

Sanjivayya's Gift By

Bonus Ordinance

RS. 8 CRORES

INTO EMPLOYERS' TILL

7 - AUG 1 2

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By Our Special Correspondent



DHORI VICTIM (SEE CENTRE PAGES)

WORKERS TO FIGHT BONUS ORDINANCE

About two lakh fifty thousand textile workers in Bombay went on a strike on June 7 to protest against the bonus ordinance. Despite the opposition to the strike by the INTUC, almost all the textile mills in the city had become paralysed. This was only one-day token strike, the precursor of the actions yet to come.

THE Bombay strike provided a measure of the discontent among the working class on the bonus issue. Of all the central trade union organisations, the INTUC has welcomed the provisions of the bonus ordinance.

The AITUC has totally denounced the ordinance and has declared that an all-India agitation would be organised to secure a rational bonus system. The HMS, the HMP, the UTUC and other trade union bodies have also sharply criticised the ordinance and described it as pro-employer.

The General Council of the AITUC which met in Delhi in April this year had declared:

The recommendations of the Bonus Commission were in the nature of a compromise in order to secure a measure of agreement among the members, although they did not fully meet with the demands of the workers.

Since the government has unilaterally overthrown the

terms of the compromise and has accepted all the retrograde suggestions of the sole representative of big business in the Commission, the trade unions will fight for the acceptance of their formula for bonus which is as follows:

Bonus Formula

A minimum bonus equal to one-twelfth of the total earnings in perennial industries and one-sixth of the total earnings in seasonal industries be paid by all concerns irrespective of the number of their employees and irrespective of their financial position.

The available surplus for distribution as bonus should be arrived at and distributed as follows:

From GROSS PROFITS, deduct:

—Depreciation;

—6 per cent return on actual paid-up capital excluding bonus shares;

—2 per cent return on reserves employed as working capital in the relevant year and on bonus shares;

—Statutory income-tax on profits after deducting bonus payable.

Sixty per cent of the available surplus thus calculated should be paid as bonus in cash, without any ceiling.

(Gross profits for calculating bonus will be arrived at before deducting managing agency commission and allowances/salaries of managing partners).

Rehabilitation, development rebate, super-tax shall not be admitted as prior charges.

There should be no freezing of any part of the bonus amount into savings certificates.

Accounts of companies must be made available for inspection on demand from the union.

New concerns must pay minimum bonus till they start making profits. New establishments of old companies shall be treated along with the parent company for the purpose of bonus.

THE Government of India has not only modified the recommendations of the Bonus Commission to suit the employers, it has also exempted them from the liability of bonus payments to the extent of about Rs. eight crores.

This has been done by advancing the retrospective effect of the bonus formula from 1962 to 1964.

The Bonus Commission in its recommendations had suggested that the new bonus formula "should apply to all bonus matters relating to accounting year ending on any day in calendar year 1962 other than those cases in which settlements have been reached or decisions have been given."

The ordinance issued by the government enjoins that the bonus formula, as modified through the ordinance, will come into operation from the accounting year commencing on any day in the year 1964.

However, it will have retrospective effect in those cases in which disputes were pending on September 2, 1964 regarding payment of bonus relating to any accounting year ending on any day in the year 1962, and any subsequent accounting year.

By this manoeuvre, the government has deprived about twenty lakhs of workers from getting bonus for 1962 and 1963. These workers are employed in the planta-

tions, mines including coal-mines, jute and several other industries.

In the plantations, jute etc., the workers were getting some bonus. But the quantum of this bonus was at least 10 to 15 rupees less than the minimum bonus of 40 rupees granted by the Bonus Commission.

In the mines, there is no profit sharing bonus for the workers except in isolated cases.

All these workers were entitled to at least the minimum bonus of Rs. 40.

Tricky Change

According to rough calculations, the government by changing the retrospective effect of the bonus formula, has deprived the workers of about rupees eight crores and granted exemption to employers from the liability of payment of this amount.

According to government's own calculations, the new bonus formula, even after it has been drastically modified to benefit the employers, will give out nearly Rs. 17 crores to about 45 lakh workers.

The rightful dues of the workers even in terms of the modified formula would have been Rs. 25-crores.



They are determined to win their demand

* ON BACK PAGE

UNIFIED SET-UP FOR CAPITAL RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Delhi CPI's Memorandum To Union Home Minister

By OUR STAFF CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Delhi state council of the Communist Party of India has demanded a unified political set-up based on a legislative assembly and responsible government for the Union Territory of Delhi.

THE council submitted a memorandum to the Union Home Minister putting forth the Party's views on the proposed set-up for Delhi, which said that only full responsible government and unified political administration would be able to solve the problems facing the Indian capital.

The memorandum said:

The proposed new set-up which retains all that exists today with the addition of a metropolitan council and two autonomous boards for electricity and transport will, in our opinion, further perpetuate multiplicity of authorities in the capital.

Many Authorities

The present administrative set-up of the Union Territory of Delhi suffers from this basic weakness that several authorities function almost within the same sphere with a very thin line of demarcation of functions.

The decisions of these authorities overlap each other, run in different directions on the same policy question and lead to complete confusion.

The problems that face the people of Delhi remain unsolved because several authorities try to deal with every single problem and there is no single centre of authority taking decisions on policy applicable to the entire Union Territory and enforcing or implementing those decisions.

There is a very thin line of difference for this city state between civic and state subjects because no single civic problem can be solved except at the state or the Government of India level.

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It was, therefore, reasonably suggested by conscious sections of public opinion all through that the present multiplicity of authorities must be eliminated if any improvement is sought in the conditions of life and services and administration of Delhi.

It was, therefore, expected that the problem of future set-up will be considered by the Government of India and the Congress party primarily from this essential aspect.

The proposals as explained to us by the Home Minister will not eliminate the existing multiplicity of authorities. The new set-up, therefore, is likely to give no relief to the people in respect of any problem facing them.

The new set-up does not create a single unified centre of authority and as such the confusion is likely to continue. The responsibility for decisions is not pinned down to one single authority.

The Corporation is supposed to function as an autonomous body as at present taking its own policy decisions; the New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC) taking its own policy decisions on the same subjects and the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) its own. On top of all this, the Metropolitan Council will also take its own decisions.

We would reiterate that any future set-up for Delhi must be based on one single authority taking all policy decisions which should be binding on various committees and all local bodies.

Taxes Galore

The proposed set-up does not even try to eliminate the present financial confusion or give any relief to the people in the matter of taxes.

The rates, for instance, of electricity and water are different in the NDMC area from those in the Corporation area.

In fact the NDMC charges, those living in its area high rates for electricity and water making in the bargain a profit of about Rs. 60 lakhs on electricity and Rs. 17 lakhs on water.

The Government of India grants apart, the Delhi Administration has its own sources of taxation and the local bodies their own and within the framework each one tries

to levy maximum burden of taxes on the people.

Further, there is not only a duplication on the cost of collections but also considerable wasteful expenditure at all ends.

The new set-up perpetuates the confusion as at present and does not visualise financial integration in a single centre of authority.

British Style

At the state level, the new set-up introduces a body in the name of Metropolitan Council with all manners of classical British checks and balances on democracy.

As explained to us by the Home Minister, the Metropolitan Council is to comprise 40 elected and five nominated members with four nominated executive councillors from amongst the 45.

The executive councillors, being nominated, will not be responsible to the Metro-

politan Council but to the Lt. Governor or the Home Minister. The Metropolitan Council, therefore, will be reduced to a farce and a talking shop.

It also shows complete lack of faith in any democratic functioning, because the executive councillors are to be nominated from among the 45 and not 40.

The Metropolitan Council cannot pass its own budget and has no legislative powers.

It seems that the body is being created only with a view to give some authority to certain Congressmen (who alone will inevitably be nominated as executive councillors) in spheres where the officers alone function at present.

It would not be wrong to say that the body is being created with a view to accommodate some more Congressmen, in positions of authority.

It therefore, does not give Delhi a responsive and responsible government at the state level and continues to deny the people of Delhi any democracy at the state level.

The Communist Party is convinced that its demand for a fully responsible state assembly and government is the only way by which a democratic form of government can be introduced in Delhi.

The present attitude of not treating Delhi even at par with the other Union Territories is highly discriminatory and derogatory to all concepts and values of democracy.

We oppose the retention of the NDMC as a nominated body as at present. We would like to impress upon the Government of India the urgent necessity of having democratically elected body for the NDMC area.

It is proposed to introduce the Mayor as chief executive head of the Corporation, assisted by a Mayor-in-Council.

While we welcome the change from the Commissioner to the Mayor as the Chief Executive Head, we are strongly opposed to the idea of having a Mayor-in-Council at the Corporation level.

The correct traditional system of administration at the local bodies level has been what is called a committee system.

The Government of India is replacing this system by Ministerial system even at the local bodies level which would be very wrong and reduce the Corporation also to a mere debating society.

The Communist Party having given its considered thought to the various aspects of the proposed new set-up would like to reiterate its demand for a full fledged State assembly and a responsible government creating a single centre of authority for all policy matters and budgetary and financial allocations.

KERALA: TU-KISAN PLANS TO AGITATE FOR FOOD

From S. SHARMA

TRIVANDRUM: A meeting of the Kerala State Trade Union Council, held on May 27 under the chairmanship of P. S. Nambodiri has called on all trade unions in the state to organise jathas to tahsildars and district collectors and present memoranda demanding increased rice ration of 12 ounces a day and sale of kerosene at fixed prices.

THE week from June 10 to 17 will be observed as the WEEK OF MOBILISATION FOR UNITY among all workers behind common demands such as re-examination of minimum wages, review of the faulty cost of living index.

The council deputed a delegation consisting of T. V. Thomas, P. Balachandra Menon and K. V. Surendranath to meet the Governor and impress upon him the grave food situation in the state and the urgency to intervene in working class problems.

In a resolution adopted on the food situation, the council said that the steps the presidential regime in Kerala has taken to meet the growing crisis were totally inadequate.

In normal rationing and inadequate quantum of rations had only helped prices of rice in the open market to go up, causing hardship to common people who had to depend on the open market for supplementing their rations.

The resolution demanded guaranteed supply of twelve ounces of rice to every adult per day.

The council noted that the artificial scarcity of kerosene had been created by oil com-

panies and their private trade agencies. It had to be met firmly by the government by ensuring sale of kerosene through fair price shops.

