempt to create trouble. They got a few khonekas (vendors' stalls) looted and spread the rumour that the khans and workers had come to pillage the town.

However, they failed in their game on a minority that the next day they had to announce a meeting to "explain" their position to the people who had seen through it.

Only 60 people came to hear their "explanation."

This was Gwalior's reply to the Raja's stooges and other disruptors.

### Kolhapur's White Commander

**F**ROM Kolhapur I have received a "correction" regarding the news that appeared in the People's Age of February 2, 1947.

Our correspondent's story said that Mr. P. L. Dhonde, the Commandant of the State Armed Forces, was replaced by a White Commander, one Col. Hynes, because Mr. Dhonde had refused to fire on the people of Kolhapur, who were on strike!

The "correction" says that the facts are different. Mr. Dhonde was not a Commandant, he was only an "in-charge Commandant" because according to the rules "no Indian Officer can become the Commandant of the State's Armed forces."

The correction, however, does not explain why there should be such a rule in the India of 1947. It does not say why that particular moment was chosen to replace a year old official by a White Colonel.

For the time-being the post of Syt. Ingal, the President of the Praja Mandal, has taken the place of the great mass-organiser of Kolhapur and the State has succeeded in deceiving the people. But the people are again thinking of going on a general strike to strengthen Syt. Bagel's hands.

When they do and when they win, they will certainly change this "rule" of employing White Tommies to kill them.

### Mysore To Start Struggle

**A**FTER recording that crafty Sir Ramaswami Mudollar "has been marking time and taking resort to dilatory and disruptive methods," the State Congress Working Committee has decided to launch satyagraha in the State for full Responsible Government.

The State Congress of Cochin has pledged full support to the struggle.

It is reported that the date for beginning the struggle will be fixed by the Working Committee of the Mysore State Congress soon.

If the State Congress given up its halting and hesitant policy of co-operation, which it has been pursuing all this time, and really starts a movement, it will have the support of all Indian States and help the smaller States to decide their course of action.

### Hot Reception For Sir C.P.

**O**N February 17, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, the doughty champion of the Princes, went to Padukotah Strip to address the Golden-Jubilee-celebration of the State's college.

It was not easy for him, however, to avail of this good opportunity to air his important view regarding the 'divine rights of Princely dynasties,' etc.

Elaborate arrangements were made to receive Sir C. P. in the State. Police lorries had been patrolling the streets for two days and nights, streets were cleared, after every ten feet there was a constable on Wellington Road, strict watch was set at the houses of Communist and Praja Mandal workers to avoid any "misbehaviour."

But no sooner did he step into the State, than he was met with a huge demonstration of thousands of people, including the students whom he had come to address with the slogan: "Go back Sir C.P.", "Go back murderer of Punnapra and Vayalar", "We don't want bootlickers of the British here."

It was a difficult and disappointing situation for Sir C. P. Even in States now he dare not go to pry his gospel.

—Ramesh Sin

# No Land For Tillers, Zemindars Retain Large Percentage, Rs. 100 Crores As Compensation

## BIHAR MINISTRY'S PLANS FOR "ABOLITION" OF LANDLORDISM

From Our Correspondent

[The declaration of the Congress in its last Election Manifesto that it stands for the abolition of landlordism in all forms raised high hopes in the minds of the kisans all over the country. Ever since the formation of the Provincial Ministries, the exploited tenants and landless labourers, who form the vast majority of Indian peasantry, have been impatiently looking forward to the necessary legislative measures.

We publish below a report of the Bihar Ministry's plans for the abolition of landlordism.—Editor]

THE Bihar Ministerial plans for the abolition of landlordism are contained in a top-secret memorandum of the Revenue Minister, Krishnababji Sahay which was adopted by the Cabinet in its meetings between July and September 1946.

The memorandum aims merely at the removal of "all intermediaries between Government and the cultivators who hold a ryoti interest". The fact is that the majority of these present occupancy ryots are themselves non-cultivators; the land is not tilled by them, but by lakhs and lakhs of tenants-at-will, share-croppers and by the 90-lakh agricultural labourers.

### Land To The Tillers ?

By stabilising the present non-cultivating occupancy-ryots, by vesting all rights in them, the Ministry is denying land to actual poor cultivators and thus keeping intact the parasitic interest in land.

All that this plan of "zamin-dari abolition" is likely to achieve is a class of non-cultivating ryots owning hundreds and thousands of acres of land and holding the mass of the rural population in perpetual bondage.

The memorandum itself makes clear that it only aims at doing away with the existing land-tenure system and substituting it "by another analogous to the ryotwari systems of Bombay and Madras Provinces."

And as is known, in the Bombay Presidency, for example, stated to be the best instance of ryotwari system and the cherished goal of the Bihar Cabinet when 10 lakhs of people own in all about 23 lakh acres in holdings of less than five acres, as much as 43.7 lakh acres are owned by only 21,793 owners in holdings of more than 100 acres (948 owning as much as 9.4 lakh acres).

The Bihar Ministry only plans to make another Bombay out of Bihar, where too the cultivators have no rights in land, where too the actual tillers are as poor as in Bihar and like Bihar the land is continually passing out of their hands into those of non-cultivators.

### Bakast And Zariat Lands

There are twenty lakh acres of bakast land which actually belongs to the kisans but has now been forcibly acquired by the zamindars. Bihar is today seeing the most heroic battles of the kisans for defending their rights in these lands.

But the Bihar Ministry's plans are different. They have decided to accept the zamindar's claim and not recognise the rightful owners of these lands; they have decided "that the zamindars should be treated as tenants for these bakast lands, which are actually cultivated by them or by their employees at the date of abolition."

The Ministry has thus planned not only to deny the rights in these lands to the lakhs of cultivators but also legalised mass evictions of tenants from all bakast

lands so that the zamindars can claim and retain these permanently as self-tilled lands.

If allowed to be carried out, under the present plans of the Ministry, the landlords will be permitted to retain all self-tilled zariat and bakast lands.

This means that even after the abolition of landlordism, the present oppressors will be able to keep back as much as 16 per cent of the total land in Shahbad district, 9 per cent in Champaran, and 30 per cent in Palamau under their possession.

### Huge Compensation

The Ministry plans to pay a huge compensation to the landlords—a total of anything bet-

ween Rs. 60 to 100 crores, at a rate of 5 to 12 times the net income, thereby retaining the whole burden of payments mainly on the shoulders of the peasantry, the mass of our population. In fact, the Ministry is more worried about paying compensation than about its burden on the nation.

### Agricultural Income Tax

The last Congress Ministry imposed an agricultural income-tax over land incomes above a minimum level of five thousand rupees net. According to a secret agreement between the Congress and the zamindars in 1938, the rate of this tax was kept very low, from six ples to two annas and eight ples in the rupee.

Last year, Dr. Gyan Chand, eminent economist, proposed to the Congress Ministry, that the rate of the tax should be raised at least to the level of the general income-tax.

Besides bringing more money for the Government coffers, this proposal if implemented, would provide funds for compensation also.

For example, the Maharaja of Darbhanga has a net annual income of about Rs. 66 lakhs for which he is required to pay an agricultural income-tax of Rs. 11 lakhs per year. In accordance with Dr. Gyan Chand's proposal,

the tax-amount would be raised to nearly Rs. 38 lakhs, thus reducing the assets for compensation money by Rs. 24 lakhs.

But the Ministry in their present memorandum have clearly evaded the issue by suggesting that "it should be taken as a separate matter of policy."

According to their present proposals, a person like the Maharaja of Darbhanga will thus get about Rs. 25 crores as compensation money; the Maharajas of Bettiah, Ramgarh, Amawan, Hathwa, Dumraon, Pachet and Chotanagpur, near about a crore of rupees each.

### Gradual Abolition

Not only that. The Ministry is not serious even about implementing their own plans. It might well take over ten years before landlordism as visualised by them is abolished.

The Ministry has not prepared any bill yet. But even after the bill is ready and passed by the legislature, the first step will be the simultaneous preparation of compensation rolls and taking up of survey and settlement work.

It is stated that the Government can take up settlement operations in two districts at a time and in the past Survey and Settlement operations took two years for each district.

Moreover, compensation rolls will have to be prepared for each separate estate and share-holder and there are over two lakh estates and over eight lakh share-holders in the Province.

The memorandum envisages a process of "gradual" and "progressive" abolition of zamindari system, district by district. It states that "the zamindari interests throughout the Province will progressively pass to the State district by district as the compensation rolls are completed, the abolition legislation is applied and the compensation is paid."

All that the Ministry proposes to do in the intervening period is to enact a temporary measure for taking over the management of private estates.

### Kisans Must Move

These are the plans of the Ministry for the "abolition" of zamindari. It is the united movement of the kisans and the people as a whole which alone can force the Ministry to make a break with the zamindars and enact a true measure for their abolition. It is the kisans themselves who can help in immediate implementation of the legal measures.

## WITH THEIR BLOOD KISANS WRITE THE LAW OF TEBHAGA

### Bengal Ministry's Bargadar Bill

By Krishna Benode Roy

The introduction of the Bengal Bargadars Temporary Regulation Bill in the Bengal legislature records a great victory for the organised kisans of Bengal. The bill seeks to put the imprimature of law on the already achieved victory of the Tebhaga struggle—the biggest kisan struggle in the history of this Province.

THE demands of the Tebhaga struggle are not new. The Kisan Sabha pressed these demands before the Land Revenue Commission, who recommended that:

(1) The share-cropper must be recognised as a tenant; and

(2) Not more than one-third share shall be legally recoverable by the landlord.

This was in 1943; but nothing has been done so far.

The voice of the kisans for implementing the recommendations of the Land Revenue Commission and for abolishing landlordism became irresistible.

The Ministry, on the advice of the bureaucracy, drew up a bill for State acquisition of rent-receiving interests with compensation and including therein some provisions regarding the bargadars.

It was naturally visualised as a long-term affair and was calculated to continue the status quo.

### Promises And Practice

But the sufferings of the kisans had reached the very limit of endurance. Seventy per cent of them are Muslims, the rest are mostly Scheduled Caste Hindus. On the eve of the elections, hardly a year ago, paradise was promised to them. With their votes the Ministry came to power.

Now the kisans got stones and bullets instead of bread. Food and freedom was assured, starvation and civil war followed.

Twelve ordinances were promulgated in 1946 to arm the Government with powers of repression; not one measure could be passed to improve the lot of the peasants.

However, the kisans have made the legislators know how to make law. Their democratic decree established Tebhaga in hundreds of villages.

