

THE STRIKE ON JULY 11

NEW AGE

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Editorial

The acutely felt grievances and rapidly mounting campaign of the Central Government employees for an all-India strike from July 11 is frontpage news. A big crisis is ahead unless good sense prevails and soon enough.

The accredited representatives of the 22 lakh employees seek a negotiated settlement and their demands are fool-proof in terms of the Union Government's own declared policies and earlier decisions.

THE Union Government refuses to talk unless its employees first agree to its dictation. This is a travesty of trade unionism. The employees rightly refuse to yield. The Government is making preparations to unleash repression as if it will really work. This is no way to run the country thirteen years after independence.

The Central Government is gambling with the peace of the country and the production of the nation. It is an intolerable situation.

Let there be no mistaking the mood of the mass of workers and employees. In the Eastern Railway, out of 94,553, almost all, 94,511 voted for strike. In Northeast Railway out of 33,000, 98.4 per cent voted for. Right in Delhi, 48,669 voted for and a mere 713 against.

In the last Parliament session, the Government boasted that defence production had increased 24 per cent. And yet it refuses to listen to the very workers who did the magnificent job. In no defence establishment is the vote for strike less than 92 per cent. In Cossipur Gun and Shell Factory it is 95.8 per cent, in Ichapur Ordnance Factory 94.03 per cent. In the Kanpur Small Arms Factory 986 voted for and 15 against. In the nearby IAF workshops at Chakeri where the new Avro is to be manufactured, it was cent per cent. And strike ballot in the defence establishments is conducted under the supervision of the management.

When the leaders of the Central Government employees met in New Delhi on June 23 they declared with great confidence, "no amount of repressive measures will deter them from the chosen course of action."

They reflected the all-embracing unity and grim determination that is fast developing at the base where Joint Councils of Action are being set up.

Despite all provocations, the union leaders are acting very responsibly. They have exempted the operational area i.e. NEFA, Mizo Hills, Laksh, Kashmir and Jammu from their strike action. They have also

exempted the army cooks and hospitals.

Their one main demand is that dearness allowance should be linked with the cost of living index. To deny it is plain injustice on all counts.

The textile workers and the

Tripartite Indian Labour Conference. Union Labour Minister Nanda gave the solemn assurance that the Government will implement this recommendation and that it applied both to the public and private sectors. The Pay Commission has not

Get Govt. To Do Justice!

bank employees of the country already get their dearness allowance on this very scale. The Central-Government-appointed Textile and Cement Wage Boards have also recommended the adoption of this formula for these industries in the private sector. How can the Union Government, as the employer in the public sector, refuse to give dearness allowance on the same scale to its own employees which it recommends to the employers in the private sector to do?

Above all, the First Pay Commission recommended this very formula and the Government accepted its recommendation. Between the First and Second Pay Commissions, the employees were fibbed off with a paltry so-called interim relief. And now, after the Second Pay Commission Report and some years, the Government refuses to implement what it had once accepted.

For the implementation of this very demand, the Central Government employees went on strike in 1949, 1951 and 1957. The Government must implement its own early pledge and not provoke its employees to go on strike again.

Another main demand is for a need-based minimum living wage as unanimously recommended by the 15th

opined against the earlier recommendation of the 15th Labour Conference. It was misled and misguided by the Finance Ministry which wrote to it that the Government did not consider the recommendation of 15th Labour Conference binding and mandatory.

It is the Finance Minister who deserves the sack for unauthorised and unfair intervention in affairs that rightly are the concern of the Labour Ministry.

A Secretary of Morarji's Ministry cannot be allowed to write off the unanimous recommendations of a Tripartite Conference, duly and solemnly endorsed and accepted by the Government representative, the Union Labour Minister.

If the Second Pay Commission is quoted against the 15th Tripartite Labour Conference, who will ever trust the word of the Government, what will happen to the whole tripartite machinery so laboriously built up and above all, what will ensue in the country's industrial relations?

This is no way to safeguard industrial peace, but the surest method of scuttling it.