The council said that the continued detention of leaders and workers of trade union and kisan movement even after the verdict of the recent elections in Kerala was impermissible.

The imposition of President's rule and its continuation for an indefinite period cut at the roots of the sacred principles of parliamentary democracy and the spirit of freedom enshrined in the Constitution.

Kisan Convention

The council called on all trade unions and organisations who cherished these principles to demand that the President's rule be ended early by conducting fresh elections.

The American war of aggression against Vietnam was condemned by the council, which called on the US to quit Vietnam. The council called on the Government of India to defeat the imperialist-inspired Pakistani aggression on the Ram of Kutch.

An unforgettable day in the history of Kerala's kisan movement—this was how Pandaram P. R. Madhavan Pillai described the special one-day convention of the Kerala Karshuka Sangham at Trichur.

The special convention was called to revitalise the Sangham and formulate an immediate programme for winning the urgent demands of the agrarian population of the state.

The sight of more than 400 delegates from all the nine districts of Kerala attending the convention and taking part in its deliberations was an inspiring sight.

The main discussions centred on how to force the government to take up major and minor irrigation works, amend the atrociously cruel provisions of the Land Reforms Act, reduce the hardships of kisans and tenants through increased rations and get their leaders in detention released.

The fact that the leaders of both the Communist Party of India and the Marxist Communist Party were present at the convention gave an added impetus to the delegates in their united endeavour.

The convention elected Madhavan Pillai as acting president in place of K. R. Gouri and P. Kunhiraman as acting general secretary in place of C. H. Kanaran. Both the president and secretary of the Sangham are now in detention.

The public meeting which rounded off the convention proceedings was addressed by M. N. Govindan Nair and E. M. S. Namboodiripad.

U. S. AID IN TRUE COLOURS

A United States embassy publication recently wrote: "In spite of the great variety of projects, US-assisted projects fall together into a coherent, well-balanced programme of economic support, carefully tailored to India's Five Year Plans. Operating at Rs. 475 crores per year, it is the largest assistance programme in the world. Its purpose is simple and clear. The purpose of our aid programmes", US Ambassador Bowles said recently, "is to develop independent nations, able and willing to stand on their own feet—and thereby to share with us a dedication to peace and freedom."

HOW dedicated to peace and freedom the US is and to share in what it is inviting us to share in the paddles of Vietnam and the streets of Santo Domingo. And a survey of the US aid to India would show how simple and clear its purpose is.

Total US economic assistance to India stood at Rs. 2,325.6 crores as on February 8, 1963. Of this, Rs. 653 crores were grants; Rs. 845.6 crores loans repayable in dollars and Rs. 1,327.0 crores loans repayable in rupee currency.

There are three agencies of the US government which are channeling its economic assistance to India. ★ The US Agency for International Development (USAID) was created in November 1961 to bring all American aid under a unified administration. It has overall charge of all US assistance and has taken over the now defunct International Cooperation Administration which was represented in India by the Technical Cooperation Mission (TCM).

The USAID has so far given India grants worth Rs. 177.8 crores. These need not be paid back.

Dollar Loans

Since November 1961, the USAID has given India 33 development loans totalling Rs. 563.3 crores. These are all repayable in dollars though repayment is scheduled over 40 years.

But what is disturbing is the fact that the interest rates on these are being raised year after year by the US government.

The 22 loans which were given in 1963 were called "interest-free", but that was only a ruse. A credit fee of 0.75 per cent was charged on these loan amounts.

The following year, the facade of credit fee was given up in favour of direct interest. And the rates went up simultaneously. Interest was fixed at 0.75 per cent for the first ten years and 2.00 per cent during the remaining 30 years. Ten loans were given under the new terms.

Again, the legislation that has been passed for the year 1965 stipulates that the interest rates would be a minimum of 1.00 per cent during the first ten years and 2.50 per cent during the remaining 30 years.

Prior to 1961, the Technical Cooperation Mission had given loans totalling Rs. 73.4 crores. These were to be repaid either in rupees or in dollars as the Government of India chose.

The US Development Loan Fund, which has now been absorbed in the USAID, extended loans to India totalling Rs. 242.5 crores between

1958 and 1961. These loans are repayable in rupees.

The amount accruing from the sale of these commodities are held by the US Embassy in a special account with the Reserve Bank of India. From that amount, the US government gives loans and grants to India, as also meets its own expenses.

Since 1956 when the PL 480 came into force, nine agreements and 18 supplemental agreements have been signed under Title I involving a total amount of Rs. 1,386.4 crores.

Wheat Imports

Of this, Rs. 907.4 crores were for wheat imports; Rs. 129.9 crores for cotton; Rs. 98.8 crores for rice, and Rs. 23.3 crores for coarse foodgrains like maize and sorghum.

But all the imports are not such essential articles as wheat and rice and cotton. Included are also such items as canned fruit, processed cheese, dry milk and milk powder, tallow for making soap.

It might be of interest to know that even tobacco is being imported under the PL 480 into this country which is herself a big producer and ex-

accumulating large amounts of money and in the future it would become absolutely impossible for the country to liquidate these huge sums.

The American themselves seem to have realised this. Hence their decision to convert the rupees held by them into dollars by offering American tourists to India to sell their dollars to the embassy and get rupees.

This new decision has been taken with the full knowledge and consent of the Union Finance Minister T. T. Krishnamachari. It is not known why the Finance Minister has agreed to such an avowedly anti-Indian step on the part of the Americans.

Anyway, this decision has knocked the bottom out of any basis of going in for the PL 480 commodities. Because, the only virtue it had was that payment for the foodgrains were to be made in rupees.

Now since the American have taken upon themselves the duty to sell off the rupees for dollars, the rupee payment made by India for the PL 480 imports would remain only in paper. The actual payments would be in dollars.

That apart, the way in which the money accruing from the sales of PL 480 imports are being disbursed by

make it so coarse. So, the Cooley Amendment actually provides that the aid is to be available to two categories of private sector borrowers;

First, American firms or their subsidiaries in this country (or elsewhere where PL 480 goods are dumped) or indigenous firms having affiliation with American firms and second, local firms facilitating disposal of American agricultural products.

But the swing toward big business in this country having ties with big business in the US even in channelling the Cooley Funds is particularly noticeable.

The rubber monopoly, Goodyear Tyre and Rubber Co. has received Rs. 2.25 crores out of the PL 480 counterpart funds. This is an American company functioning in India.

The Mysore Cements, in which the Kaisers of America are collaborating with an Indian firm, Sarangapani Mudalliar, received Rs. 1.38 crores.

Birlas' Hindustan Aluminium has received Rs. 2.00 crores. Here again, it is the Kaisers that are collaborating.

Synthetics and Chemicals, in which Tulsidas Kilachand is collaborating with Firestone, has received Rs. 6.50 crores.

Union Carbide, an American firm operating in India, has received Rs. 2.18 crores.

Coromandel Fertilisers, which is affiliated to the American firm, California Chemical Company, has received the biggest plum of Rs. 10.76 crores.

Favoured Birlas

Birlas have got a second round of assistance from the Americans in the form of a loan of Rs. 3.00 crores for the Renuagar Power project in Uttar Pradesh, in which again the Kaisers is collaborating.

While this is the picture available with regard to Cooley Fund, the nature of loans given directly by the USAID for the private sector is not very different.

Walchand Hirachand's Premier Automobiles (manufacturers of FIAT cars) got Rs. 3.40 crores in August 1961 and Rs. 1.40 crores in February 1962.

Delhi Cloth Mills got Rs. 4.70 crore in June 1962 for their rayon mills in Rajasthan.

Hindustan Motors of the Birlas (Ambassador cars) received Rs. 7.50 crores in December 1962, Rs. 11.00 crores in July 1964 and again Rs. 1.40 crores in the same month.

The Tatas have also not lagged behind. Telco received a loan of Rs. 6.50 crores in December 1962, another of Rs. 5.60 crores in July 1964. The Trombay Power plant got Rs. 8.60 crores in October 1962.

Another source from which Birlas have got huge

AIM : CONTROL INDIAN ECONOMY, FATTEN PRIVATE MONOPOLIES

By PAULY V. PARAKAL

Help For Whom ?

Actually, there is not much of assistance here. The PL 480 itself came into existence to support the American rich farmers who were faced with increased production and resultant slump in prices.

It was to dispose of the surplus American agricultural products that PL 480 was drawn up. It had the added attraction of bringing in money for what was being dumped in the high seas before.

The legislation has four titles. Under Title I the United States sells agricultural commodities like wheat, rice, coarse grains, cotton, dried milk powder, tobacco and other agricultural commodities to underdeveloped countries in local currencies. Under this title India has

received Rs. 1,386.4 crores worth of commodities from the United States.

The amount accruing from the sale of these commodities are held by the US Embassy in a special account with the Reserve Bank of India. From that amount, the US government gives loans and grants to India, as also meets its own expenses.

Since 1956 when the PL 480 came into force, nine agreements and 18 supplemental agreements have been signed under Title I involving a total amount of Rs. 1,386.4 crores.

Cooley Amendment

The Cooley Amendment to PL 480 provides that upto 25 per cent of the money accruing from the sale proceeds of the agricultural commodities given under Title I of the legislation shall be loaned to the private sector.

This means that the US government reserves the right to pick and choose Indian private sector units and grant their munificence to them in the form of loans. Nothing better suited to keep the private sector in India tuned to the imperialist waveband!

Another adverse effect is that the US embassy has been

the Americans deserves special attention.

According to them, Rs. 170.50 crores are reserved for US government uses, which means embassy expenses as also the cost of the spying and subversive activities which it undertakes here.

Out of the rest, Rs. 375.30 crores are for grants to the Government of India, Rs. 740.20 crores for loans to the government and the remaining Rs. 100.40 crores for loans to the Indian private sector under the Cooley Amendment to the PL 480 legislation.

Of course, the Americans are polished enough not to

Anxiety Over Indo-US Relations

Now that Prime Minister Shastri is on his way to Canada the US lobby in India is hoping and praying that the American President might condescend to talk to him over the long-distance telephone. This magnanimous gesture is expected of the US President "in an attempt to restore Indo-American relations which have deteriorated since April this year," says a press report.

The Executive has called upon the Government here "to take the initiative to defend democracy in Asia through a system of regional security embracing India and Japan and all countries in between".