For this audacity, thousands were arrested, hundreds were beaten and injured. Tens were killed, while all the time the Ministry in their Press Notes recognised the justice of the Tebhaga.

### Kisans Establish Tebhaga

Yet the struggle gathered momentum at every turn and flooded the whole Province in one gigantic sweep. With their blood the kisans wrote the law that:

(1) Crop shall remain with the share-croppers;

(2) One-third will be the share of the owner;

(3) The share-cropper shall not be evicted from the land he tills;

(4) Not more than 12 per cent shall be recovered as interest; and

(5) Escalation of illegal dues must be stopped and punished. This is Tebhaga; and in all the struggle areas Tebhaga is a fait accompli. The kisans enforced this in practice and forced the Ministry to bring this temporary Bill.

This is the genesis of the pre-

sent Bill. It lays down, in Sec. 3, that the eviction of existing share-croppers be stayed until April 1949 and, in Sec. 6, that the share-cropper supply implements and cost of cultivation shall get two third share of the crop.

But there is another side of the shield. When the Tebhaga started, the bureaucrats boasted, "Law will take its normal course." The jotedars said, "We won't give you our land if you take two-third." But neither could have then imagined the real face of the Tebhaga.

Normal course of law failed to stop Tebhaga. Threat of eviction only rendered eviction impossible. The jotedars in panic fled to their Ministers; the bewildered bureaucrats ran to the Secretariat. The routed jotedars—and bureaucrats wanted more powers; the jotedar, to evict the bargadar, the bureaucrat to crush the upsurging kisan.

The Provincial leadership of the Congress and the League are greatly influenced by the landed interests.

The meeting of the League Working Committee held in December last could not take any definite attitude on the issue of Tebhaga.

The BPOC was at one with the League in this respect: in the meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee Sjt. Kiron Senkar Roy is reported to have said "We need have no opinion on it at present; it is not on everything that we must necessarily have an opinion."

### Congress And League Opposition

Finally, public opinion was sought. Sjt. Nishit Nath Kundu and Maulana Abdulla Hil Begul, Congress and League M.L.A.s of Durgapur, Sjt. Anubha Chandra Ardhary and Maulvi Ghousuddin Pathan, Congress and League M.L.A.s of Mymensingh and numerous other Congress

and League leaders have launched joint campaigns against Tebhaga.

Both the Congress and the League are today torn by powerful warring factions, those against the kisan demands being vocal and influential.

Hence the Ministry proposes to take away by the left hand what it has given by the right. So:

● In Sec. 5, the Bill permits eviction of bargadars if the landlords or the members of his family want to cultivate the land themselves, if the bargadars misuse the land, fail to cultivate it properly and if the landlords share of crop is kept in arrears.

● Sec. 5 and other provisions empower the collector to interfere in the possession of land and exclude the jurisdiction of the Civil Court over these matters.

In the present civil law, there is no summary and short procedure available to a jotedar to evict the bargadar if he clings to the land. A criminal action by a jotedar would at most be a non-cognisable case and the Collector would have no power to interfere. Under the existing law, arrears of share can only be realised through the Civil Court and are—no ground for eviction.

The present Bill seeks to remove these "difficulties" of the jotedars and authorises the Collector "to cause such steps to be taken as he may deem necessary to secure compliance with his order." The bill thus legalises Police Raj and Martial Law for eviction of bargadars.

### Battle Not Over Yet

Even as it is, the Bill is not likely to have an easy passage through the legislature.

The Congress Assembly Party has already tabled a motion for referring the Bill to a Select Committee.

Reactionaries inside the Congress and League will no doubt try to combine to defeat or delay the Bill, while the wheels of the machinery of repression will continue to grind the millions of kisans.

The duty of the kisans is clear. It will be suicidal to harbour the illusion that the battle

(Continued on page 8)

# NO TRUTH BEHIND SUHRAWARDY'S BROADSIDE AGAINST COMMUNISTS

## Shameful Story Of Surrender To Jotedars

(By Nikhil Chakravarty)

On February 28, Mr. Suhrawardy brought an omnibus charge-sheet against the Communists in the Bengal Legislative Assembly for "not merely the general wave of unrest, but of lawlessness and defiance of authority". He concentrated his main fire against the kisan struggles like the Tebhaga and Tanka movements and presented harrowing account of kisan violence at Dinajpur and Mymensingh.

What is the background to Mr. Suhrawardy's broadside against the Communists?

EARLY in January, Mr. Suhrawardy not only openly supported Tebhaga, but even intervened in the first round of repression in Mymensingh. The Bengal Ministry announced a Bill to enforce Tebhaga which was due to be brought before the present session of the Assembly.

This together with the phenomenal spreading of the Tebhaga movement to areas not even touched by the Kisan Samiti led to the desperate rallying by the jotedars, who began to conspire against it. Hundreds of telegrams began pouring in to the Secretariat about the "looting" by the kisans.

In fact, all that the organised kisans had been doing was to take possession of two-thirds of the share of paddy reaped by them. Though in more than one case the jotedars had, on their own, resorted to firing or assaulting them, there was not a single instance of a jotedar having been beaten by the kisans.

### Jotedars' Pressure

The jotedars inside the League, particularly from Dinajpur, put the maximum pressure on the Chief Minister. The Bengal League Parliamentary Party appointed a jotedar-ridden Sub-Committee, which recommended shelving of the Tebhaga Bill.

At the League Council meeting on February 9 the reactionary top leaders stifled all discussion on Tebhaga or Abolition of Zemindari Bills.

This abject surrender to the jotedars by the League Ministry was made easier by the developments in the Congress camp. The Bengal Provincial Congress, owing to the pressure of Hindu jotedars, could not take a firm stand on the Tebhaga Bill and only called for spinless from the districts.

The Congress Parliamentary Party was equally reluctant to see the Tebhaga Bill passed.

### Sabotaging Tebhaga Bill

As many as 96 amendments were sent in by the Congress and the League MLAs. Not one amendment wanted speedy passage of the Bill—all in one way or another, wanted that it should be shelved.

Ultimately, it was understood that the Ministry decided to refer the Bill to a Select Committee of 15 of whom eight were big jotedars, who had already denounced the Tebhaga movement, and one European, while none from the kisans' side were taken.

This open betrayal of the kisans by both the Ministry and the opposition left the field open for the bureaucracy to go ahead with their plans to crush the growing peasant movement.

It is significant that it was only during the last four weeks, that is, after the fate of the Tebhaga Bill had been sealed, that open police atrocities and large-scale firing started.

The "line clear" was actually given in the directives of one

Mr. Martyn, Deputy Secretary, Home and Political Department, Government of Bengal.

In a secret memorandum of January 18 Martyn advised against "handling" the Tebhaga movement under the Special Ordinances.

### Secret Memorandum

But in another secret memorandum dated February 5 (by which date the jotedars had won their battle inside the Congress and the League) the same Martyn instructed the District Officers that "powers given by the Special Power Ordinances can and should be employed if it is considered that the powers under the ordinary law are likely to prove insufficient."

The whole of the present Assembly session showed this surrender to the jotedars by the Congress and the League.

Every time the Communist M.L.A. Jyoti Basu wanted to move an adjournment motion regarding police atrocities on the kisans, he was disallowed. Even his own extenuation from Mymensingh was not allowed to be discussed on the floor of the House. Neither the Congress nor the League MLAs upheld Jyoti Basu's stand.

On February 25, a powerful jotedars' delegation called on Mr. Suhrawardy and urged him to take a strong line against Tebhaga kisans, painting a lurid story of their lawlessness.

### Communist Delegation

The same day Communist M.L.As, Jyoti Basu and Ratanlal Brahma, and Snehansu Acharyya saw Mr. Suhrawardy and drew his attention to the police and military atrocities against the kisans.

Mr. Suhrawardy said that he had received reports from District officials about the kisans indulging in violence.

Jyoti Basu narrated his own experience in the districts and maintained that it was the kisans who had remained peaceful while the police and the military who had indulged in violence.

He called on Mr. Suhrawardy to visit the affected areas and judge things for himself instead of relying on the officials and jotedars' version. But he declined to do so.

On February 24, Congress M.L.A. Mihir Chatterjee tabled an adjournment motion on police firing at Balurghat.

In the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting many top Congress leaders wanted it to be dropped. Nikunja Maiti, Nishit Kundu and others spoke of lawlessness and dacoity in the District.

Dhiven Datta, the Deputy Leader, showed the Kisan Sabha statement on police atrocities. Kiron Shanker snubbed him by saying that that was all false propaganda by the Communists.

At last it was decided that Mihir Babu might move his motion but there must be no criticism of police measures or the Government policy and that the motion should be withdrawn if the Ministry agreed to make a statement.

Before the Assembly met, this decision of the Congress Party was conveyed to the Ministerial benches.

Accordingly, when Mihir Babu's motion was moved, Suhrawardy promised a statement and the motion was withdrawn.

### Reliance On Officials

On February 27 Mr. Suhrawardy did not make his promised statement. He only said that he had just received Dinajpur District Magistrate's report on which he would base his statement. Meanwhile, it was understood that the White bosses of the Political Department and the Special Branch had been called upon to prepare Mr. Suhrawardy's statement.

On February 28, when Mr. Suhrawardy actually made his statement, Communist M.L.A. Rupnarain Roy, who had just that very morning returned from Khanpur, Balurghat, wanted to speak telling what he had seen with his own eyes. But he was not allowed to speak. Even when he approached Kiron Babu, the latter declined to back him.

This is how, backed by jotedars, both Hindus and Muslims, the police and the bureaucrats, Mr. Suhrawardy delivered his famous oration against the Communists without giving them a chance to reply.

## 'NOT PEASANTS BUT POLICE BOSSES MUST BE ON TRIAL'

### Bengal Communist Leader's Statement

Blowmi Sen, Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of India, has issued the following statement in refutation of Premier H. S. Suhrawardy's attack on the Communists for "lawlessness" in the Province, on Tebhaga, in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on February 28 last:

**T**HE Chief Minister has charged the Communists of inciting peasants to acts of lawlessness and disorder. He has made this charge only to conceal the truth about police violence and the pogroms to jotedars and their henchmen.

His plea that the police fired in self-defence will not hold ground. For, how can he explain that in Khanpur alone 800 peasants stood firm while 121 rounds were fired only in self-defence? And how do 500 people face the firing because of Communist incitement? I challenge Mr. Suhrawardy to prove his case before an impartial Enquiry Committee.

Some Hon'ble Members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly have issued statements exposing the police violence in Sreang. Why does not the Chief Minister refer to their statements, and can anyone rebuke these facts?

