

# REPORT FROM NAGPUR

# NEW AGE

COMMUNIST PARTY WEEKLY

● FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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25 nP.

What has been the most significant thing in this session of the Congress? I put this question to a prominent Congressman—well-known for his enlightened views—as we were coming out at the close of the Nagpur session of the Congress.

HE replied: "At Nagpur in 1920 we started the mass movement for freedom through non-cooperation. And today in 1959 at Nagpur, we begin our mass movement for Socialism through cooperation."

The point underlined by Pandit Nehru himself in his concluding speech was that the Nagpur Congress would mark a new milestone on the road taken at Avadi.

Where at Nagpur there was an awareness of a programmatic advance, one could not help noticing a lack of exuberant enthusiasm both among the delegates and the visitors to the Congress. This has been not only the most thinly-attended of the Congress sessions since independence, but there was a singular lack of enthusiasm. The only exception, of course, was the accompanying programme of the Film Stars' Cultural Show for the benefit of the National Savings Drive which provided a strange anti-climax to the serious deliberations of the leading political party in the country.

The order of priority in business enjoined by the leadership this time was Planning, Agrarian Question and Fore-

ign Affairs and they themselves pointed out that the traditional practice of putting the Foreign Affairs resolution first had been given up in view of the importance that the other two resolutions had for the nation's march towards a Socialist pattern. In effect, it was the resolution on Agrarian-Organisational Pattern—the title chosen by the Prime Minister—which evoked the keenest interest among the delegates.

### Closed-Door Session

The acutest controversy centred round the land question. The Working Committee itself, it is reported, could not come to a decision about the precise criterion for ceilings on landholdings. So, its suggestion was couched in conveniently general terms: "The definition of personal cultivation should be brought in line with the recommendations in the Second Five-Year Plan."

A closed-door "informal" session of the AICC was called, where at times feelings ran high. The main points of dispute were, first, the definition of ceiling; secondly, the timetable for land reforms; and thirdly, the lack of available

resources for the starting of cooperative farming.

The AICC Sub-Committee on Agricultural Production had recommended that all land legislation "must be completed in all the States by the end of 1959" while in its appendix it suggested that the distribution of the surplus land after the application of ceiling "should be completed within a period of three years." This was objected to by many as rather precipitate.

It is interesting to note that the resolution for the session wanted that legislation on ceilings "should be completed" by the end of 1959, but does not categorically lay down the implementation period as three years. The only thing that it enjoins to be completed in three years is the organisation of service cooperatives throughout the country.

### Outspoken Opponent

The most outspoken opponent of the entire agrarian resolution was Sri Charan Singh, U.P. Minister. With an able marshalling of arguments, he opposed the imposition of ceilings, the cooperative joint farming, the State trading in wholesale trade in foodgrains, as also the policy of price support.

Incidentally, the discussion showed that the critics and

the opponents of the resolution had a better grip over the subject and could quote from direct experience than its supporters. In fact, Sri A. P. Jain's reply to Sri Charan Singh was weak and far from convincing.

While these powerful attacks came from the landed interests, a fairly large number of delegates carried their criticism right into the open session at the abandonment of the promise of land to the landless. Their main contention was that the surplus land available after the imposition of the ceiling should be distributed to the landless agricultural labourers. Some wanted that the village common lands—vested in the Panchayat according to the Working Committee's recommendations—as also the reclaimed waste land should also be earmarked for distribution among the landless.

These critics held that it would harm the Congress in the countryside if it now went back on its election pledge about land distribution. Recalling Gandhiji's wish that land should be given to the Harijans—who are mostly landless agricultural labourers—one speaker wanted its implementation in the name of peace for Gandhiji's soul.

Fear was also expressed by a number of speakers that this would give a handle to the Opposition parties to discredit the Congress in the eyes of the landless.

### Two Amendments

It was obvious that the Congress leadership was embarrassed by this volume of criticism. The original draft placed before the Subjects Committee by Sri C. Subramaniam stated that the surplus land available after the imposition of ceilings "should vest in the Panchayats and should be managed through village cooperatives." On being asked, Sri Subramaniam clarified that this surplus land would be owned by "the community through the Panchayats."

In the Subjects Committee, Sri Subramaniam himself brought forward an amendment saying that the cooperatives which would manage the surplus lands would consist of landless labourers and small peasants.

But as criticism persisted, Pandit Nehru in the open session brought a further amendment dropping the small peasants, so that the cooperatives managing the surplus lands would consist of landless labourers only.

These amendments, however, did not fully meet the criticism because the point made out by the critics was that the landless should feel that he had a stake in the land itself and not merely in the labour that he would

be putting in through the coop.

I asked a veteran Congressman why it would not be possible to distribute the surplus to the landless while making it a condition that they were to join the coop farm—a step which could dispel the fear that uneconomic holdings held by small owners might affect production.

### The Compromise

His answer at first was that there would not be enough surplus land to go round for the entire army of landless and so any attempt at land distribution would lead to worse complications.

He then disclosed that even in the AICC Sub-Committee on Agricultural Production, there was considerable opposition to ceilings and particularly to the landless being made owners of the surplus. So a patchwork compromise had to be arrived at by which the principle of ceilings was accepted—though not precisely defined—on the understanding that the surplus should be

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## GUESTS FROM EAST GERMANY



The Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic and Mrs. Grotewohl being greeted on arrival by Delhi Mayor Aruna Asaf Ali, Defence Minister Krishna Menon and Humayun Kabir, Minister for Culture.

## REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL

Next week's NEW AGE is the Special Republic Day Number.

With 12 pages extra, this number will have articles on the Nagpur Session of the Congress, the economic situation in the country, our relations with the Socialist world, India's foreign policy, the question of defending our democracy, etc., etc.

We are expecting articles by R. Palme Dutt, Ajoy Ghosh, B. T. Ranadive, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Bhupesh Gupta, P. C. Joshi, S. G. Sardesai, K. C. K. Menon, Essen, Jaipal Singh and others.

Don't miss your copy of this Special.



## Sharecroppers Fight Back Sabotage Of Land Reforms

CALCUTTA, January 12

"A new type of mass movement for the harvesting of the new paddy crop has developed this year in several districts of West Bengal, where the bargadars (sharecroppers) predominate."

THIS information was given by Comrade Bankim Mukherjee, MLA, Kisan leader, at a Press Conference convened by the State Kisan Sabha in Calcutta on January 10.

Comrade Bishwanath Mukherjee, Vice-President of the Sabha, emphasised that the "success of this movement will only strengthen the entire democratic movement for the rebuilding of our agriculture."

Among others present at the Press Conference were Comrade Bhowani Sen, President of the State Kisan Sabha, Comrade Kansari Haldar, M.P., Comrade Abdur Razzak Khan, M.P., Comrade Hemanth Ghosal, MLA, and Comrade Prabhas Roy, MLA.

The bargadars have been forced to launch the movement because they are being faced with a very grave situation today.

When the West Bengal Estate Acquisition Act was passed in 1954, the Government had announced that 600,000 acres of surplus land would be available for distribution to agricultural labourers, bargadars and other poorer sections of the peasantry. But it is now learnt that only 60,000 acres have vested in the State.

**SABOTAGE OF LAND REFORMS:** How has this come about? Obviously, big landlords have evaded the ceiling on land holdings, statutorily fixed at 25 acres per owner, through mala fide transfers, partitions, benamis (retention of ownership under fictitious names), etc.

The landlords are now trying to finalise such transfers, and thus sabotage land reforms.

The investigation into cases of mala fide transfers undertaken by the State Government so far, has proved to be a colossal farce. Out of 1,63,000 cases already disposed of, only 4,800 transfers or 9 per cent cases have been declared mala fide!

If these transfers are not properly detected and declared illegal, the bargadars and landless labourers have little prospect of getting land.

The bargadars are already in a quandary. If they recognise the new benami (fictitious) owners, who now claim to be "small" owners, the bargadars will be evicted from land on the pretext of resumption for self-cultivation, and the hope of detecting surplus land will be dashed to the ground.

If, on the other hand, bargadars refuse to recognise the benami owners, they will have to face prosecution for failing to deposit the owner's share. In either case, land reforms will be torpedoed and the bargadars will swell the ranks of landless labourers or be reduced to the position of semi-serfs.

**NEW TYPE OF MOVEMENT:** Faced with this grim prospect, the bargadars have launched peaceful mass action in Midnapore, 24 Parganas, Jalpaiguri and other districts,

many, as 50 persons have been arrested under the Act.

**MAIN DEMANDS:** Besides the demands made in the petitions referred to above, other main demands of the bargadars are:

1. The Government should recognise the khamars where paddy has been stacked by them.

2. Whenever petitions regarding illegal transfers are received, enquiries should be made, and cases which have been already disposed of should be reviewed.

3. Enquiries should be made publicly in the proper manner so that peasants get the opportunity of proving the mala fide character of the transfers.

4. All evictions should be immediately stopped and all eviction cases stayed.

5. Cases pending against bargadars and Kisan Sabha workers should be withdrawn.

6. Pending enquiries into mala fide transfers all proceedings of Bhagchaks courts relating to surplus land should be stayed.

It was stressed by the kisan leaders that if the slightest improvement in agricultural production was to be achieved land reforms must be successfully implemented and the surplus land above the ceiling fixed should be distributed free of cost among the bargadars, landless labourers and poor peasants.

"Unfortunately," they pointed out, "the surplus land is fast disappearing and the hopes of reconstructing our underdeveloped agriculture are being belied."

"The present bargadar movement is precisely directed to check this process and help the implementation of land reforms," they concluded.

## REFUGEEES BEGIN DIRECT ACTION

CALCUTTA, January 12

The direct action of East Pakistan refugees for their rehabilitation in West Bengal and against the Government's attempt to send them to Dandakaranya through coercion, began in Calcutta and other districts from January 7.

THE United Central Refugee Council (UCRC), which is leading the struggle, has repeatedly pointed out that it is not opposed to the Dandakaranya Project or any other development project in any part of the country. If any refugee volunteers to migrate to Dandakaranya, he is certainly welcome to do so. But the UCRC is definitely against any coercion on refugees who are not willing to go there and wish to be resettled in West Bengal.

Shortly before the direct action was launched, the Communist Party's stand on Dandakaranya and the rehabilitation of refugees in West Bengal was again clarified by Comrade Jyoti Basu, Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, and Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, Leader of the

Communist Group in the Rajya Sabha.

Comrade Basu made it clear in the Assembly on January 12 that the Communist Party was not at all opposed to the Dandakaranya Project. But the Party was, however, convinced that it was possible to resettle all the camp refugees in West Bengal. He further stated that the Party was not against refugees going voluntarily to Dandakaranya, but he warned the Government against employing coercive methods.

Comrade Bhupesh Gupta told a large gathering of camp refugees at Asrahabad near Calcutta on January 6, that there could be no objection to the development of Dandakaranya. But the scheme could not be successfully implemented by com-

## ACT HERE AND NOW!

### Editorial

**EXPECTATIONS** held out by the Government that the worst phase of the food crisis was over have proved false. Food prices have soared to new heights. Last week, in Punjab atta was quoted in the open market at Rs. 24 to 26 a maund. At Ghaziabad, within a week, the price of wheat shot up from Rs. 26 a maund to Rs. 31 reported to be "the highest ever in living memory." Long queues of men and women waited for hours before grainshops in the capital city of Delhi where prices had risen about 25 per cent higher than in the last month, and for several days atta was simply not available.

The situation is hardly better in most other areas. Calcutta has been facing an acute shortage of rice. "The paradox is," wrote the *Times of India* in its News Service from Calcutta on January 7 "that just as the new crop is due to pour in—and that a bumper one in West Bengal—stocks with wholesale merchants are reported to be small."

The people have not reacted to this steep rise in foodgrain prices passively. Meetings and demonstrations have been held in several towns. In many areas of Punjab and in Delhi, the Communist Party and other parties have moved energetically to bring mass pressure on the Government. Srimati Aruna Asaf Ali, the Mayor of Delhi, sharply criticised the Government for its refusal to tackle the problem on an all-party basis and urged the adoption of prompt measures.

All this has not been without result. In some places, the Government under mass pressure has had to act, though tardily. Nevertheless, the situation as a whole remains grim.

Behind the scarcity and the sudden spurt in food prices, which were already too high, lies a carefully-prepared and deep-laid conspiracy. The big landlords and unscrupulous traders who control our grain market had already warned the Government that "serious consequences" would ensue if the idea of State trading was not given up. They were backed by influential elements inside the Congress who unashamedly championed their cause in the Press as well as in the Congress session itself.

Seizing the failure of the Government to take prompt steps to introduce State trading and emboldened by the support from influential elements inside the ruling party and a section of the Press, these anti-social forces have created an artificial scarcity. They want to discredit the idea of State trading among the people. They want to hold the society to ransom and blackmail the Government. They want a free hand to be given to them so that they may mint millions by inflicting colossal misery on the people.

At Nagpur, Sri Nehru has declared that the Government will press on with the scheme of State trading. All will welcome this declaration.

But this is not enough. Steps have to be taken immediately to tackle the situation. If the Government means business, it should act boldly and firmly. It should take over the huge stocks lying with hoarders and big landlords. It should distribute these stocks at reasonable prices through fair-price shops in urban as well as rural areas, where, too, prices have reached unprecedented heights. It should form representative all-party committees at all levels to ensure the carrying out of all this.

Already in many areas, different parties and individuals are coming together on the issue of food. Our Party hopes that this process will be continued and carried forward so that a mighty united movement may develop to defeat the enemies of the people.

(January 12)

elling some camp refugees to go there.

He emphasised that the Communist Party and other Left parties would not oppose it if refugees voluntarily opted for Dandakaranya. He appealed to the people to wish well to all those refugees who chose to go there willingly.

But, he further said, any attempt at coercion would be justifiably resisted by the refugees. He contended that the possibilities of rehabilitation in West Bengal had not yet been exhausted.

The UCRC rightly maintains that although the Government has given a categorical assurance that no pressure will be used, its decisions to close all camps in West Bengal by July 31 next and to throw out all

wan and Nadia Districts. **NOT AMENABLE TO REASON:** Time and again, the UCRC has pointed out that the possibilities of rehabilitation in West Bengal are still quite considerable. In August last year, it submitted a number of concrete schemes to the Government for the resettlement of all the 45,000 camp refugee families, 35,000 of whom are now proposed to be sent to Dandakaranya.

The UCRC has further shown that the cost of its schemes and the time required for their completion will be much less than those for similar schemes undertaken anywhere outside this State.

It has told the Government that if necessary facilities are extended to the UCRC it will demonstrate through practical implementation that each of its schemes is realisable without much difficulty.

But the Government is not prepared to listen to the language of reason and persuasion. It has spurned the offer of cooperation. Yet it goes on repeating that the UCRC is opposed, under all circumstances, to refugees being sent outside West Bengal.

**UNDERLYING MOTIVE:** The main purpose of the sinister propaganda offensive launched by the Government is to hide these ugly facts from the public:

1. Although a huge amount of money has been spent already, most of the 32 lakh refugees now living in West Bengal are still dragging on a miserable existence.

2. Not to speak of giving serious consideration to the UCRC's alternative proposals, the Government has systematically sabotaged its own pilot projects, such as the Herobhanga and the Keleghal schemes, in order to make out an "unassailable" case for bundling out the refugees to Dandakaranya.

3. Since the Dandakaranya Project was launched, all rehabilitation grants and benefits to several lakhs of non-camp refugees have been totally stopped. The plea that is being trotted out is that Dandakaranya must be given the topmost priority!

The real motive is obvious. The Government is attempting to drive a wedge between the camp and the non-camp refugees.

**LAST-MINUTE EFFORTS:** Even on the very eve of the struggle, Comrade Jyoti Basu and Bhupesh Gupta made another attempt to persuade the Government to see sense.