NO one need feel shocked over the lowest depths of kowtowing to which the right-wing elements in this country are prepared to descend to propitiate the gods in Washington.

Following upon Johnson's gratuitous snub served to India in the form of his unilateral postponement of the Indian Prime Minister's projected visit to USA on the false plea of the President being too busy, the US lobby here has been occupied principally with the job of "restoring the damaged Indo-US relations".

In pursuance of these efforts they mounted a campaign to get India to give up its stand demanding cessation of American private raids over North Vietnam, because, they pointed out correctly, this was the chief reason for the supreme deity in the White House getting rattled and suggesting postponement of Shastri's visit. Tremendous pressure was built up on this question—both from outside the government as well as from inside it.

There was hardly any room, however, for India to whittle down her stand on Vietnam in face of the grave and gross violations of international agreements and the international law to which the US had taken recourse in pursuit of its none-too-new a game of securing domination in the name of saving all and sundry from the "threat of communism".

The maximum propitiation of the gods in Washington could achieve in the circumstances was Shastri's letter to Johnson—officially described as being in the spirit of his statements in Parliament but unofficially providing the American lobby with a very handy peg to hang their propaganda of "restoring Indo-American relations" on.

Now, this very gesture of Shastri—quite unnecessary in itself—is sought to be utilised to bring the big boss in the

Comment

White House to speak to him over the long-distance phone while Shastri is in Ottawa.

If this phone call does materialise it will be only an added insult in the background of today and we do hope that the Prime Minister will not yield to pressures to submit the country to this indignity.

SWATANTRATS AT IT

THE National Executive of the Swatantra Party which met a few days ago in Madras did what it was expected to do in the current situation.

In one of the resolutions it adopted it assailed the Government of India for taking "a shortsighted and suicidal attitude" over Vietnam by refusing to support US aggression there.

It revealed itself as a real carbon copy of all US puppets when it went to the extent of making the ridiculous charge of the Government of India being controlled by none else than the Communists. Like the blue-blooded Americans of the McCarthyite variety, it declared that "Communists and fellow-travellers" appeared to have "taken charge of the Congress and the Government through a kind of remote control".

The Swatantras for all their stupidity have not dared to advise the Government of India to enter into an open military alliance with the US. Instead they have now indicated their preference for working towards that end via a tie-up with Japan.

UP KISAN MEET PLANS AGITATION

From RAMESH SINHA

In its fifteenth session, held from June 3 to 6 at Shahpur in Muzaffarnagar district under the presidency of Sarju Pande MP, the Uttar Pradesh Kisan Sabha has decided to launch a mass campaign culminating in a mass kisan struggle for reducing the ceiling limit and for the distribution of excess and fallow land to the landless and poor peasants.

THIS session of the UP Kisan Sabha was held after nearly five years. During these years the units of the Sabha had become inactive and the membership had touched the lowest figure. The sectarian former secretary of the state unit had all but destroyed the organisation and even the last session was held in a hall in Lucknow!

But last November, a meeting of the State Kisan Council and other activists of the Kisan Sabha was held in Kanpur.

The meeting decided to revive the work and fixed up quotas of membership for the districts. Chandrajeet Yadav MLA was elected secretary of the Council.

Since then there has been an inspiring revival in the work of the organisation.

By the time the state conference met at Shahpur 50,000 members had been enrolled, units formed in about thirty districts and local district conferences held in twenty districts.

This spurt in the work was well reflected in the Shahpur conference. It was attended by over 250 elected delegates from 30 districts.

For three days the delegates discussed a document prepared by Bhikha Lal MLA on the agrarian problems of UP and the report of general secretary Chandrajeet Yadav.

The discussion was rich and showed the earnestness with which the Kisan workers were applying their mind to the problems affecting the kisans.

The 7,000-strong rally was addressed by Z. A. Ahmad, Teja Singh Swatantra, Sarju Pande, Chandrajeet Yadav, Vijajpal Singh, popular Communist MLA of the area, Sardar Singh, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the conference, and Jharkhande Rai, MLA.

Intervention and abide by the Geneva Agreements in letter and spirit, helping thus to end this dirty, dangerously escalating war. —SHARIF (June 8)

Congress Defeated By Left Front In Behala Municipality

CALCUTTA: Congress has been reduced into a minority in the South Suburban (Behala) Municipality, the second biggest in West Bengal.

Elections to the Behala municipality took place on May 30. It was for the first time that elections on the basis of adult franchise has taken place there.

The United Peoples Association (UPA) consisting of the Communist Party of India, the Marxist Communist Party and progressive independents emerged victorious in the elections.

Out of 25 seats, the UPA won 13 while the Congress was able to get only 12. Out of the total 61,933 valid votes polled, the UPA secured 30,780

while the Congress got 27,601 votes. The rest were polled by independents.

Among the 13 UPA commissioners, the Marxist Communist Party has four members and one supporter; the Communist Party two Party members and two supporters. The rest of the UPA commissioners are independents. One of the Marxist CP member elected is in jail and another underground.

The Behala municipal elections had created considerable interest in all political circles in the state and top leaders of all the parties participated in the election campaign.

On the UPA side, Indrajit Gupta, Renu Chakravarty, Sonmath Lahiri, Bhowani Sen and Ajoy Dasgupta campaign-

ed along with Jyoti Basu of the Marxist CP.

The Congress had fielded three ministers in the campaign, Saini Mukherjee, Furabi Mukherjee and Tarun Kanti Ghosh, besides PCC chief Ajoy Mukherjee.

On the eve of the elections the Congress held its 24 Parganas district conference on a lavish scale. It was here that Atulya Ghosh made his now notorious "anti-capitalist" speech.

The main theme of the Congress campaign was that if it was not voted into office, no funds would be made available to the municipality by the government.

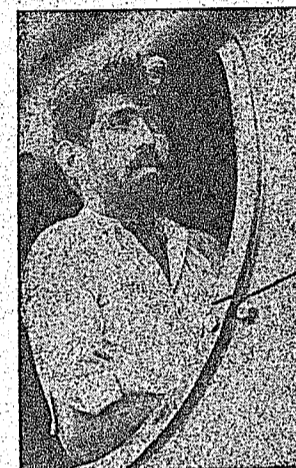
However, the voters of Behala have discarded such threats with utter contempt and reduced the Congress into a minority.

The Martin & Burn company which owns the Shahdara-Saharanpur Light Railway has been harping for quite some time on the theme that this railway is suffering huge losses.

THE losses are said to be due to the competition of the bus services resulting in lower income from passenger traffic. In addition, it argues that three successive industrial tribunal awards have contributed to the rise in the working cost of the railways.

Hence the company is unable to run the railways "unless government grants some substantial subsidy".

But what are the facts? The railway shows no sign of closure at all and in fact is doing more brisk business than ever, and its profit is mounting up.



The engine-driver of SSLR

Some relevant data in this connection would be worth taking note of:

a This railway is a 2'6" gauge line owned by Martin and Burn Ltd., Calcutta. This is the only group of railways (four lines in Bihar and West Bengal also) owned by private capital in free India.

b The company was registered on November 28, 1905 and the Shahdara-Saharanpur Light Railway (SSLR) took on steam on a 92½-mile track on October 18, 1907.

c In 1905 the then United Provinces government arrived at an agreement with this company under the terms of which the 92½ miles track was "gifted" to the company without any charge whatsoever. The agreement also stipulated that allowing four per cent of "surplus profits" on paid-up capital, every year the remaining profit would be divided equally be-

tween the government and the company.

The government may take over the railway, the agreement further stipulates, but only on certain conditions which are pretty stiff ones.

A Railway Not So Poor As Martin Burn Says

For sixty years the agreement is continuing though it could have been rescinded only after 20 years by paying compensation. It was not done and extended for a further period of seven years. Since then every seven years the agreement is being renewed.

The present seven-year renewal ends on April 18, 1969 and if government wants to take over the railway, it will have to pay 25 times the profit the company has earned during the previous three years! Or it may choose to pay 125 per cent of the invested capital!

The invested capital of this

salaries and allowances and go made up this year and it is estimated to be about 4.1 million.

The total number of employees in this railway is 1107. The head office in Calcutta has 276 employees. The total expenditure of all the five railways owned by the company is about Rs. 12 lakhs a year; 45 per cent of it is met by the SSL Railway alone.

The General Manager draws a

bonus and other facilities, which are abominably low, the company comes out with the threat that the railway would be closed down.

And on top of it, whenever the employees press for increase of their wages, dearness allowance,

As far as passenger amenities are concerned, these are next to nothing. A few days back I travelled in this Victorian era train. When I reached Shahdara station, I found a long queue before the booking office. In the train, there was hardly any space to stand, not to speak of sitting accommodation.

There is no proper arrangement of water in the compartments. There are some dilapidated fans

monthly salary of Rs. 5,000 for managing just a total of 300-mile railways! The general managers of Indian Railways who manage about 5,000 miles of railways in each sector get about Rs. 2,750.

Similarly, the superintendent of SSL Railway receives a salary of Rs. 2,000 per month besides perquisites worth Rs. 1,000. The divisional officers of the Indian Railways in charge of 500 miles of railways receive only Rs. 1,600.

The most astounding bit of the SSL Railway is that a general manager is not a qualified engineer!

But when it comes to ordinary skilled workers, the company restricts its purse to the maximum.

By ANEES JALALI

company is about Rs. 27 lakhs (₹200,000) besides shares of Rs. 12 lakhs held by the public.

The 22 lakh was granted as loan by the British government on which every year Rs. 125,550 are levied as interest.

During the last nearly-sixty years about Rs. 72 lakh have been paid as interest while the principal amount is still a loan!

But that is not all. This company took away Rs. 80 lakh under the head "Renewal and Replacement Fund" though about 80 per cent of the rolling stock have remained unchanged for half a century.

Along with this drain, the officers of the company draw fat

The balance sheet of the company shows that it has built up a reserve fund of Rs. 12 lakhs. It is estimated that the current year's trading profits (gross profits) would be some where around Rs. 50 lakhs, about Rs. five lakh more than the previous year.

