

British Provinces, we have come to accept the "existing legislatures" and where they do not exist, the panchayats and Municipalities as electoral colleges for the election of the States representatives.

These are bodies so heavily weighted with the Princes' blocs and the franchise on which they have been elected is so narrow (generally 1 to 5 per cent) that even the Times of India has been forced to characterise them as "bogus."

● Finally, now the leaders have given their support to the Union Schemes (Deccan States' Union)—symbols of imperialism's worst intrigues against the Indian people—schemes which the leaders had always and most stoutly opposed in the past.

This is the sad position to which the leaders' policy of appeasement has brought the mighty States peoples' movement—the balance-sheet of last 15 months from Udaipur to Gwalior.

Vital Demands Given Up

Many vital demands of the people including those for Res-

possible Government and elected representatives to the Constituent Assembly have been abandoned in the name of political expediency and illusory hopes.

The peoples' movement has been cut and battered to keep it "under restraint", and the enemies—the British and the Princes—have been more and more encouraged to persist in their plots against our march towards freedom.

Instances like those of Kolhapur, where the AISPC leaders had sent Syt. Kamal Nayan Bajaj to condemn and stop one of the most successful of the recent general strikes and struggles against autocracy show that there is still no end to this fatal policy.

The Gwalior Session must answer whether we must go further down this road, leading to the success of the British and the Princes' plan to torpedo India's freedom, democracy and unity, or unite our ranks, raise our banners and burst through all imperialism's plans, make a sharp turn on this fatal policy and create a free democratic India of our fondest dreams.

DOWN

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WITH

AUTOCRACY

Tasks

Before the States' Peoples Movement

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INDIA CANNOT BE HALF-FREE AND HALF-SLAVE

P. C. Joshi

The decisions of the All-India States Peoples' Conference (AISPC) meeting in its Annual Session at Gwalior, will go a long way to make real or mar the pledge wrung out of the British Government for Indian freedom by June 1948.

THE main base of the Indian freedom movement has naturally been in what was called British India. It inspired the peoples' movement in the States also.

It has been the accepted principle of the Indian national movement that on the day of freedom, India shall not remain half-free and half-slave.

This is what has joined the two movements together into one stream. This is how from the common slogan of "Quit India" came the new slogan "Quit Kashmir" advanced by Sheikh Abdulla, the wisest and tallest among the States peoples' leaders.

Kashmir Showed Way

The Kashmir struggle set in motion a new wave of struggles in a series of States for ending Princely Autocracy and establishing people's rule, for popular representation and not Princely nominees in the Constitution-making Body, in short for freedom for themselves, enabling them to contribute their strength to build the structure of Indian freedom.

Sher-i-Kashmir is a prisoner behind the bars and has also been elected President of the Gwalior Session. This at once expresses the weakness and strength of the whole situation.

The weakness lies in the fact that the Indian Interim Government and the leadership of the National Congress have not yet been able to win the release of one of India's bravest leaders.

The strength lies in the fact that the very elements who could not win his release have to accept him as the best leader to head the organisation of the States' peoples at a most critical stage in the Indian freedom movement.

Let His Spirit Guide

We hope the indomitable spirit of Sheikh Abdulla will be the spirit of every delegate at Gwalior; his uncompromising hostility to Princely Autocracy the guiding line in the discussions, his burning faith in the people the strength behind the decisions taken.

The Session would be attended by the rank and file workers from most of the States, though a good part of them are already in jails like Sheikh Abdulla; by States peoples' leaders, but some of the closest colleagues of Sheikh Sahib are either in jail or underground; by the top-ranking leaders of the National Congress itself symbolising the solidarity of our freedom movement as a whole.

A clear and bold lead from Gwalior can enforce by June '48 "Quit India" all over the country, clean out the 584 British pockets that are the Indian States, and usher in a new era. Drift, vacillation and compromise will not only be a mockery of all that Sheikh Abdulla has stood and fought for—a betrayal of the

cause—but menace Indian freedom itself.