They addressed a joint letter to Prime Minister Nehru, urging upon him to rescind the Government's decisions regarding the closure of camps and discontinuance of doles, which have been interpreted by the refugees as a measure of coercion, and to create an atmosphere conducive to proper discussions with a view to arriving at a satisfactory solution.

The reply received from Pandit Nehru, it is reliably understood, is thoroughly disappointing. It is evident that the Government is bent on pushing through its own plan without paying any heed to the legitimate demands of the refugees or the constructive suggestions of the Opposition parties.

**DEFIANCE OF SEC. 144:** Till January 10, about 461 refugees, including 63 women, had courted arrest by defying Section 144.

On the first day, 108 refugees of 19 camps and two colonies from seven districts of the State, led by Communist leader Samar Mukherjee, MLA, and Marxist F.B. leader Srirhid Mullick, MLA, Vice-Presidents of the UCRC, participated in the satyagraha. Ninety-one refugees courted arrest in Burd-

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## Refugees' Struggle

★ FROM FACING PAGE

THE memories of the food and other struggles which rocked the State, from one end to the other, during 1958, have hardly died down, when the ushering in of 1959 finds the people of Uttar Pradesh poised for bigger and even more resolute struggles.

As a result of gross betrayal by the agents of the U. P. Government inside the U. P. Cane-Growers' Federation and the leaders of the Praja Socialist Party the general strike of the State's 17 lakh cane growers which was scheduled to begin from January 14 has, for the time being, been put off. But only for the time being; for, the bluff of these gentlemen has been called—much sooner than they had expected.

On December 29, when they advised the cane-growers to postpone their decision to strike, they had said that the Chief Minister and the Minister for Agriculture of the State had "sympathetically considered the demands of the cane-growers" and had arranged to hold a tripartite conference of the millowners, the Government and representatives of the cane-growers "to consider the question of raising the price of sugar-cane and the formula of sharing by the cane-growers in the extra profits made by the industry." The conference, as announced by them (not by the Government), was to be held on January 12 in Lucknow.

The PSP leadership, which was a party to this hoax on the cane-growing peasantry, had also repeated the same thing and advised the peasants to have "patience and wait."

Now, on January 11, the U.P. Government has come out with a communique flatly contradicting the "several news-items" appearing in the "Press" and stating that, "No such decision (to hold a conference) has been taken by the Government."

It is further revealed that, in reality, the Government had never given these leaders any assurance regarding holding of a tripartite conference, it had only advised them to withdraw the strike.

But the Chief Minister, Sri Sampurnanand kept quiet all these days. Only the day before the conference was scheduled to be held, has he come out with this disclaimer. It speaks volumes for the moral fibre of these Ministers and for the methods they employ to hoodwink the people!

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JANUARY 18, 1959

## U. P.: 1959 BEGINS ON NOTE OF BIGGER STRUGGLES

★ FROM RAMESH SINHA

region known such a powerful upsurge. And what was more—the struggle and the upsurge were led mainly by the Communist and Kisan Sabha workers.

The leaders of the Federation as well as those of the PSP saw in these developments a glimpse of the future if there was to be a joint struggle, and fumbled. The pressure of the Government was already there. They knuckled down and staged this betrayal.

But now that all these are known, events have once again begun to move rapidly. The firing on kisans in front of the Deputy Defence Minister Sardar Surjeet Singh Majithia's sugar mill in Gorakhpur District on January 7 has further infuriated the peasantry and the people. Two kisans have died as a result of that brutal firing and about five more are lying in a precarious condition.

The U.P. Kisan Sabha has called an emergent meeting of its Action Council, which was formed for conducting the cane-growers' struggle. The Kisan and Communist leaders of the State are carrying on negotiations with the leaders of other parties—including the PSP—to fix another agreed date for the strike. I have just seen a telegram from Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena, M.P., and one of the leaders of the cane-growers and the Kisan Sabha, urging the fixing of such a date.

The entire episode has taught the people a lesson and once again brought out the unifying and noble role of the Communist Party and the Kisan Sabha. This will stand the cane-growers in good stead as they go into struggle, which they will, undoubtedly do soon.

This time they will also have the active support of nearly 60,000 workers of the 68 sugar mills in the State. In its conference held at Bahngnan in Gonda District on January 3 and 4, the United Sugar Mill Workers' Union has decided to go on strike from February 15 for the demands of the sugar mill workers.

The workers have demanded that 1) they should be given bonus since 1955-56 in accordance with the decision of the Appellate Tribunal; 2) they should be given a 25 per cent wage increase pending the decision of the Pay Commission; 3) they should be given a retention allowance as is done in the sugar mills in Bihar; and 4) the question of recognition of the representative union should be decided on the basis of a general referendum of all workers.

The more than 100 delegates from over 40 mills who attended the conference at Bahngnan have gone back determined to launch the struggle, because they have already exhausted all other forms. All the units of the union have been directed to serve strike notices on their employers by January 10. The Statewide strike, as already stated, will start on February 15.

The strike of the cane-growers backed by the support of the consumers and the workers of the sugar mills will unleash an invincible force.

There is still another section of the peasantry which has been restive for long—the peasantry in the areas where the consolidations of holdings scheme of the Government is being pushed through in the teeth of bitter opposition by almost all the Opposition parties of the State and the kisans.

As a matter of fact, a very large section of delegates at the Sultanpur Session of the U.P. Kisan Conference wanted that a decision to launch a struggle against the present scheme of consolidation of holdings should be taken immediately. It was after great persuasion by the leaders that the decision has been deferred for some time.

However, in the middle of February an Anti-Consolidation of Holdings Scheme Conference is being held in Unnao District. Preparations have also been launched to stage a demonstration on March 10 in front of the State Assembly at Lucknow. It is almost certain that the Unnao Conference will finalise the dates for the struggle on this issue.

## TEACHERS ON PATH OF STRUGGLE

Most indicative of the general unrest in the State, as we enter the New Year, is perhaps the decision of the Council of Action of the teachers of the State's High Schools and Intermediate Colleges to resort to direct action, which will (their resolution says) "include demonstrations before the Council House, boycott of High School and Intermediate examinations, hunger-strike, individual or mass satyagraha and Statewide general strike..." in support of their demands for wage-increase and other things.

In preparation for these more serious steps, the Council of Action of the secondary teachers has enjoined upon its units to observe a "Preparations Fortnight" from January 21 to February 15.

Further, the skyrocketing prices of foodgrains as well as their acute scarcity are again forcing the people to think in terms of yet another food struggle. With the passing of the Nagpur Congress resolution regarding the question of fixing a ceiling on present land holdings and the formation of cooperatives of agricultural labourers with the surplus land the struggle for land, too, will be taken up even more vigorously.

Congressmen of the State have no time for all these problems. They are busy enrolling bogus members for their group fight.

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## DOWN TO EARTH

THE week's papers have been full of news from Abhayankar Nagar, which the politically conscious have been widely discussing. In this issue we carry a report of the Congress session, and will analyse next week the resolutions of the ruling party and the prospects ahead. However, it is very much worthwhile taking note of the grim situation as it exists under the Congress regime.

The Congress discussed the question of ceilings amidst great excitement. When the Congress Government in Bengal abolished the zamindari system and fixed the ceiling at 25 acres, it was estimated that about six lakh acres of land would be available for distribution among the landless and the refugees. But it is now stated that no more than 60,000 acres will be thus available. Fake, mala fide transfers of land by landowners are, obviously, responsible for the disappearance of the surplus land. It is the loopholes in the Congress legislations that gave the landlords the elbow-room.

### Strengthening Private Sector

There has been big talk about extending the public sector and raising resources through it for further development. The Damodar Valley Corporation built an 85-mile-long navigable canal at a cost of about Rs. four crores. It will connect the coal-mining and industrial belt around Asansol with Calcutta. The steamers should tow 20 lakh tons of cargo a year. It should bring a handsome profit to the public exchequer, but this canal, built with public money, is being handed over to the private sector!

It is learned that the competitors are the Joint Steamers Company of MacNeill Barry, the biggest inland water transport company in the country, and Birla's Calcutta River Transport Association (CRTA). Each is trying to oust the other, but the CRTA is likely to win and in it the other company is also represented!

Birla's terms are a 20-year monopoly for all cargo traffic along the canal, exemption of all tolls and taxes for a period of five years and the right to fix the rate of freight charges. Here is the latest example of the public sector being used to help strengthen the private sector and public resources handed over to the enemies of planning.

Let us take education. The Central Advisory Board of Education is meeting at Madras this week to discuss limiting the admission to universities, which is increasing at the rate of 50,000 students annually. The scheme for re-organisation of secondary education had provided for converting high schools into the higher secondary pattern.

The Ministry's report complains that the State Governments have no feeling of "urgency" to achieve this reform and the Union Government expects that it will be only by the end of the Third Plan that the change-over may be achieved. While curtailment instead of expansion of university education is sought to be done, expansion of technical and other useful types of education is not being guaranteed. The discontent

among the students and their guardians is increasing.

### "Beginning Of End"

The situation inside the Congress organisation, whose leaders are responsible for the above is so bad that they dare not discuss it openly in the Congress session. Let us see from the latest news how the situation stands.

In Orissa, a lot of dust has been thrown up during the election of the Pradesh Congress President. Chief Minister Mahatab could get his nominee elected only by staging a walk-out from the FCC meeting in which other names were proposed. He had his way, but as a Congress leader of all-India prominence remarked to the IPA Correspondent, "This is the beginning of the end."

In Kerala, the Pradesh Congress Presidential election had been stayed on orders from top. District elections were held amidst literally free-for-all fights. Both the factions appealed to the police for the possession of the Congress office and the safety of the records. The gentlemen who campaign outside Kerala against "insecurity" in Kerala under the Communist Government themselves appeal inside Kerala for security against each other to the same Communist Government!

The politically serious cannot afford to forget numerous facts like the above. They will not trust the new words of the Congress leadership unaccompanied by new deeds.

### Bhoodan Failure

THE 'Bhoodan' movement used to be hailed as the alternative to Communism in our country. The ruling party supported it as a useful auxiliary to its own governmental activities. The Bhoodan work in Koraput was advertised as a model. It is now being frankly admitted that the reality in Koraput reveals no success.

In a recent speech at Kolhapur, Jaiprakash Narain, the high-priest of Sarvodaya, stated that reconstruction work in the gramdan villages had failed.

U.P.'s Bhoodan leader Suresh Rambhai in a signed article writes: "We see the workers of the Bhoodan movement in U.P. have not been able to win any section of society at all. Theirs has become an isolated class by itself. . . . We don't cooperate among ourselves, we are not able to win the constructive workers to our side and we have not succeeded in enlisting the cooperation of constructive institutions and centres. Little wonder none is so poor as to do reverence."

Vinobha Bhawe himself in the last issue of Bhoodan writes: "Now-a-days we have become more critical than practical. People quote my words and criticise me. . . . One should ponder that an old man, taking the name of Gandhiji and shouldering the work of Gram Swaraj has been roaming from village to village for the last eight years. Is it proper for the people to sit idle and talk instead of taking to this work?"

Bhoodan is now eight years old. People rightly refuse to take Vinobhai's noble words

## NOTES OF THE WEEK

for granted. They correctly want to evaluate the concrete results of the eight years' work of the Bhoodan movement. He, however, is getting rattled by justified criticism and pleads for further trust.

### Indo-Pak Relations

THE whole country has been worried over the Indo-Pak relations, but the Congress session did not discuss the issue at all. It is reported that this happened on the personal intervention of Pandit Nehru, who assured the insistent delegates that the Congress Government had received the needed assurances from the U.S. Government that the military aid to Pakistan will not be used against India.

There is no dispute in our country that the continued Indo-Pak tension suits the imperialists most. Let us examine the major events of the week to see once again which way the imperialists are producing their puppets in Pakistan. The situation on the Assam-Pakistan border continues to remain tense with ugly incidents, local economy stands disrupted and periodic panic seizes the people. Assam Governor Fazl Ali has visited the troubled areas recently to study the situation and report to New Delhi.

The Shillong Correspondent of the Hindustan Times (January 13) writes: "The Pakistani authorities, it seems, agreed to a cease-fire only to gain time to make fresh trouble so that normal life on the border may not be possible. . . . There is a deeper game involved in the Pakistani aggression. The border incidents cannot be dismissed lightly."

### Canal Water Talks

The Indo-Pak canal water talks which began on December 2 in Washington have deadlocked and stand indefinitely adjourned. The Pakistan plan was not only a complicated engineering project, but also involved the colossal cost of Rs. 350 crores. As against this, the Indian plan which would have given Pakistan all the water due from India, was to cost not more than Rs. 60 to 70 crores. India is reported to have offered to guarantee through an international treaty to supply Pakistan at the border with the full quantity of water. India, as a further friendly gesture, agreed to pay a sum of about Rs. 24 crores towards the cost of link canals.

The Pakistan delegation has rejected the Indian offer and sticks to its own fantastic demands. The initiative has now gone back into the hands of the U.S. dominated World Bank, which has promised to submit its own plan later on. Trusting the U.S. has implied handing over a vital Indo-Pak dispute to the World Bank to twist it the way it suits U.S. tactics of the moment. The Indian people know the reactionary aims of the World Bank from its last conference held in New Delhi. Its colonial demands about our Third Plan had to be rejected by the Nehru Government itself and the same World Bank is being trusted again. Here is a new danger point arising from the timid,

compromising policy of the Congress Government.

The July 28 London declaration of the Baghdad Pact countries committed the U.S. to increased assistance and cooperation with Pakistan and the other Pact countries. We know what followed. Another meeting of the Baghdad Pact is due in Karachi this month-end when the U.S. is expected to announce new bilateral defence arrangements with Pakistan. The Pakistani militarists will not only get more military aid but also "psychological aid." Discouraged by Iraq's defection, they will be encouraged against India. The Congress rulers have chosen to blindfold the country against the imperialist danger from Pakistan, but the other neighbours of Pakistan cannot afford to do so.

### Soviet Warning

On December 26, the Soviet Government warned the Pakistan Government about its new military agreements with the U.S., not to "complicate the situation in the region of Southeast Asia and the Middle East," not to "increase the danger of Pakistan being drawn into military ventures of a third Power," not to let her "territory" be used as a military base by a third Power. The Soviet note also stated that the new military agreement "infringes and cannot but infringe the interests of Russia's security."

The mighty Soviet Union, in warning the reactionary rulers of Pakistan betimes, has upheld the cause not only of Soviet security but the security of all Asian countries threatened by the American alliance with the reactionary rulers of Pakistan.

### P. S. P. "Opposition"

IT is no accident that the General Secretaries of the Congress, in their report to the Nagpur session list among Congress victories the successful bye-election contest of Asoka Mehta to the Lok Sabha from Muzaffarpur.

There have been seven bye-elections to the Lok Sabha so far in which the Congress won three but lost four seats. The Congress vote has fallen to 48.2 per cent from 66.6 per cent in the General Elections. Intelligent observers have noted that a significant feature of the post-general election situation has been the break-away of new sections of the peasantry due to Congress failure to satisfy its land hunger and give real practical relief.

The National General Council of the Praja Socialist Party in its latest Allahabad resolution opined that the ceiling, recommended by the Planning Commission of an annual net income of Rs. 3,600 was "on the high side." It, however, regretted the delay and expressed the hope that a ceiling on the Planning Commission's own basis would be carried out before the end of the year.

This underlines the fact that the differences between the leaders of the PSP and those of the ruling party are formal and not real. If they were not, it would have called for a joint front of all those standing for a just

and lower ceiling and planned to unitedly rally the discontented peasantry.

The resolution supported the starting of cooperatives and expressed the hope that "the great revolution in rural life would be initiated by all concerned with new determination and new attitude and outlook." How close is the resemblance to Pandit Nehru's own words.

This hope can only become real by adopting the political tactic of united work inside the coops by the Communists, PSPers, progressive Congressmen and individuals against reactionary Congressmen, the rural rich and the bureaucrats. This, however, is far from the thoughts of the PSP leaders.