The upward trend of its profit is:

1931	Rs. 6 lakhs
1958-59	Rs. 31 lakhs
1963-64	Rs. 39.5 lakhs
1964-65	Rs. 45 lakhs (approx.)

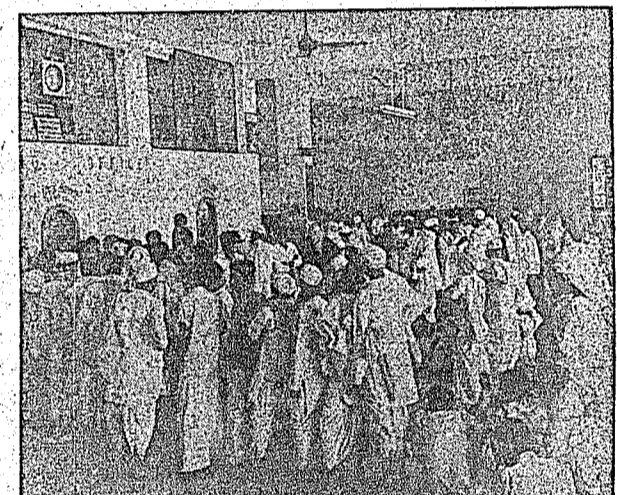
The number of passengers handled annually is:

1961-62	3,662,000
1962-63	3,929,000
1963-64	3,623,000

The slump in the number of passengers in 1963-64 has been

but they don't move; in the night, lights give out only a dim glow when the train is running; when the train stops, even the dim light goes off.

So, the SSL Railway's slogan seems to be huge profits for the owners, low wages for the employees and no amenities to the passengers.



Queue before booking office at Shahdara

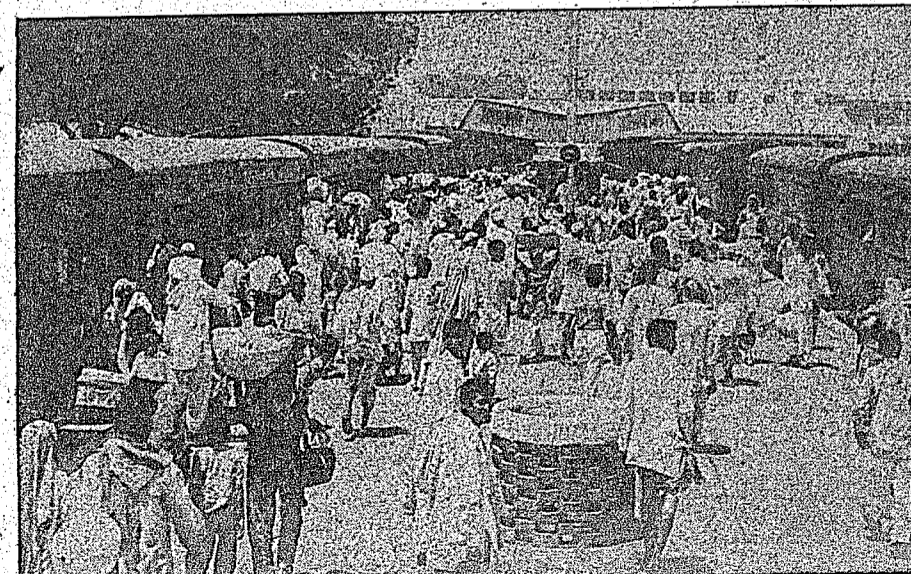
some emoluments, but who On February 23, 1964 the general manager of the Martin and Burn group of railways, C. S. Mehta had said that the government would have either to subsidise the railways or take it over".

Many of the workers in the SSL Railway have to put up more than eight hours' duty per day. The salary-payments are irregular. Uniforms are granted only when the old ones become completely tattered.

The employees are still getting a daily allowance of nine annas which was fixed in 1952.

It seems the time has come to implement the demand of the general manager: take over the railways under Martin and Burn.

Rush of passengers to catch the train



JUNE 13, 1965

NEW AGE

FOR PARTY MEMBERS ONLY

RESOLUTIONS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

New Delhi 5-11 April 1965

ORDER THROUGH PARTY COMMITTEES

PAGE FIVE

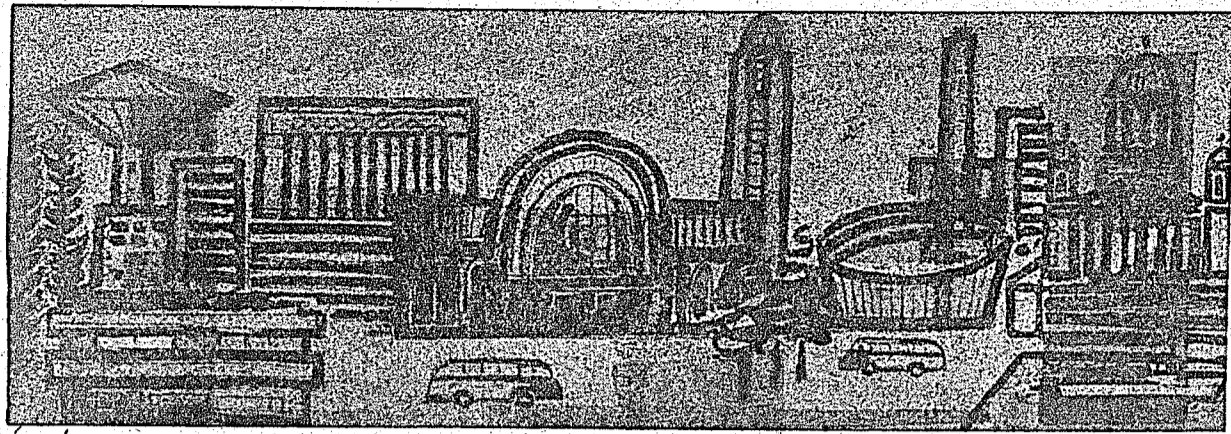


Ravage of Ahmedabad's clash on June 1

PAGE FOUR

NEW AGE

JUNE 13, 1965



An artist's impression of the city of Helsinki

TO HELSINKI IN JULY

India Prepares For The Mightiest Peace Assembly

By OUR STAFF CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: In every state in this country there are preparations to send delegates to the World Congress for Peace, National Independence and General Disarmament which takes place in Finland's capital, Helsinki, from July 10 to 15.

SEVERAL states have already held conferences or conventions in preparation for the Helsinki congress. Others are in the thick of preparations to hold such conferences.

What has been remarkable about most of these conferences has been their broad and representative character. On a national scale, a large number of representative peace organisations have agreed to take part actively in the Helsinki congress.

Apart from the All India Peace Council, which is naturally taking the lead in the preparations, these organisations include the Committee of Indian Parliamentarians for Peace, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, the Continuing Committee of the World Conference for Peace and International Cooperation and the Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity.

Mass Organisations

All the mass organisations, which have taken an active part in the peace movement have also been invited to send their delegates.

The trade unions and the youth, student and women's organisations will send leading office bearers and committee members to take part in the world congress.

It is already clear that the Indian delegation will be the most representative and influential ever sent to any peace assembly. This is in the fitness of things, for the Helsinki congress will be the most influential world gathering for peace ever held.

The host country, Finland, will be represented by a delegation which will include the leading figures in all walks of life and will have the support of the President and

leading ministers of the government itself. Similarly, from all countries of the world will come men and women of great authority and prestige, commanding in the widest circles.

In order to be able to play the role which India is expected to play in as influential a world congress as this, it is necessary that the Indian delegation should be composed of the most representative leaders of public opinion from all parts of the country.

A large number of MPs and MLAs have been nominated as delegates. Among them are some of the most outstanding figures of the peace movement as well as several leaders who have not yet joined the peace movement. From the point of view of numbers, it is essential both for India's prestige as well as for effective work that the delegation should be as large as those of similar large countries.

At all previous congresses, the number of Indian delegates has always been among the largest.

While it is clear that it is not possible to include in the delegation the several hundreds whose names have been suggested, it is hoped by the organisers that no narrow considerations will prevent the Government of India from allowing an adequate number of delegates to proceed to this vital congress.

The preparatory committee for the World Congress has already given India a place of distinction in the Congress. The Indian delegation will be one of the ten delegations which have the honour of delivering reports in the plenary sessions.

The subject allotted to India is of special significance. It is:

"Nuclear free zones and other partial disarmament measures; elimination of foreign troops and military

bases and of military pacts and blocs; contribution made by nonalignment to efforts for peace and national independence; treaty on general disarmament."

Papers are being prepared to guide the Indian delegation's representatives in each of the commissions in which the major work of the congress will be conducted.

During the days of the Congress in Helsinki will be held a special session of the supporters of the World Council of Peace (and such other delegates as care to attend) to elect a new world council and its leading bodies.

The whole question of the structure of the world council which has grown so much more representative and authoritative since its

last formal election in 1958 is under discussion.

A committee has been appointed by the presidential committee of the World Council of Peace to discuss and frame proposals for the strengthening of the organisational structure of the movement.

On behalf of this committee, which includes representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Britain, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, UAR and USSR, a report will be placed before the special session at Helsinki, after discussions in a meeting of representatives of all national peace committees to be held on the second day of the Congress.

Bihar Khet Mazdoor Sabha Plans Agitation

From K. GOPALAN

PATNA: The Bihar Khet Mazdoor Sabha has decided at its annual general meeting to launch a statewide agitation for the revision of minimum wages, strict implementation of the existing Minimum Wages Act and for freedom from all vestiges of serfdom for the agricultural labourers.

THE fourth annual conference of the Bihar Khet Mazdoor Sabha was held at Jamal in Monghyr district from May 21 to 23. Kharghari Misra, president of the Sabha, was in the chair.

The conference was attended by 62 delegates and 13 fraternal delegates. Among the fraternal delegates were Z. A. Ahmad, vice-president of the All India Kisan Sabha and Chaturanan Misra, president of the Bihar unit of the AIITUC.

Karyanand Sharma, general secretary of the Bihar Khet Mazdoor Sabha presenting the annual report reviewed the organisational position as well as the achievements of the agricultural workers in last year's struggles.

The organisation, he said, though not very strong, has been able to conduct a number of struggles in different parts of the state especially

in Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Gaya districts.

A one-day token strike was organised successfully in more than a hundred villages to press the demands of the agricultural workers. The outcome of the struggle was very encouraging. The workers have been able to realise their demand for minimum wages and other facilities in the villages where the struggle took place.

Charter Of Demands

The experience of the struggle clearly indicated that agricultural workers, if organised and properly led, would be able to secure their demands all over the state, the report said.