The Central Government employees will not only be fighting for the most elementary right of a minimum living wage but they will also be fighting

THE Joint Council of Action of Central Government employees, meeting on June 23, adopted the following resolution:

The Joint Council of Action carefully considered the reply dated June 18, 1960, received from the Secretariat of the Prime Minister to the letter addressed by the Chairman of the JCA. The meeting deplores the attitude of the Prime Minister as reflected in that letter declining to meet the representatives of the JCA. The Prime Minister's contention that the recommendations of the Pay Commission amount to an award by a tribunal is untenable. The very fact that the Government has unilaterally modified the recommendations is proof in itself that it was never an award.

The Council regrets very much that the Prime Minister should have taken exception to the formation of a Joint Council, and is of the opinion that the creation of the Council was in exercise of the fundamental rights of the workers to organise to safeguard their rights as a means of collective bargaining under the Constitution. The Prime Minister's anxiety for the well-being of the employees and the improvement of their living standard is wholly inconsistent with his refusal even to meet the representatives of the employees to discuss their legitimate demands.

It is not seriously disputed that the Government's failure to stabilise prices has made consider-

able inroads in the real wages of the employees. The Council, therefore, while sharing the Prime Minister's concern for the successful fulfilment of Plans and aware of other grave issues of both national and international importance fails to appreciate how a legitimate effort to prevent a further deterioration of admittedly low living standard is "unbecoming".

Under these circumstances, therefore, the Council is compelled to reaffirm its earlier decision and calls upon all Central Government employees to go on strike from the midnight of July 11 (zero hour of July 12) 1960. The Council very much regrets the inconvenience which would be caused to the public and wishes to emphasise that it is the Government's unhelpful and unreasonable attitude which has forced this course of action on the employees.

The Council appeals to the public for its sympathy and cooperation in the employees' struggle for a fair deal.

The Council urges the Central Government employees to stand united and determined to make this historic struggle for justice a success. The Council is conscious of the ordeal through which the employees may have to pass including the banning of the strike by the Government and yet feels confident that no amount of repressive measures will deter them from the chosen course of action.

to make the Indian Government honour its own pledges when they go on strike on July 11. The Indian people will support them not only because theirs is the demand based on elementary social justice but also because they expect the Government not to function in a crooked but honourable way.

It is no use hoisting the tattered banner of national emergency to resist the just demands of the employees. Where is the national emergency with the Rashtrapati, Defence, Finance and Railway Ministers all out of the country?

It is no use repeating the false argument that a wage-rise to the Central Government employees will lead to inflation and endanger the Plan. There are Planning-cum-Labour Minister Nanda's own words against this falsehood. In the last session of the Parliament, he clearly stated that wage-rise was not responsible for the inflationary pressure.

What should really stir national conscience is that during the whole course of the First and Second Five-Year Plans the Central Government employees got nothing more than Rs. five during 1957.

It is no use relying on the INTUC to break workers' unity

and the coming strike. It is something like a broken red. The experience of the Jamshedpur general strike and the textile strike in Bombay on July 25, 1959 should be enough for the Government to realise the grim truth. Again in Calcutta the local INTUC has been joining with the AITUC whenever the mass of workers have gone into action in a big way. The Congress leaders do consider it undesirable but it is real and tells its own tale. The Government will be acting in a criminally irresponsible manner if it cannot read these plain signs of the time.

The workers are preparing with all their might for their general strike but negotiated settlement is their declared first choice. We earnestly hope good sense will prevail and the Indian Government will soon start talks with the leaders of the Joint Council of Action and before the situation goes out of hand.

Indian public opinion cannot let the Government play with Indian peace, production and the Plan. It will give all support to the Central Government employees who are only fighting for their just and minimum due and to make the Indian Government act honourably.

(June 29)

WITH THE RASHTRAPATI

● by cable from MASOOD ALI KHAN

MOSCOW, June 28.

In Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and Sochi, the President of the Indian Republic has been accorded a tumultuous welcome. It has become a thrilling demonstration of love, respect and deep friendship, which the Soviet people cherish in their hearts for India. It has been a sea of flowers and smiling faces all along. Thousands upon thousands greet the Indian guests with such sincere emotion, such fervour and warmth that even the stoniest hearts would melt.

IN Leningrad, about a million lined the route from the railway station. Rajendra Prasad and his party visited Smolny, the building where the headquarters of the Bolsheviks was situated at the time of the October Revolution. The President saw Lenin's room and the hall where Soviet power was proclaimed in 1917.