In Bombay, the C.P.-PSP united front inside the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti has not only led to a powerful movement which has won almost all the bye-elections so far held at the various levels but even encouraged the PSP Executive to urge the Government "to end the present stalemate and take immediate steps to create the unilingual States of Maharashtra and Gujarat."

### Opportunism

The PSP leaders' tactic of loyal opposition to the Congress and real opposition to the CPI is leading to its losing political prestige and influence along with the Congress. This is causing real worry to the PSP leadership. From what FSP Chairman Ganga Saran Sinha stated in his Kanpur Press Conference it is clear that he does not mind publicly owning up that the PSP no more stands by its traditional tactic of no alignment with the other political parties.

The Times of India on January 7 editorially summarised his position in the following words: "It is not a question, he says, of Left or Right but of fighting elections after seeking adjustments as local situations may demand. What we have here in fact is a plea for opportunist alliances. This plea will never impress rational opinion nor rouse popular enthusiasm. . . . It is clear that the Praja Socialists do not have any serious objection to the formation of opportunist alliances."

The original PSP tactical plan to emerge as the leading party of the opposition, the alternative to the Congress, has failed. Instead, the Communist Party has risen to that position and is accepted as such by all. This bitter experience has not made the PSP leaders wiser but madder. Their new tactic of uniting all the "democratic" and "Socialist" parties (excluding the "totalitarian" Communists) in defence of Indian democracy leads them to ally with the Ganatantra Parishad in Orissa and the Muslim League and the Congress in Kerala.

Such an unprincipled tactic may weaken and divide the popular forces for the time being but it will prove suicidal for the PSP itself unless its rank and file changes it in time.

—P. C. JOSHI

(January 14)

## THE MAN-MADE PLANET

UNITED STATES: The U. S. radio and TV stations interrupted their broadcasts to report the firing of the rocket a few minutes after the news was transmitted by Moscow Radio and TASS.

The United Press International reported that American scientists were dumb-founded by the huge weight of the Soviet space rocket's last booster.

Dr. Henry Richter, head of Rocketry Research at the Special Laboratory under the California Technology Institute called it a "hell of a big thing."

### Soviet Lead

Under the headline "Russia Again Ahead Into Space—Soviet Success After United States Failures Jolts Hard-Won Confidence Here," the New York Times Washington Correspondent wrote: "The U.S. this week-end found itself once again far behind in the space race just as it thought it was catching up with the Soviet Union. . . . The fact that the Soviet Union succeeded where the United States four times had failed emphasised the Soviet technological and psychological lead in the accelerating space race."

BRITAIN: One of the most prominent British scientists, Professor Massey of the Royal Society, when approached by a Press Association correspondent, described the Soviet space shot as "a very big project indeed." Prof. Massey added: "I have little doubt, they have enough rocket power to get a vehicle as far as the Moon."

Almost all the London papers of January 5 front-paged the spectacular news with editorial comments hailing the great achievement.

The Daily Mail said: "For the first time since creation man has introduced his own 'planet' into the solar system. This is an incredible feat of the Soviet scientists who have richly earned worldwide congratulations."

The Daily Express said: "Russia's latest triumph in outer space gives a significant nudge to the balance of world power."

The Times declared: "The Russian way is to do things big. They have built big dams, big nuclear accelerators, biggest machines for research on controlled thermonuclear reactions. They have launched biggest Sputniks—in terms of useful load—and now have both launched space vehicle and propelled it to the greatest distance from the Earth."

### Significance

The Daily Herald was of the opinion: "The really striking significance of the Russian rocket is its reflection of the technological and industrial power which lies behind it, on the earth, in Soviet Russia."

A number of British papers urged the Western leaders to rethink their war policy with the latest developments in scientific research.

WEST GERMANY: The re-vanchist West German Press, expressed itself, in its own way.

Die Welt, for instance, commenting in its Sunday edition,

HOW many of us do not remember the starry nights of our childhood when, in the lap of our grand mothers we would listen to the mythological stories about the heavens, and would look up at the skies with reverential awe?

We now live to see times—and it will very likely be during the life-span of our generation, when man will set foot on the planets of the solar system, in the first place naturally on the Moon.

At the turn of the present century, man was grounded to earth and the vast majority of mankind groaned under the oppression of old regimes. And so were the Russian people. But today, by overthrowing the older order and by establishing the socialist order in their country, the Russian people have reached such pinnacles of science and technology, sooner than the rest of mankind, that they have won the admiration of their friends and foes alike.

The launching of the Soviet space rocket which has now entered the solar system between the earth and Mars as its tenth planet—and the first man-made planet—is a triumph of science over superstition, a triumph of the Socialist system over the capitalist system, a triumph of the forces of world peace and progress over those of war and reaction.

Theoretically, in the year 2113, after completing 125 revolutions around the Sun, this first artificial planet will return to its starting place and meet the Earth. And early in 1975, it will come closest to the Earth—which will still be 15 million kilometres away from the Earth.

Imagination staggers visualising the revolution that would have been made till then in our knowledge of the Universe and of the laws of nature. Colossal indeed would be the victories of man in understanding and mastering the laws of nature. Science most keenly awaits the deciphering of the signals which this messenger of man has sent to

## AND ITS ECHO ON THE EARTH

under the caption "Red Star" said that the successful launching of the Soviet cosmic rocket came as a great shock to the West psychologically.

The paper expressing concern for the "backwardness of the West" lamented that the accurate control of the Soviet cosmic rocket signified that the Soviet Union possessed powerful rocket thrust power and also precision electro-technique, while in the past the West has held that it was the sole possessor of the complex technique.

EGYPT: All Cairo morning papers of January 5 of Arabic, English and French, featured the news of the Soviet cosmic rocket as their frontpage lead story and some of them carried it under red banner headlines.

Al Ahram said: "This victory not only belongs to Soviet scientists but to all humanity." The paper greeted Soviet scientists in the words: "We greet these victorious men from whose minds and laboratories world peace has emanated."

Al Massa noted in a commentary that it was indeed tragic that the time when the Soviet Union was registering such a great victory, American imperialists and capitalists thought of possessing and buying the Moon.

### Strange

Referring to reports of some Americans enquiring from their Government about the price of land on the Moon,

the paper ridiculed this strange American mentality and urged these Americans to think of the issue of peace instead of buying property on the Moon, and to think of a ban on hydrogen bombs so that humanity may live.

IRAQ: In an editorial entitled "The New Soviet Rocket Is A New Year's Gift For the Cause of Peace" Al Rai-al Am wrote: "It is not accidental that U. S. rockets or satellites fail repeatedly while amazing success accompanies the Soviet ones. The reason is simply because the Americans are trying to use science for war-mongering purposes while in the Soviet Union science is developed for the sake of peace."

### No Better Proof

Another Iraqi paper, Al Bilad, commenting on the Soviet space rocket, wrote: "There is no better proof of the supremacy of the Socialist system than the fact that the Soviet Union is overtaking the capitalist countries in most of the fields and before long it will be the most advanced country in every respect." The paper concluded that what seems most amazing and breathtaking of the Soviet achievements is only natural "under the Socialist system which gives full play to all human potentialities and considers man the most valuable capital in the world."

SUDAN: Hailing the launching of the Soviet space rocket, Sudanese Information

the Earth, while blazing its trail through interplanetary space.

The importance of the Soviet space rocket lies not only in the fact that a man-made ship has for the first time overcome the force of Earth's attraction, but also that it has opened up prospects of obtaining valuable information on interplanetary space, the physical properties of the Moon, and cosmic rays. As the Soviet Academician Ambartsumyan has pointed out, by studying the physical processes in interplanetary space, in stars and nebulae, we can detect such properties of substances and such laws governing nature which are often concealed to researchers on the Earth.

The information supplied by the instruments of this man-made cosmic laboratory will result, in major discoveries. It will, for instance, make it possible to televise the far side of the Moon, to investigate the transition of the solar atmosphere into adjoining interplanetary space, to observe the surfaces of the planets and the Sun magnified tens of thousands of times.

The sodium cloud released by the Soviet space rocket was remarkable not only for providing valuable information about the density of interplanetary matter, but it was remarkable also for the fact that it was the first time in history when man artificially reproduced the physical astronomical processes owing to which the comets revolving round the Sun emit light.

All progressive humanity rejoices at this demonstration of the creative genius of the free Soviet people and the gigantic progress in science and technology made by the working people of the world's first country of triumphant Socialism.

Presented here are but some of the typical comments which have appeared in the world Press on this occasion.

tary importance is also very great."

The Pakistan Times in its editorial of January 5 entitled "A Prodigious Feat" drew the conclusion: "A firm agreement on the peaceful use of outer space is therefore imperative if mankind is to be saved from total disaster."

INDIA: For two days all leading newspapers in our own country banner-headlined on front pages reports about the Soviet cosmic rocket.

The Statesman editorially wrote: "The time when there will be real men in the Moon is evidently drawing nearer."

The Indian Express published its London Correspondent's reports as saying, "Once again the West's military experts are forced to revise their estimate of Soviet missile technology. What undoubtedly shocks the Pentagon is the high degree of navigational accuracy the Russians have shown."

A Times of India article said: "The reality of Moscow's achievement can hardly be denied. In successfully launching the rocket that will travel beyond the Moon and finally establish itself as a satellite of the Sun, the Soviet Union has once again confirmed its superiority in the race for the control of the outer space."

### Not Accidental

This brief world Press round-up can well be wound up with the words of Prof. Ta Quang Guan of the Viet Nam Democratic Republic's National Scientific Research Board (as quoted from Hanoi by Nhandan): "It is not accidental that mankind enters the cosmic age simultaneously with the Soviet Union entering the Communist era, and that the people who have succeeded in breaking through the gravity of the earth are also the people who first broke the shackles of private ownership."

### Prodigious Feat

Jang, commenting editorially on the Soviet achievement as "a historic achievement of man having no parallel," opined, "but its political and mili-



# A. I. S. F. MAPS PATH TO STUDENT UNITY

- ★ To Build A Healthy Outlook
- ★ To Defend Academic Rights
- ★ For A Democratic System Of National Education

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

"Students are part and parcel of the society. It is the society and the nation which give them the facility of education... They can pay half of their debt by learning intelligently and the remaining half by serving their motherland. Students must always keep in mind their own responsibility to society; if they try to place themselves above the society from which they come, they can only inherit the arrogance of the half-educated, because real wisdom comes only through active participation in the day-to-day life of the people."

In these true and noble words, the All-India Students' Federation (AISF) formulated its resolution on "Tasks" and they permeated all the discussions held, and made the atmosphere of the whole Conference warm and serious. The AISF rightly claims to be the oldest student organisation and with the

richest heritage, to which most progressive students look for lead. It held its 15th Conference at Udaipur from January 2 to 4, breaking new ground and unifying its members more than ever before.

Indian students during the last few years have faced numerous difficulties, emerging from the changing pattern of education—viz. the three-year degree course, higher fees, restrictions in admission in the higher institutions of learning, attacks on university autonomy, throttling of academic freedom, student rights, teachers' bona fide activities, etc. They had hopes for a better future through the success of the Second Five-Year Plan and have suffered disillusionment from its recognised failure and shortcomings. They have responded enthusiastically to the anti-colonialist victories in the Afro-Asian countries. They have been discussing excitedly the achievements in planning of the Socialist countries.

Banaras has been the scene of the most talked of student struggle of the period and the Prime Minister of the Student's Parliament in the BHU, popularly known as 'Marshal' Nautiyal, was elected as the new President of the AISF. The Kerala delegation was justly cheered and in its report gave the welcome news of organised student participation in the grow-more food campaign and in the shramdan initiated by the Kerala Government. Chandrapran from Kerala was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents. The delegates from Bengal reported on their rich experi-

ence of successful work inside the broader official student unions, their struggle against increased fees, their contribution to the self-help movements among the students and above all, the glorious account of two-and-a-half lakh students' strike against the landing of Anglo-American forces in the Lebanon and Jordan. Hiren Das Gupta was again elected as the General Secretary.

It was a representative conference. Good delegations had come from all the States except remote Assam and Madras and they were all dominated by the fraternal spirit of Indian unity.

The response of the local people, both students and their guardians, was heart-warming and enthusiastic. The inaugural session was attended by 7,000 and the concluding one by 10,000.

Dr. K. M. Ashraf of the Delhi University inaugurated the Conference. In nostalgic words, he recalled the old days of the anti-imperialist struggle, told anecdotes of how the best of the Indian youth has always been non-communal, anti-imperialist and progressive. He drove home all his main points by reciting very apt Urdu couplets. It was a good sympathetic teacher-elector talking to earnest, enthusiastic student patriots.

Communist leader P. C. Joshi stated that Communist students had always tried to discharge their duty to the nation through the AISF. He did not agree with the opinion that the students themselves were primarily responsible for indiscipline in educational institutions. It was the way the elderly ruling politicians were running the country that created the atmosphere of frustration and bitterness of which indiscipline among the youth was a part of the picture. The duty of political parties was not to sermonise to the students but help create the conditions in which the youth enthusiastically gave their best.

He appealed to the students to become good students for India could not be made into a great and prosperous nation by third-rate youth. The Indian youth would have a good future only if it learned to work for a good future for the working people of India. Learn to serve the people

with all your heart and you will not know disillusionment nor suffer from cynicism, concluded P. C. Joshi.

Rajasthan's Finance Minister Haribhau Upadhyaya, a veteran Sarvodaya leader, addressed the delegates. He stated that the main enemy in post-independence India was capitalism and its evils. Socialism was the present ideal of the nation and all the Socialists, from the Sarvodayites to the Communists, must unite to serve the people and fight all evils.

The concluding session was addressed by Prof. Maksoud of Lebanon, a Visiting Professor at the Indian School of International Studies. In his speech, he narrated the story of the Arab nations' struggle against imperialism and drew repeated cheers from the audience.

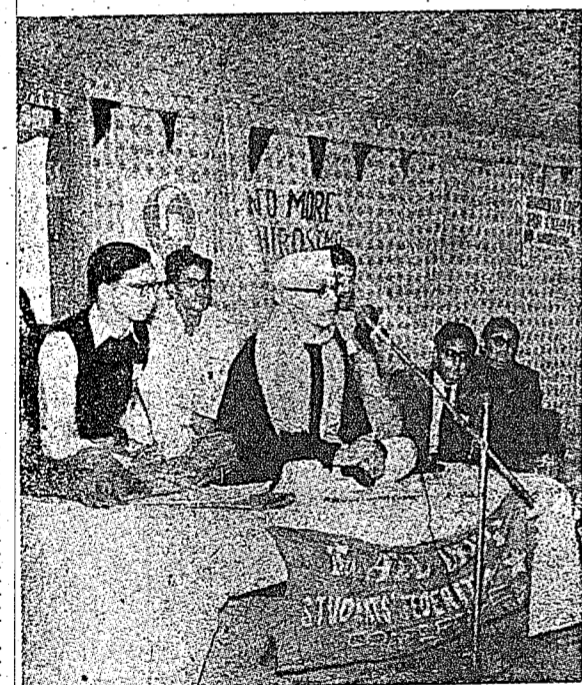
The session concluded with a cultural programme organised by the local students of songs, dances and short dramas. Arab-Asian solidarity became very much alive, when Prof. Maksoud himself sang an Arab patriotic song and another romantic one.

It was quite a businesslike conference. After the inaugural address and the General Secretary's report, the delegates divided themselves into three commissions—the first was on the tasks of the AISF, the second on students' unions and the third on University autonomy and education. The debates were hot but the decisions unanimous.

Before formulating the tasks of the organisation, delegates discussed anew the role of their organisation in post-independence India.