The British rulers forced to pledge Indian independence in words are manoeuvring their fastest, hardest and cleverest to ensure that "Independent India" after June '48 remains under their decisive control, indirectly and hence more securely, because the new resurgent India cannot be governed the old way, because the new democratic world will not tolerate India remaining a colony of Britain.

The British tactics have to be known and seen before they can be smashed.

Under the British Plan of "Indian Freedom," the 584 British-propped Indian Autocrats will become "Independent." The "Indian Republic" will have a thick lining of Indian monarchs, they will be British Fifth Column inside the Indian Union. The bigger States like Kashmir and Hyderabad threaten to keep out of the Union and have independent relations with Britain, i.e., become satellite States of Britain on the very soil of India.

Air And Naval Bases

The British military chiefs are already building up ports in maritime States for the use of the British navy in case Karachi, Bombay and Calcutta are no more available. In all key States, from North to South and East to West, air ports are being built for the use of the R.A.F. in case Independent India does not enter into "military alliance" with Britain.

British officers are feverishly modernising and training the armies of the Indian States and much more than negotiations are going on for the use of Princely territories as British garrisons. In case the British are forced by Indian leadership to a military withdrawal from British India, they will retreat into the States and keep their military might marshalled there.

Indian States would be outside the Indian Customs Union, i.e., their territories would be free dumping grounds for British goods, bases for smuggling the same to the rest of India. British capital is already entering into deals with the parasitical Princes for the exploitation of the rich undeveloped resources of the States.

The British imperialists are out to use the Indian States as their political, military and economic bases and thus keep their stranglehold over India as a whole.

Immediate Significance

The struggle of the States peoples for democracy and freedom inside the Indian States has not the old remote but a new immediate significance for Indian freedom as a whole, for all Indians. Their victory will spell defeat of British conspiracy and bring reality to the efforts made to win Indian Freedom by June 1948.

This prime consideration adds unprecedented importance to the Gwalior Session.

The All-India States People's Conference has so far loyally followed the lead of the All-India Congress leadership, which

has kept it from struggle, which has counselled patience, which has been negotiating on behalf of the people with the Princes. The question of all questions before the delegates will be: where has this policy of appeasing the Princes led?

Responsible Government yet remains hung high in the clouds of words.

Constitutional reforms in most of the States are yet a matter of the future and in the few cases they have been introduced, they are mostly what the British introduced in India in 1907, while the best of them are of the 1917 type, that is, bogus.

The early demand that peoples' representatives alone should be in the Constituent Assembly has been reduced to 50 per cent popular representation and 50 per cent Princes' nominees, and even the former will be chosen by agreement with the Princes.

It is a clear case of retreat all along the line and an advance nowhere.

The moment the real masters of the Princes, the high-ups of the Political Department, realised that the Congress High Command would not sanction struggle in the States, but negotiate round the table, they began applying the screw tighter and tighter, while making the Princes talk more and more of their loyalty to Indian Freedom, future greatness of India, their desire to do their patriotic duty, etc.

This disastrous compromise on fundamental demands has gone hand in hand with sapping the very strength of the States peoples' movement.

Just at a moment when the Congress was in office in the Provinces and the Centre, the Princes shaking in their legs and the people prepared to do anything that would carry them forward to freedom, the Congress High Command put the wet blanket on the States peoples' struggle.

Withholding Support

Last year, not only were the patriots of other States prevented from following the lead of Sheikh Abdulla, but even the Kashmir struggle was denied the sympathy and support that all States' struggles have got from Nationalist India and the Press.

The British advisers of the Princes seized upon this weakness and launched an all-out offensive on all fighting elements inside the States while keeping the door of negotiations open with the top-Congress leaders.

This is how Travancore and Telengana were drowned in blood and similar ruthless repression launched in every State where the people raised their heads. In the latest cases, as in Alwar, they are provoking communal riots to disrupt the people's movement.