Indian guests were present at the launching of the 40,000-ton tanker, Budapest, at the Baltic shipyards, saw the huge workshops, visited historical monuments and palaces, and saw the great art collection of Hermitage. The President paid a visit

to the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad and was very much impressed by the work being done there in the field of Indology. He was presented with translations of Arthashastra, Mahabharat and other Indian classics and a set of publications on India. In the evening he saw a ballet performance.

The President has been very much impressed by all that he has seen and at the banquet given in his honour by the City Soviet of Leningrad he declared, what I have seen has exceeded all my expectations. What struck him most, he said, was the almost perfect

blend of different traditions, old and new.

We, Indian journalists accompanying the President saw for the first time, in our lives the glorious white nights of Leningrad and on the banks of river Neva, people collected and gave improvised concerts to please us.

On Saturday, June 25, we arrived in Kiev, capital of Ukraine, and from the airport all along the route it was same picture. People stood three-four deep for miles to welcome the head of Indian State, they showered flowers and ran forward to the cars wherever we slowed down.

Next day the President went to see the collective farm, Druzhba, at Ksaverovka village in the Grebenka district of Ukraine. It is a big farm uniting about twelve hundred families and two villages. The Rashtrapati and journalists of his party asked many questions and acquainted themselves with the working of the farm in great detail. The party saw a new club build-

ing and some houses of farmers.

The visitors were very much impressed by the farm which has an income of ten million a year and has made astounding progress during the last five or six years. Addressing a meeting of collective farmers, Rajendra Prasad congratulated them for their great achievements. The President declared he was happy to see that science was being used to increase the standard of living of the people and that farmers had plenty of food, good life and a high standard of living.

He could see from their faces that they lived a happy life and enjoyed good health. People need food to live, clothes to wear and education for development of mind. He could see that they had all this. He did not doubt that they would continue to progress in the same way and their crops would continue to increase.

Yesterday, we arrived at the picturesque health resort of Sochi on the Black Sea. The

twenty-mile route along the winding mountainside road from Adler Airport to Sochi was lined with waving, cheering crowds who gave an enthusiastic welcome to the President and his party. Hundreds of bouquets of the beautiful fragrant flowers of the south were showered upon us. Here, too, people shouted slogans in Hindi, ran forward to shake hands and some even ran along with the cars and kissed members of party.

Today, the President visited two sanatoria and saw the elaborate arrangements of sulphur baths available for patients. He was impressed by the excellent sanatorium built for workers of the metallurgical industry.

The whole Indian party went for a cruise on the Black Sea this morning and enjoyed the breath-taking panorama of Sochi with its mountains and beautiful sanatoria and bathing beaches.

The President today planted a Magnolia tree in the valley of Friendship in Riviera Park.

THE DELHI ANGLE

Honest Constructive Straightforward

by OUR CORRESPONDENT

P. M. COMMENDS SOVIET DISARM SCHEME

NEW DELHI: It was hot and dull in the Capital. Not so now. There is a break in the sizzling heat. With the disappearance of the lull in the political diplomatic activities.

Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and their official and domestic entourage are slowly crawling back into the plain with the onset of the monsoon. Even otherwise, their stay in the hills was made unpleasant by the Prime Minister's letter to his Cabinet colleagues and States Chief Ministers forbidding undue exploitation of the J. & K. Government's hospitality.

The immediate provocation for Nehru's intervention was the latest conference in Srinagar on community projects. Over hundred and fifty officials travelled up taking as many of their kith and kin. And the amazing thing was that all of them, officials, their wives and children, were carted from Pathankot at Kashmir Government's expense. Their stay was also underwritten by the State Government. This is not to say there are no honourable exceptions among those who went.

An interesting point of this particular conference which lasted for several days was that it was held only in the forenoons. Afternoons were free! Who says S. K. Dey does not know how to plan community living?

After a pretty long time, the Prime Minister met Delhi's Press corps last week. There was a backlog of issues for clarification: talks in Peking, the latest about Tibet, Akali stir, hot news from Japan, Pay Commission and such routine matters as the protocol

governing the Queen's visit.

But the highlight of the Press Conference was the information that the Prime Minister himself volunteered unasked. It was his reaction to the latest Soviet proposals on disarmament. He made repeated references and described them as "constructive", "honest", "helpful" and "straightforward."