It was agreed that in the pre-independence period, there was broad national unity and the AISF successfully functioned as the united national organisation of the Indian students. It was now conceded that in the present period the old national unity no more existed and political differences had become sharpened, various political parties had formed their own student organisations. The AISF was at present the organisation of Communist, progressive nationalist and independent Socialist students. It was from here that they had to start

\* SEE FACING PAGE



## INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

### Does Nagpur Offer Anything Better?

IN the humdrum of the "momentous" Nagpur session of the Congress, the sordidness of the country's existing state could perhaps for some time remain hidden from the people's watchful eye, had it not been for some very candid statements of a very high official of the Government itself. As it is, even as the Working Committee was giving finishing touches to a resolution which was to be hailed as a new message for the country, a couple of days later the Governor of the Reserve Bank, Sri HVR Iengar, was detailing the "achievements" which the private capitalists had been enabled to attain under a very "Socialistic" Congress dispensation.

Addressing the Commerce Graduates' Association at Bombay on January 7 he stated that the gross fixed capital formation in the private sector "had been steadily increasing from an annual rate of a little over six per cent in 1951 to as high as 16.5 per cent in 1957." In terms of investments he added "it had put in the first half of the Plan almost as much as it was expected to invest over the whole Plan period." In terms of output, however, it might not be so since "investment required for the given increase had been under-estimated in the Plan."

#### Atonement For Past Sins

As a corollary to this phenomenal progress of the private sector, which it was able to achieve in spite of the so-called "draconian" fiscal and other measures, which it decried so much, its rate of growth in the remaining Plan period might be subjected to some curbs. Investment in the public sector, said Sri Iengar, "would consequently necessarily appear disproportionately large." Lest it be mistaken to mean some basic departure in policy he hastened to add that "the Plan balance would have been restored towards the end of the five-year period."

In reckoning the worth of the Congress pronouncements in respect of accelerating the rate of development of the public sector, therefore, it will be worthwhile to remember that in the past this important task was just not undertaken to enable the private sector to come out with flying colours. To talk of more Socialism in subsequent years in this context can thus only be taken to be an act of atonement for past sins. Sri Iengar's address revealed a few other facts as

well—facts whose importance cannot be overstressed while evaluating what the Congress leaders now promise. Detailing the progress in the total economy since the inauguration of planned development in the country six years ago, he said that the national income at constant (1948-49) prices rose from Rs. 8,850 crores in the last pre-Plan year to Rs. 11,010 crores in 1956-57—an increase of 24 per cent. How uneven its distribution was is shown by the fact that the per capita income increased by only 15 per cent over the same period. Hence, simultaneously with the growth in the nation's economy has also been growing the share of those sections in it who manage to thrive so well under the Congress brand of Socialism.

#### Testimony To Failure

Another testimony to the Congress Government's failure in handling the people's problems has been provided in a Study of the National Employment Service.

Throwing light on trends in employment during four years 1953 to 1957, it says that "the employment opportunities generated by five-year plans... are failing to keep pace with the growing labour force of the country." "While the number of vacancies increased," it adds, "the number of applicants available per hundred vacancies was throughout the period at a level higher than 2000." Thus, for every vacancy created there were on an average 20 aspirants—and since only one could get it 19 must have remained jobless.

Further, the Study discloses, "next to the unskilled group, the clerical group formed the largest component of the live register... This rate of growth would not change so long as young persons preferred 'white collar' jobs or until alternative occupations were open to them."

Thus, not only the problem of unemployment remains as unsolved as ever, even the pattern of jobs available remains as colonial as when the British held the reins of the country's Government. Otherwise, in a developing economy, building its industry and reorganising its agriculture, it is certainly not with clerical jobs that the people would want to busy themselves.

From creation of untenable opportunities to the private entrepreneurs since the inauguration of the plan period to their denial to the labouring people—

## Students' Federation Will Popularise Socialism

\* FROM FACING PAGE and redefine their ideas and tasks.

In post-independence India, ideas of Socialism have rapidly grown among advanced elements. Socialism alone could help build a strong and prosperous nation in which the youth could have a bright future. The AISF decided to study, discuss and popularise Socialism and carry forward its rich anti-imperialist heritage by becoming the leading organisation of progressive Indian youth.

The session decided to recruit its membership from the best talent among the students, from every sphere of activity, educate and organise them to become model workers for mass work among the students and in the service of the people.

The Conference decided to set up a high-powered committee to draft a new constitution for the AISF which will be widely discussed in all the lower units before being finalised in the next session.

The delegates took realistic note of the political division among the advanced students, which hindered the mass of the students from actively joining any student organisation. They also discussed their experience of work inside the official student unions which

such has been the fruit of the Avadi brand of Socialism. One wonders if the new Nagpur brand has anything better in store for the country.

#### Set Your House In Order

A GOOD amount of hulla-baloo was raised some time ago about China's so-called "underhand" trade practices in forcing her way into the East and West Asian textile markets. The unfairness of these charges was also brought home to our and other peoples by the report of a Japanese Study Team which had studied the phenomenon in some detail.

Now, another authority, again from the non-Communist world, Professor C. P. Fitzgerald of the Canberra University, has testified after return from an Asian tour that the secret behind China's success "is her rapid industrialisation... something of the type paralleled by Japan thirty years ago... and not political warfare of dumping and underselling."

In face of these assessments by non-Communist authorities, is it too much to expect of our textile magnates as well as their patrons in the Government that they would devote more attention henceforth to putting their house in order than in casting aspersions on a great neighbour.

—ESSEN

January 12, 1959.

included students of all political shades and also the mass of non-party students.

These student unions were emerging as the united mass organisations of the students and the Conference decided that the AISF must do all it can to develop and strengthen these unions as broad united front organisations through which the mass of students could be successfully rallied and useful activities among the students carried out. The vanguard role of the AISF had to be played inside these student unions and where they did not exist, the AISF must take the initiative to get them established.

V. S. Nautiyal stated that if any single student organisation, following the lead of any political party, had given the call for solidarity strike for the BHU, it would not have been successful. The Statewide strike in U.P. succeeded only because the broad-based student unions gave the call.

The Bengal delegates explained that their strike in solidarity with the Arabs was such a grand success only because the unions gave the call and it was accepted by the mass of students as a united lead.

The emergence of the unions as united mass organisations of the students was a new factor in the student movement.

The session concluded that an all-India federation of local student unions could be the only united national platform of the Indian students and decided to work for the same.

The unfortunate position, however, was that three different organisations existed and all took the name of the National Union of Students (NUS). The split has been brought about by group rivalries among the Congress and Socialist factions.

The AISF decided to shed its old sectarian approach and the "capture" mentality and make serious and earnest efforts, with the help of eminent educationists, to unify all the student unions into an all-India federation whose programme and plan of work should be evolved by common agreement, which should help to build up a healthy outlook among the Indian students, and defend their academic rights and freedom and ensure them a democratic system of national education.

#### University Autonomy

The resolution on university autonomy stated that though the British rulers had started modern colleges to create a class of "natives for public administration," the national movement, however, made them fortresses of the growing democratic Indian intelligentsia. The cause of academic freedom inside the educational institutions which had been successfully upheld even in the days of British rule by Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, Dr. Radhakrishnan and others, was now suffering a set-back despite India having achieved independence.

In the recent years, the Government at the Centre and

some of the States have undertaken the task of removing some very serious defects that have crept into the administration of the universities. This "cleaning-up" operation against known and recognised evils was not being done in a clean and healthy manner. The resolution protested against "unwarranted powers to the Government which make the Ministries of Education and Governors of the States virtual dictators of the universities."

The AISF declared that by increasing official representation inside the university bodies and decreasing that of the teachers, political discrimination was being resorted to, which would make a "mockery" of free university education and the danger real to academic freedom "so necessary for carrying on research and finding out solutions to the various problems that face our country."

The AISF decided to support the just struggle for academic freedoms and university autonomy. It also rightly gave the caution that in these struggles the students must beware of playing into the hands of the vested interests and the factional elements.

After deciding to organise regular study camps for the education of the SF workers on all-India and State levels, the new Working Committee decided to collect funds to run their all-India centre and bring out a student journal. Local SF leaders pledged to fix concrete targets of constructive work in their localities.

The Kerala S.F. had a membership of 15,000 before the Statewide strike organised by the Opposition parties against the Kerala Government and they had thought that the S.F. had been smashed up. The membership of the S.F. now stood at 45,000 and this remarkable growth had taken place through sustained constructive work and organising principled discussions among the mass of students. The SF delegates from other places promised to follow the example of their Kerala comrades.



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# COMMUNIST PARTY CONFERENCES PLAN WORK AHEAD ANDHRA PARTY ON ITS FEET AGAIN

The Communist Party is on its feet again in Andhra. This is the impression that one inevitably gets from the proceedings of the Eighth Andhra Pradesh Conference of the Communist Party of India, which concluded its six-day session at Khammam on January 4.

THIS is the impression that the Secretary's report gave; this is the confidence with which the 250 delegates representing over 40,000 members went back to their districts; this is the conclusion that one could draw from the deliberations; and finally, this is what was proved by the unprecedented mass rally of 60,000 people (according to news-agency reports), the biggest ever in Khammam.

## Mammoth Rally

On the eve of the final rally on January 4, Khammam presented an unusually festive appearance. From villages as distant as sixty miles away, from the neighbouring districts of Warangal, Krishna, Nalgonda and Gudur and from the mining belt of Kothagudem, poor people, peasants and workers poured into the town in huge numbers, singing and dancing with traditional musical instruments like horns, drums and bells and cymbals, with photos of their revered leaders and martyrs decorated and hoisted in beautifully-built gopuras in bullock carts. There were Red Flags fluttering everywhere and big red festoons coupled with the multi-coloured sarees of the womenfolk with babes in their arms and food parcels on their heads and flowers in their coiffures presented an enchanting scene of unsophisticated beauty. What a contrast to the smartly-dressed ladies who gathered at Hyderabad for the AICC session in their glittering jewellery and gold-embroidered sarees!

These thousands came to Khammam to hear the message of the Communist Party Conference.

**BACKGROUND:** The Conference was meeting at a time when the Party, overcoming the effects of the setback in the mid-term elections of 1955, was on its feet again, restoring the Party organisation and proceeding towards further consolidation of its organisational strength to lead the people.

The Conference was also meeting at a time when the Congress forged to face the 1955 elections had broken down and serious and sharp conflicts leading to threats of split had developed.

Their fixed earnings, are getting more and more restive. Finally, the Conference was meeting after a period, in which not only the working class, but also huge sections of middle-class employees like non-gazetted officers, teachers, village officers, besides Central Government employees had waged many a struggle to win their minimum demands.

The Conference met in this background, to take stock of the situation, to review the progress registered in the organisation, to pool the experience and above all, to know why the Party could not place itself at the head of this mounting discontent and lead the masses.

The Provincial Conference, was preceded by a number of Taluk and District Conferences, where also the same enthusiasm was witnessed confirming that the Party is on its feet again.

Though this was the second Provincial Conference after the reorganisation of States, this is really the first time that delegates sat to discuss the problems of both the areas in common and this helped the whole Party to get an integrated picture of the problems and possibilities in the State as a whole.

## Documents And Discussions

The Conference was well prepared for. Besides the 71-page Political - Organisational Report submitted by the Secretary of the State Committee of the Party, Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao, which gave a picture of the political and economic situation in the State, the organisational position of the Party and the

future tasks, there were eight other information documents running into about 200 pages, reviewing the situation on the kisan, agricultural labour, student, trade-union and legislature fronts as well as the work of the daily and monthly journals of the Party. These reviews helped the delegates to discuss the main report in an informed manner.

The fact that the Conference discussed the report for four days, the fact that as many as 200 amendments were sent in by delegates, is an indication of the seriousness and thoroughness with which delegates discussed the document, in order to chalk out their future tasks.

## General Secretary's Exhortation

To all this preparation was added the speech made by Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, which surveyed the national and international situation and gave a perspective which he asked the Andhra comrades to keep in view constantly in their march ahead. He told the delegates about the expectations of the sister provincial units from the Andhra unit and exhorted them to work hard to live up to the expectations of not only their comrades in other States, but of the people in the State itself.

**POLITICAL SITUATION:** According to the Political - Organisational Report, the Congress party was no longer united as it was before 1956 and presented a hopelessly divided house not only between the two groups, but also into sub-groups within the main groups. The Congress Party no longer commands fear or respect as before, Congressmen no longer fear disastrous consequences for themselves if they leave the party. Today, they are very freely talking in terms of going out, since they see in the

growing discontent among the people a source on which they can base themselves. The group politics inside the party stemmed not out of any differences on politics, but mainly due to the desire for self-aggrandisement and lust for political power. The Conference, however, took note of the fact that the recent statement of the rival group was an indication of their realisation that they can thrive only if they can champion the cause of the people.

Though the policy of the Socialist Party is one of equidistance to both the Congress and the Communists, the Socialist leadership in Andhra, disgusted with the policies of the top leadership, is now trying to change its methods, but in a peculiar fashion. Andhra Socialist leaders are

grouped itself with branch units in about 3,600 villages in 170 taluks of the State, with about 40,000 paid membership (another 12,000 members had paid their dues but this had not reached the Provincial Centre.) The Party leadership more united than before has helped various district units to revive their activities.

The Communist Party is being looked upon as the main defender of people's interests, as against the Congress Party which is outspokenly in favour of the rich and the landlords. That the Party has secured a firm place in the hearts of the people can be seen from the fact that people warmly responded to the call of the Party for a Five-Lakh Fund and gave the Party four lakhs last year and

★ In The Service Of The People ★ In The Cause Of The Nation

★ Against Reactionary Policies Of Congress Government

**BUILD MIGHTY MASS MOVEMENTS !**

★ Popularise The Socialist World ! Defend The Kerala Government !

**STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY !**

now giving the slogan of building up a united front with the former Krishik Lok Party, Praja Party and PSP and other independents. This, they say, is in opposition to both the Congress and the Communists.

The PSP in Andhra is not an organised force to be reckoned with in any district, except in some trade union pockets.

As against this, the Communist Party, after the 1955 mid-term elections, has re-

also from the fact that Communists have been elected to presidencies in about 1,500 panchayats in the Andhra area, besides being placed in responsible positions in various town municipalities.

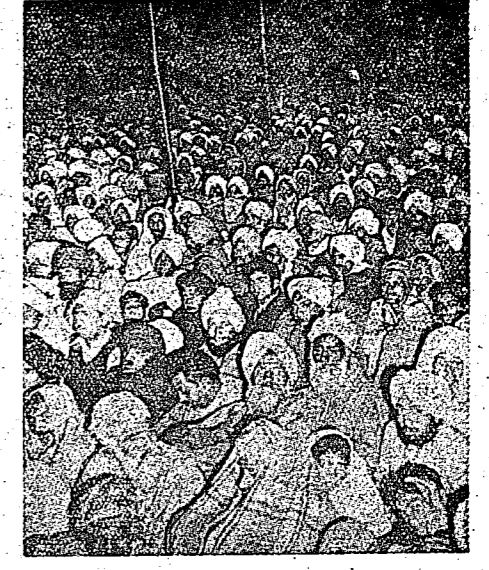
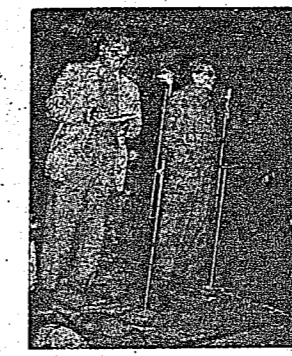
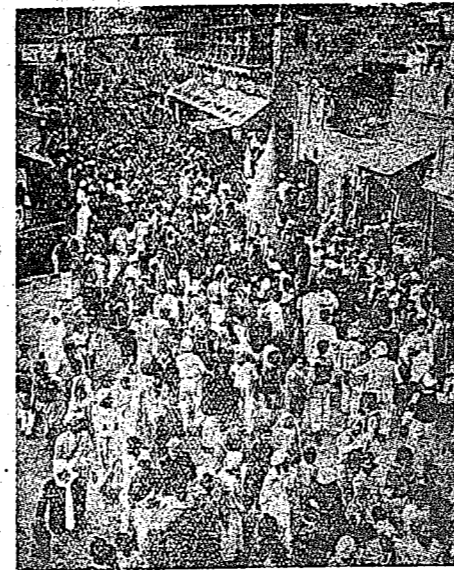
Yet, the Party did not overlook the fact that though the Communist Party is considered a Statewide Party and as an alternative to the Congress, it has its branches only in 3,600 of the 26,000 villages in the whole State. Thus, there is a wide gap between the general influence of the Party and its organisation.