The conference adopted a charter of demands of the

VIETNAM EXHIBITION OPENED IN DELHI

NEW DELHI: An exhibition of photographs of North Vietnamese people was sponsored by the Delhi State Peace Conference here on June 4.

The exhibition displaying 136 photographs depicted the cultural and political life of the people of North Vietnam. Some of the photographs also show the brutalities committed by the US forces now in operation in South Vietnam, as also their attacks on North Vietnam.

The exhibition was opened by the Mayor of Delhi, Nuruddin Ahmad.

Speaking at the opening of the exhibition, the Consul-General of Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Hoa, said that his country was determined to fight American aggression and throw the aggressors out of their motherland.

He stressed the friendship between North Vietnam and India and underlined the common desire of world peace and banishment of all forms of colonialism from the face of the earth.

Isabella Blume (Belgium) will preside over the special session and Romesh Chandra (India) will present the report on behalf of the structure committee.

The new organisational proposals are expected to strengthen the World Peace Council and make it more representative and universal. Similar strengthening of its leading organs is envisaged.

BIHAR DOCTORS RESIGN EN MASSE

From K. GOPALAN

PATNA: More than 1,500 doctors serving under the Bihar government have submitted their resignation en masse to press their demands for higher pay scales and better service conditions.

THE resignations were submitted on June 1, with one month's notice to the state government as required by the rules.

If the government failed to meet their demands by July 1 the doctors would be free to walk out of service anytime after that date.

The doctors have resorted to this form of struggle because of a ban on strikes by government servants.

The resignations were collected by the Bihar State Health Services Association and submitted to the Director of Health Services by a delegation headed by Dr. Madhusudan Das, president of the Association.

The doctors in government service are thoroughly dis-

satisfied by the pay scales recommended by the pay revision committee. Their pay scales are far below those recommended for officials of other departments.

Hence, their main demand is to remove the disparity between their pay scales and those in other departments of the state government.

While supporting the demands of the doctors Dr. A. K. Sen, president of the Bihar branch of the Indian Medical Association, has urged the state government to make sincere efforts to meet the demands of the doctors.

The attitude of the government to the mass resignation is not yet known. But a spokesman said that the development was "very serious", whatever that may mean.

Govt Grant Facilities to Naga Rebel to Consult Phizo

SHILLONG: The self-exiled Naga rebel leader A. Z. Phizo's brother, Kevi Yallay, is leaving shortly for London to consult Phizo about the Peace Mission proposal. It appears that neither the Peace Mission, nor the spokesmen of the underground would take the responsibility for sponsoring this visit. Each says the other has arranged it.

YALLAY, however, is going with an Indian passport, granted by the Government of India which must have given its consent for this London trip.

The Government of India, according to reports here, is also offering other facilities to Yallay for his journey to London.

It is known for quite some time now that the underground wants to consult Phizo about the Peace Mission proposal for a solution of the Naga problem.

Obviously, the underground feels that it cannot commit itself to any solution before it has obtained the opinion of Phizo.

By granting the passport to Yallay, the centre, observers point out, recognises this position of the underground Nagas.

Earlier, it is noted, there were proposals that Phizo might come to Burma, where the representatives of the underground might meet him.

This proposal, like an earlier one suggesting Phizo's coming to Pakistan, preferably to Dacca, where the underground representatives might go to meet him, did not receive any favourable response from the Government of India.

At one time, it is now widely known, the Government of India suggested that the Vice-President of the Naga National Council—

AMRITSAR TEXTILE WORKERS SECURE GAINS, END STRIKE

From OUR CORRESPONDENT

AMRITSAR: The heroic struggle of the Amritsar textile workers has been called off with effect from June 2 on the basis of an agreement arrived at between the united action committee and the Punjab government.

THE decision of the action committee to call off the strike was endorsed unanimously by about 400 representatives of the workers on June 1. Later in the evening a mass rally approved the decision.

The strike has been called off on the basis of talks held and assurances given by the government on May 15 at the negotiations held in Chandigarh.

These talks were attended by Chief Minister Ram Kishen, Home Minister Darbara Singh

and Labour Minister Rizak Ram on the government side and S. A. Dange and Satish Looma, general secretary and secretary of the AIITUC respectively, on the workers' side.

The points settled at that meeting were:

The committee set up under the March 26 notification of the government should conclude its deliberations within a fortnight. For this, day-to-day meetings should be held if necessary.

While the workers and employers' representatives on the

committee should extend their cooperation for speedy deliberations in the committee the government should do its best to secure speedy conclusions.

The government assured the workers' representatives that it would take all necessary steps to ensure status quo ante of the strike, lay-off or lockout regarding workmen on rolls.

The government approved the principle of fixation of guaranteed minimum wage/fall back wage, not linked with production, for piece-rated workers.

Regarding any unjustified notices of closure given during the strike period, the government undertook to do all it can to ensure the withdrawal of the same and ensure working of such concerns.

The government also assured that the March 4 notification read with the modifying notification of April 5 would be implemented.

If during the course of implementation of these notifications, any dispute arose, the government would take proper steps to have it settled through normal conciliation or arbitration or adjudication proceedings.

Regarding the claims of wages for the strike period or during lay-off or lockout, a committee consisting of the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar as chairman and three representatives of the workers and employers each and the Conciliation Officer of Amritsar Circle No. 1 as members has been set up.

Wages for Strike Period

In case no unanimity is reached in this committee, the government would accept the majority recommendation. It will do all it can to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the committee.

All cases and legal proceedings against the workers will be dropped. The agreement provided that the strike would be called off with effect from June 2. For those workers who have gone away, the time limit to join duty has been set as June 12.

The action committee has in a resolution greeted the heroic textile workers of Amritsar for having withstood all kinds of police repression and bravely carried on the struggle for 53 glorious days.

The committee expressed confidence that the workers will continue to maintain and strengthen their unity forced and cemented in the course of this heroic struggle, as the unity of the workers was the guarantee of their success.

If Phizo had not in the meantime obtained British nationality, his visit to India might not have posed a very serious problem. But now that he is a British citizen, it has created some complications.

There is the problem of some one inviting him. Who possibly could do it? It was suggested to the Government of India that New Delhi should send an invitation to Phizo to come to India.

According to unimpeachable sources here, there was some exchange of views between New Delhi and Shillong and Kohima about this suggestion. However, the question of extending invitation to Phizo was not solved.

The Peace Mission members could not do so without the concurrence of New Delhi which, it appears, could not do so for fear of adverse public criticism.

Even if the underground extended the invitation, the problem would not have been solved inasmuch as Phizo would not "take the risk" unless the Government of India would assure "safe conduct".

According to one report, not all among the underground leaders want Phizo to return. It is noted here that according to a Kohima report some "villagers" are not happy at Yallay's going to London.

These people are reported to maintain that Yallay would not be able to persuade Phizo to be helpful in making a settlement. Yallay maintains that he is "neutral" and only desires peace in Nagaland.

It is now admitted on all hands that no settlement is possible unless Phizo would approve of it.

Well-informed sources maintain that there is no unified leadership

Capitalist Inhumanity Stands Indicted

A wave of horror swept through the country on May 29 when the news was flashed that on the previous day a series of three underground explosions at the Dhori colliery had killed all the 300 odd miners below the surface. Colliery accidents due to gas explosions, roof-falls, flooding and the like are unhappily common enough in India. Memories of major disasters such as at Chinakuri, Amlabad, Parasia, Burra Dhemo in recent years are still fresh in the public mind. But Dhori dwarfs them all. The totally unexpected and sudden nature of the explosions, the terrific violence of the resulting blasts, the huge death-roll, the grim irony of fate which trapped one shift of workers as they were going to work and the other shift as they were coming off duty—all these have heightened the tragedy of this pit of death.

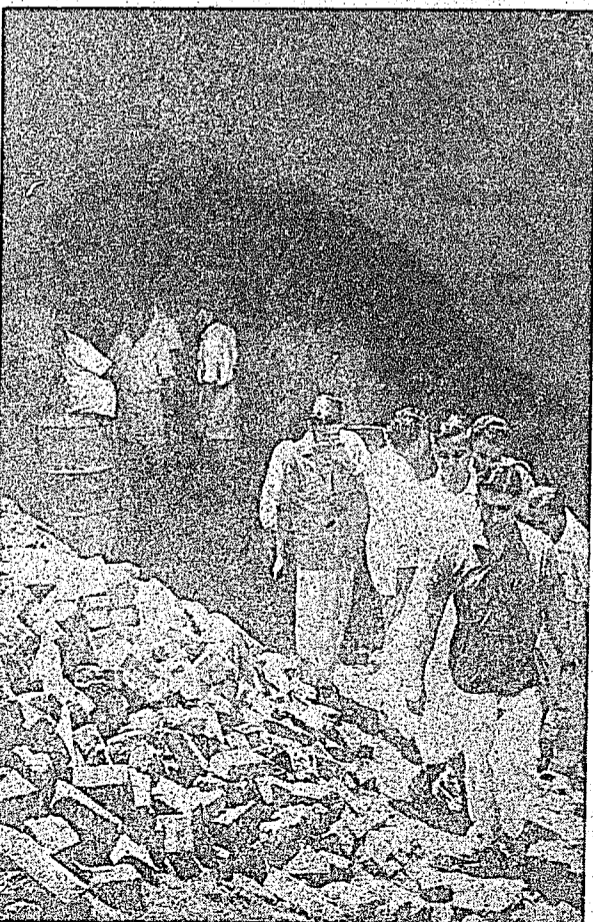
I was able to reach Dhori only on the morning of May 31, accompanied by Chaturanan Misra, Chinmoy Mukherjee and Lalit Burman of the Indian Mine Workers' Federation, Dhanbad, and its Jharia and Ghidih branches.

By that time, between 220 and 230 bodies had been recovered and we were told that the rescue teams which had rushed to Dhori from all over the mining area had been ordered to withdraw, as the Chief Inspector of Mines felt that local rescue workers were now sufficient to cope with the remaining work.

This could only mean that in the Chief Inspector's estimate very few bodies were still untraced.

Subsequently, it has been officially announced (June 2) that 253 bodies have been recovered out of an estimated 267 underground at the time of the explosions.