### Police Violence

For one month the police have been shooting down the peasants in Dinajpur and Mymensingh districts. The entire Hajong area in Mymensingh district is in a state of military siege; even relief workers have been arrested and extorted.

Not the peasants but the police bosses must be on trial. Throughout his long statement, Mr. Suhrawardy does not say a word about the real issue—the peasant's demand for Tebhaga. The Tebhaga demand is just, it was accepted by him as such when the Pergadar Bill was gazetted. But what has happened to the Bill?

It is obvious that the jotedars do not like this Bill. They have intimid-

ated Mr. Suhrawardy to postpone it. The delay in introducing the Tebhaga Bill in the Legislature is the biggest encouragement to the jotedars to coerce the peasants to part with half their produce.

The peasants are taking the paddy to their own farm-yards and they are always ready to hand over one-third of the share to the jotedar. But the jotedars organise lathis and, with police backing, force the peasants to part with half the crop. Under what law does the jotedar take away the peasants' paddy from them? Will Mr. Suhrawardy stop this organised looting by the jotedars?

### Tebhaga—Just Movement

The Tebhaga movement is a just movement. It is a united Hindu-Muslim movement. It strikes at the root of British imperialism and at its imperialist-feudal system of exploitation.

The Communists are proud of helping the peasants to carry forward this just and democratic movement. No amount of slander or repression can alter this.

Impoverished peasants are fighting against hunger and brutal violence. The Chief Minister threatens repression and more repression against the peasants. Let Mr. Suhrawardy be true to his people, the very people who put him in power.

No amount of repression can crush the just movement of the united peasantry. Mr. Suhrawardy must solve the problem by legalising Tebhaga.

Let him find out the real instigators of lawlessness—the police and the jotedars.

## NO PAPER UPHOLDS BENGAL LEAGUE PREMIER

### Press Reactions To Suhrawardy's Attack On Communists

By wire from Nikhil Chakravarty. Calcutta, March 3.

Press reactions to Mr. Suhrawardy's attack on the Communists for lawlessness in Bengal reveal that not one paper has yet upheld the League Premier. Papers have criticised the Kisan Samiti, but all have condemned the police excesses. Mr. Suhrawardy's own paper, Itihad, and the official Congress supporter, Amrita Bazar Patrika, have so far refrained from making any comment whatsoever.

**T**HE League daily Azad while unprecedented rise in the cost of living, criticising the sponsors of the Government so far have done nothing to lighten the burden—of at least nothing that has actually lightened their burden...

"Nor can we, of course, support the way in which the police and the Government officials are engaged in repression. Under no circumstances should the police misdeeds in using the bullets and lathis against innocent kisans, in destroying their property and even in perpetrating atrocities on the women, be permitted..."

### Unjustifiable Vigour

Sgt. Sarat Bose's supporter, the Hindustan Standard wrote: "It is certainly not the fact that the lawlessness of violent kind is being 'sedulously propagated' by the agitators."

"What, on the contrary, has been happening in Bengal is that the police, who have failed so miserably to uphold law and order when communal riots broke out or when the profiteers have snatched essential food away from the pocket of the poor, have been functioning with extraordinary and unjustifiable vigour whenever the authority of the Government or vested interests has been challenged by determined, though peaceful groups of people..."

"The burden of lawless agricultural labourers, petty rural workers, fishermen and hand artisans, on all accounts the atrociously unjust economic system in vogue, has now become unbearable on account of the

The Congress Socialist supporter daily Krishak says:

"The more the hated picture of this bureaucratic scoundrel is coming to light, the more is the public mind shocked with it.... The Suhrawardy Government is trying to suppress all popular movements by terrorising. We do not deny the existence of a political party behind the kisan-movements."

### Root Cause Economic

"But it is because there is economic discontent in the life of Bengal's kisans that popular discontent has assumed such a widespread proportion. Unless and until the root cause of this discontent is removed, the kisan movement is going to spread all over Bengal."

The nationalist daily Nasrullah mentioning Suhrawardy says:

"Just as it is not true that strikes are brought about only by a class of self-seekers from outside for their own factional ends, so it is not true that in the Kisan movement, this class of people lead the unlettered peasants astray. The real cause must be found in our economic system."

The newly started nationalist daily Swaraj, edited by Satyen Majumdar, writes:

"The Chief Minister, of course, has not raised the question... whether there is economic inequality at the root of the current among the peasants and workers.... If it is true that the kisans foolishly heed the police bullets at the instigation of Communists. Then why is the Ministry inactive in showing the kisans their mistake?"

"And the economic or political movement can be crushed by repression—this lesson may not be known to the British bureaucrat-controlled police, but should be known to a popular Ministry."

# High Level Of Taxation To Feed Imperial Armies And Expensive Bureaucracy

WELCOME STEP TO TAX RICH, BUT NO PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Interim Government's first Budget presented to the Central Assembly by Mr. Liaqat Ali, Finance Member, has evoked mixed reception. While some have called it a "poor man's Budget", others have let loose a barrage of propaganda against it calling it a "mischievous" and "arbitrary act of vindictiveness."

**T**HE total revenues are placed at Rs. 279.4 crores as against Rs. 336.2 crores last year and Rs. 121.8 crores in 1938-39; the total expenditure is estimated at Rs. 327.8 crores as against Rs. 381.4 crores last year and Rs. 121.7 crores in 1938-39. The deficit of Rs. 48.4 crores, increased to Rs. 58.7 crores as a result of the abolition of the Salt Tax, is expected to be made up by increased taxation to the extent of Rs. 39.7 crores, leaving a net deficit of Rs. 18.9 crores.

## Main Features

The main features of the Budget are:—

- Heavy taxation of big profits is proposed—
- a) A new tax of 25 per cent on business profits exceeding one lakh of rupees is proposed (bringing in an estimated yield of Rs. 30 crores);
- b) A tax on capital gains is proposed (yielding Rs. 3½ crores);
- c) The Corporation Tax is doubled from the one anna per rupee to two annas (bringing in about Rs. 4 crores);
- d) Limits for imposition of the Super Tax are changed in a manner so as to bring in another Rs. 2½ crores.
- Relief is provided to the people by the abolition of the Salt Tax and raising the limit of incomes liable to income-tax from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 2,500.

But the main burden of indirect taxation remains on the masses as at present. No relief is provided to the mass of tax-payers and reliance for the main source of income is still placed on indirect taxes.

fits, despite which the industrialists made fortunes. The E.P.T. was discontinued from April 1946 and the profits left to mint money out of the continually rising prices.

The present taxation is only meant to undo what the abolition of the E.P.T. had done. The amount of the tax is much less than the E.P.T. and it is wider in its scope and fairer in its incidence.

## Expenditure—Acid Test

But the common man is bound to ask: Why is it, that while maintaining the huge burden of indirect taxation on his shoulders, the Interim Government is demanding more money? For what purpose are the new taxes being levied? Is it for the welfare of the nation, for the uplift of the condition of the mass of the people?

It is the items of expenditure and not revenue alone which form the acid test of a Budget. Taxes are levied by all forms of Government but it is the purpose for which the taxes are levied that matters. And it is here that the main failing of the present Budget is brought out. Here it revealed very sharply the continued imperialist nature of the Budget.

● No relief is provided to the mass of the starving Government employees, the railway workers, the postal workers, the Government Press workers and the clerks of the Secretariat, etc. Their wages and pay are not increased at all. In fact, by taking shelter behind the "coming" recommendations of the Pay Commission, the Interim Government has finally sealed the fate of the employees under them.

imperial armies and defend imperialist interests: For 1947-48, although the Defence expenditure is reduced by nearly Rs. 50 crores as compared to 1946-47, the estimate is placed at as high a level as Rs. 138.7 crores when the normal defence expenditure in India was placed at only about Rs. 48 crores under the Financial Settlement of November 1939 between the Governments of India and U.K.

## Armies Remain Intact

With a view to suppress the and determined to win their freedom, to suppress the great strike-wave sweeping the country and the mighty kisan battles for land and food, and to devise "Operation Asylums" for the hutchery of Indian people, imperialism wants to keep its armies intact and the Finance Member is merely providing the necessary Budget for this purpose.

Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan in his Budget speech declares that demobilisation during the next year will be slow because "the conditions likely to obtain during the year 1947-48 will, in some respects, be far from normal"

by Prem Sagar Gupta

And what are these abnormal conditions except the developing freedom battle of the Indian people?

## A National Victory

The Finance Member merely hoodwinks the people by removing the Salt Tax. The abolition of duty on salt is the most welcome measure, not merely because it relieves the poor people of a certain burden of taxation, but because the abolition of the Salt Tax has been a consistent demand of the Indian national movement.

It is round this issue of the Salt Tax that many battles have been fought, struggles launched, satyagraha offered and sacrifices made.

But the Finance Member's proposal to abolish the Salt Tax, however welcome, cannot screen from our eyes the big military expenditure that is being financed.

Not only that. For the year 1947-48 the Interim Government has entered into a pact with Britain to maintain British armies here and pay for them to the tune of 22 millions (Rs. 2.6

crores), in return for allowing British a free use of Indian troops abroad (by bearing their expenses), obviously meant to crush and suppress the freedom movements in foreign countries, like Indonesia, Indo-China, Greece and Iran.

## A Shady Deal

The Finance Member has proposed a "mutual waiver of all claims and payments" between India and Britain arising out of India's obligations to Britain "on account of expenditure incurred by that Government on recruiting, equipping and training British Service personnel for service in India" (emphasis mine—PSG) and British obligations to India on account of "similar charges in respect of the Indian Army personnel employed by His Majesty's Government overseas" (emphasis mine—PSG) and cost of maintaining British troops in India to the tune of 22 millions.

The Finance Member has no plan with regard to the Sterling Balances.

He does nothing beyond stating that he will fight against any scaling down. The Sterling

Balances have been reduced during the past ten months by nearly Rs. 125 crores through an increasing flow of consumers' goods, purchase by Indians of shares in the London market, etc. The Finance Member has nothing to say on this.

In fact, he himself squanders the Sterling Balances through acquiring possession of war disposals and stocks at high prices.

## Disposal Of Surpluses

Moreover, according to him, these stocks are to be acquired in possession of either "for the future use of India's Armed Forces or as surpluses awaiting disposal".

As is generally known, much of these stores is quite useless and would be kept merely as "surpluses awaiting disposal". This means that India would find these "surpluses" of no use except to sell them to imperialist powers like the Dutch and the French who need them for their imperialist aggression in Indonesia and Viet-Nam, in case these Governments do not

ready corner their requirements

(as they are doing at present) before April 1, 1947, the date on which the Government of India will take them over.