**ECONOMIC SITUATION:** There is a short-fall in expenditure under almost every head, except irrigation and electricity, the short-fall ranging from 25 to 40 per cent and even more in certain cases. Money has been spent on irrigation projects, but the irrigation potential created has not been utilised; the State remained industrially backward; food prices continued to soar high, rendering the life of those with fixed incomes miserable; usurious rates of interest still prevailed in rural areas and lack of adequate facilities hampered agricultural production. As much as thirty crores rupees of new taxes had been levied during the period under review; due to evictions, pauperisation of village artisans, unemployment in the rural side was in-

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## AT THE PUNJAB CONFERENCE

LEFT TO RIGHT: A view of the procession on the concluding day of the Punjab Conference. Comrade B. T. Ranadive and Comrade Surjeet addressing the open rally. A view of the rally.



The Fifth Punjab State Conference of the Communist Party discussed and adopted a Political Report and an Organisational Report as well as a number of resolutions on important problems facing the State and its people.

OVER 200 delegates representing the eleven thousand members of the Party in the State attended the Conference, inaugurated in Ludhiana on December 27 by Comrade S. V. Ghate, Chairman of the Central Control Commission. The concluding rally of the

some small-scale industries and expansion of some bigger industrial units, the Punjab continued to remain industrially backward though the State's industrial potential was immense.

Reviewing the working of the Second Five-Year Plan in

to the agrarian policies of the Punjab Government.

He sharply criticised these policies and added that instead of giving land to the tiller, the Government was deliberately encouraging the growth of capitalist landlords in the State with the result that the number of landless was rapidly increasing in the rural areas.

Comrade Surjeet condemned the Punjab Government for not enforcing ceilings on landholdings in the rural areas. He said that a ceiling of 30 standard acres and exclusion of certain farms from even this ceiling were unjustified and demanded that the ceiling should be brought down to 20 standard acres and made to include the farms now exempted. Without introducing immediate agrarian reforms, agricultural production in the State cannot increase nor can the basis for rapid industrial development be laid.

Coming to the political situation in the State, Comrade Surjeet in his report said that in the recent past both the Hindu and Sikh communalists had intensified their splitting activities and had succeeded in misleading some sections of the people. The Jan Sangh was more and more directing the edge of its attack against Communism, the Communist Party and the Communist-led Government in Kerala.

This was not the first time that Master Tara Singh had raised the bogey of "the Panth in danger." The Sikh masses, however, were coming to realise the futility of Master Tara Singh's slogans.

The State Government itself is guilty of communalism, continued Comrade Surjeet. It was not long ago that the Congress leaders had compromised with Master Tara Singh and other Akali leaders for their narrow selfish interests. The dominant group in the State Congress led by Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon continued to preach casteism and incite the rural population against its urban counterpart.

## Combat Communalism

In this situation, Comrade Surjeet's report emphasised that one of the major tasks of the Communists in the State was to combat communalism in all forms. The regional formula should be implemented, he said, and further powers given to the Regional Committees so that the unity of the people in

both parts of Punjab could be advanced.

There was a special mention in the report of the growing authoritarian trend in the dominant clique in the ruling party and the increasing attack on democratic liberties and democratic forms. There was an attempt to curb the initiative of the panchayats and municipalities, preventive detention rules were being modified to penalise the parties of the opposition, there was indiscriminate resort to the Public Nuisance Act to impose a virtual ban on the activities of Opposition parties, specially the Communist Party. The recent move in the Punjab University to frame new service rules which would even violate the spirit of the Republic's constitution was another instance of this trend. The way the Red Flag was attacked at Jandiala and the complete silence of the State Government over the Rewari incident in which a senior Minister like Dr. Gopichand Bhargava was manhandled were other reflections of the same trend.

Comrade Surjeet said that the standard of living of the people as a whole was falling and the burdens on them were rapidly increasing. On top of all this, food prices had begun shooting up rapidly. The Punjab Government had remained complacent till recently and only the mass demonstrations in the cities had forced it to give some relief to the urban population. Even then, the agricultural workers who had also been hit hard had been neglected.

## Party Forging Ahead

Reviewing the activities of the Communist Party in the last three years, Comrade Surjeet said that despite its mistakes, the Party had registered advances in all spheres of life. The Party had begun to defend the interests of the masses in a more systematic manner and Party members had fought communalism firmly both in the urban and the rural areas.

Party members had also on their own initiative paid increasing attention to the execution of those schemes and projects which gave relief to the people.

The report took special note of the progress of the Party's work among the industrial workers and agricultural labourers.

The nine-point programme which the report placed before the Party included the defence of the cause of peace, particularly in the background

of the imperialist manoeuvres in Pakistan; consistent battle against communalism; an alternative master plan for the development of Punjab; building of the unity of the working class; development of the kisan movement; strengthening of the agricultural workers' organisation; defence of democracy and democratic liberties; organisation of women, students and youth; and defence of the Communist-led Government in Kerala.

## The Two Tasks

Summing up his report, Comrade Surjeet said that the Communists in the Punjab were faced with the dual task of reversing the reactionary anti-popular policies of the Congress on the one hand and on the other, consistent and dogged fight against communalism. He emphasised that both these tasks were inter-related and had to be undertaken simultaneously.

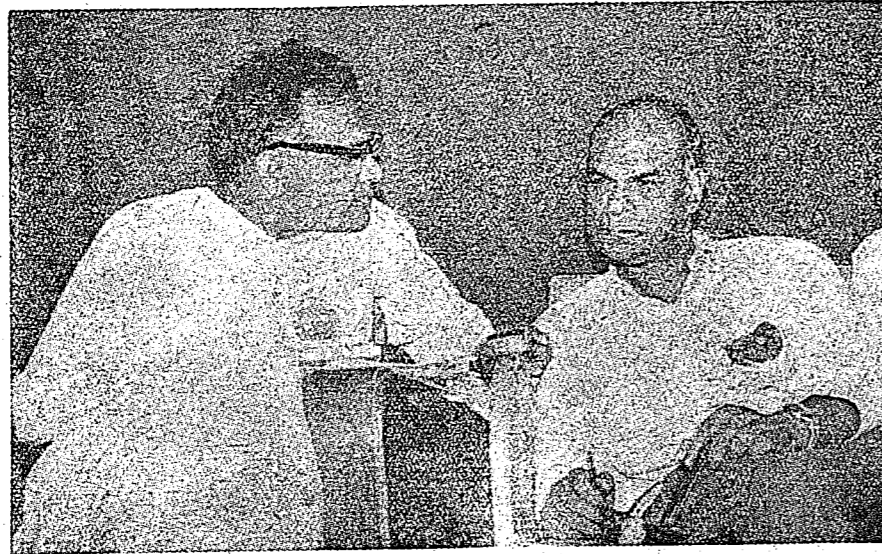
After prolonged discussions the report was adopted with about 75 amendments, most of the amendments relating to three vital tasks facing the Party in the State.

Through the amendments it was emphasised that in the fight against communalism in the State, a two-fold task faced the Party. First the masses and following of both the Akalis and the Jan Sangh had to be drawn into campaigns and struggles on common issues facing the people such as fight against betterment levy, rise in cost of living, etc. Secondly, in the fight against communalism a consistent ideological battle has to be waged. The amendments directed the Provincial Party leadership to issue such pamphlets and literature which would concretely expose the ideology and slogans of the communalists.

The second group of amendments related to united front work. These amendments said that in the specific situation in the Punjab where no organised democratic party existed with a considerable mass following, unity of democrats in the State would be unity with democratic-minded individuals, democratic-minded elements in the Congress, and the followers of the Congress. The Conference also decided that in forging such democratic unity, the record of service to the people of the various groups and individuals with whom unity is sought should always be kept in view.

The third batch of amendments related to the work of the Communist Party in the backward areas, of the

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Andhra Secretary Rajeswara Rao and General Secretary Ajoy Ghosh at the Andhra Party Conference.



# BULGARIA'S LEAP FORWARD PLAN

THE output of Bulgarian agriculture will be almost two times more in 1959 and three times more in 1960 than last year. By 1961, the national income from industry, transport, construction work and trade will surpass by 15 billion leva the target set by the Five-Year Plan. These are the aims before the mass national movement which is unfolding itself in Bulgaria for fulfilling the Third Five-Year Plan (1958-62) ahead of schedule.

In order to carry out these tasks, all-out efforts are being made for the full utilisation of the labour reserves, expansion of the raw material base of the country, full utilisation of the production capacities and reserves in the rural economy. In agriculture, particular attention is being paid to enlarging the cooperative farms, to the further introduction of mechanisation, to the development of poultry farming, pig-breeding, dairy farming and to increasing irrigated land.

At present, in Bulgaria, a process of enlarging cooperative farms is going on. Convicted of the advantages of bigger cooperative farms, several neighbouring cooperatives have come together and established farms with fifteen, twenty, twenty-five and even more thousands of acres of land. From a total of

3,450 cooperative farms, 640 large cooperative farms have now been formed. At the same time the question of increasing irrigated land is being considered. Now more than one million and eighty thousand acres of land are under irrigation whereas in 1944 there were only 92,000 acres of irrigated land. It is calculated however, that if all water resources are utilised the irrigated areas can reach a total of five million acres.

## Irrigation Projects

In view of this, it is estimated that by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan, about 1,500,000 acres more of land will be ready for irrigation, whereas 500,000 acres of land will be prepared for irrigation this year. With government funds and particularly with the labour and other resources of the enlarged cooperative farms, Bulgaria is now in a position to utilise for irrigation the waters of the Danube river. And within a short period, stage by stage, it will be possible to irrigate the whole Danube low land of the country.

On what is this leap forward based? Answering this question recently, Anton Yugov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bulgaria, said:

In the fact that by merging cooperative farms, a

fuller and more rational utilisation will be made of every inch of land, of agricultural machinery, agro-technical measures will be introduced on a larger scale and labour will be distributed and utilised more correctly, which under Bulgarian conditions is an important factor for achieving the task set.

In the rise of financial and material resources of the cooperative farms. Until now, for example, the cooperative farms have been setting aside about five to ten per cent of their incomes for the indivisible fund. The members of the enlarged cooperative farms themselves will now set aside from 15 to 30 per cent of the total income. This creates a new and more solid material and technical basis for the cooperative farms and makes it possible, with the labour and means of the cooperative farmers and the aid of the Government, to increase the irrigated land area of the country from one million to 2.5 million acres during the next two years. Increasing irrigated land area, giving more fertilizers and making better use of the manure mean ensuring higher yields of the basic agricultural crops.

In the expansion of the fodder base, which will also render a powerful thrust to the development of animal husbandry and poultry farming branches, which have an ex-

## FROM THE SOCIALIST WORLD

tremely important significance for the entire national economy of Bulgaria.

All this creates conditions for the united cooperative farms to turn into multifarious farms and increase production quickly as well as raise the income of the peasant cooperative farmers.

## Change In Consciousness

The deep changes which have taken place and continue to take place not only in the economy of the country but also in the consciousness of the people make it possible to set the task of catching up and surpassing in production per unit of land and per capita the most developed European countries with intensive agriculture, in the near future, said Anton Yugov and added: "It should be pointed out, of course, that such a decisive leap in the economic development of our agriculture, has become possible particularly now, when Socialism has become victorious also in the field of agriculture."

In order to fulfil the Third Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule in industry, construction and transport, the working people of Bulgaria are discussing the questions of the full utilisation of the available technique, of the improvement of the organisation of population, of saving raw and other materials, of the proper supply of the enterprises with material as

well as of reducing the periods of introduction of new production capacities.

During the last month of 1958 alone, the machine-building plant at Kolarovgrad (Northern Bulgaria), the factory for barite concentrate at Stara Zagora (South Bulgaria), the ice-producing factory at Russee (North Bulgaria) and others were put into operation. A new copper works near the town of Pirdop has also been commissioned. The output of the light industry in 1957 surpassed the envisaged target by 270 million leva worth of goods.

The employees at many ministries and offices have expressed their wish to work a number of days during the year at various construction sites. Universities and secondary school students also have expressed readiness to take part in the construction work during holidays. Thus the entire working population of the country is taking part in the fulfilment of Third Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule.

To quote Anton Yugov again, answering the question as to what constituted the transformation of Bulgaria from an agrarian country into an industrial agrarian country he said:

"Probably it is known that in the past Bulgaria occupied one of the last places in Europe in the economic field. Under the People's Government, the face of the country has radically changed, the industrialisation of the country is taking place extraordinarily fast. It is enough to state that industrial output in 1958 will be 8.5 times more than in 1939. Entirely new branches of industry have come into being."

Bulgaria had almost no machine-building industry in the past. An ever expanding machine-building industry has been established during the years of people's rule, whose output in 1958 will be 45 times more in comparison with 1939. Almost all kinds of machineries for agricultural work except tractors, machines for the food, coal and mining industries, various kinds of machines for construction, etc., are now produced in Bulgaria. The development of electrical industry has exceptionally moved ahead, now producing electric motors, transformers, generators, various kinds of house-hold appliances, etc.

The characteristic feature is that in 1939 the per capita production of electricity in Bulgaria was 42 KWH, whereas it will be about 390 KWH in 1958; the per capita production of coal will rise from 352 kgs to 1,610 kgs; of cotton fabrics from 5.4 metres to 21.4 metres; of sugar from four kilos to 19.6 kilos and so on.

The relative share of industry in the national income will reach 46.2 per cent in 1958 from 24.3 per cent in 1939. The ratio between industrial and agricultural production will change from 24.8: 75.2 in favour of agriculture in 1939, to 68:32 in favour of industry in 1958. These few figures bear eloquent witness to the great leap which the People's Republic of Bulgaria has made in her economic development, for her transformation from a backward agricultural country into an industrial-agricultural country, said the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

meeting which was proceeded by a huge procession, starting from 'Seshagiri Nagar' named after the leader of Kothagudem miners, who was brutally shot dead. Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, Sundarayya, Basavapunnah, Narayanreddi and Yellareddi sat in a specially-constructed chariot, decorated with Red Flags, golden threads and flowers of all shades and colours.

This was followed by two hundred prabhas in bullock-carts, which had been arriving throughout the day from far-flung villages. In the procession could be seen lambadis, nomad tribes of the district, who presented a colourful appearance in their traditional red and yellow costumes with inlaid mirrors and ornaments of brass and horn, singing tribal songs.

Every bus, every vehicle and every train, arriving hours late, emptied hundreds of people into Khammam town.

And for once, the organisers of the Conference were distressed: the modest arrangements made for the public rally proved absolutely inadequate. But thanks to the resourcefulness of the people and the discipline of the crowd, the inadequate arrangements did not come in the way of the rally becoming a grand success.

Kerala was the running thread in all the slogans, on banners, in speeches and cultural performances and songs. The rally was rounded off by cultural programmes, one of which was about Kerala and the traditional burra katha.

# MADRAS ELECTRIC WORKERS' VICTORY

THE Report of the Negotiating Committee constituted for resolving the dispute between the Madras State Electricity Board and its workmen constitutes a victory of great significance for the 40,000 electricity workers of Madras State which ranks third in India in generation and utilisation of electric power.

Electricity workers in Madras have been suffering under miserable wage conditions—the basic minimum wage being Rs. 18 only since 1947. Since then electricity 'distribution' and generation have expanded heavily and the profits have been growing. But whenever the workers raised vital and urgent demands the administration would give callous replies.

"The question of appointment of pay and wage committee... has been deferred for a year for the present."

"Regarding the revision of basic scales for all employees the question is deferred..."

"Regarding the dearness allowance the proposal is deferred for a year for the present."