Keeping the people out of action has meant that the British have gone into action. Indian States could either become new battle-grounds for Indian freedom or new bases for imperialism. There was and is no third way.

Sheikh Abdulla sounded the war-bugle but the Congress High Command put up the white flag. This is how the British imperialists have got the chance

to dig into the States for all their imperial purposes and make up for all the concessions they have to make in British India.

This is a policy that not only condemns the States peoples to stay under their Autocrats, but menaces the very freedom of British India.

Reverse This Policy

It must be reversed in the common interests of India as a whole, as much for the States peoples as for the rest of us. And Gwalior is the place to do it.

There is already great discontent among the rank and file workers of the AISPC and among all the sober and fighting leaders who have seen opportunities pass by and the enemy become stronger during the last year.

It is not a question of evolving a new programme, but one of firmly reiterating the very demands of the AISPC that have been watered down or ignored, and above all pledging anew to fight for them to ensure their realisation the soonest possible.

1. States representatives to the Constituent Assembly to be elected by the people. In no case the Princes or their nominees to be allowed inside it.
2. Calling in every State of a sovereign Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise to enforce the right of self-determination and decide its own future as also of its present Ruler.
3. Immediate establishment of Responsible Government to run the administration and enforce the above demands.

This is a truly people's programme. All it needs is a peo-

ple's movement in every State to clean out the British puppets in one big sweep.

Secondly, all it needs is full-hearted Congress co-operation which is a dire necessity in the very name of the Congress desire to win freedom by June 1948.

Neither the Princes nor their protectors, the British, have the strength today to stand up to a widespread people's movement in the Indian States supported by Provincial and Central Governments and the entire might of the National Congress.

Weakest Link

The States are the weakest link in the chain of the British Imperialist Plan.

The moment the policy of appeasement of the Princes goes and the policy of relying upon the peoples' might adopted, the rule of the British puppets will collapse in their own States and our brother peoples come into their own.

The numerous States peoples' struggles that have taken place despite the present policy shows the extent of discontent and the indomitable will to fight of the unknown Sheikh Abdullas that abound in every State.

The moment the Congress High Command stops dealing with the Princes, who are no more than Indian agents of the British power, and begins supporting the States peoples' efforts to win democracy and freedom for themselves, all British

plans to use the States as bases against Indian Freedom will become still-born.

They Can't Face Revolt

When the British could not face Pandit Nehru's resignation and had to come out with the Attlee Declaration, fix the date-line and change the Viceroy, they cannot risk Indian revolt from two sides, British India and Indian States.

The key to the situation lies with the Congress and the policy it adopts. Our brother patriots from the States assembled at Gwalior and sitting together with representatives of the Congress High Command can and must decisively influence it.

The issue is Indian independence and democracy versus British conspiracy against them.

Sheikh Abdulla saw light first. It must guide all his colleagues assembled at Gwalior. And he personally lighted the sacred fire of peoples' struggles. It must be carried forward to final victory.

More sons and daughters of the common people have fallen as martyrs in the year 1946 than ever before. Their warm blood meant courage, confidence and will to win here and now. Let their memory be the inspiration behind Gwalior's lead to the States' peoples and call to the brother patriots all over India for active support in the common cause.

FROM UDAIPUR... TO GWALIOR

Ramesh Sinha

Meeting on the eve of the final stages of Constitution making in India, the Annual Session of the All-India States' Peoples' Conference, to be held on April 18, 19 and 20 at Gwalior, will be of supreme importance to the country's progress towards freedom.

MR. Attlee's latest statement has posed two sharp alternatives before the Indian people:

- Are the Indian States to be allowed to become the bridge-heads and military and economic bases of imperialism and the reactionary forces fostered by it, against India's freedom—
- Or, are the peoples of the States to assert themselves so that these 584 anachronisms, representing utterly obsolete, obscurantist regimes of feudal autocracy, are ended, all arti-

cial partitions and divisions destroyed and the States, with their 100 million peoples drawn into properly constituted linguistic Provinces of Free India, bringing into being a Democratic Republican Union as visualised in Pandit Nehru's resolution in the Constituent Assembly?