Indrajit Gupta MP and other trade union leaders coming out of the Amla incline after inspection. —Photo Shambhu Banerjee



The time-keeper's office at the mouth of one of the inclines has been completely wrecked, the unfortunate time-keeper himself was flung 50 feet out of his room and killed. All the mining sirdars also lost their lives.

Where are the attendance registers and records for all the three pits? To this question no definite or verifiable reply was available.

Some persons say that all or most of the papers were destroyed or missing when the time-keeper's office was smashed.

Others maintain that some records have been found but they were incomplete and, besides, as shift-changing was actually in process on that fateful morning not all workers may have been correctly marked as "in" or "out".

But a responsible official of the adjacent NCDC colliery at Kargali told us that all the registers had been found in very slightly damaged condition and were in police custody.

It seems that on the basis of whatever records have been recovered, the workers' names were checked and anyone who did not appear in the flesh was presumed killed. It is by this process that the Mines

By
INDRAJIT GUPTA MP

Directorate has arrived at a total casualty figure of 267 dead.

It is humanly impossible for anyone to identify the bodies. We watched, amid a small group of grimly silent spectators, as about a dozen corpses were laid out on "charpoys"—poor, twisted, blackened shapes of what once were men, charred beyond recognition in the agony of violent death, some of them so bloated and swollen that it took four rescue workers to drag each body up the inclines. The stench of death hung sickeningly around.

This colliery—primitive and old-fashioned by any standards—is owned by the Raja of Ramgarh. Workers told us that oppression and exploitation of labour had been the rule here. There is a union led by the local Congress MLA, but its role has been a dubious one.

A prolonged strike by the coal-cutters, lasting for 45 days, had ended on May 21, and less than a week after the resumption of normal work, the disaster took place.

The overwhelming majority of workers do not live in the company's "dhowrahs" but are residents of the surrounding villages. They are not only employees of the Raja in his capacity as mineowner, but also his "praja" because he is the feudal zamindar from time immemorial of this countryside.

The Raja and his colleagues cannot be expected to be bothered over much by the tragic loss of life of a few hundred "serfs". We were told how the Raja had visited the spot by jeep the previous day for literally a few minutes, clad in his immaculately white "shervani" and pyjamas, how he briefly expressed his "regret" to the Chief Inspector of Mines and drove away without a word to the workers' hapless, grief-stricken families standing around.

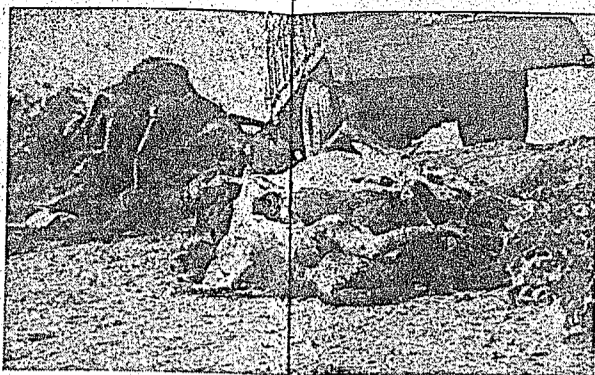
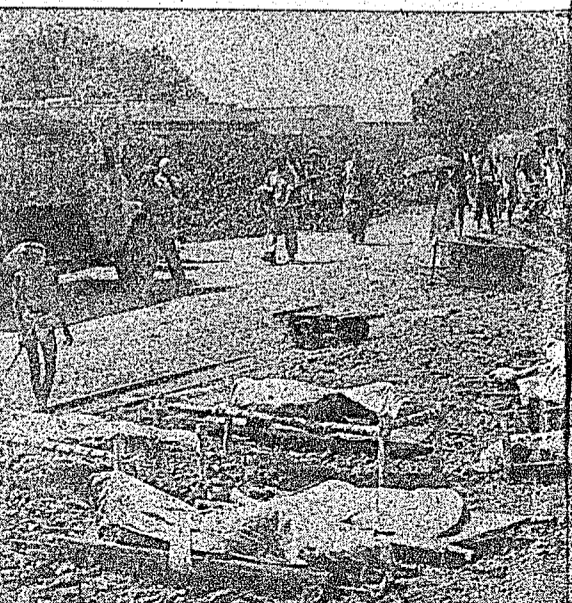
It is this same feudal outlook which bred the management's utterly callous indifference to the rescue operations for recovery of bodies?

Not only the Mines Directorate people but the neighbouring NCDC personnel complained bitterly to us about the fact that for several hours after the disaster not a single man belonging to Dhori colliery was made available for rescue work, no local resources (vehicles, shelter) were offered, not a drop of drinking water or morsel of food was provided by the management for the heroic rescue squads who came from other areas and worked unceasingly in the most difficult conditions. And yet it was one of the

By
INDRAJIT GUPTA MP

top members of the management who complained to me that they were being "ignored" and neglected by the government people! According to him, neither the Chief Inspector of Mines nor the Deputy Labour Minister, R. K. Malaviya, had bothered to visit the colliery office to meet the management and discuss matters with them. But I saw with my own

A few of the dead bodies laid out before cremation. —Photo Shambhu Banerjee



Dead bodies being dumped from trucks

DHORI DISASTER

eyes during the time I was there, that not a single member of the management left the office and came outdoors in the blazing sun to help or even to watch the rescue work going on.

Was it an explosion of gas or of coal-dust? Only the proposed Court of Enquiry can tell. But various persons we talked to pointed out what they consider to be "baffling" features of the accident.

Firstly, the Dhori mine is supposed to be reputedly non-gassy and is a naturally ventilated one. It has more than once been awarded certificates of merit by the Mines Directorate on this account—though of course, this may be so much eyewash.

Secondly, the working surface of the mine is very damp with water trickling down all the time. Pumping operations have to be conducted without a day's break. In these conditions, normally, not much coal-dust would accumulate.

Thirdly, no blasting is done in the second shift, during whose duration the explosion took place.

Fourthly, the 45 days' strike had caused stoppage of all coal cutting work, and on this ground too, accumulation of coal dust would be less than normal.

Fifthly, what could have served as the ignition agent for such a violent explosion?

However, puzzling these features may appear, the fact remains that the disaster did take place and its causes have got to be located. Not one person we met has anything but ridicule or scorn for the "sabotage" story concocted by the Raja and now being elaborated by his henchmen.

One of the latter, whom I met in his office, told me that possibilities of a planted timebomb cannot be overlooked, and that a Muslim (!) shot-firer was reported to be absconding. So the sabotage yarn is being perfected with a view to influencing the future Court of Enquiry.

On the basis of my own inquiries at the spot, three big questions stand out unanswered and, who knows, the

* On Page 10

Colliery Explosions and Safety Measures

Towards the end of February, 1965, on the last day of the Safety Week at Jharia in Bihar, D. Sanjivayya, Union Minister of Labour and Employment, quoted poems and statistics to boast about the "great success" in reducing accidents in mines. The place was not far from Dhori. Everybody applauded when speakers pointed out the need to increase output per manshift and talked more about production and less about safety. G. S. Jabbi, Chief Inspector of Mines, said "our output per manshift must go up at all costs" and stressed the need of economy in coal mines.

The mine owners are exactly doing this—practicing economy at the expense of safety. If the costs are to be measured in terms of human lives, they are indeed heavy.

According to the Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines, from 1959 to 1964 August, there were 1,185 fatal accidents leading to the death of 1,419; 16,978 persons were seriously injured in 16,721 serious accidents. This is in relation to coal mines alone.

The majority of the coal mines suffer from bad and unscientific planning, primitive layout, defective ventilation system, and machinery which are in use today are old, worn out and in need of constant repairs.

New investment is practically nil. The World Bank loan of nearly Rs. 17 crores to the private sector remains unutilised.

By
KALYAN ROY
General Secretary, Indian Mine Workers Federation

and even those who were issued with license to import machinery have actually surrendered their licenses.

The coal mining machinery plant at Durgapur, built with Soviet help, is retrenching workers on a mass scale for lack of orders and coal mining machinery already produced are rotting for want of buyers. The private sector refuses to buy from the Durgapur plant.

In spite of all this, productivity has gone up. While output per manshift in 1954 was 0.38 tons, it increased to 0.48 tons in 1961, and further rose to 0.51 in 1963-64.

The percentage increase in employment is lower than the percentage increase in production. The primary reason of this difference is the spectacular increase of over 25 per cent in the productivity of mine workers.

The Second Five Year Plan provided for an increase of 20 per cent in the productivity of mine workers and had expected higher employment on the basis of the targeted production of 60 million tons.

However, the target production was not reached but the productivity target was exceeded. The result was higher production with fewer workmen.

Accidents are inevitable when all attention and stress are paid to produce coal "at all costs" neglecting the safety and the rights of miners.

In this respect, we find a strange similarity between the last terrible accident at the Chinakuri colliery on February 19, 1958 and the latest at Dhori on May 28.

The Dhori colliery employs over 500 workers per day, and produced over 10,000 tons of coal per month and is owned by one of the biggest landlords of Bihar, Raja of Ramgarh.

The first thing which strikes us is the great confusion regarding the number of workers killed in the explosion.

In all other parts of the world the exact number of casualty is announced within a few hours of the accident. This is natural. There should not and need not be any difficulty whatsoever to find out the exact number of people dead or missing. There are any number of registers—attendance registers, lamp regis-

By
KALYAN ROY
General Secretary, Indian Mine Workers Federation

ters, manpower distribution plan etc. Then why should there be so much confusion?

While the Statesman reported "274 die in Bihar Coal Mine Explosion", the Amrita Bazar Patrika wrote "Over 375 die in worst mine blast". It was further reported, "according to the UNI, a government spokesman said he was 'taking the low figure' in estimating the death toll at 250, but union leaders put the figure at 400".

A few lines about the registers, etc., will be helpful to readers.

Attendance registers give full particulars of when a man goes down and comes out and is kept under the charge of the attendance clerk to be present at the pit top or incline mouth in the attendance room.

The lamp register is maintained by another person—called lamp-room clerk, showing record of the lamps issued from and returned to the lamp room; and in the record the number of the lamp issued to any person shall be entered against his name.

The manpower distribution plan says that during the first week of every month, a survey shall be made of the number of persons normally employed in every district and other places below ground the mine; and a sketch plan showing the results of such a manpower survey, and signed and dated by the manager, shall be kept in the office of the mine and a copy thereof shall be kept with the attendance clerk.

If these registers and plans are kept and kept correctly there should not be any confusion regarding the number of casualties.