"Regarding gratuity, it will be considered when service rules are framed."

"Regarding age of superannuation, it is decided not to take any action."

"The question of extending 15 days casual leave benefit to factory N. M. Rs (nominal muster roll workers) is under consideration."

In connection with four specific requests of the workmen the replies have been very interesting—

"Request has been refused." "Request has not been accepted." "Request has been declined" and "The Chief Engineer has been requested to furnish details for consideration of the matter."

Such is the soulless bureaucracy that has been turning down all the just demands and requests of the workmen.

The committee was appointed on March 28, 1958. And it concluded its sessions on August 30 last. The Chairman finalised his report on October 7, 1958, and it was submitted a week later along with the views of the representatives of the Board as well as the Federation.

This report has been published by the Tamilnad Electricity Workers' Federation (5, Ritchie Street, Madras-2)

workers. They are classified as operation subordinate service (O.S.S.—7,700), work-charged establishments (1,700), nominal muster roll workers (N.M.R.—22,000), and casual workers (10,000). The first two categories are monthly paid, those in the third category are paid fortnightly and casual workers are daily rated.

The workers employed under the operation subordinate service belong to the permanent service cadres and the rest are temporary. Even among the O.S.S. there are some workmen who are temporary and are awaiting confirmation in permanent vacancies.

## Negotiating Committee

It was against the background of this misery of the workmen and their growing unity and struggle that the Madras Government appointed a negotiating body for the settlement of the employees' demands. Sri M. V. Harihar Aiyar, District Judge and Presiding Officer, Labour Court, Coimbatore, was the Chairman of the negotiating committee. Sri V. P. Appadurai, Sri A. R. Narayana Rao, and Sri T. V. Natesa Mudaliar were the representatives of the State Electricity Board and Sri V. G. Row, President, Sri M. K. Manickam, Vice-President and Sri S. C. Krishnan, General Secretary of the Tamilnad Electricity Workers' Federation, represented the workmen on the committee.

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The report is significant in many respects. On ten out of the twelve issues referred to the committee such as wage scales, classification, gradation of employees, dearness allowance, permanency, gratuity, etc., there has been an agreement between the Chairman and the workers' representatives. The Board representatives have not expressed any disagreement with the recommendations and have only stated that "the recommendations are of far-reaching importance" and "the matter therefore requires very careful consideration of the Board at a committee level."

The Chairman has, in fixing wage scales, accepted the fundamental principle that minimum wage should be need-based; that if the concern is essential in public interest, it should be the duty of the Government to find the resources to meet the essential wage demands; that fair wage should have priority over profits and that "when the dilemma is between paying a little more to labour and a little less to capital, the relative criteria must change in favour of the economically weak..."

The Chairman has upheld the Federation's classification,

i.e., unskilled, semi-skilled II and semi-skilled I, skilled I and II and highly skilled II and I.

## New Wage Scales

The wage scales proposed for the various categories are as under:

Unskilled: monthly Rs. 29-14-39; daily Rs. 1.10 nP-2 nP-1.52 nP.  
Semi-skilled II: monthly Rs. 36-2-52; daily Rs. 1.38 nP-8 nP-2.02 nP.  
Semi-skilled I: monthly Rs. 50-24-65; daily Rs. 1.90 nP-10 nP-2.50 nP.  
Skilled II: monthly Rs. 65-3-89; daily Rs. 2.50 nP-11 nP-3.38 nP.  
Skilled I: monthly Rs. 90-34-125; daily Rs. 3.50 nP-14 nP-4.90 nP.  
Highly Skilled II: Rs. 110-6-170.  
Highly Skilled I: Rs. 125-74-185.  
Peons: Rs. 29-14-38-2-46.  
Attenders: Rs. 35-14-50-2-60.  
Lower Division Clerks, Store Keeper III: Rs. 58-4-78-5-98-6-110-74-125.  
Bill Collectors, Store Assistants, Commercial Assistants: Rs. 58-4-78-5-98-6-110.  
Upper Division Clerks, Store Keepers I and II: Rs. 85-6-125-74-155-8-195.  
Draughtsmen III: Rs. 90-4-110-5-140.  
Draughtsmen II: Rs. 130-5-145-6-175.  
Draughtsmen I: Rs. 160-74-205.  
Read Draughtsman: Rs. 220-10-300.  
Tracers I and II: Rs. 50-3-65-4-85-5-100.  
Accountants, Senior Accountants, Senior Superintendents: Rs. 160-6-190-8-230.  
Senior Superintendents, Senior Accountants: Rs. 230-10-300.  
Typists: Rs. 58-4-78-5-98-6-110-74-125. (In addition special pay for typing as at present.)  
Steno-typists: Rs. 80-5-110-74-140. (In addition special shorthand pay i.e., Rs. 15 per month for lower grade qualification and Rs. 35 for higher grades.)  
Sub-inspectors of Bill Collectors: Rs. 95-5-120-6-150-74-180; Inspectors of Bill Collectors: Rs. 160-6-190-7-225.  
Deputy Chief Accountants: Rs. 250-20-450.  
The Report fixes the basic wage at 100 points of the Madras cost of living index. For any increase in the cost of living index the neutralisation is to be as follows:

For all workmen drawing basic salary of Rs. 100 and less dearness allowance at the rate of 2 1/2 annas per point of rise.

For all workmen drawing a basic salary of Rs. 101 to Rs. 200, at the rate of 2 1/2 annas per point up to a salary of 100 and 30 per cent for the rest of the salary. For salaries above 200, it will be calculated at 20 per cent for the amount above Rs. 200.

The new scales are recommended to come into force from January 1, 1958.

Regarding the fixing of new

scales, it has been recommended that the initial pay should be fixed in the proposed scale in the grade next to what the workman is drawing in the existing scales on January 1, 1958.

Regarding weightage, it has been recommended that all employees who have put in five years and more should be given increment at the rate of one increment for every completed three years of service.

It is suggested that the age of retirement for those persons whose age of retirement is fixed at 60 will continue to be 60 and 58 for the rest.

The Chairman has recommended in his report that "gratuity may be granted at the rate of 15 days per year of completed service, even to those who have put in three years of service, but that the maximum may be fixed at 15 months."

On the question of permanency Of Service

The Chairman's recommendations are:

N. M. Rs and work-charged employees who have put in two years' service are entitled to be made permanent if they have a satisfactory record.

Posts that ought to be made permanent even under the existing rules and all those who are qualified should be made permanent.

These recommendations are a landmark in the growing unity and the developing struggles of the electricity employees and for that matter similar middle class and technical employees not only in Madras but all over the country.

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# LABOUR NOTES

BY RAJ BAHADUR GOUR, M. P. SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS

N.M.Rs who are qualified to become permanent but for whom there are no posts available should be allowed to enjoy the privileges of permanent workmen with regard to pay and allowance, gratuity, provident fund, travelling allowance, benefits under Workmen's Compensation Act, leave facilities and festival and national holidays.

These are some of the outstanding concessions that the electricity workers in Madras State have won through this negotiating committee.

Board's Behaviour

But the Board representatives are going against the very spirit in which the Committee was formed. The Ministers had given the assurance that Board representatives would go into the committee to settle matters. And that is why the workmen withdrew their strike notice and the writ petition in the High Court. Now they say that the recommendations are far-reaching and they would consider them at committee level in the Board.

These recommendations are a landmark in the growing unity and the developing struggles of the electricity employees and for that matter similar middle class and technical employees not only in Madras but all over the country.

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# ANDHRA PARTY CONFERENCE

\* FROM CENTRE PAGES

creasing; the handloom industry continued to be in crisis, stocks having accumulated to the tune of over Rs. 1.27 crores by August 1958; Government had openly taken a policy of standing by the employers as against the employees, in complete disregard of all labour laws, especially the decisions of the 15th Labour Conference.

On top of all this, in the development programme; Government is more and more relying on officialdom and the bureaucracy is apathetic to take people's cooperation. Wherever non-official committees were constituted, Government was nominating its own men and even men of its own group to these committees.

The Report also noted the fact that unable to face this growing discontent and solve the problems of the people, the Congress Government was actively abetting communal and regional feelings, with a view to divert the peoples' movements into wrong channels.

FUTURE TASKS: Certain important conclusions emerged out of the four-day discussions on the Report.

It was seen that the experience of Party organisation during the last two years had underlined the wide gap between the state of our Party organisations and its spreading influence. The need to conduct a wide network of schools to improve the present cadre as well as create new cadre to meet the situation and to provide trained hands to man the hundreds of pan-

chayats and cooperatives was very acutely felt.

The Party failed to conduct a big political-ideological campaign about the achievements of the Socialist camp, particularly the Soviet Union and China, and the campaign to defend the achievements of the Kerala Government as well as an ideological campaign against the wrong theories and formulations of the Left parties in the State.

The review of campaigns on problems of food and land reforms also revealed that the Party had not utilised the existing potentialities to develop Statewide mass movements.

Though the Party organisation is on its feet, the mass organisations, especially the Kisan Sabha and agricultural labourers' organisations have still to get on to the rails, enrol mass membership and take up problems of the respective class of people. "Plunge into mass activity"—this was the ringing call to the delegates given by the Conference.

The Conference noted with satisfaction the growth of the Party's work among the working class, as also the fact that after the 1955 elections, the Party had pursued a more flexible policy of united front not only with other political parties, but also with independents, which yielded good dividends to municipalities and panchayats. Noting the fact that the discontent among the masses is having its own influence it decided to utilise the situation to advance the cause of the democratic movement, as well as to win the demands of the people.

It was decided that special effort should be made to start a statewide movement on the issues of land reforms, food, taxation. A mighty mass demonstration is to be organised to push the demand for land. Of significance is a "one-year plan" of the Party, which includes a fund drive, conducting of Party schools, to train the 5,000 functionaries of the Party, collection of Party membership fees, organisation of cultural squads, one for each district, etc. January to April will see the drive for the Five-lakh Fund and a big political-educational campaign to popularise the achievements of the Socialist world—the Soviet Seven Year Plan, and China's leap forward specially.

The election of the 101-member Provincial Council (ten of whom have still to be coopted) and the re-election of Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao as Secretary were unanimous. A twenty-one member Executive and a seven-member Secretariat were also elected, which includes Comrades C. Rajeswara Rao, P. Sundarayya, Ravi Narayanreddi, Baddam Yellareddi, Y. V. Krishna Rao, Moturi Hanumantharao and Tammareddi Satyanarayana.

Resolutions touching upon the various problems like projects, industries, discrimination by the ruling party, release of prisoners, greeting the launching of the new Soviet rocket, remission of affected areas, and greetings to Kerala comrades were adopted. It is these decisions, especially the decision to plunge into mass activities, that were explained to the thousands that gathered at the public

meeting which was proceeded by a huge procession, starting from 'Seshagiri Nagar' named after the leader of Kothagudem miners, who was brutally shot dead. Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, Sundarayya, Basavapunnah, Narayanreddi and Yellareddi sat in a specially-constructed chariot, decorated with Red Flags, golden threads and flowers of all shades and colours.

This was followed by two hundred prabhas in bullock-carts, which had been arriving throughout the day from far-flung villages. In the procession could be seen lambadis, nomad tribes of the district, who presented a colourful appearance in their traditional red and yellow costumes with inlaid mirrors and ornaments of brass and horn, singing tribal songs.

Every bus, every vehicle and every train, arriving hours late, emptied hundreds of people into Khammam town.

And for once, the organisers of the Conference were distressed: the modest arrangements made for the public rally proved absolutely inadequate. But thanks to the resourcefulness of the people and the discipline of the crowd, the inadequate arrangements did not come in the way of the rally becoming a grand success.

Kerala was the running thread in all the slogans, on banners, in speeches and cultural performances and songs. The rally was rounded off by cultural programmes, one of which was about Kerala and the traditional burra katha.

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# A PEEP BEHIND THE PURDAH

Piqued by the unholy attack on the public sector by the propagandists of the private sector, Pandit Nehru, while unveiling the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Esplanade Maidan in Calcutta said: "There were some people in the private sector who remained behind the purdah, . . . and it is not possible to peep into their private affairs."

THE kept Press of Big Business, of course, could not allow such a frontal attack go unchallenged. Goenka's Indian Express, for instance, retorted with an editorial entitled "Uncalled For."

Here is a peep behind the purdah that will help to decide whether the attack on the private sector is uncalled for or called for:

## Biggest Spinning Concern

The Madura Mills Co. Ltd., the biggest spinning concern in India with about five lakh spindles in their six units in Madurai, Ambasamudram and Tuticorin, employing about 25,000 workers, is a British-dominated company and A and F Harvey are the managing agents.

In 1955, they began saying that they were getting less competitive, as the other mills in Tamilnad were on higher workloads and demanded a steep upgrading of the loads in their units.

The workers refused but the Madras Government obliged the management by appointing a special Tribunal to go into the question. The report of the Textile Tripartite Committee, the agreement between

## FROM A. BALASUBRAMANIAM

the unions and managements of Coimbatore, the Madurai Meenachi Mills agreement, etc., were exhibits before the Tribunal. The management produced most of the other millowners or their managers as witnesses. The enquiry which started in mid-1956 went on till around March 1957. After a detailed and searching enquiry, the Tribunal gave its award which substantially conceded the management's demand for its pound of flesh.

When the award began to be implemented a number of practical difficulties and anomalies came up. Used as they had been over a period of 25 years to a particular level of workload the workers found the new loads in some of the departments too heavy. Disputes developed inside the mills and the management declared a lock-out. Tripartite talks in the presence of Sri R. Venkatraman, Minister for Labour, were held and all agreed to the suggestion of the AITUC unions that there should be standing commit-

tees in all the units and these committees should discuss the anomalies and practical difficulties and seek to settle them quickly.

Only unanimous decisions of these committees were to be binding. In case there was no unanimity on any issue that was to be referred to the Government. These standing committees proved most useful and on a majority of issues unanimous decisions were arrived at making small alterations in the grades here and there, to suit local conditions, the age of the machinery (which is very old), the layout of the mills, etc.

Thus from the middle of 1957 the new loads have been in vogue. Hardly had a year gone by when the management again started its cry, "There is a recession in textiles. We are being ruined. Our production cost is high. We can no longer compete with the other mills in the State. The only way to save ourselves is for the workers to take on more loads. The variations and alterations from the Coimbatore agreement must go."

## Economise At The Top

As far as the bourgeoisie is concerned the only way to economise on production costs is to hit the workers with retrenchment or with more work-loads! The workers said no! They said, economise at the top, rationalise the managerial sector.

And there is plenty of scope for economising at that level.

Thirdly top officials (a managing director, a deputy managing director, 13 mercantile assistants on manager grades, two office assistants, three engineers, five junior engineers and five spinning masters) altogether get annually Rs. 18 lakhs! It is interesting to note that in 1949, their total annual emoluments came only to Rs. eight lakhs. So over the last nine years, they have given themselves an increase of 125 per cent.

## Allowances In Addition

Now about some of the allowances these senior officials get.

a) A dearness allowance of Rs. 75 (two years ago Rs. 200 was taken away from dearness allowance and merged with salary so that they can get more by way of pension contribution).

b) A marriage allowance of Rs. 250 per month. How can an officer marry on Rs. 3,000 or 4,000 per month? Hence the special allowance.

c) A children allowance of Rs. 50 per child up to a maximum of Rs. 150.

d) Then there is the provident fund to which the company contribution is 6 1/2 per cent of the salary plus dearness allowance.

e) And then there is a nice beautiful pension fund scheme to which the officer contri-

butest 2 1/2 per cent of his salary the company contributes 22 1/2 per cent.

f) That is not the end of the allowances. For those gentlemen on the managers' grade there is a special allowance of Rs. 100 per month.