The purpose of this article is merely to review the policies and developments in the States in the last fifteen months since the Udaipur Session of the AISPC in order to be better able to work out the course one should follow in the present critical situation.

What Pt. Nehru Said

In February 1939, speaking as President of the Ludhiana Session of the AISPC, Pandit Nehru had rightly described the role of the States when he said:

"These offsprings of the British power in India, suckled by imperialism for its own purposes," stagnating and decaying are the "vast prisons" of our people "where the human spirit is sought to be extinguished and the resources of the people used for the pageantry and luxury of Courts, while the masses starve and remain illiterate and backward."

Calling upon the people for "action" and struggle to put an end to the feudal States which were a "bar" to India's progress towards freedom, he asked the huge multitude, numbering tens of thousands gathered at Ludhiana:

"Are the Middle Ages to continue in India under the protection of British imperialism?"

That was seven years ago, on the eve of the Second World War.

In the six years of war, during which the men and material resources of the States were most rapaciously harnessed for the aggrandisement of the British and their Princely agents, the conditions, both economic and political, worsened in the States and the question of terminating the reign of feudal autocracy in one-third of India had come to the forefront.

Colossal War Budgets

To take a few examples, 40 per cent of Bhopal's budget, 20 per cent of Gwalior's total revenues, Rs. 9½ crores or a year's whole income of Hyderabad were dedicated to "war

purposes." Besides, crores of rupees were extracted from the people for maintaining armies on the various war fronts (Gwalior maintained five armies in different theatres of war) and for contributing to numberless "subscriptions", "donations" and "loans".

A State like Faridkot which has an income of Rs. 26 lakhs was made to "invest" Rs. 60 lakhs in "Defence Loans."

This war drain coupled with the increased exploitation by the jagirdars and the unchallenged blackmarketing in all essential commodities, including food and cloth, had impoverished the people so much that from Kashmir, Alwar, Jodhpur, Mewar, Kotah in the North down to Mysore, Cochin and Travancore in the South, nearly the whole of feudal India was engulfed in a serious food and land crisis.

The fast moving political events in British India, the release of political leaders in the summer of 1945, the "Release INA" campaigns and demonstrations, the unprecedented working-class, peasant and youth upsurge throughout the country found a ready echo in the hearts of the States' peoples.

Terror Could Not Crush It

And in spite of terror and repression, they surged forward through resolute local struggles against feudal exploitation and for Responsible Government in almost every State to join hands with their brothers in British territory in the fight for India's freedom and democracy.

Continuance of feudal autocracy was impossible without doing great harm to the national movement as a whole.

The Udaipur Session of the All-India States' Peoples' Conference met in this background in December 1945.

Pandit Nehru, who presided over the Session, knew of this critical background more than anyone else. He condemned the autocratic and parasitical rule in the States and said that democracy and autocracy were "incompatible" and all the "ancient and harmful relics (of feudalism) will have to go if the people as a whole are to raise themselves out of the morass of poverty and degradation in which they have remained for so long." (Presidential Address)

Royal Instruments

He knew well of the dastardly plans of the British also. He quoted Lord Canning, the Viceroy, who had written in 1869:

"It was long ago said by Sir John Malcolm that if we made all India into zillahs (that is districts in British India) it was not in the nature of things that our Empire should last fifty years, but that if we could keep up a number of Native States without political power but as royal instruments, we should exist in India as long as our naval supremacy was maintained."

It was with this realisation that the Udaipur Session reiterated the two main demands of the States' peoples:

- (1) The immediate establishment of full Responsible Government in States as integral parts of India; and—
- (2) The sending of only elected delegates of the people to the

Constituent Assembly as representatives of the States.