But the fact is that these registers and plans are kept in a most haphazard manner in the coal mines. Workers are sent underground without any attendance in order to avoid payment of bonus etc. Even the names are changed every month.

Deception and falsification of the attendance and other registers have become a permanent feature in the mines. And the Mines Department has miserably failed to do anything about this.

The whole conduct of the management of the Dhori colliery from the very beginning is rather suspicious. In an interview with the correspondent of the Statesman, the Raja of Ramgarh, proprietor of the Dhori colliery, said: "The muster roll of the second shift having been blown away, they could not ascertain how many people were actually going down at the mine."

But what about other registers and plans?

Naturally a serious doubt arises—whether use are once again faced with suppression of the number of casualties, secret disposal of the bodies and a conspiracy to cover up violations of the Mines Act, Rules and Regulations?

Exactly this happened in the last two great disasters of a similar nature. Only at the Amlabad colliery explosion in 1955 there was no confusion and names of workers killed were published. But things were different at Poidih and Chinakuri.

Failing to ascertain the number of death, which was over 200, the Court of Enquiry, into the Poidih colliery (Andrew Yule) disaster in 1936 pointed out—"A system of deception and falsification of the attendance registers had been introduced and practiced by the manager".

The number of deaths in the Chinakuri coal mine disaster (Andrew Yule) on February 19, 1958 still remains a great mystery shrouded in enigma. Till today nobody knows how many families of killed workmen got compensation and what was the total amount of compensation paid for.

In a reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on February 26, 1959, Abid Ali, the then Deputy Minis-

ter of Labour said: "Information is not available."

After finding that the attendance-cum-lamp registers, explosive registers, manpower distribution plan, etc., were all improperly kept and inaccurate and unreliable, the Chinakuri Court of Enquiry stated that "the exact figure of safety lamps which were available for use on the February 19, when the explosion took place, does not appear in any of the documents".

Then it came to the most amazing conclusion that casualties could not have been less than 115 and more than 176 and "were probably a few more than 155"—a remarkable finding indeed!

But when challenged about the correctness of the figure by Members of Parliament and the Indian Mine Workers Federation who accused the government and the Court of Enquiry of suppressing the number of casualties and shielding the British company which was responsible for the accident, S. C. Samanta MP, a member of the Court of Enquiry, and Gulzaril Nanda, the then Union Labour Minister, hesitated and faltered and fumbled and pleaded helplessness on the floor of the Lok Sabha on April 2, 1959, during the discussion on the Chinakuri disaster.

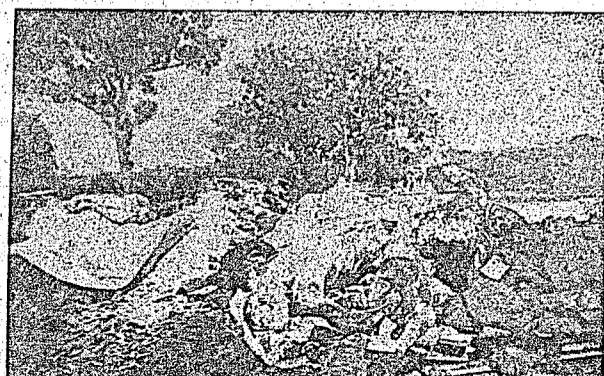
S. C. Samanta said: "As regards the number of death and casualties, heaven knows that. We cannot say for certain that this is the number of persons who died. How can we?"

The statement of Nanda was even more pathetic. In a desperate attempt to defend the report of the Court of Enquiry in the background of criticisms made in a book, "White Washing Enquiry At The Chinakuri Coal Mine," Nanda could only say:

"I will not say that all these allegations (made in the book) are baseless. Some of them, may be, are to an extent correct... For example, there was the question in regard to the register. Has it any bearing on the casualties, the outcome, the number of deaths? It is an important matter—even a single death. The register was not maintained. All right. That was a violation. If there was any violation involved, it is our duty to look into it, and I promise the House that all these things will be looked into... There may be difficulties about registers. I say there

*ON PAGE 12

The all-consuming fire to burn the remains



A Communist Looks At Language Problem

INDIA'S LANGUAGE CRISIS by Mohan Kumaramangalam; Published by New Century Book House, Madras; 122 pp; Price Rs. 5.00.

THIS small book is the best literature available in my knowledge on the present language problem facing the country. It begins by giving a brief but adequately complete account of how the different major languages of India had developed during the period of imperial rule and what was the position of the different languages during the period of freedom movement.

The author in particular reminds the country of the language policy of our independence movement and how this policy as elaborated by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru was abandoned and undermined in the period following independence.

In three chapters—Framing of the Constitution, The Official Language Commission, The Official Languages Act—the author traces the whole history of this development and shows how the present Hindi-English controversy is primarily due to the inadequate attention paid to the problem of the development of the state languages.

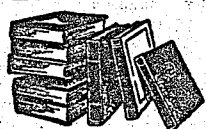
This was because, in the first instance, the framers of the Constitution resisted the idea of linguistic provinces and valuable time was lost from 1947 to 1956 during which the move for making the mother-tongue the official language of the state could not be put into effect in a large number of provinces—especially the bigger ones as many of these provinces were still bilingual or multilingual.

During the same period, however, the machinery for developing Hindi and introducing it for purposes of administration and government, both at the Centre and in the Hindi provinces, went ahead.

It is this which brought about the situation when in 1965 at the end of the 15-year preparatory period stipulated in the Constitution, Hindi apparently seems to be better equipped for immediate adoption for replacing English whereas almost next to nothing has been done for the development of the state languages in their respective states.

The author is also clear how the zeal of the Hindi fanatics went ahead not only vis-a-vis the other Indian languages but also departed from the earlier policy of Hindustani of Gandhi and Nehru and of the Congress of the pre-independence period to a new concept of artificial Sanskritised Hindi which was sought to be imposed and whose first victim evidently was Urdu.

Throughout he gives very apt quotations from the writing of Gandhi and Nehru as well as from Congress resolutions etc. to show how Hindustani was conceived as a unifying language representing the composite culture of the North,



BOOK REVIEW

Next he deals with the very important question that unless there is a move for statutory recognition of the state language of the state, it will be impossible to persuade any considerable body of students to opt for the state language as the medium of instruction even if provided for by the universities.

There will be the tendency to depend on one's proficiency in English and to use it as a shield against the onrush of Hindi.

This has been actually so in contrast to the development in the Hindi-speaking areas, thus furthering the suspicion of the non-Hindi peoples about the advantages which the Hindi-speaking people would naturally enjoy at their cost when Hindi has become the official link language.

This point is specially important for the people in the Hindi-speaking areas to understand because without this it is impossible to appreciate why such large masses of otherwise patriotic people in the South could be won over by such a slogan as "English Ever".

The author then shows how the language problem is one essentially of democratisation and not merely one between two sections of the so-called English-speaking elite who do not number more than two per cent of the population.

It is essentially a problem of running the country in the languages which are the mother-tongues of the people thus enabling them to participate in the process of administration, law and justice, legislation, commerce and education.

In this context the function and the method of adoption of the link language is two fold—to bring about the voluntary acceptance of one language as the all-India language and thereby strengthening national integration and at the same time make such gestures and take such steps that satisfy the non-Hindi majority of the country that justice has been done to them on this issue and thus further strengthen our national consolidation.

He stresses that the full implementation of the three-language formula is the only possible lasting solution of the problem.

In two appendices the book includes the resolution of the CPI National Council on the language question and briefly recounts the points of similarity and contrast between the situation in India and

that obtaining in the USSR immediately after the revolution.

In the USSR the problem was not one of adopting a new link language. Russian was already there, more developed than the other languages, the existing official language and the mother-tongue of the majority of the people.

In the USSR the problem was not one of link language but of developing the languages of the republics by special effort to undo the earlier practice of their suppression and forcible Russification. The difference in the Indian situation is obvious.

Apart from providing a valuable and clear analysis of the problem—how it stands today and how it has arisen—the book also provides an expose of the Hindi and English fanatics and the vested interests they represent.

Coming from a Tamil Communist the book appropriately has a chapter on the position of Tamil today in which the author shows in detail how the comparatively

greater anti-Hindi feelings in Madras is primarily due to the even lesser steps having been taken in that state compared to others in regard to the further development and application of the state language.

Another important subject on which the book throws valuable light is the question of technical terminology for all the languages if they are to become the media of instruction up to the universities.

Here the Soviet example proves extremely valuable. Development of Russian language after Pushkin was also faced with this problem and the language assimilated a remarkable large number of words from German, French and English. There was no attempt to create new words to denote the concepts of the new industrial age from ancient Russian roots.

After the revolution this common sense approach was continued in the development of the comparatively more backward languages of the republic.

A word was selected to denote a technical meaning—either foreign or Russian—and this word or the root of this word remained unaltered in all the languages of the republics in spite of the different stems and endings that may have been added to suit it to each language.

—BAREN RAY Pondicherry V. SUBBIAH

CAPITALIST INHUMANITY STANDS FULLY INDICATED

* From Centre Pages

plus to the tragedy may be found among them?

1 Before work was resumed on May 21, after the 45 day strike, what precautions, if any, were taken to test thoroughly the safety of working conditions? Was any proper inspection done even between May 21 and 23?

No reply is forthcoming to this question. The regular manager went on leave from May 21 or 23; an acting manager was in his place, but nobody can state anything definite and there is a patent attempt to pass the buck. One thing is certain: the Mines Directorate carried out no independent inspection of its own.

2 Even in a reputedly non-gassy mine, is it not possible for pockets of gas to accumulate at times? If so, what precautions were taken against this risk?

3 Is it not possible for naked lamps (no safety lamps are used at Dhori) to ignite a coal dust explosion under certain circumstances?

There seems, in any case, to have been utter complacency on the part of both the management, whose indifference and callousness are not surprising, and of the Inspectorate of Mines which is paid out of public funds to maintain sharp vigilance at all times over safety regulations.

Whatever the factor which set off the explosion it could not have been a minor one, but it went undetected in the absence of any proper inspection and testing safety conditions. For this neglect, hundreds of innocent workers have paid with their lives, and the "mysterious" explosion has caused unreasonable panic for miles around.