The Interim Government has no plan to offer at all for the economic development of the country.

No plan for the import of capital goods for the development of heavy industries has been suggested by the Finance Member.

Nor has he made any proposal to take over the British concerns in India (in lieu of part payment of Sterling Balances) to get national control over vital industries like coal-mining, jute, etc., and foreign banks, to nationalise these foreign concerns and thereby not merely stop a net annual drain of Rs. 150 crores but also create additional financial sources for the national Exchequer.

## Tax On Profits Correct

The Indian people have always demanded and acclaimed the acquisition of the entire industrial profits for purposes of national reconstruction. They have no sympathy at all for those who see in this step an encroachment on the growth of industry. They will acclaim any step which recognises the principle of relieving the burden of taxation on the mass of the people, of taxing profits of the rich for reducing the "glaring social disparities".

But a Budget is no national Budget if it merely taxes the rich and does not reduce indirect taxation, does not plan economic development, or provide better living to its employees. A really national Budget must plan to ameliorate the conditions of life in the country.

Hence, while we must demand that the Interim Government should go ahead with its proposals of new taxation, institute an inquiry into and take over the entire war profits, we must also demand that the funds be spent for the benefit of the people, for giving relief to them from taxation, for ensuring a basic minimum living wage to the Government employees, and not for feeding imperialist armies and not for killing, shooting and suppressing their freedom movement.

The present Budget cannot be acclaimed just because it taxes the profits—the revenues must be used in the interests of national reconstruction.

	1938-39	1939-40	1947-48
	In crores of Rupees	Percentage to total Revenue	Percentage to total Revenue
Revenues from Customs (Imports)	29.8	31.5	79.5
Central Excise	8.6	6.8	66.9
Railway Contributions	4.3	3.3	2.5
Posts and Telegraphs	0.5	0.997	4.2

Mr. Liaqat Ali has also promised an inquiry into war-time blackmarket and inflated profits and accumulations.

By promising such an inquiry, by taxing the rich and those who can bear it, the Interim Government has taken a step in the right direction. A break from the traditional imperialist method of taxing the poor and feeding and fattening the rich has been a long-standing demand of the national movement.

## No Right To Howl

The people of India will support any move on the part of the Government to take the entire profits of the industry for the welfare of the nation.

And in this case, the Indian industrialists, the war-time profiteers and blackmarketeers who have accumulated immense wealth, have no right at all to howl.

For, the tax on profits proposed by the Interim Government is no new tax, no "contribution" of the present Finance Member. During the war, the earlier imperialist bureaucracy had imposed the Excess Profits Tax (E.P.T.) and was taking away quite about 80 per cent of the pro-

By making no provision for them in the present Budget the Finance Member has ruthlessly crushed all hopes of any substantial improvement in their condition.

● No proposal for economy in administration by way of giving the sack to highly paid British personnel and by reducing the high salaries has been made.

Instead as was usual with imperialism, an Economy Committee is proposed and the Finance Member, while disregarding a thorough-going retrenchment because of the expected deflation does not obviate at all the possibility of mass retrenchment of the lowest paid staff.

Thus, an over-weighted imperialist bureaucracy with "Civilians" eating away into the coffers of the nation, is meant to be retained, simultaneously throwing lakhs into unemployment.

## The Real Aim

The real aim behind the continued burden of indirect taxation on the people and the new taxation proposals is no nation-building activity. The high level of taxation is maintained not with a view to ameliorate the life of the people, but to feed

# BEHIND KHIZAR'S RESIGNATION

(Continued from Page 3)

news is pouring in from the Punjab. Yesterday (March 4), thirteen were killed, ninety-eight injured in police firings. The A.P.I. report says that a communal clash took place in Ghowki Matti, the centre from where communal riots always start in Lahore. Curfew has been imposed.

In these circumstances, a great and tremendous duty rests on the common people of the Province.

● The Muslim masses, who so bravely fought police terror all these days; whose anti-imperialist slogan—"Humarai Ladar Bartanvi Sarkar ke Khilaf," "Down with the Union Jack," "Police Raj Murdabad"; whose courage and endurance won the admiration of even their political opponents; who kept the demand of communal riots at bay with so much foresight and patience—must once more roll up all their anti-imperialist fervour and denounce the leaders of their Ministry-walk-out, declare their deter-

mination to resist riots, and keep the Punjab united and not a battleground for the civil war, which they have produced. And they must say:

● They must realise that the only way to win their freedom and keep the Punjab united is through making the demand for the self-determination of the entire Punjabi people their own, in contrast to the communal and separatist demand of the League leadership.

● They must compel their leaders to grant the fullest civil liberties in the Province, repeal the Ordinance and scotch the bureaucracy's plan to resurrect it in the form of an Act; to fulfil the demands of the tenants and the workers and carry out the pledges of the Punjab League Manifesto.

● Equally must the Hindu and Sikh masses, followers of the Congress recall the many battles they have fought which made the Punjab a Province which the country looked upon as a stronghold of the anti-imperialist struggle. They must remem-

ber the name of Bhagat Singh and of all the other great martyrs which they have produced. And they must say:

● Shame on the leaders, the quarrelling, factional leaders, who today are busy rousing Hindu and Sikh chauvinism and are thus carrying out the British game of fomenting civil war.

Our interests are common with our Muslim brothers, and together alone can we drive out the British.

● Above all it is the duty of the Communist Party and the organised worker, peasant and student movements to throw in their entire weight with death-defying courage to prevent civil war and to cement the common bonds between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

They must expose the British Plan, helping the Congress League masses to force their leadership to break with it, and carry forward the struggle of the tenants for a decent living, the masses and of the working-class for a living wage.

# INDIA-WIDE OBSERVANCE OF R.I.N. ANNIVERSARY

ner Jenkins from Chancellorship and demeritisation of the University.

## Lucknow: United Action By Left Parties

THE R.I.N. anniversary was observed in Lucknow from February 21 to 23 under the joint auspices of the Communist Party, Congress Socialist Party, Forward Bloc, and Revolutionary Socialist Party, whose Secretaries issued a joint statement greeting the unity of the armed forces and the people forged by the naval uprising.

A public meeting was held on the 22nd in Puranichan Park, under the presidency of Mr. Ramabhan Dubey, Secretary of the Forward Bloc, and addressed among others by Harish Tiwari of the Communist Party. Resolutions calling the martyrs and pledging support to the demands of the ratings were adopted. Another resolution called upon all Left parties to cooperate in campaigns for civil liberties and in supporting popular struggles.

## Pondicherry: French Imperialism In Action

THE people of Pondicherry observed the R.I.N. day anniversary by the tooth of bitter opposition from the nationalist quarters. A large number of students went on strike despite the anti-strike propaganda of the local Students' Congress. A huge procession of 16,000 marched through the streets of Pondicherry.

A French Police Officer Joll opened fire on the workers without warning when a gang of goondas had attacked the procession with brickbats. In the shower of brickbats and bullets, one worker died on the spot and several others were injured.

The situation would have taken a serious turn had not the workers' leaders of Pondicherry including the Mayor intervened and assured the processionists of firm action by the Government against the guilty persons.

The procession then marched to the Odierathala Maidan where a mammoth meeting of 20,000 was held. Sjt. Vaidyalingam, Mayor of Madurai, presided. Speeches were made condemning the firing earlier in the day and hailing the fighting spirit of the R.I.N. ratings and the workers of Bombay who rose in their support in February 1916.

The "R.I.N. Day" anniversary was observed throughout India to commemorate the revolutionary uprising of the ratings of the Indian Navy. Despite bans by the bureaucracy and strictures by the national leadership against any specific observance of the day, meetings were held and strikes and demonstrations took place. Resolutions were passed at every meeting, demanding the immediate Indianisation of the armed forces, reinstatement of the victimised ratings and the immediate redressal of their just grievances, such as racial discrimination, bad treatment by the White officers, etc.—all the promises made by the Congress and League leaderships when they asked the ratings to surrender a year ago.

Here are reports of some of the demonstrations and meetings which took place in the main centres in India.

## 60,000 Workers And 30,000 Students Strike

IN Bombay 60,000 workers and 30,000 students went on strike on February 22. Fifteen mills and 14 factories were completely at standstill. Six others struck work partially. Meetings were held in the vast majority of schools and colleges.

The military and armed police patrolled the streets, mainly the working-class areas throughout the day.

But the strike took place despite this open intimidation, despite the ban under section 144 and a special circular by the Police Commissioner prohibiting all meetings and demonstrations of any sort during the R.I.N. week.

The strike took place in spite also of statements by the President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, H. K. Yell, and the Secretary of the Students' Congress calling upon Bombay's colleges not to participate in any strike or demonstration, for the R.I.N. day.

From February 18 onwards, the walls were plastered with posters (particularly those of the Girni Kamgar Union (Red Flag) and the All-India Students Federation) and filled with chalked slogans calling for the observance of the R.I.N. day.

A special squad of policemen was put on the job of scrubbing these slogans and tearing posters off the walls.

February 22, the working-class areas were decorated with Red Flags and festoons. At one place a Marjins' Tash was erected in the shape of a paper model of a ship. At another place "Kamal Gate" was erected in

Many schools and colleges observed the day.

## Lahore: Lathi Charge & United Students Strike

ON February 21, at the call of the Punjab Students' Federation (PSF), about 300 students absented themselves from their classes and joined in a meeting held under the auspices of the PSF in the University lawn.

An appeal by the PSF to the Students' Congress for joint meetings and joint processions was not only ignored, but the Students' Congress actually propagated against the taking out of a procession and even the holding of any meeting except those which would be held during the recess periods inside the colleges!

Despite all this, the students held the meeting which was addressed among others by Kasma, a victimised R.I.N. Sub-Lieutenant from Castle Barracks, who is now a student.

The meeting then formed into a procession and marched through the main streets of the city, carrying placards inscribed with the slogans: "Go Back Mountbatten", "Hindu-Muslim Bhai Bhai", "Hindu-Muslim Nahi La-

reng", "Long Live the Unity of the People and the Forces."

When the students again assembled outside the Senate Hall, Students Congress leaders also joined in. Students wanted the Vice-Chancellor to come out and listen to their demands. But the Vice-Chancellor instead sent the police who ruthlessly lathi-charged the students assembled there and injured Manoharan (a prominent leader) and Lekhi (Secretary of the Students' Congress).

## Big Protest Demonstration

Next morning, 5,000 students came out on strike to protest against the lathi-charge. About 1,000 students of the local Santan Dharma College marched to the University Hall shouting slogans: "Remove the white Chancellors", "End Police Raj". Doyal Singh College students also marched in a procession to the meeting.