The Udaipur Session further gave a call for the building up of the "strength, cohesion and unity of our people" to enforce the above demands.

But the STRATEGY adopted by the Congress leaders—the "practical" line taken by them—ran contrary to these professions.

Instead of REALLY building up the peoples' movement in the States and working to accord them popular support from British India, they began to temporise, make conciliatory overtures to the Princes and put a brake on the movement in the States.

About the same Princes, whom he had earlier called "offspring of the British" and of whom he had written, "The problems of Government require something more than a knowledge of how to manage polo-ponies or recognise the breeds of dogs...", now Pandit Nehru said that "some of these Princes and Rulers belong to ancient houses intimately connected with history and tradition."

Friendly Approach!

He said that the States were the depositories of "rare, artistic and cultural traditions" of India, and "our approach" towards them "should be a friendly one—an invitation to them to join in the great tasks ahead."

The logic of the leaders was: So long as there is a tussle going

on in India to get power from British hands, why antagonise the Princes?

Pandit Nehru forgot the words he himself had quoted that so long as the Indian States are allowed to remain, the British power cannot be ended either in British India or the States.

The most vital right and demand of the States' peoples to elect their representatives on adult franchise was given up by the leaders at Udaipur. Instead, the people were asked by them to accept a franchise corresponding to the British Provinces, that is about 11 per cent.

SECONDLY, even the Luddhiana Session's demand that all but about 20 States which had a "population exceeding 20 lakh souls or Revenue exceeding Rs. 50 lakhs" should be abolished by merging them with linguistically homogenous Provinces was dropped and in place of the above mentioned population and Revenue qualifications, the words "sufficient population and Revenue" were substituted.

Not only did this further restrict the earlier perspective of abolishing most of the States, but actually created a loophole for the continued existence of ALL the States.

Sowing Disruption

THIRDLY, because the attitude henceforward was declared to be "friendly" and of "willing cooperation with the Princes" an attack was made on one of the most fighting wings of the States peoples' movement—the branches of the Communist

Party of India—by debarring Communists from being voted to any elective posts inside the All-India States Peoples' Conference, and thus setting the AISPC and its branches on the path of disruption.

The imperialists were not slow in making use of this weakness on the part of Congress leaders.

They knew well that the situation in the States was explosive. They knew that their stoogelings sat on a smouldering volcano, which would blow up at any moment. They knew that in Alwar, in the Punjab States, in Bikaner, in Faridkot and in several other smaller States it was only the guns and the restraining influence of the Praja Mandal leaders which had held the people in control.

What could, in such circumstances, be more "welcome" to them than that the Congress should throw its weight against any mass movement or agitation in the States?

Wavell's Instructions

Within a fortnight of the Udaipur Session on January 17, 1946, Wavell summoned the contemptible crowd of his cronies to Delhi and told them to take full share in the preliminary discussion "with a view to ascertaining in what way they can best take their part in the Constitution-making Body" to keep the juicy carrot of their co-operation with the Congress leaders always dangling before them.

Wavell further asked them to make their administrations "stable" by "associating" some popular elements with them.

The next day Bhopal came out with his pompous declaration of January 18, 1946, promising freedom, democracy, almost everything to the States' peoples. One of Bhopal's own tribe, Sir S. P. Bapna, the Prime Minister of Alwar, exposed how deceptive and hypocritical Bhopal's declaration was, when he said:

"Such declarations and speeches are only made for diplomatic reasons and carry little value in effect."

To prove his contention he added—

"What has the Nawab of Bhopal ... himself done in his own State to implement the 'famous' declaration?" (Amrita Bazar Patrika, September 8, 1946).

There were, of course, some constitutional trickeries here and there but they were aimed only at disrupting the people's ranks by winning over the less steady elements in the Praja Mandals. No REAL reforms came in any State.

Plans Get Under Way

On the other hand, the plans of the Political Department—political and military—were intensified in the States.