The P.M. was certainly proud that one of the latest disarm proposals which pertains to the destruction of weapon carriers was the one that India had the privilege to suggest first some year ago.

About other things the P.M. was not so explicit. U-2 incident? Old history. Developments in Japan? "I cannot discuss other countries." All the same he made a remark which is clear enough. He said: "After all, what has happened in Japan does indicate that some people there are not in favour of it (the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty), and that itself reduces the value of it."

Apart from this statement conditioned by diplomacy, the Prime Minister is reported to have more explicitly stated his views on Japanese developments to his colleagues in Delhi and other State capitals. He disbelieves the view that the Communists or international Communism are behind the present upheaval in Japan.

Official thinking is that a large section of people in Japan who cannot easily forget the horrors of Hiroshima are behind the movement against the enslaving treaty. They are more afraid after the U-2 incident of their country being made use of as an Ameri-

can base.

A little more light has also been shed on official thinking in Delhi on the U-2 flight and the Summit failure. The Prime Minister seems to think that the Summit failed because of inept handling by America. The contradictions in the positions taken by the State Department since the first flash of news about the U-2 have complicated matters.

The scare stories in the millionaire Press about Chinese build-up and a second round of Tibetan rebellion are scaring less and less people in the Capital. The P.M. himself said at the Press Conference that they "tend to get exaggerated."

It was the Agence France Presse that first "started" the second round of rebellion in Tibet. Since this news agency cannot send anything about the genocide taking place in Algeria it is concentrating on Tibet. It is said in very reliable circles that this agency's Correspondent who fired the first shot from Gangtok is an official of the Sikkim Government.

After the Press Conference the Western Correspondents looked crestfallen. They were busy preparing to move up to the foothills to receive the Panchen Lama. But it has now been disclosed by Nehru himself that there is another gentleman who styles himself as Panchen Lama!

At any rate, it is Master Tara Singh and not Panchen Lama who is engaging official mind here. With the Akali agitation the anti-Kairon elements in Delhi are active. It is well known that Prime Minister Nehru is Kairon's staunchest supporter. Pant

is inimical to him. Others have been promoting Sardar Swaran Singh's transfer to Chandigarh. There are many, including Cabinet Ministers, who think that Nehru is being misled by Kairon and the best course is to pamper Tara Singh by giving him everything short of Punjab Suba.

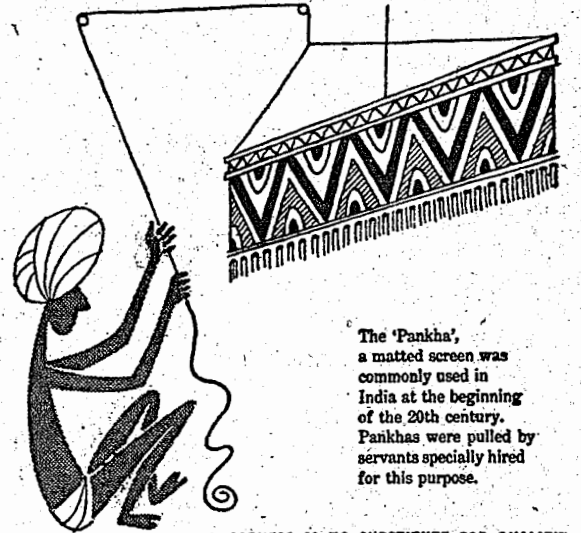
Meanwhile, every one is upset over the use of Gurdwaras by the Akalis. And rightly so. But some people have no moral authority to do so. They are the same people who encouraged use of the church against the Communist-led Kerala Ministry. I remember listening in the Lok Sabha during the last

session Pant's deputy B. N. Datar, replying to a Communist motion for preventing the church from interfering in political matters. What did he say then? He couldn't curtail the liberty of the church! The chicken is coming home to roost to the detriment of the secular fabric of the Indian Republic.

TAILPIECE: M. V. Kamath of the Times of India reports from Bonn that Morarji Desai has made friends in West Germany and during his discussion with Dr. Adenauer, he (Morarji) made a favourable impression on the Chancellor!

June 28

FACTS ABOUT FANS



The 'Pankha', a matted screen was commonly used in India at the beginning of the 20th century. Pankhas were pulled by servants specially hired for this purpose.

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