At the meeting the leaders of the Students' Federation and Students' Congress jointly condemned the police lathi-charge, hailed the unity of the students and demanded an enquiry into the incident, removal of Govern-

memory of the R.I.N. martyr—the Communist Mitha worker, Kamaal Donda. Later, the police removed this Gate and one worker was arrested for carrying "obstruction."

On February 23, when the Forward Bloc members tried to defy Section 144 and hold a meeting at Chowpatty, 14 members were arrested including Sheelbhadra Yajee, General Secretary of the All-India Forward Bloc, and the meeting was dispersed by lathi charges.

Earlier on the 19th, the police raided the Forward Bloc office and arrested its Bombay Secretary and other office-bearers for announcing their intention to defy the police ban on meetings.

## Calcutta: United Students Strike

ON the 18th the Indian Ex-Services Association held a meeting under the presidency of Dr. Ramnagar Lohia, where wreaths were placed at a memorial by representatives of various organisations.

On the 20th, the Forward Bloc observed the R.I.N. anniversary by holding a meeting at the Indian Association Hall under the presidency of Sjt. Jitmal Kanti Bora.

A resolution was adopted saying that the heroism and sacrifices of the ratings shown in the short-lived but historic fight against the British, has ushered in a new chapter in the freedom struggle of India.

On the 21st, the Students' Federation and the All-Bengal Students' Congress jointly observed the R.I.N. anniversary and held a huge students' meeting in the University compound.



"Kamal Gate" put up in Patel by workers in memory of martyr Kamal Donda.

## BENGAL BARGADAR BILL

(Continued from Page 4) for Tebhaga is over or that the battle for land will be easy.

Armed with powers given by the Ordinances the Jotedars and bureaucrats will hit back and try to dislodge the kisans from their positions.

They will first try to defeat the whole Bill, and failing that, try to take away the provisions beneficial to the bargadars or as much as of them as possible and throw their whole weight for the passage of the harmful provisions.

The kisans should, therefore, carry on country-wide agitation for:

- (a) Immediate passage of the Bill and—
- (b) For removal of Sec. 5 and other harmful provisions of the Bill.

"Pass the Bargadar Bill"; "No Eviction of Bargadars"—these should be the slogans until the Bill is passed.

The progressives in the League, if they are at all concerned with the welfare of the Muslim masses, if they want to save lakhs of Muslim families from utter ruin and starvation, must support the Kisan Sabha agitation for immediate passing of the present Bill after deletion of the unjust and harmful clauses.

By thus supporting the joint struggles of the common Hindus and Muslims alone can the League progressives justify their freedom declaration.

Equally must the Congress Leftists see that only by boldly supporting the struggle of the kisans against the Jotedars, only by supporting and not keeping out of the joint struggle of the oppressed Hindu and Muslim kisans, can they hope to win the Muslim masses for the final battle against Imperialism.

# VELLORE DETENUS TO GO ON HUNGER-STRIKE ?

## Madras Ministry Refuses Elementary Demands

The 120 Madras Ordinance Raj detenus inside Vellore Jail are once again being slowly forced into going on hunger-strike against the inhuman treatment being meted out to them.

THEY have written and urged the Madras Ministry to accord them at least the treatment which the imperialist bureaucrats gave to Congress detenus under the Defence of India Act. But the Ministry busy with its own factional power-politics inside the Madras Assembly Party—has refused to meet their demands.

On February 19, Mr. Bhashyam, Minister for Law, paid a visit to Vellore Jail and met a committee of the detenus consisting of N. K. Krishnan, Ramnathan, A. K. Gopalan and N. Prasad Rao. This is what Mr. Bhashyam had to say about each of the detenus' demands.

● At the very outset he refused to give them the facilities given to detenus even under the Advisers' regime.

● As for the daily allowance for detenus, Mr. Bhashyam insolently remarked that the allowance of twelve and a half annas a day was much better than what an "average" man received. Anyone will concede that this is a paltry pittance. And that is not all.

● As a final stroke, Mr. Bhashyam refused to consider the committee's demand that Smt. Kamla Ramaswamy (grand daughter-in-law of Dr. T. T. S. Rajan, the Madras Congress leader and former Minister) one

of the detenus, who is pregnant, should be given special diet and clothing, because of her condition.

For Mr. Bhashyam all Communist are alike and they are all to be treated alike—at the fact that they should be on twelve and a half annas a day. The fact that one of

them is a prospective mother makes no difference to him.

Mr. Bhashyam's answers to the detenus' demands show a callousness which disgraces the name of the Congress to which he belongs.

All over the country there will be alarm at the prospect of the detenus going on hunger strike and risking their lives. But there will equally be alarm at the fact that they should be forced to take this desperate step under a Congress Ministry.

## 'Minimum Standards Of Humanity And Decency Must Be Maintained'

### P. C. JOSHI ON REFUSAL OF DETENUS' DEMANDS

In the course of a statement to the Press, describing the conditions of the Vellore detenus and giving the details and the replies received by them from Minister Bhashyam, P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, says:

"The detenus have reached the limit of patience. Any day they may resort to hunger strike. They are young and they are determined; but must they be compelled to undergo this suffering?"

"I appeal to the Madras Ministry to act while there is time. Humiliation and suffering cannot crush the spirit of a Communist, but when this happens under the Congress Ministry which the common people returned to power, it cannot be allowed to last one day.

"There are certain minimum standards of humanity and decency that must be practised in our common political life. I earnestly hope that all those who can help and influence the Ministry will act and get it to meet the demands of the detenus before the detenus are compelled to go on hunger strike."

## NAGPUR DETENUS' TOKEN HUNGER-STRIKE

THE Communist and trade union workers detained in the Nagpur Central Prison went on one-day token hunger-strike on February 25, says a Press report from Nagpur.

Prime Minister Ravi Shanker Shukla, replying to an adjournment motion on the hunger-strike moved in the C.P. Assembly by Mr. Rahman Khan stated (according to the Hitavada, February 26 and 27):

The detenus had submitted a 'petition' and again a reminder demanding—

- (1) Permission to interview and correspond with friends and relations;
- (2) Government should not only feed the detenus but supply elementary needs such as newspapers, letters, clothing, etc.;
- (3) The supply of books and periodicals not proscribed by the Government;
- (4) Abolition of classification of detenus;
- (5) Permission to sleep outside the barracks at night during summer.

On February 25, while opposing the adjournment motion, Sjt. Shukla said: "It is a matter of ordinary course of business and is not a matter of urgent public importance."

However, he did not say a word about what the Government is doing to meet the elementary and just demands of the detenus.



# THE BULGARIAN DEMOCRACY AT FIRST HAND

(by Commander Edgar P. Young, R.N.)

The most outstanding impression which I have, after six weeks spent recently in Bulgaria, is that the Bulgarian people though the poorest in Europe, is among the best educated, and politically among the most advanced, in that part of the Continent.

THIS is all the more surprising when one considers that Bulgaria is essentially an agrarian country, with very little industry, and that, therefore, the vast majority of the people are peasants, and live in villages.

Such conditions are elsewhere productive of illiteracy and political apathy, exploited by reactionary Church and other elements of the population to the detriment of the people.

That they are not so in Bulgaria is due to the fact that the Bulgarian people, in the course of prolonged struggle for its liberation from a "colonial" status, has developed its own kinds of democratic popular organisations—cultural, economic, and political.

## Mass Organisations

It is these mass organisations of the people, to which all the more active elements of the Bulgarian population belonged, which carried on an unceasing struggle against Fascism inside Bulgaria for 21 years, from September, 1923, to September 9, 1944, when under the political leadership of the broad-based Fatherland Front, they overthrew their Fascist rulers and brought Bulgaria into the war as an active belligerent on the side of Democracy.

It is they who, on the second anniversary of that heroic rising, on September 9 last year, voted in overwhelming majority for the abolition of the Monarchy, which had proved synonymous with "national disaster," and decided that their country shall henceforth be the People's Republic Bulgaria.

It is they who, on October 27, at the elections for the Grand National Assembly which is to draw up the Constitution for their new Republic, set the seal on their long-drawn struggle for Democracy by returning to power a Government of the Fatherland Front with a majority of 75 per cent.

And finally, it is largely because of them that the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communist), though fully entitled, since it has a clear majority on its own of 53.16 per cent to form a Government on its own, has wisely decided to maintain a Government of the Fatherland Front, as "a historic necessity," and to develop "People's Democracy" as the Bulgarian road to Socialism.

## Baseless Stories

Such are the unquestionable facts which should be realised by foreigners, before they accept the quite baseless stories set in circulation by the disgruntled Bulgarian "Opposition," through irresponsible sympathisers in foreign diplomatic circles in Sofia, regarding alleged "terrorism" by the Red Army or by its alleged agents, the Bulgarian Communists, and regarding the alleged "Sovietisation" of Bulgaria.

I write this with full sense of responsibility, and also in full confidence that my statement cannot be seriously challenged.

For, I have seen for myself, and have heard for myself from the mouths of the people in town and countryside, quite enough to satisfy me that the results of the last elections in Bulgaria are genuinely representative of the will of the majority of an exceptionally well-informed and politically conscious people.

No fear of the Red Army—which in any case, was conspicuous by its absence—could have inspired the young peasant wo-

man in a small village near the borders of Yugoslavia whom I heard telling her friends at an election meeting that I was an Englishman, "come to see our Democracy". Later on, she came up and asked: "Have you got such Democracy in England?" No "Red Terror" could have moved her to such obvious sincerity as she showed.

## People's Democracy

And she was but one of many hundreds of ordinary men and women, among the many hundreds of thousands whom I saw at various public meetings, in factories, in co-operative enterprises, or in cultural institutions, who were equally spontaneous in expressing to me their pride and satisfaction with their "People's Democracy," and their confidence in the Fatherland Front, which is both its originator and its political expression.

What then, it may be asked, is this "People's Democracy," for which the Bulgarian people has voted so strongly? It is political Democracy of a type very similar to that to which we are accustomed in Britain—with equal and universal suffrage, secret ballot, and so on—but with certain noteworthy additional features.

I WAS greatly intrigued, to read the lugubrious article in last week's (February 29) *Janus*, the organ of the Congress Socialist Party, on Socialism abroad.

The author of the article, who prefers to remain anonymous, presents a dismal picture of the Socialist Parties in Europe straying from the path of Socialism and comes to the pessimistic conclusion that there is something peculiar to the soil of that continent not conducive to the growth of Socialism.

"Indeed," says he, "we cannot escape the thought that 'enfeebled and constantly backward-glimping Europe, whose nineteenth century memories of prosperity seem faintly to oppress her, is not the place where a true socialist philosophy can crystallise.'"

