

# Stand by the People of India!

Below we print in its entirety a statement issued on August 10 by the Workers Party calling upon the workers of the United States to "Stand by the People of India!":

The All-India National Congress has, by resolution adopted at its Bombay meeting, decided to call upon the 400,000,000 people of that great country to launch civil disobedience in a great effort to win freedom for their country—freedom from a 200-year-old foreign rule.

The British rulers, acting in a fascist-like manner, have given their answer to this demand of the Indian people in the traditional way of imperialists and dictators. They have launched a wave of violence and terror against the people. They are arresting the nationalist leaders; they are shooting down those who meet and demonstrate for their liberty; they are establishing military rule by decree; they are suppressing all news about India, with the exception of their propaganda lies.

British imperialism in India is now face to face with the greatest challenge ever to its slave rule. It wants to perpetuate this rule by establishing a most brutal military dictatorship over 400,-

000,000 people who will no longer live as slaves to a foreign power. For India's people there can be no such thing as a "deal" or a "compromise" when the issue of their independence is at stake! They want immediate, unconditional and full independence: the kind of independence supposedly guaranteed to them under the "Atlantic Charter." The British terrorists may reply to this demand with the criminal shooting of



GANDHI

hundreds of unarmed people, but this will avail them nothing.

We do not know whether Gandhi, Nehru and Azad—the conservative leaders of the Congress Party who have been arrested by the British—intend to go through with their call to mass struggle and their promise to call upon the people to rise up. All too often in the past, above all in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, these men, fearing social revolution by the masses, have compromised and yielded to the threats of imperialism. We do not have confidence in their leadership of the people. Instead of appealing to the workers and peasants of India to prepare themselves for the inevitable struggle to throw off the yoke of British imperialism, a struggle that everyone knew was coming, they ran after the Viceroy, Roosevelt, Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, etc., in a futile effort to make a deal with their enemies.

But we do have the utmost confidence in the long-suffering people of that country because the fire of freedom and liberty burns strongly within them. The Workers Party is unconditionally behind the Indian people in their struggle for the right of self-determination and national independence. The Workers Party condemns the terror of the British militarists and overlords who insolently deny the rights of these colonial peoples.

The press in America has already begun a vicious campaign of slander against Gandhi, Nehru and the nationalists of India. When General de Gaulle claims that he is fighting to free his country from Nazi rule, he is hailed as a great French democrat. When the nationalists of India fight to free their country from equally hated British rule, they are slandered as "appeasers" and "Japanese agents." The capitalist press of America, which tells us each day to sacrifice all in the "war for democracy," has taken upon itself to decide that the Indians are not worthy of freedom. England once decided, although she learned otherwise, that the thirteen American colonies were not worthy of freedom!

### THE PEOPLE OF INDIA CAN DECIDE!

It is claimed that India is not ripe for freedom, that to grant her independence would result in "chaos" and "disorder." Perhaps the handful of British bankers and imperialists who have great financial and money interests at stake inside India would be upset about losing their plunder. But 400,000,000 people would be lifted to their feet and breathe the air of their country as free men. This is not "chaos," but true, democratic progress. The people of India can decide and settle their own internal problems (such as the Hindu-Moslem question) through their own democratic organizations. Hindu and Moslem disunity, deliberately encouraged by the British in order to divide the people, will be solved by the people in a common struggle for their freedom.

It is also claimed that independent India will open the door to Japan and fall under Axis rule. This is another vile imperialist slander. Who believes for one moment that 400,000,000 people will obtain their freedom (after 200 years of enslavement), only in order to give it away again to another foreign, equally reactionary imperialist power?

Today, under foreign rule, the people of India are indifferent to the Japanese threat. They feel that they have no country of their own, nothing worth fighting for. The wealth, the land, the industry of their country, is owned by the foreign bankers 10,000

(Continued on page 2)

# LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 17, 1942

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

# HANDS OFF INDIA

## Disobedience Campaign of 400 Million Indians Met by British Violence and Terror

By HENRY JUDD

The campaign of the Indian people for immediate independence from England, launched by the All-India National Congress, has been met by a wave of terror, shootings, arrests and beatings on the part of the British authorities.