Even all this is not enough to bring out the full efficiency of the top officials. So other amenities have to be provided for them, like—

a) Free furnished modern bungalows, with air-conditioners, and all the other gadgets;

b) Free supply of coal or firewood and kerosene;

c) Free supply of electricity;

d) Servants and gardeners free of cost;

e) Free maintenance of bungalows;

f) For those on manager's grade, a car and chauffeur;

g) Twenty gallons of petrol per month for those who own cars;

h) Vegetables supplied from the company's farm at a nominal cost;

i) Free medical treatment for the entire family (including maternity), supply of medicines and food tonics;

j) Facility for entire family to proceed to any place in India by Air-Conditioned or First Class and stay there during the annual leave of one month.

What is to be noted is that some of these more important cash and other benefits were added during 1955-1957, the period of "decline, recession, crisis!"

The company meets yet another of the very, very pressing needs of these officials—and that is bonus! Of course, many Labour Appellate Tribunal decisions had said that bonus was to make up in some measure for the short-fall of the actual wages from the living wages earned by workmen. Is it difficult to see or to understand that for these highly skilled bosses Rs. 5,000 per month is no living wage?

Apart from the managing agents, the above officers and dozens of junior officers and supervisors, the company needs must have the advice of Sir James Doak at London. For this so indispensable advice, he has to be paid Rs. 6,000 per month! And a Mr. Hughson at the London Office of Harveys—God knows what he does there—must get Rs. 5,000 per month, and for the maintenance of that office in London Rs. 2,000 per month has to be spent.

There is yet another angle to this loot. There is another allied concern, the Comorin Investment and Trading Co. (Private) Ltd. We learn from the horse's mouth as it were that this is but another name of the Madura Mills Co. Ltd. It has no separate capital. It is supposed to purchase all cotton that the Madura Mills need. And the Madura Mills need from eight to ten crores rupees worth of cotton every year. For purchasing this the Comorin Investment Trading Co. Ltd. is given a commission of about 1 1/2 per cent. That is a good way of pocketing a few lakhs of rupees, without so much as a thank you!

This is the result of just a peep behind the purdah. More when I have had a better look.

The organisation of a big mass movement on these problems will undoubtedly help to change the political situation in Punjab and defeat the game of communal reaction.

vested in the Panchayat which the village rich who will be affected by the ceilings hope to control.

It is significant that this was the very ground on which many of the delegates pressed for the surplus to be distributed to the landless instead of being vested in the Panchayat.

A Union Deputy Minister clarified his "personal" point of view "informally": with all this tempest over ceilings, he explained, there will actually perhaps be no surplus left by the time the ceilings come into force, because most of those who have extra land have already started dividing it up into smaller holdings among their own relatives.

He did not consider there was much to learn from China in the matter of cooperatives. (Sri Subramaniam in the Subjects Committee held almost the same view, because of the elements of "coercion" in China while the Congress wanted to go the "democratic" way.) The Deputy Minister did not see much prospect about cooperative joint farming, but he was enthusiastic about service cooperatives, for which he commended the Scandinavian model. Service cooperatives, it is important to note, received the approval of Sri Charan Singh as well.

In the mind of quite a few, India should follow the Japanese way of farming under which a huge army of landless could fit in with a high degree of production, bringing three times per acre yield than in India.

## PERSPECTIVE PLANNING

The Prime Minister's speeches on the resolution on Planning emphasised the importance of perspective planning. He seemed to favour the general laying down of the principles of physical planning as such, and was reluctant to go into any details about the actual outcome of the efforts of planning so far.

His repeated warnings to the private sector came in clear contrast to the different emphasis generally put by some of the other members of his own Cabinet, like the Finance and the Home Ministers. Pandit Nehru was equally effective in answering the World Bank thesis of "consolidate before advance" though he did not mention the Bank by name. In the debate over planning also, the criticisms came from opposite directions. The voice of Big Business was provided by Sri Babubhai Chinal whose whole emphasis was in the direction away from the public sector. He attacked Life Insurance nationalisation as also the role of the State trading Corporation. He cautioned against State trading in wholesale foodgrains, while about the Third Plan he warned that by having a bold and ambitious Plan, we should not land ourselves in difficulties.

It was interesting to note that nowhere in the Congress deliberations, the pertinent question raised in Sri Dhebar's Presidential address—"Why the people do not feel enthusiastic although so much is being done for them"—was discussed by the delegation.

## Definition Of Socialism

Even in dealing with generalities, the Prime Minister did not answer Sri Hanumanthai's demand for a clear picture of what is meant by a "democratic Socialist society." This was invested with additional importance in view of the fact that the resolution under discussion—itsself an improvement on the previous draft on this particular point—enjoins at the end that "all the implications of Socialism, in terms of individual and cooperative effort it requires, should be clearly explained to the people."

At the open session, the Prime Minister, however, tried to touch this point when he said: "The time has come when we cannot live from hand to mouth, if I may say so, with regard to our thinking." In lucid terms he then declared: "We want, first, higher standard of living for all; secondly, reduction of disparities in our country; and thirdly, equal opportunity for all."

A significant item in the resolution is that instead of simply stating that the wages should be linked to production—which is believed to have been objected to by many of the State Governments as being likely to stir up a cam-

paign for higher wages—it is now held that "wages and salaries should be increasingly dependent on work done and on production and should be related to the conditions existing in India." The present draft, some delegates felt, is significantly ambiguous to be interpreted differently by the management and the trade unions.

There was hardly any forth-

right call for a countrywide drive against corruption. Rather, Pandit Nehru's remarks that corruption is sometimes associated with a certain phase of development, might be taken as an alibi by at least some for all irregularities prevailing today. Pandit Nehru, however, was quick to point out that corruption in the public sector is, even then, less than in the private sector.

and the resolution—in stronger language than in the past—was not missed by many in the Congress.

Many also noted Sri Menon's advice to Indians in Africa to be "proud of kinship with Africans" while his warm tripping today. Pandit Nehru, however, was quick to point out that corruption in the public sector is, even then, less than in the private sector.

## Organisational Issues

While the claim was freely put forward that the resolutions on Agrarian Question and Planning have far-reaching possibilities in taking the country forward, there was extraordinarily little discussion on organisational issues. With the obvious lack of unified understanding among Congressmen about the implications of these resolutions, hardly any concrete steps have been taken to bring about that unity.

Moreover, the last year has seen powerful Pradesh Congress Committees rent asunder with group politics dominating them. Not only no mention was made in the speeches and resolutions about this growing canker in Congress activities, but there seemed to be a singular lack of realisation about the importance of the role of a political party in bringing about important reforms.

How serious this question is bound to become if decisions are to be implemented is clear from Sri Charan Singh's opposition to the agrarian resolution, for he is himself the Minister who is expected to execute most of the decisions in the biggest Congress State, U.P.

The U.P. controversy was patched up for the time being, while the Andhra question did not come up. Kerala Congress leaders held several meetings with members of the High Command, "bogged" as they were over the choice of a PCG President.

Sri Manmohan Misra quite frankly stated that the Congress organisation in the countryside has become inadequate to cope with the

\* SEE BACK PAGE

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Three issues figured prominently in the discussion on Foreign Affairs: Pakistan, Goa and the Commonwealth. The absence of any reference to Pakistan in the resolution was explained, rather unconvincingly by the assertion that "in common parlance we do not speak about Pakistan as a foreign country" as Sri Krishna Menon made it out.

There was in fact no direct reply to the condemnation of the United States for supplying arms to Pakistan with which she issues threats to India and which leads also to spending more on our country's defence. Sri Krishna Menon seemed to agree with the proposition only in case of France using arms against Algeria: "When military aid is given to a country, the giving country cannot put the condition that the guns would fire only in one direction."

## Silence Over U. S. Arms Aid

But no reference to the U.S. arms aid to Pakistan was accepted. In fact, the Prime Minister is reported to have urged the Working Committee to accept the American assurance given to India that U.S. arms to Pakistan would not be used against this country.

West Bengal delegate Bijoy Singh Nahar's objection to the resolution because of the absence of any reference to the depredations on the border and the handing over of a portion of Berubari to Pakistan under the Nehru-Noon agreement came at best partially from the anxiety that the Opposition parties might make use of it against the Congress Government.

Perhaps the best part of Pandit Nehru's moving to Pakistan was his moving tribute to old comrades with the obvious reference to Abdul Gaffar Khan and others—who have done so much for India's freedom but were left out of it when it actually came and are today languishing behind bars as they had to do in the past.

There was no convincing answer to the demand for a strong line on Goa. Sri Krishna Menon while disagreeing with the suggestion that anything more could be done from the Government's end, stressed the importance of solidarity campaign with Goans' own resistance. Judging by the volume of resentment expressed over the issue, it is doubtful if all were convinced by the leaders' argument on the point.

The particular mention of growing friendship with Com-

monwealth countries was answered by the leaders mainly by the point that with the entry of new members, the Commonwealth itself has been changing its character.

Pandit Nehru added that while remaining in the Commonwealth brought no harm, he thought it was beneficial since India's weight could be thrown at times on the side of good in any issue. In today's world, he felt that anything that unites should not be broken.

Over all the three issues—Pakistan, Goa and Commonwealth, the Prime Minister took the position that if we adhere to Panah Shila we should be prepared to accept its implications.

Sri Anup Singh, surprisingly enough, was happy at the reference to the growing friendship inside the Commonwealth countries. We have "grown immeasurably" by this association, he said.

Sri Sheelbhadra Yajee claimed that even Socialist countries wanted India to stay in the Commonwealth and thereby help the cause of peace.

## Freedom Not For Sale

Loud applause greeted Sri Krishna Menon when explaining India's basic position in foreign policy, he declared: "Our freedom is not for sale." Stress against Western policy over Algeria and Cyprus both in Sri Menon's speech

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## Punjab Conference

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Punjab in general and particularly in the Hindi region. The Conference noted that the Jan Sangh which had gained a foothold in the urban areas was now seeking to penetrate into the Harijans region and hence emphasised the need to organise the democratic movement in these areas.

The Organisational Report presented to the Conference by Comrade Surjeet made a critical estimate of the Party organisation in the State.

Since the Jandiala Conference of the Party three years ago, 7,000 new members had been recruited to the Party, the Party membership at present standing at 10,751. Out of the 20,898 villages, in the Punjab, the Communist Party had its membership in 2,655 villages organised in 1,125 branches. The Party has its membership and branches in 112 towns and cities of the State.

The Party had 415 whole-time cadres, out of whom 137 were working in Party organisations, 51 on the working class front, 45 among agricultural workers, 133 on the kisan front, four among women and one on the youth and cultural front.

This advance was not yet commensurate with the possibilities that existed. Com-

rade Surjeet also underlined the need to raise the ideological level of Party members.

## Programme For Party-Building

After discussing this report, the Conference chalked out a programme to strengthen Party organisation in the State. Main points of this programme are:

● Training of cadres by organising Party schools at various levels;

● Rapid recruitment of Party members from among workers, agricultural workers and women. The Conference decided that at least five per cent of the members of trade unions and agricultural labour organisations should be educated and recruited as Party members.

● Improvement of the functioning of the Party by improving relations between the higher and lower committees, regular reporting, check-up, etc.

● Sale of Party literature and journal, with the target of doubling the Party journal's sale during the coming year;

● Strengthening of the work of the Party in the Harijans region—by helping the existing Party committee there and by sending more cadre;

● Improving the financial position of the Party. It was decided that every earning member of the Party

should give at least 2 1/2 per cent of his income to the Party every month. The Conference elected a State Council of 75 members. The Council elected Comrade Harkishen Singh Surjeet as the Secretary and 25 members to the State Executive Committee. A State Control Commission of five was also elected.

Addressing the open rally of the Conference, Comrade B. T. Ranadive appealed to the people of the Punjab to sink all their differences and unite in order to defend the freedom and democracy of India from the growing threat of imperialist conspiracies in Pakistan.

Comrade Ranadive paid tributes to the revolutionary traditions of the Punjab and said that it was here in Punjab that long before Mahatma Gandhi raised the slogan of complete freedom, some revolutionaries had come forward and laid down their lives for this noble cause.

He expressed his confidence that the people of Punjab in keeping with their traditions will rise to the occasion and unitedly come forward to face the new threat.

Sharply criticising the role of the communal forces, he appealed to the people of Punjab to see that all those who seek to divide the Punjab on false slogans of religion, of Hindi or Punjabi in danger serve the interests of the enemies of the people—the Anglo-American

imperialists.

Taking stock of developments in India in 1958, Comrade Ranadive said that despite pressure on the Nehru Government from the imperialists on the one hand and Indian Big Business on the other, it was pursuing an independent foreign policy. He said that certain elements within the Nehru Government, aligned with the imperialists and Indian Big Business were seeking to reverse these policies and warned the people to remain vigilant.

The second biggest achievement of the democratic forces in India in 1958, he said, was the defeat of reaction's conspiracies to throw out of office the Communist-led Government in Kerala. He said that Congress and Praja Socialist leaders had united to overthrow the Communist-led Ministry for they feared that its policies were having a tremendous radicalising effect on the people throughout India.

Other resolutions adopted by the Conference were on the communal situation, on developments in Pakistan, on democratic liberties, on the agrarian situation, on the struggle against betterment levy, on rise in food prices, etc.

The organisation of a big mass movement on these problems will undoubtedly help to change the political situation in Punjab and defeat the game of communal reaction.

This is the result of just a peep behind the purdah. More when I have had a better look.



# INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

THE New Year this time appears to have brought along with it a fresh and hopeful breeze that could, if not blocked out, continue to blow long enough and gather strength enough to be able to extinguish the flames of the cold war.

The reports of the sojourn of the First Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A. I. Mikoyan, in the United States augur well for the peace of the world. A very considerable section of the American Press stresses the friendly and open nature of Mikoyan's talks with U. S. officials. The articles emphasise the prompt desire of the Soviet statesman to settle by personal contacts and talks questions that give rise to tension in international relations, particularly in the relations between the USSR and the United States.

There can be no denying the fact that in fanning the cold war and in playing on the brink of war—with world peace, mutual distrust and lack of extensive contacts that prevented the attainment of mutual understanding, played a significant role. If we are all to breathe freely in the same atmosphere, the perpetual hovering of a nuclear menace in it could hardly be considered as conducive by any sane person.

## To Soviet Union's Credit

It goes to the credit of the Soviet Union, which first broke the barriers of the earth's gravity, that it has become the first in attempting to break through such a state of affairs as well. The Soviet Deputy Premier has by now met a number of important personalities in the United States. With remarkable candour and outspokenness he has been answering questions disturbing the American mind.

That chronic sufferer of a "summit-phobia", John Foster Dulles, has already met the Soviet Deputy Premier in his State Department office, once. The preliminary talks, though reported to be in general

terms, have covered the problems of common interest, including the question of Berlin, Germany, disarmament and trade. They have agreed to meet again for more detailed discussion on Mikoyan's return to Washington after touring the U. S.

Mikoyan was also received by the U. S. Vice-President Richard Nixon and held talks

with him on similar lines. Nixon is reported to have spoken of the need for peaceful economic competition between the U. S. and the Soviet Union.

The stage is thus being set for the oncoming Eisenhower-Mikoyan talks.

## Outspoken Utterances

Meanwhile, the Soviet Deputy Premier is touring the U. S. cities, meeting U. S. top industrialists, politicians, trade union leaders, Pressmen as well as the man-in-the-street, and answering questions ranging from the problems of peace and Berlin to Communism and the internal problems of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party.

Considering the manner in which the American people were kept informed, or rather misinformed, about the Soviet viewpoint, the positive significance of the outspoken utterances of the Soviet Deputy Premier for the promotion of mutual understanding between the two most powerful countries of the world can well be imagined.

When asked which question he regarded as being of cardinal importance for the improvement of relations with the United States, Mikoyan replied: "Above all, the question of peace. We must not aggravate relations, must end the

Dr. Walker Aster, the President of the Detroit Edison Co. and Associates, while thanking Mikoyan for his speech, had said that all those present could have a better understanding of each other after this remarkable meeting and expressed confidence that all present would do their utmost to improve the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Apart from a few anti-Soviet demonstrations, which at

## MIKOYAN'S U. S. VISIT —A Happy Augury

answered: "There can be no two different interpretations of the word 'peace'. Some people in your country concentrate attention on the question who is to blame for the cold war and seek to shift the blame on us. This is a wrong approach. If this approach is taken, the dispute on this question can go on endlessly. Would it not be better to let future historians settle the issue and now explore ways of improving our relations?"