One is amazed at the colonial ignorance which the author betrays about what is happening in Europe or may be the deliberately shuts his eyes to facts, for, how else can he prove his pet theories?

## Allice And Kicking

Socialism in Europe, or in any other part of the world, is by no means dead; it is very much alive and kicking—kicking the landlords, the industrialists, the reactionaries, all the vested interests, out of the dominant positions which they had secured.

On this page, we give an article on Bulgaria's new democracy. It is not written by a Communist—Edgar P. Young is an English Liberal. What he says is enough to show that one need not despair of the success of Socialism, at least in Bulgaria.

And what is happening in Bulgaria is typical of the other new European democracies—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, Poland, Rumania, Hungary.

Land is coming to the tiller, the ownership of landlords is ending; basic industries are being nationalised; plans for all-round increase in production are under way; in every field of activity people are being more and more associated. With firm and determined steps these countries are marching towards Socialism.

It is true, however, that this struggle for democracy and Socialism is not being led by the old type Social Democratic parties. It is the greatly strengthened new Communist Parties and the reformed Socialist Parties, with all their prejudices burnt out by the heat of battle, who are at the helm.

Not all this our author fails to see.

Thus, for instance, the People's representatives (e.g. Members of Parliament) are subject to recall before the end of the period for which they have been elected, if they fail to give satisfaction to those who elected them.

It is also an economic democracy; but not at all, as might be expected, of the Soviet type. State and Municipal enterprise functions side by side with Co-operative and private enterprise, under the co-ordinating control of the Government.

Private monopoly is forbidden, and the State may have a monopoly with regard only to mineral resources, to communications of all kinds, and to trade in "anything which is of essential importance for the people's economy and the needs of the people" (e.g., cereals, which are the staple items of the national diet, salt of roses, and tobacco, which are at present the main items that can be exported to gain foreign exchange).

## Land For Tillers

The land is to belong to those who cultivate it, but the amount which may be held by an individual is restricted to the amount which he himself, with the aid of his family only, can cultivate.

Interesting features which have been borrowed from the Soviet Union, but which can hardly be considered as exclusively Soviet today, are the Right to work, to Leisure, to Education, to Medical Care, and to a Pension in case of sickness, disability and old age, and, coupled with these,

"obligation to work in accordance with one's strength and ability."

Where "the people" come into the picture is in connection with the fulfilment of the "People's Democracy." This fulfilment is not to be left to the Government and to the Administration. In each town and each village there is a Fatherland Front Committee, an elected body in which each of the parties of that front has equal representation.

## To Help Govt.

Having fulfilled their initial revolutionary role and their subsequent electoral function, these "One" Committees, as they are called colloquially, remain in being—not, as is suggested by the "Opposition," to act as some kind of super-Government, from behind the scenes, but to help the Government in its tasks.

It will be their duty to observe locally the fulfilment of the Government's intentions, to frustrate attempts at sabotage and to report to the appropriate Minister (for necessary action by him) any hitch or shortcoming.

In the industrial field, the Fatherland Front Committees are supplemented by Factory or Works Committees, with functions very similar to those of British Production Committees.

In the course of a motor tour of about 1300 miles which I made round Bulgaria during the fortnight after the elections, I was able to judge for myself whether the system which I

have outlined is "real" and is working as intended.

I saw in Varna an assembly of village mayors and representatives of OZIR, the Peasants' Organisation, called together by the Regional Fatherland Front Committee to discuss and decide how, and on what scales, income tax shall be levied on the farming population.

That meeting was attended, as it should be, of course, by men and women who had voted and who had been Parliamentary candidates for the Opposition.

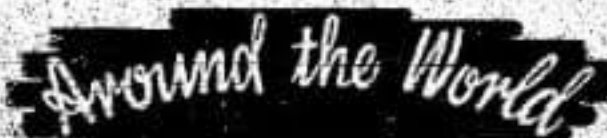
## People Co-operate

At Plovdiv, I found a Co-operative boot-making enterprise, created by OZIR, the Artisans' Organisation, discussing the modernisation of its plant to enable it to keep pace with the private firms in the fulfilment of the Government's plans.

At Plevan, some hundreds of Trade Unionists, called together by the town Committee of ORPS, the United Trade Union Organisation, were making plans for increased production in the factories, for giving technical help to the peasants and for contributing to the more speedy realisation of the Government's plans of social improvement by voluntary work in building houses and nurseries.

This was Bulgarian "People's Democracy" in action indeed. And everywhere it was accompanied by the enthusiasm which is engendered when men and women work freely together for the achievement of their common good.

The hard conditions of today are borne without grumbling, because the people feel confident that a better future is theirs for the making—under the leadership of those who have proved themselves worthy of trust.



## Socialism Abroad

And for a simple reason. The Congress Socialist leaders in India have the same illusions. His "mass mis-conceptions, the same widespread prejudices which the pre-war Socialist Democratic Parties had and still have in many countries."

## False Theories

Social Democracy of the post-1918 era, denying the fundamental principles of Marxism and class-struggle, advocated cooperation with capitalism and imperialism in the name of harmonious progressive development.

In the economic field, it stood for cooperation with capitalism as the path for prosperity for the workers providing the basis, as E. P. Dutt has put it, for an ultimate far-off painless transition to Socialism.

In the political field, it maintained that a peaceful transition to Socialism was possible through parliamentary democracy and no basic change in the character of the state was necessary.

Lastly, in regard to the land of victorious Socialism—the Soviet Union—its attitude was one of extreme hostility for it had had the audacity to take the road to Socialism not recommended by Social Democracy, and, despite gloomy predictions, was reaching its goal.

Indeed, Social Democracy evinced greater keenness to fight the Communists at home and the USSR abroad than anxiety to get rid of their own capitalists and landlords.

What the result of such theories was is common knowledge. During the years between the two world wars, capitalism did not wither away, parliamentary democracy failed to achieve Socialism through Socialists, did win a majority in a number of countries at the polls, class collaboration did not improve the workers' lot.

Fascism, which is but the naked dictatorship of capital, ground down under its iron heel the toiling people, threw overboard all democratic forms, and ultimately plunged the whole of Europe, and later the entire world, into a world bloody war.

Some leaders of Social Democracy did begin to realise the folly of their policies.

In a *Manifesto*, issued in January 1934, after the advent of Hitler, the Executive of the German Social Democratic Party admitted their mistake in not carrying forward the 1918 revolution and accepting the Weimar Republic.

"That it should have taken over the old machinery of Government virtually unchanged was the great historical error committed by a German Labour Movement which had lost its sense of direction through the war."

Stalin, Otto Bauer, the Austrian Socialist leader, wrote in 1934:

"The Austrian workers believed that Socialism could be realised by democracy in peace. The Fascists have shot democracy to pieces. They have taught the Austrian workers that there is no other choice—either the dictatorship of Fascism or the dictatorship of the proletariat."

## Lessons Learnt

The success of Fascist terror and World War II were, in a large measure, learnt by the European people. The glorious part played by the Soviet Union in the war against Hitler instilled a new inspiration among them and united resistance movements, led jointly by the Socialists and Communists, grew up in most European countries. In the process of this armed struggle they destroyed the power of the vested interests and the State machine, making a peaceful transition to Socialism a practical possibility.

After liberation this unity has been carried forward in a number of countries. Where it has, people are forging ahead, the reactionaries are on the retreat. Where the Socialists have failed to shed their anti-Communist prejudices and have refused joint action, as in France, not only the Socialists but the progressive movement itself has received a set-back.

It is good that our Indian Socialists on their dark side of the Socialist movement, but that is no justification for dividing the entire movement with black columns.

One wishes too that the evils of

Social Democracy were not laid upon them.

They rightly proclaim that the British Labour Party is drifting away from the principles of Socialism, yet they accept as their free value British declarations about quitting India. Why cannot they see through the phos mask behind which the Labour Imperialists hide their ugly designs? How is it that they cite the example of Britain as having taken the road to peaceful transition to Socialism?

They still echo the cry of vested interests all over the world and consider the Communists as a menace, thereby weakening the fighting front of toilers against their exploiters. Why cannot they remember that this cry meant Fascist and capitalist for the European people—not Socialism and prosperity?

Again, they lay up eagerly the tendentious propaganda put out by the world's biggest factory, Reuters, in regard to the Soviet Union and the new European Democracies.

## Why This Growth

They refuse to see that the Communist Parties all over the world are growing (their total membership today is nearly two scores or against the pre-war membership of about 20 billions) not because they have Soviet backing, not because they are its aids, establs, but because in every country they are the most fearless and consistent fighters for the objectives which the workers themselves acclaim.

It betrays complete contempt for the people to think that they could ever make a party standing for the interests of a foreign country a leading party in so many countries.

And if there is uniformity and consistency in the principles and policies of the different Communist Parties it is so for the elementary reason that the interests of the people all over the world are one. The language of an Indian peasant is no different from the language of a Yugoslav peasant, nor is the capitalist of one country any the less rapacious than the capitalist of another country.

Not to realize that today the Communist Parties are leading the battle for democracy and Socialism and not to see the gains already won is indeed to despair of Socialism itself. United, the new democracies of Europe have shown, Socialists and Communists together can deal the final death-blow to Imperialism and Capitalism and end exploitation of man by man, to which both are pledged.

-V. M. KAUL

★ Chiang Kai-Shek Faces Crisis

★ Economic Collapse In KMT China

★ U.S. To Join Britain In Greece?

THE last week has seen the bursting-up of the economic and military crisis inside Kuomintang China.

In the military field, despite the total aid of American imperialism, Chiang's forces are on the defensive both in the north, in Manchuria, and in the central area of fighting, Shantung.

On February 26, the Kuomintang-controlled Central News Agency admitted that the Communists had launched a major offensive against Changchun, Manchuria's capital. The same day the Communists claimed a big victory, "the biggest in the civil war," in Shantung, resulting "the annihilation of two Nationalist armies."

The news of serious set-backs for the Kuomintang comes after seven months of full-scale offensives against the Communist-led areas and armies. More than anything else it exposes the bankruptcy of Kuomintang strategy which expected that with the full support of American arms, it would be able to crush and wipe out the Communists in a short time.

Communist Strength

In fact, according to the Communist estimate, if the first seven months of the Civil War (July 1946 to January 1947) are divided into two periods, July to October and November to January, the position of the Communists definitely improved in the second period.

In the first period, the KMT occupied 144 cities and towns previously in Communist hands, while the Communists succeeded in liberating only 64 cities and towns. In the second period, however, the KMT occupied only 55 cities and towns while the Communist forces liberated 54, out of which 28 were liberated in the month of January ALONE.