Through repeated declarations, the Princes were assured of continued protection by the British. They were further told that paramountcy would not be transferred to the Union Government, it would lapse and they would be "free" when Britain handed over power to the new Indian Government.

Through secret meetings and circulars the Princes were told how to conduct themselves in "negotiations with the

British Indian parties" in order to make the "best possible bargain" and retain their autocratic regimes untouched.

Their individual and collective military and economic plans were concerted through meetings of "experts" held at Bhopal and Delhi, etc.

The most "tested" agents of the British Government—both political and military—like Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, Sir Sultan Ahmed, Marsh Smith (notorious Inspector General of Police, U.P.), C. G. Herbert (of the Political Department), Mason (of the Government of India's Defence Department) — were sent to the States to carry out the plans of the Political Department.

To weld together the little princelings so that they may not be squeezed out of existence by the peoples' assaults, faithful Rulers like Nawanagar, Dungarpur, etc., and Government officials like C. G. Herbert, Lt. Col. Harvey and other toadies were let loose to organise States' Unions in all the States Agencies, such as those of Kathiawar, Deccan, Orissa, etc.

The obvious purpose was to consolidate their strength in the States and to use them as ramparts against the entire Indian people.

Struggles Spread

But in spite of the black intrigues and the devilish plans of the British and their Princely marionettes to stifle the anguished cries of the hungry, exploited and war-torn States' peoples and in

spite of the halting, compromising and even disruptive lead given by the Udaipur Session, the unquenchable fire of the peoples' discontent could not be put out and the flames of struggle rapidly spread to almost every nook and corner of feudal India.

Look at only a few of the struggles which took place in the first half of 1946:

JANUARY: Almost on the heels of the Udaipur Session, a peasants' and workers' movement broke out in Gwalior State.

In Nagda hundreds of kisans were deprived of their land to make room for Birla's new mill. On their resisting, they were lathi-charged, their huts were burnt, their children and women were dragged on the ground and the men-folk thrown EN MASSE into jail. In the town of Gwalior 6 workers were shot dead. The whole population supported their struggle.

In Jaipur, the rack-rented, penniless kisans stopped paying the taxes. Scores of them were arrested and beaten.

FEBRUARY: The militant Muslim peasants of Alwar were roused. Prajamandal, Muslim League and Kisan Sabha jointly launched a movement for the ending of feudal exploitation and for setting up a Responsible Government in the State. There were lathi-charges, arrests and then in April wanton firing, killing five and wounding hundreds. Martial Law was declared in several parts of the State.

This was followed by a complete strike and the capital of the State was saved by mounting guns on the approaches to it and on every street inside the town.

At this very time the huge Bhil belt in Mewar (Udaipur) was set afire. Food was scarce. Bhils and townspeople—workers, middle-classes all joined to face repression. Furious crowds hit back. Ministers and their cars were saved only by the intervention of the Praja Mandal leaders.

In Marwar (Jodhpur) cavalry was used to suppress the people's united agitation for food, dearness

allowance and Responsible Government.

MARCH saw similar unbeaten struggles in BANSWARA (hundreds arrested, even teachers went on strike), KISHANGARH, BHARATPUR (renewed repression, people defied bans, arrests, hunger-strikes in jail) PATIALA (bans broken, lathi-charges, hundreds wounded, 45 arrested) and BILASPUR.

In APRIL the big struggle of Alwar was followed by a terrible repression in Faridkot. Lathi-charges, over a thousand arrests, burning of Tricolours, attacks on women and children, nothing could break the complete strike of the people in the State. Kisan jathas poured in from all the neighbouring States.

There was firing in Pataudi State killing one on the spot.

In MAY in DUNGARPUR State there was a complete general strike for three days, hundreds of people were arrested, bans were defied by the people, scores of jathas poured in from outside; unrestrained repression led to hundreds of Bhil families running away from the State.