To date (August 11), eighteen people are reported to have been killed, with many hundreds wounded by British police and soldiers, who have fired point-blank into crowds of Indian workers merchants and students demonstrating for their freedom. In Bombay alone, the present center of the struggle, the police have fired ten times in the space of two days.

In every major city of India, stretching from Bombay to Calcutta, there has been at least one criminal assault by the British upon unarmed and defenseless demonstrators.

### Who Are the Democrats?



British upon unarmed and defenseless demonstrators.

The British-appointed Viceroy of India is ruling by decree and military authority. Martial law and curfew prevail from one end of the country to the other. British soldiers (supposedly sent to India to fight the Japanese!) are patrolling all the key centers with bayonets and machine guns.

Already hundreds of arrests and imprisonments have taken place. Beginning with Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Azad, the most prominent leaders of the Congress Party, and extending to innumerable local leaders and trade union officials, the British dictators are mercilessly hounding them into their concentration camps and jails.

### Labor Action Forum Topic Will Be India

Because of the great interest aroused among workers by the events in India, the Sunday, August 16, Labor Action Forum originally scheduled on the topic of "America Since Pearl Harbor" has now been changed to "India's Struggle for Freedom."

Max Shachtman, national secretary of the Workers Party, will be the principal speaker, as previously scheduled. He is speaking as a guest speaker, invited by LABOR ACTION.

In addition, Henry Judd, regular contributor to LABOR ACTION, will speak. Arrangements have been made for the large audience that is expected. The meeting will take place on Sunday, August 16, at 8:00 p.m. Location of the hall is Irving Plaza, 15th Street and Irving Place, New York City.

Gandhi has threatened to embark upon an immediate hunger strike.

According to the meager British-censored reports that are available, it is clear that the workers of India stand in the front of the movement for immediate independence.

They are shutting down factory after factory, including plants producing munitions. In Bombay alone—a great industrial center—eighteen large textile mills are closed. The Bombay textile workers played the leading role in the struggles that raged in that city. They were the first victims of the British terror.

This strike action by the workers has extended to the industrial cities of Allahabad, Ahmedabad (textile centers); Lahore (student center); Nagpur and Poona (railroad and steel centers). Side by side, workers and students are participating in violent clashes with the police and soldier authorities.

### USE FASCIST VIOLENCE

Recognizing this great challenge on the part of the people, the British imperialists who have dominated this great country for over 200 years are resorting to any and all methods to prevent its spread. They are taking every leaf out of the

(Continued on page 2)

## Facts You Should Know on India:

There are approximately 400,000,000 people in India today.

They have lived under British rule for over 200 years.

### Wages:

- (a) Skilled miners earn 20 cents a day.
- (b) Plantation workers earn 6 to 10 cents a day.
- (c) Textile workers earn \$12.00 a month.
- (d) Jute workers earn \$8.00 a month.

### Education:

- (a) Ninety per cent of the people cannot read or write.
- (b) There is one high school for every 315 square miles.

### Health Conditions:

- (a) India has the highest death rate in the world.
- (b) Six million people die each year from malaria.
- (c) An average of four to six people live in each tenement room in the cities.

### British Profits:

- (a) British bankers collect interest amounting to \$150,000,000 per year on Indian debts.
- (b) British bankers loaned eight billion dollars to finance British wars in Asia and Africa, British owned railroads, etc. Now they collect interest on this money.

- (c) British capitalists own mines, communications (railroads), plantations, factories, etc. British imperialists control tariff, shipping, commerce, collect all taxes, etc.
- (d) British capitalists have five billion dollars invested in India.
- (e) British capitalists make an average of \$700,000,000 profit each year on their investments.

### Democracy Denied:

- (a) People were not allowed to vote on the question of participating in the war.
- (b) Less than 10 per cent of the people can vote in any elections.

## INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

### Speakers:

**MAX SHACHTMAN** || **HENRY JUDD**

National Secretary, Workers Party

Contributor to Labor Action

**IRVING PLAZA**  
15th St. & Irving Pl.



**Sunday, August 16, 8 P.M.**

**Admission 25 Cents**

**NEW YORK  
LABOR ACTION FORUM:  
In Defense of  
the Indian People**