The Communists also claim that they have taken prisoner no less than 36 Generals of the KMT army (47 in the first period and 39 in the second); the names and addresses of all these Generals have been published in the Communist daily of Chungking, New China Daily, and till now the KMT Press agency, usually very voluble, has not issued a single contradiction.

The total casualties of the KMT armies in this period of seven months is estimated to be 5,60,000 or about 28 per cent of the KMT's standing army.

That the KMT and their American supporters have seriously miscalculated is shown also by the news that the Americans who had promised to withdraw all their troops from China in a short time, have now postponed the evacuation of these troops, particularly from the key cities of Tientsin, Tientsin and Tangu. (Tas message from Shanghai).

All this shows one thing very clearly: that despite all the KMT's tall talk of crushing the Communists, the facts show that the Communists are not only holding their own but steadily increasing their capacity to resist the KMT offensives.

Growing Economic Chaos

If such is the picture of the military situation, the economic situation is far worse inside KMT China. Last week after gruelling criticisms from the supporters of the Government, Premier T. V. Soong, popularly considered to be the financial brain of the KMT, submitted his resignation.

His place has been taken by Generalissimo Chiang himself, thus underlining the serious nature of the emergency. According to a Reuters report

(March 3), Dr. Soong was criticized for his failure to stop the inflation of Chinese currency, which has reached astronomical proportions in the last year.

In fact, inflation in China is rapidly mounting; in 1937 Chinese note issue was 1,400 million dollars; by the end of 1945 it had risen to 2,112,500 million dollars; and towards the close of 1946 it is estimated that the note issue had risen to 8,200,000 million dollars.

Thus the total new issues for 1946 ALONE amounted to more than three times the combined issues of the preceding NINE YEARS.

Factories Closing Down

This, however, is only one result of the deep economic crisis in China. Part of the same picture is the increasing closing-down of Chinese factories, the opening-up of American factories, equipped with the most modern machinery and the flooding of the Chinese market with American goods.

In Shanghai alone over 1,160 factories and commercial firms went out of business between June and October 1946. By the end of the year 1946, it was estimated that between 30 to 40 per cent of Shanghai's firms would have to close down, the total assets involved being between Rs. 20 to Rs. 35 crores!

It might be thought that as Shanghai is an important port, American imports have affected its business the most; but in fact they have seriously hit Chinese industry as a whole.

Eighty per cent of the 1,200 members of the Medium and Small Industries' Association of Szechuan (Province of

which Chungking is the capital city) have closed down; so also two-thirds of the 470 members of the Chungking branch of the China Industrial Association have gone out of business.

American Invasion

Meanwhile, U.S. capital is invading China with seven-league strides. In the three months, August, September and October, American manufacturers sold twice as much woollen goods as did the Chinese.

Simultaneously U.S. firms have begun to import their own factories. By the recent Sino-American Commercial Agreement, Chiang, in return for U.S. armed help against the Communists, allows the far stronger U.S. business freely to come into China and crush Chinese industry.

by Mohan Kumaramangalam

(The facts given above are taken from the China Digest, published in Hongkong).

All this only goes to show that in the attempt to crush the democratic movement and the Communists, Chiang and the KMT leadership are steadily moving towards an abyss.

Militarily they are worse off than ever before; economically fighting the Communists is a heavy strain (forcing them, for instance, to impose THIRTY different taxes on single shops in Hankow in order to raise money for the war), while the price of American help is total economic domination, the reduction of China to the status of a U.S. colony.

Crisis is intensifying in KMT China and there is no doubt that for all Chiang's arrogant orders to the Communist delegation to quit from Nanking, soon he will be faced with a people inside his own territory who will no more tolerate such a corrupt, inefficient, reactionary regime, subservient to foreign imperialism.

Anglo-U.S. Negotiations

IF the organiser of the civil war in China is facing a new crisis, so also the real organisers of the civil war in Greece, the British, are facing a new crisis. Just as the Americans and their friend, Chiang, miscalculated about the outcome of starting a civil war in China, so too have the British miscalculated when they used their military strength to put the Royalists in power a year ago.

Today far from being able to leave the Royalists to manage their own dirty work, the British have been forced to admit that a Greek-Royalist-Comm-British combination can no longer rule Greece today; the biggest gun in reaction's arsenal, American imperialism, is to be called in to help.

On February 28, the British Foreign Office spokesman admitted that Anglo-American discussions are going on over the problem of continuing Britain's "economic and military obligations" in Greece.

The next day leading U.S. Right-wingers immediately responded, one Senator George proclaiming that "if the British pulled out of Greece, he had little doubt that Communists would soon seize control."

Thus in Greece also the way is being prepared for the U.S. to step in as the anti-Communist guardian angel.

This, however, will solve nothing for just as American guardianship of Chiang has not saved him, so also an Anglo-American agreement to outress reaction in Greece is not going decisively to change the situation. Here also the economic and military situation remains as

insoluble as before; in an effort to broaden the political base of a Government which is manifestly THEIR instrument, the British forced a reorganisation at the beginning of February.

The result, however, was that while some minor Royalist cliques joined the main body of moderate democratic opinion, represented by the Liberals led by Sophoulis, refused to enter the Government.

The leaders of the new Government are the same old friends of Hitler; Premier Maximos has publicly testified his support for both Tsolakoglou (first Quisling Premier) and Rallis (third Quisling Premier). So also has the present Minister of War, Stratos, and many others.

The net effect, therefore, has been that Government is no more representative than before reorganisation.

Fight Against Tyranny

Meanwhile, in the hills the guerilla army is consolidating its positions; according to a British M.P., George Thomas, who visited the guerilla area, it is "a movement against tyranny—and if there is such tyranny within Britain, the British people would also go to the mountains."

Its main hold comes because the British-supported Greek Government is a Fascist Government, pure and simple, which is riddled with corruption and does nothing for the people.

For instance despite the tremendous destruction during the war, the Government has not built a single new house, "roads are terrible, there are only a few bridges and wages are very low." (George Thomas).

It is in this background that the U.N. Enquiry Commission is at present visiting Greece, charged to enquire into Greek allegations of Albanian and Yugoslav and Bulgarian intervention in Greece's civil war.

And there can be no doubt that if the report of the Commission speaks the truth, it will conclusively point to the internal situation in Greece itself as the main cause of civil war, which will not end until this cause is removed and an all-party democratic government, including the EAM and the Communists, is installed.

March 3, 1947.

World Labour In Action

S. African Negroes Demonstrate

SEVEN thousand Negroes demonstrated in the streets of Johannesburg to demand decent housing in the largest slum area held by native Africans. The demonstration was held shortly before the visit of the British Royal family.

The demonstrators represented 400,000 natives who are forced to live in segregated areas outside the city. Only the lucky ones have ramshackle houses in which to live. Most of them live in huts or shacks or impoverished shacks made from discarded old drums.

Native Africans, who number eight million and comprise four-fifths of the country's population, are not allowed to leave their reservations without special passes. They are subject to arrest if they are found without necessary passes, which sometimes number as many as a dozen. Nor are the natives allowed to form labour unions.

The Johannesburg demonstration highlighted the Government's disregard for the welfare of the natives. Shortly before the demonstration, the city council had flatly rejected a housing plan that would have cost \$100,000, on the grounds that the city could not afford it. At the same time, it allotted \$140,000 to pay for a 2-day reception for the British monarch and his family. (17-2-1947.)

First Major Strike Of E. African Workers

THE new determination for freedom that World War II stirred among colonial peoples is being expressed in the British colony of East Africa in the first major strike of native workers.

The strike which started among dock workers, has spread to 10,000

domestic servants, railway and postal workers, and has brought the port of Mombasa to a complete standstill.

The strike took local British officials by surprise because they thought the Africans were too backward to organise a large-scale walk-out. The strike is being led by 16 ex-servicemen, among them veterans of the battles at El Alamein and Sidi Barrani, who refuse to return to pre-war slave conditions.

The strikers are demanding a 3-fold increase in their present wage of 50-shillings a month, but British officials refuse to negotiate until the men return to work.

Scabs from the British community, protected by armed troops, are maintaining essential services. (19-2-47.)

Tribunals Stop Landlord Profiteering In Britain

BRITISH landlords who thought they had found an easy way to get around rent control laws are losing not only their popularity but their swollen profits through the Government-sponsored rent tribunals now operating all over the country.

Rent control has never been relaxed in Britain because the millions of people whose homes were blitzed to rubble would be up in arms if it were. But, as in the U.S., the landlords worked out tricks to raise ceilings many times above the pre-war level.

The most popular was to put a few sticks of old furniture in an apartment, since ceilings only applied to unfurnished premises. Or else the landlord would offer "services," which often proved to be nothing but hot water.

If these devices the rent for a typical flat in a London Borough was raised from \$700 a year to \$2,315. A 2-bedroom apartment, on which the unfurnished rent was \$300 a

year, was ruled furnished at \$3,965.

This practice became so widespread that the Government was bombarded with public protests. The rent tribunals are the result.

The tribunals, appointed by the Minister of Health, consist of three public members and two building appraisers. British tenants or landlords may apply but, needless to say, the applicants are usually tenants.

A Square Deal For The Tenant

The tribunals are not out to stop the landlord from making a profit but they do aim to see that the tenant gets a square deal. In the majority of cases that are brought before them, the tribunals order a rent reduction.

For example, of 238 recent cases acted on by the Paddington and Marylebone tribunal, which works in two of London's most populous boroughs, 228 rents were reduced, 20 were approved at the current rate and one was increased.

According to Mr. Graham Pole, chairman of this tribunal, the average reduction is 24 per cent although in some cases it has been as much as 75 per cent.

Here is how the tribunals do their work: When a tenant applies he has to fill out a form giving details of the premises. At the same time the landlord has to give his version, describing all the furniture and "services" he provides.

Then the two expert appraisers go to work. They compute the fair rent on the basis of the unfurnished value, including the cost of water, electricity, repairs, insurance, cleaning, management, etc., plus a profit up to 25 per cent and about 10 per cent to 20 per cent on the estimated value of the furniture.

After the survey is through the appraisers come up. The public is pres-

ently allowed to attend hearings although the tribunal has the right to hear cases privately. The tenant tells his story, the landlord tells his, and usually after a few minutes, the Chairman announces what the appraisers have found.

Once the tribunal has set a rent, it cannot be raised unless the value of the property or "service" is increased.

Landlords often get no more at the proceedings than they give tenants eviction notices. But the tenant is still protected. If the tenant can prove the landlord gave notice for no other reason than that he applied to a tribunal, local authorities have the right to requisition the premises if he has done so.