The realistic approach motivated by a genuine desire for a peaceful coexistence is transparent in these replies.

Again, when asked about the division of Germany, Mikoyan's reply was as succinct as his indictment forceful: "At one time there was one mark, enough for the whole of Germany," he declared. "But you set up a different currency. West Germany is in your military alliance and you armed this army and are now turning over your atomic weapons to this army. Yalta said nothing about that."

"Do you know what it means to put atomic weapons in the hands of German revenge-seekers? You are now arming Germans with atomic weapons to be used against us and now you are demanding free elections. One is not compatible with the other."

The keynote of the Soviet Deputy Premier's speech addressed to the American people is the appeal: "We should start talking to each other as human beings and as equals," for finding immediate ways for averting a nuclear war, for ending the cold war atmosphere and for increasing trade and establishing broader mutual contacts which can help strengthen peace.

## Hopeful Response

Significantly enough the response from quite a number of influential personalities in the U. S. has been hopeful. A few instances are worth citing.

American industrialist Cyrus Eaton has spoken in favour of businesslike competition between the two countries despite the difference in ideology.

James Lincoln, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Electric Co. and G. Brown of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, both have stressed the significance of exchange and mutual understanding between the USSR and the USA.

one place elicited from Mikoyan the biting remark: "We stand for freedom—not freedom for hoodlums, but freedom from hoodlums." The general picture which one gets from Press reports is that the Soviet Deputy Premier is being well received by the American people.

In fact, at a luncheon given in honour of the Soviet guest by Ohio business circles, the Presidents of the

## KERALA KALOTSAV

\* FROM FACING PAGE

the week from 3 to 5 p.m. Their folk songs and dances were of all types, from the very raw and primitive to the cultivated and complicated art forms.

In the earlier years I had found it very difficult to get the Kathakali exponents admit the folk origin of their great national art. This time when a tribal troupe from the Malays performed the Thayyam, I nudged Guru Gopinath. "There is your grand-father of Kathakali" and he heartily agreed.

On other days we discovered classical Kathakali's folk grand-aunts and grand-uncles and there was no doubting them for anybody with eyes to see.

This folk art festival has not only been a discovery for Kerala's traditional artists but it has helped to strengthen the demand that the Kerala Kalamandalam, the premier Kathakali Centre, should also have provision for teaching the folk art forms.

We saw folk dances which could be put to new uses with great effect. For example, the vigorous Kanniyarkali would suit the youthful Jawans of our armed forces remarkably well. The stick dance of the Moplahs could be usefully taught to our high-school boys. Kalkottikall ought to be taught in every girls' school and become the national dance of Kerala girlhood as Garba is of the Gujaratis.

Thayambaka, the folk orchestra based on the Chendas, could be used to stir the blood of our youth.

The Kalotsavam has helped to give a really organised form to the broad-based cultural revival that has been taking place in Kerala over the few decades. It has been a big get-together of the masters

biggest industrial, trading and transport companies, bank directors, publishers of local newspapers and members of the general public, the statements made by the American speakers were such that Mikoyan declared: "If the spirit which infused the speeches here today were to become the basis of all our relations, a new page in history would be turned."

But the net result of Mikoyan's visit would be known after his final meeting with the U. S. President.

It now remains to be seen whether the U. S. Government would rise to the occasion and instead of pursuing a policy which leads it to "spend billions more" for military affairs "regardless of how badly it might wreck" the balance of the U. S. budget (Report of the "National Planning Association") and to such absurdities as even chewing gum, firewood and laxatives being classified as "strategic" goods whose export from the U. S. to the USSR is banned, let alone the grave dangers to world peace involved in the "brinkmanship" performances, would meet the Soviet initiative half-way in turning "a new page in history."

(January 14)

and workers in the various fields of Kerala's culture. What is important is that they have not only come together for a festival but also begun to feel the need to keep together for their own future work.

The festival has also revealed the wealth of talent that exists in Kerala's cultural life. The concrete problem is to pick up young talent and train it under the old masters.

The seminars on Kerala's Kathakali, folk arts, music and drama were very interesting and exciting, and what is worth noting is that they generally came to unanimous conclusions. This again reveals how ripe the situation is in Kerala for a new forward move. I will write about the discussions in these seminars in another article.

Fortunately there is no Calcutta, Bombay or Madras inside Kerala. So the danger of commercialisation of Kerala's national culture is far less.

The non-partisan and clean manner in which the Communist Ministry, headed by E. M. S. Namboodripad, is aiding the revival of Kerala's culture has strengthened the belief among Kerala's cultural leaders that further development of Kerala's culture on a national popular basis will be carried forward, with the generous help of the Kerala Government.

(January 13)

# KERALA KALOTSAVAM

By P. C. JOSHI

The year 1958 ended for me in a very happy manner indeed attending the Kerala Kalotsavam (Festival of Culture). The Communist Government in Kerala has not only introduced the Education Bill, the Land Bill and appointed a Committee for administrative reforms, but also formed the Sahitya Akademi and the Sangeeta Natak Akademi. Within a year of its establishment the Sangeeta Natak Akademi organised the Kalotsavam and despite inevitable weaknesses made it a success.

VETERAN freedom-fighter and the editor of the leading nationalist daily, Mathrubhumi, Sri K. P. Kesava Menon, was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the Chief Minister inaugurated it. It was a week-long festival with three concerts of traditional music and one of light music, two ballets and three modern dramas, with the children's festival thrown in on the very first day.

Every day was a busy day with the seminars in the morning, demonstration of folk art in the afternoon and scheduled cultural performances in the evening, which went on late into the night. Kerala's cultural heritage was made to live, in a big way, on the stage, and it thrilled everyone who witnessed it.

A few incorrigibles went on whispering and campaigning that the Communists were taking the mask of culture to strengthen their Party influence, but their evil words did not work. All the present names in Kerala culture, the great masters and the young artists, were there and so were the culturally interested persons from all over Kerala. Anti-Communism proved to be a damp squib when hurled against the noble cause of reviving and carrying forward Kerala's national culture.

The festival stirred the best feelings among the audience and it felt good to spend a whole week amidst such fine people, who are thinking and working for the grand cause of Kerala's culture and were grateful to our Government for having created the necessary conditions.

## Feast Of Music

Kerala's top vocalist, the venerable Chembal Valdyanatha Bhagavathar, Presidential Award winner, virtually opened the festival. He was accompanied on the Mridangam by the wizard of the instrument, Sri Palghat Mani, another Presidential Award winner, and on the Violin by T. N. Krishnan and on the Ghatam by Alankudi Ramachandran.

It was Kerala's all-star cast and their performances uplifted the 5,000 audience present, which heard them in pin-drop silence for over three hours. Chembal sang Karnatik songs both devotional and romantic and a few Kathakali songs. After singing one Kathakali song, he asked the great Guru, Kunchu Kurup, if he was doing it right and the whole audience roared when he got the answer that another song would make even the Guru's old bones start dancing!

On December 23, young musician Kaviyur Revamma

and patronage as is available in our metropolitan cities.

## Kathakali —Grand Style

Kathakali has its own Gurus and their disciples as actors. A guru and his guru never unite with one another and are generally as jealous of each other as their old feudal patrons. In the Kalotsavam new prospects were opened up when on December 23, a whole-night Kathakali was performed by an all-star cast consisting of the present leading actors from the Kalamandalam and other institutions, all famous actors and disciples of the great gurus. The stories of Nala and Damayanti and Keechaka Vadham were enacted with great realism and artistry.

In the traditional style Kathakali, the girls don't act,

with modern themes, and even in traditional form suited for new modern themes.

I discussed the problem with the Kathakali specialists and its actors and their response was positive. The new cultural revival in Kerala is certainly on the way up when its leading traditional artists are so open to new ideas and responsive to modern needs. They also responded enthusiastically to the suggestion that their significant get-together in the Kalotsavam must be carried forward and lead to new creative work on a collective basis.

Very few know that Mrinalini Sarabhai is herself a Malayalee and loves her Kerala. She came to the festival with her troupe, Darpan, trained by Chattunni Panikkar. They performed the story of Lav and Kush holding up Ram's Aswamedh horse, in

Ballet Troupe performed Vasavadatta in a mixed style which was presentable but nothing outstanding. They failed to make a hit because their other items were weak and this was because it is very difficult to make a mark after a grand Kathakali performance.

Watching the Darpan and the Bharathi troupes, noting their worth as also their weaknesses, the thought came to me over and over again that our young modern artists need to respect our traditional art forms more. They have yet to train their troupes to the professional level. They are too much in a hurry to perform while they need to learn more.

## The Modern Dramas

Vaikom Mohammed Bashir's Award winning novel, Ndayappaku Orana Undaranni, (My Grandfather Had An Elephant) was enacted as a drama. It is a social story of Moplah life. The actors were remarkably talented and true to types. The performances revealed that Kerala's cultural renaissance has also drawn in the hitherto backward Moplah and even their girls outside the purdah.

On the 22nd, Alleppey's Arya Kala Nilayam performed Bhawana. It was a dance drama and suffered from the undigested influence of Uday Shankar's Kalpana. I felt very sorry that a worker writer, of undoubted talent, had tried to portray the story of a social strata of which he had no living experience. The upper class outlook had infected a proletarian writer even inside Kerala!

On December 27, Trivandrum's Kalavedi performed Mama Warerkar's Kanchara Seetha adapted by C. N. Srikanth Nair. This was the most successful drama of the festival.

These drama performances revealed the histrionic talent that exists inside Kerala and the brave efforts that the various local groups are making on their own to build up Kerala's modern stage.

## The Folk Arts

Kerala Communists can be justifiably proud of being the pioneers in the revival of Kerala's folk cultural heritage in the days when the middle-class considered folk songs and dances as rustic and uncouth. One felt very good reading the editorial comment of Kerala's leading nationalist daily Mathrubhumi: "The beauty and variety of the folk forms of art presented at the festival would have surprised many people. Even today there exist in different parts of Kerala many folk forms which if properly polished can shine with increased brightness and artistic value."

The folk troupes came from all over Kerala, from its various labouring castes, tribes and communities and they performed every afternoon of

\* SEE FACING PAGE

## Kerala's Cultural Revival Takes A Big Step Forward

anticipated and everyone said that they had never imagined before that so much musical talent existed inside Kerala.

Orchestral music was performed on December 23 in modern style by the Trivandrum Orchestra and on the last day by the Calicut Orchestra which combined both Western and Indian instruments. Without the backing of a rich and influential organisation, orchestras do not survive. Kerala's young artists love their culture and are making the needed sacrifices to be able to stabilise their new orchestras, full of promise, without such support

the boys themselves act the female roles. This festival brought to the fore Suniti and Thangamani, daughter and niece of the Raja of Kottakkal as promising young artists, and the experts agreed that Suniti has a future if she keeps on dancing.

All the Malayalees with whom I discussed the performance assured me that they had never witnessed such an inspiring and gripping Kathakali before. I am an old lover of Kathakali. In Kathakali the elements of music, dance and drama are very harmoniously blended. As an art form it is very well suited for the creation of new ballets

modernised Kathakali style, and it was a big success as a ballet based on Kathakali style. There were less mudras and more movements and the good choreography made the story move fast and pleasing to the eyes.

## The Modern Ballets

Their ballet Manushya was a failure. It was an attempt at combining the classical styles with our folk dances, in Western ballet style. It suffered from amateurishness and lacked spirit. Gopalakrishna's Bharathi



Panchavadyam performance at the Festival

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# REPORT FROM NAGPUR

\* FROM PAGE 13

tasks facing the people. A sense of defeatism has come over Congressmen, he admitted, so resolutions by themselves would not enthuse workers. All the urge for sacrifice that was so widespread in the days of freedom struggle was now missing. In contrast, Sri Sat Mishra, quoting Prof. Bettelheim, referred to the great part played by the Communist Party in China in acting as the central nervous system for the entire economy.

While there has been no dearth of complaints from Congress leaders about the Communist Government in Kerala trying to make use of Government machinery, anybody watching what was happening in the Congress Nagpur itself could not fail to detect the massive assistance that the Government renders in various forms for the session of the ruling party.

### Two Issues Avoided

Two issues which have engaged public attention most during the past year were conspicuously avoided at the Nagpur Congress. Kerala was not once referred to, although Sri Dhebar downwards what a clamour has been made about the sacrilege against 'democracy' under the Communist Ministry.

The other issue which was totally kept out was the demand for Samyukta Maharashtra. Not once throughout the session the question was allowed to be raised, while Pandit Nehru in his public meeting did not once make a mention of it.

It is not that the people of Nagpur were indifferent to it. On the very opening day of the Congress session, a mammoth gathering attended a public meeting addressed by the leaders of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti headed by S. A. Dange and S. M. Joshi. Perhaps at no other session of the Congress a counter-attraction could draw such a big audience away from the Congress session itself.

### Unexpressed Rivalry

Although unexpressed, the powerful rivalry so familiar in New Delhi, between the U.P. and the Gujarat groups—centring round Pandit Pant and Morarji Desai respectively—could be felt at the Nagpur Congress. Many thought that the exit of Sri Dhebar from Congress Presidentship is itself one of its results. Some even went to the length of suggesting that Morarji's operation was timed in such a way that he might stay away from the session with good grace.

Clearly the U.P. group is more powerful in the Congress

and with the obvious hook-up with the South, they could trounce the Morarji group in case of a tug-of-war. It is likely that the Morarji group has thought it discreet to lie low for the present.

### Next President

It is in this context that the choice of Sri Dhebar's successor assumed peculiar importance and Smt. Indira Gandhi's name has come up as his possible successor.

What is, however, more significant is the fact that not one among the various names for Congress Presidentship that were heard during the week in Nagpur—like Nijalingappa, C. Subramaniam or S. K. Patil—has hardly an all-India standing—such is the patent bankruptcy that faces the Congress leadership today.

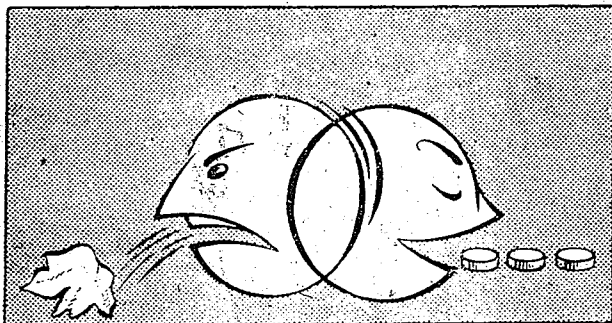
### Nehru Dominates

Although all the resolutions were passed unanimously and the voting on amendments was pathetically poor, it would be wrong to conclude that the High Command enjoys the unstinted confidence of the ranks. The one man who does command it still is Pandit Nehru and the passing of the resolutions with all their implications was undoubtedly his personal triumph.

An index of the average feeling of the delegates towards the High Command was provided by an interesting non-official motion brought forward by Sri Hanumanthiah that half the Working Committee should be elected by the AICC instead of the present practice of the entire body being nominated by the President. Sri Mahavir Tyagi supported it while Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri opposed the motion. It was defeated by a narrow majority and that too when it was made known that Pandit Nehru was in favour of the status quo.

### One-Man Popularity

It is this reality of the one-man popularity of the Congress which has left an abiding impression on me as I left Nagpur. "Can the whole lot of people sitting behind Pandit Nehru implement this programme?" asked a colleague of mine pointing to the dais. Not only that, the leadership minus Nehru is effete and ineffective in carrying the millions with them, many of them—in fact, even some of the supporters of the resolutions—can hardly enthuse the nation about their capacity, integrity and conviction in carrying out the programme that Nagpur has laid down for the Congress.



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