In BIKANER an orgy of violence was let loose because the people committed the crime of asking for Responsible Government. Army bands surrounded whole belts of kisans and beat them to terrorize them. During the lathi-charge on May 15 alone 100 children, women and men fell down unconscious.

In July at the same place there was firing, killing one and injuring seven. The Raja said that the firing had been resorted to because 1,000 kisans had raided his palace and wanted to run up the Tricolour flag on it.

For Responsible Govt.

These struggles, spontaneous and elemental with the demand, "Put an end to feudal exploitation and set up Responsible Government" written on their banners, had a terrible sweep and striking power due to their extreme revolutionary character, which did not fail to draw in even the police and the mili-

tary with them in several places like Alwar, Bharatpur and Tehri.

The flame could never be extinguished. If it was put out at one place with peoples' blood, it burst forth in a dozen other States with a greater glow and fierceness.

All these developments which were knocking at the very foundations of the out-dated and decrepit feudal order, culminated towards the end of May 1946 in the great "Quit Kashmir" movement against the autocracy of the Dogra Dynasty.

This struggle which was the biggest, the toughest, the most bloody and most glorious, led by the tallest of the States' peoples' leaders, Sheikh Abdulla, revealed for all the world to see the mailed fist of the Political Department behind the velvety facade of Princes' independence.

It at once became a part and symbol of India's fight against British imperialism, opening a new chapter in the close relationship of the two wings of our freedom movement.

The "Quit Kashmir" struggle was and will always remain a beacon light guiding the footsteps of the Indian people on their march towards freedom.

But the leadership of the Congress did not pay heed to the inspiring message of Kashmir or the other States peoples' struggles and continued its policy of appeasement.

The Wet Blanket

In January 1946, following the repression in Bharatpur where

unitedly the Hindus and Muslims of the State asked for permission to launch Satyagraha, Pandit Nehru wrote back to them:

"In view of the declaration made by the Chancellor in the Chamber of Princes, I would advise the Princes (the Praja Mandal) not to start Satyagraha."

The same thing he wrote to Gwalior, adding that he felt sorry that people "in many of the States" did not have faith in the Princes' declarations!

But the worst thing came in June 1946 after the Kashmir struggle.

Addressing the meeting of the General Council of the All-India States Peoples' Conference at this time in Delhi, Sardar Patel not only said that the 'gulf' between the Rajas and the Congress had disappeared and that, "We have to meet and move the Princes in a way that they do not fall so that they nor we may suffer."

He severely criticised Sher-i-Kashmir for starting the "Quit Kashmir" struggle saying that so far as the "nationalist India" was concerned, to it Pandit Nehru and Maharaja Saheb of Kashmir "were the same" (Tribune, June 30, 1946).

He jeered at the Kashmiri delegates who had come to Delhi from the fighting lines for help.

In his cold, bitter words there was not even a hint of reproach for the Dogra Army, which had killed hundreds of Kashmir's valiant sons.

It was after this speech of Sardar Patel that the Political Department, acting through Kak, dared to arrest and insult Pandit Nehru.

Attitude Worsens

This was a big turning point. From this time onwards the leadership's attitude towards the peoples' struggles in the States became worse every day.

● Permission to launch struggle was repeatedly refused, as was the case, for instance, in Mysore, Kotah, Gwalior, Alwar, Bharatpur, Faridkot, Patiala, Pataudi, Tehri, Bilaspur.

● If struggles were started or they developed spontaneously, the leadership immediately intervened by sending directives to stop them or by deputing somebody to go and "enquire into the conditions" or "mediate" between the Ruler and the Praja Mandal. Kashmir, Bharatpur, Kotah, Faridkot, etc., are examples of this.

● Mass revolutionary organisations of the workers and peasants were condemned.

In the summer of 1946 as the kisan upsurge swept across the Rajputana and Central India States and Hyderabad (Dn) and strong Kisan Sabhas began to rise, first the Regional Council of Rajputana and then the All-India Standing Committee of the AISPC meeting at Bombay in July 1946, came down upon them.