This means another legal tangle for the tenant. But, in spite of this and other defects (it takes about six weeks to get action because tribunals are clogged with work and rent reductions are only retrospective to date of application no matter how long the landlord has been overcharging), the tribunals have provided only available protection for hundreds of home-seekers. (20-2-47.)

Mexican Teachers Strike For 40 Per Cent Wage Increase

UNABLE to make ends meet on their \$2c. (about \$1.2) daily salary, teachers in the State of Durango announced that they will not reopen rural schools until their pay is raised 40 per cent.

The strike was called by the teachers' Union after a series of meetings with Ministry of Education officials. The Union considered demands modest in view of latter per cent rise in living costs since 1945.

The school shut-down may spread to Lower California, and other States where salaries are not appreciably higher.

Union spokesman charged the State of Mexico a number of clerks were dismissed by 1000 of the State for taking part in the strike. (21-3-47.)



# For The Cause Of Indian Freedom And Democracy

## COMMUNIST PARTY'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS

For over a year now the Communist Party has been the main target of British attack. Members and followers of our Party constitute the largest number of political prisoners inside jails today. A vast majority of those who fall victims to the bullets of the British police and military have been martyrs of the Red Flag. And now we are threatened with Ordinances or extraordinary legislation in Province after Province, detention without trial, ban on meetings, regimentation of our Press, confiscation of property, etc.

In our country it has always been the pride of any party to be singled out for imperialist attack. Our people have admired and respected such a party. But it has meant greater responsibilities for our Party around. We need more than ever before the confidence and support of our people to keep ourselves going and survive the imperialist attack.

To all the members and supporters of our Party, our urgent appeal is that the more they explain the programme and work of our Party to the various sections of our patriotic people, the more support they will get for our Party Fund.

We need more cash today than ever before. We are confident that our comrades themselves will pay much more than they have ever paid, but what is more, collect from hundreds more. Not one single comrade should leave even one man untouched whom he knows, among whom he lives and works.

### Most Consistent Anti-Imperialists

The appeal of our Party is irresistible because ours is the most consistent anti-imperialist people's policy today.

● Ours was the only party that exposed the Cabinet Mission Plan in its true colours while others sang its praises, and ours is the party that successfully continues to expose all imperialist manoeuvres—political, military and economic—which show that the British are plotting to stay in India, while talking big of quitting.

● Ours was the only party that came full blast against the riots, and our comrades everywhere threw their entire weight in fighting the flames of civil war. The Chittagong Armoury Raid, Lal Mohan Sen, was martyred in Noakhali. The neighbours of every single Communist know that there is no greater fighter for Hindu-Muslim unity and brotherly peace than a Communist.

● Ours is the only party that is playing the boldest part in the States peoples' fight against autocracy—the struggles of Kashmir, Travancore, Telengana, Bharatpur and other States, suppressed in blood, have been new landmarks on the road to the final struggle for freedom.

### At The Head Of All Struggles

● Our comrades have been in the forefront of every popular struggle of every section of our people for a better and democratic life. We have done our best against the British enemy without any illusions. We have given our best in the struggles of our people without any vacillations. We have suffered and died at the hands of the enemies of our country and our people.

We need today the utmost support of our patriotic fighting people. And we know they will pay for our Party recalling the courage of our comrades, the eloquence of our agitators—who are today behind the bars, and

the truth they read in our Party papers which are sought to be suppressed.

### For Greater Battles Ahead

**WORKER! COMRADES!** Remember the great response you won in strike battles and appeal to all your fellow-workers to pay for the Party of the Red Flag, their own Party that taught them to fight, that built their unions, which must become stronger than ever before for greater battles ahead—and in worse days to come, against rising prices, intolerable living conditions.

**PEASANT COMRADES!** Remember the Tebhaga struggle and all that has been achieved under the Red Flag in your own Province and district. A new spirit of resistance pervades the peasant mass today. The peasant everywhere is coming to the Red Flag for a lead against the parasitical landlords who threaten to effect reforms to reduce rents, are removing all the food to the blackmarket.

Appeal to him again to pay for the Party of the Red Flag, that builds peasant unity through the Kisan Sabha, that is his shield against zamindari oppression and his own voice for the abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller.

**STUDENT COMRADES!** Ever since the IYA trials, you have been in the forefront of every student action, voicing the demand of our youth for patriotic education, rousing them against every manifestation of British terror, mobilising them in support of the striking workers, helping to build Hindu-Muslim unity against communalism and riots.

The mass of students respect your courage, admire your faith in national unity and know Communist students to be among the most conscious of their patriotic duties.

Appeal to them and they will pay generously for the Party that nursed you.

### For A New Life For Every Family

**WOMEN COMRADES!** Under the Red Flag, in the backward State of Hyderabad, women fought for their honour, shoulder to shoulder with their men against the Nizam's military. And the peasant women of Bengal fought the goondas of the zamindars and the reserve police to save their honour and their homes in the great Tebhaga struggle.

Appeal to all the women you know, among whom you live and work, and they will pay generously to the Party that teaches women how to fight shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk, for a new life for every family, so that our children should not suffer as we have suffered, but get what we have dreamed of.

Our Party is staking everything and exposing the diabolical British Plan of cheating our people with new words, dividing Hindus and Muslims, setting



P. C. Joshi

the Congress against the League, inciting one section of Indians against another, so that they can dictate the future of India.

The British imperialists are, therefore, out to suppress us, and we look to our patriotic people for support, so that our Party may become stronger still to be able to contribute its utmost for Indian freedom.

Our comrades are at the head of every popular struggle, and the enemies of our people—the Princes, the parasitical

landlords, the profiteering capitalists, demand the extermination of the Party so that the imperialist police and the military may rapidly suppress all popular movements for democratic liberties and a better life here and now.

All this would have been impossible except for the fact that the leaders of the Congress and the League are pursuing a policy of compromise with the British imperialists and playing power-politics among themselves which has divided Hindus and Muslims into two warring blocs with the British manoeuvring from the top.

They are listening to the voice of their vested interests; their Ministries are defending this ruthless repression against our Party. We know this way only the British imperialists and the Indian vested interests gain, the freedom forces are split, the peoples' movement weakened through the suppression of its vanguard—the workers and peasants.

It is this disastrous development in our national life that our Party seeks to reverse. It is for us a battle with our backs to the wall.

● In the name of Indian patriotism, help us work Congress - League - Communist joint front for the final battle against British imperialism, and strengthen the funds of our Party.

### In The Name Of Our Martyrs

● In the name of our common people and their martyred sons and daughters, appeal for funds so the battle against profiteering, famine-makers may be led better and fought still and the cause of democracy triumph.

We look to our members supporters to pay all the and collect the utmost largest number as possible.

Our Central Headquarters need Rupees one half lakhs for the year Provincial Committee fixing separate quotas, elections will continue till of May.

P. C. Joshi

(All cheques, money orders, drafts, etc. to be made in name of S. V. GHATE for 'For Fighting Fund').

## 'If Under Congress We Get Ordinar Raj, How Shall We Get To Swaraj

### P. C. JOSHI ON BOMBAY MINISTRY'S PUBLIC SAFETY BILL

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

**T**HE Bombay Government too has come out with a drastic bill, the same sort that the British imperialists used to pass during and before the war and which the Indian freedom movement has always opposed.

The communal danger is only a pretext. The all-embracing bill is a Democles' sword against every popular movement.

Citizens of Bombay know how communal riots were not fought back at all, but workers driven to strikes and peasants demanding rent reduction have been lathi-charged, shot at and their leaders exterminated under the Goonda Act and numerous faked cases of rioting, arson, loot have been started against them.

### Unworthy Of The Congress

Cooked up stories have been put out in the Press with instructions not to let the popular version get any publicity.

The bogey of violence too has been raised. The Government statement cites Amalner, where nine workers were killed and 69 wounded by bullets but not one policeman.

Then again the Warli example is cited. Here too at least five Warlis have been killed, 13 wounded by bullets but not one policeman has been killed or wounded.

It is not the organisers of the people but their oppressors, the hated police and the military who commit violence.

Everywhere the people have been demanding fulfilment of the election pledges by the Congress Ministry. They had been promised a new life, they have not even got a better life but are facing a worse life.

Instead of meeting the people's needs, rousing and organising the people against the blackmarketeers, the capi-

talist profiteers and parasitical landlords, the Ministry is listening to their voice more than that of the people who voted it into power.

The bureaucracy is naturally exploiting the opportunity by putting up false reports and framed-up charges and teaching the Ministry how to stamp out the natural inevitable unrest that is welling forth among the toiling people in the form of strikes, etc.

### It Weakens The Congress

The game of the imperialist bureaucracy is deep and devilish. It is to tame the popular Ministers as they did the old liberals, link them up with their old friends, the Indian vested interests and make them face the people, suppressing section after section, so that the great Congress gets weakened and becomes more amenable to British-pressure and dictation.

The Communists' appeal to the citizens of Bombay and the Legislators before whom the bill will be placed is—

● It is the British not the Congress way to rule through such ordinances. Only the British will gain and our country will lose this way.

● It is the British game that the workers' and peasants' movement be suppressed through the Congress Ministries so that their new partners, the Tatas and Birlas and their old allies, the khots and sahukars get greater control over our national life and politics.

I am sure, the mass of common people will see that the suppression of this fighting vanguard is a blow against the entire people, to weaken their urge for better life and their demand for prompt Ministerial measures to meet the needs of the people

at the cost of the exploiters who are becoming fatter and fatter.

● It will be a disastrous for our freedom movement if Ministries, under the command of our greatest, free organisation, the Congress, the administration suppress the most elementary civil ties of the people.

The question is simple under Congress Ministries get virtual Ordinar Raj, shall we ever get to Swaraj?

I am reliably informed Home Member Morarji Desai the Assembly Party met held on February 24, 1947, not refer to the communal danger at all but demand drastic powers to round up Communists.

Congress-Communist coalition suits the British, suits the vested interests.

But how does it correspond to Congress tradition, the immediate needs of the people, the final struggle for freedom?

### Bogey Of Violence

The least we Communist is that if anyone charged with violence, will be tried in the net and given the chance of the utter futility of the and that our normal and daily activities are dored impossible by the bans and detentions trial.

I am sure the Bombay workers and above all the citizens of Bombay with a firm and loud voice such a black bill is not the British, unworthy Congress and must not of the statute book under gress Ministry which in low the democratic way Indian unity and no bureaucratic way that set party against another. Bombay, 20th February, 1947.

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