Working with the Rajputana Kisan Sabha was banned and the Andhra Mahasabha of Hyderabad having a membership of a hundred thousand kisans was disaffiliated from the AISPC.

Strikes Condemned

The same meeting of the AISPC Standing Committee condemned the workers' strikes and laid down the rule that the Praja Mandal workers should not have anything to do with any Mazdur Sabha which is not affiliated to Sjt. Birla's Hindustan Mazdur Sevak Sangh.

This disruptive rule was proposed by interested parties in full knowledge of the fact that the Hindustan Mazdur Sevak Sangh is universally hated in the States and 99 per cent of the workers' unions—excepting those which have not joined any organisation—are affiliated to the All-India Trade Union Congress.

Later on, the leadership became intolerant of ALL militant elements even inside the Praja Mandals. They were called "irresponsible mischief-makers" and threatened with expulsion.

Example Of Tehri

In this connection, perhaps, the worst example was of Tehri, where almost in the midst of a grim struggle (in August 1946) against the hangmen of Shri Dev Suman, the leadership suspended the Executive Committee of the Praja Mandal and nominated an utterly unrepresentative Committee, so that it may be "acceptable to the Raja."

Another rule was made that in future "where necessity for any direct action arises, reference must be made to the Regional Council and to the General Secretary of the AISPC", thus completely ruling out the possibility of any struggle (September 1946).

The natural result of this policy was that the Princes were emboldened and began to attack the States peoples' struggles with greater insolence and brutality.

The Kashmir struggle was sought to be drowned in blood. In Travancore most murderous repression was unleashed on the workers and all trade union activity was crushed, because

Rulers' Sovereignty

● By the acceptance of the January 29 resolution of the Princes' Conference, the Congress leaders have accepted the sovereignty of the Rulers, their right to maintain their independent 584 autocratic regimes in the States, thus giving up the demand for an All-India Union consisting of integrally connected democratic units, as was visualised in Pandit Nehru's resolution in the Constituent Assembly.

● The basic demand that only the elected representatives of the people have the right to speak on behalf of the States has been watered down.

At the Udaipur session Pandit Nehru had said that one of the reasons why the Cripps' proposals of 1942 were rejected by the National Congress was that in them this basic right of the States' people was ignored.

But today the leaders have accepted the Princes' Negotiating Committee as the sole spokesman of the States.

What 50-50 Deal Means

They have accepted the ill-famed "50:50" deal, under which apparently only 50 per cent of the States' delegates to the Constituent Assembly will be nominated by the Princes, but IN REALITY because of the undemocratic system of election of the peoples' quota, the Princes will get up to 75 per cent of the total seats.

● On the question of franchise, from adult franchise and then the franchise (about 11 per cent) prevailing in the

the workers of Alleppey, Alwaye, etc., were at the head of the agitation for not only their own economic demands but also for food and Responsible Government in the State.

In Hyderabad the Deshmukhs (zamindars) installed a reign of terror, loot, rape and murder. Along with the Hyderabad Committee of the Communist Party, the All-Hyderabad Trade Union Congress has also been declared illegal.

The Princes and the Political Department are making full use of the no-struggle appeasement policy of the leadership.

Retreat All Along

Further result of this policy is that all along the line, the leaders have been forced to retreat and give up many of the basic demands of the States' peoples.

● The demands of the States' peoples to put an end to feudal autocracy by the establishment of full democratic Responsible Governments in the States has been de facto replaced by minor demands for civil liberties, release of political prisoners, setting up of Reforms Committees or the appointment of one or two popular Ministers.

Instead of asking for the establishment of real responsible Governments—whose form is decided by the elected representatives of the people—the Congress leaders have begun to bless such fake reforms as those of Cochin, under which all the most important portfolios of Finance, Law and Order (Police, Army), etc., are outside the control of the people's representatives.