Now the silence of the graveyard prevails at Dhori. The workers' relatives and friends were not satisfied by any means that the various pit inclines had been cleared of all bodies. Some of them, I was told, were subsequently allowed to enter the mines and go through them to see for themselves.

But no representatives of the union or the workers have been permitted, as far as I know, to accompany the rescue teams at the actual time of recovery operations. This is an important omission from the point of view of the forthcoming Court of Enquiry, which will have to rely on the first hand evidence of those who were underground at the initial stages of the recovery operations, and can bear witness to any possible suppression or distortion of facts by interested parties.

Above all, if funds are to be adequately and equitably disbursed for the relief and rehabilitation of the dependants of the killed miners, dispersed as they are over several villages and prey to all sorts of panic-mongering rumours, it is essential that a complete and reliable list of the dead is compiled and published within the shortest possible time.

One neglect and in-danger-of-being-forgotten aspect of the tragedy is the consideration of severely injured surface workers who were working near the mouths of the inclines and in the direct path of the blast and fumes which roared out of the mines.

I visited some of them in their beds at the Phusro Mines Hospital, suffering from serious burns and shock,

EDITORS

KITE-FLYING BY THE HINDU

A news item has appeared in THE HINDU dated May 29 saying that I was to be included in the Pondicherry state cabinet. This so-called news item was picked up by the Tamil dailies and flashed in a big way causing great confusion.

I have already sent a denial to THE HINDU which said: "The report published in the Hindu dated 29-5-65 that I have refused to confirm or contradict rumours that he might join the state cabinet has no foundation whatsoever and leads to misleading conjectures which are far from truth and objective reality."

I wish to state that the report was absolutely misleading and based on rumours and speculations set afloat by interested political groups inside the Congress and intended mainly to tarnish my name.

The real aim of the report was seen from the fact that the report in THE HINDU has been malignantly used by Madras daily NAVAMANI to slander members of the Communist Party of India as people prepared to cross floors for getting ministerial jobs.

—BAREN RAY Pondicherry V. SUBBIAH

Party Press Month

The Party Press Month (one month during the period May 15 to June 30) is being currently observed throughout the country. Of the highpoints of the campaign, the most important one is the mass-scale drive for popularisation of the Party papers published by the centre, namely the central organ NEW AGE weekly (English), JANYUG weekly (Hindi) and HAYAT weekly (Urdu).

In order to intensify the WIN MORE READERS campaign, the central secretariat has decided to offer incentives to enterprising Party members and sympathisers who would take initiative in securing subscribers for these papers.

The incentives offered by the central secretariat are as follows and are valid till August 15, 1965. It is, of course, understood that crediting of subscriptions to one's name will be considered only after the amount has been received at the managerial offices of these papers.

PRIZES

★ For those who would secure FIVE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS or TEN HALF-YEARLY SUBSCRIPTIONS or TWENTY QUARTERLY SUBSCRIPTIONS of any one of the three papers or the three papers together:

One-year free supply of one copy of either of the three papers.

★ For TEN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS or equivalent thereto:

Coupons worth Rs. 30 negotiable with the People's Publishing House, New Delhi for buying books according to choice.

★ For TWENTYFIVE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS or equivalent thereto:

Rs. 100 in cash or utility goods of that amount according to choice.

★ For ONE HUNDRED ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS or equivalent thereto:

Rs. 300 in cash or utility goods of that amount according to choice.

★ Those who would secure 100 or more annual subscriptions or equivalent thereto, would also have:

- His photograph and a short life-sketch published in the Party papers.
- The fact of this achievement recorded in the Party card, if he is a Party member.
- Be declared as a honorary member of the NEW AGE family.

★ Those who would secure highest number of subscriptions (beyond 100 annual subscriptions or equivalent thereto) shall have the distinction of receiving:

- Cash prizes or utility goods worth a big sum, the exact amount of which is to be decided by the Party's central secretariat;
- Special honour by the Party and the Party press; and
- Special awards and benefits.

Agents Note

★ For six weeks, any time upto August 15, 1965, agents can receive extra copies in addition to their existing orders on SALE OF RETURN basis. The number of extra copies ordered must be reasonable.

★ On the extra copies sold, a commission of 40 per cent will be allowed for six weeks effective from the date of the order.

★ After six weeks, when sale of extra copies would be stabilised, new terms can be worked out for the entire bulk of copies to be sold every week.

A COMMENT ON THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

D. C. Home's article on the language question published in NEW AGE (June 6) is thought-provoking and informative. I have no hesitation in accepting many of the points he has raised in the article.

BUT the article suffers from one very serious drawback. Home, while elaborating the part English language played in bringing modern ideas, literature, scientific knowledge etc., to India, is blind as regards the reactionary role this language had in preventing the development of the Indian languages and of Hindi as an all-India link language.

Hence the solution which he suggests to this problem is also seriously defective. He, while agreeing that "Hindi must one day become the country's central language", puts forth the formula of "harmonious use of both Hindi and English" as solution for the present.

He further says that with this "we can reach a state when not only Hindi alone will do but also the fuller use of regional languages will not be conducive to unhealthy regionalism."

This means that if regional languages are introduced as media of instruction and education in the states, not only they will not serve the

university stage' by the re-banishment of English from India altogether. He only wanted the removal of English which is acting as a stumbling block on the way of the development of regional languages and Hindi as an all-India link language.

The CPI is not out for banishing English altogether. It only wants that English should not act as an obstruction to the growth of regional languages and their taking the rightful place as the media of administration and education.

Place for English

English will occupy an important place in India even after it is replaced as medium of administration and education, because it is one of the important world-languages through which advanced scientific and other knowledge will be available to India for a long time to come.

As a matter of fact, the National Council of the CPI had accepted the three-

effectively put the balanced and non-chauvinist line of the National Council in his article.

He did not ask for the banishment of English from India altogether. He only wanted the removal of English which is acting as a stumbling block on the way of the development of regional languages and Hindi as an all-India link language.

The moot point of his article is the exposure of Hindi chauvinists who want an immediate replacement of English by Hindi even to the detriment of regional languages.

The passage from Yogindra Sharma's article quoted by Home, if seen in this context, will not carry the meaning which Home has sought to impart to it. I hope he will appreciate this position.

The recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee on the language problem is on the whole good. It goes a long way in helping the solution of the language issue that is troubling our country. We are glad that this resolution is very near the stand taken by the National Council of the CPI.

What is required is the honest implementation of this resolution by the central government and the state governments.

The duty of all the political parties, mass organisations and individuals who cherish the unity and integrity of our country, is to unite and put continuous pressure on the central and state governments, for the speedy implementation of the above resolution to resolve the language problem.

By
C. RAJESWAR RAO

purpose, but develop "unhealthy regionalism".

So till the appointed "one day" comes, English has to rule the roost both in the states and at the centre and act as the guardian of unity of our country and save it from regional disintegration.

Nobody knows when that fateful "one day" will dawn on our country. Even after 17 years of independence we are almost where we were and English continues to be still the medium of administration both in the states and at the centre and of education in the universities.

Retrograde Argument

The argument that the regional languages are backward and undeveloped to act as the media of administration and university education is being flung before the faces of the masses by the English-educated intelligentsia who are controlling the administrative machinery and the universities. They will continue to do so till doomsday if they are allowed to have their way.

What is needed is a vigorous action on behalf of the central and state governments "to replace English as medium of administration, of law courts and of education at all levels, including the

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Colliery Explosions and Safety Measures

*FROM CENTRE PAGES

may be some marginal differences. Why don't they come for compensation? That was the question asked. The counter-question or the explanation is that so many of them are ignorant and illiterate people. This is a matter worth looking into. I made a research into the past enquiries and tried to find out the number of those who did not ask for compensation. There was also the CRO and Gorakhpur labour was involved. Incidentally, I may say about this CRO and Gorakhpur labour that I did not like the position as it is and in the Industrial Committee on Coal I have said that something should be done. Something has to be done."

But unfortunately nothing practically has been done in all these years in any one of the matters. The CRO and the Gorakhpur labour still continue. Nor has there been any change in the attitude of mineowners.

Both the managements, Chinakuri and Dhori, behaved in the same way after the explosion.

After the Chinakuri coal mine explosion at about 9.45 P.M. Huges, Assistant Chief Mining Engineer, instead of informing the rescue station or the Mines Department gave order to the Labour Advisor to contact Chief Mining Engineer Rosser in Calcutta by a long distance telephone.

It was one of the inspectors of the Department of Mines who first informed the rescue station at about 10.30 P.M. The first rescue team could go down at about 11.30 P.M.—two hours after the accident, and obviously none could be rescued.

The attitude of the Dhori management is even worse. Additional Superintendent of Police, Giridih, bitterly complained to pressmen about the "utter indifference of the management".

He stated that even after

15 hours of the accident, the management did not care to inform the local police station. He further complained that the management even did not provide trucks for the removal of the bodies.

He added that if the people of the adjoining areas had not come with all resources to help the rescue party, it would have been impossible for them to start the rescue operations.

Thus we find "utter indifference of the management" on the one hand and people's cooperation on the other.

A question naturally arises—what was the reason behind this utter indifference of the management? Are they trying to hide or suppress or cover up anything which would make them responsible for this ghastly tragedy? Why did the owner, Raja of Ramgarh, the ex-boss of the Swatantra Party of Bihar and a coal magnate, instead of rushing to the mine in one of his helicopters, remain in Calcutta and rush to the press alleging "sabotage"?

Regarding other features of the accident, all reports are unanimous and what were observed and seen immediately after the Poidih (1935), Amlabad (1955) and Chinakuri (1958) colliery disasters also reappeared here.

There was a rumbling sound like thunder clap. The entire area trembled. There was a huge flash and columns of coal dust rose like mushroom clouds after an atomic explosion. And the entire area was covered with coal dust.

According to the Ananda Bazar Patrika (30.5.65), one of the clerks at the incline mouth thought it to be an earthquake and ran for safety but he could hardly see. Coal dust blurred his vision.

The blast of the explosion was so terrific that a worker sleeping three miles away was killed by a

flying piece of stone. Inside the mine everything was blown away including the haulage equipment. Bodies which were brought up, coated with coal dust, looked like burnt out logs.

What do all these indicate? A coal dust explosion or an explosion where coal dust played a major part? And a coal dust explosion of this magnitude can only be caused by gross negligence on the part of the management and the Department of Mines.

Coal dust is the most dangerous combustible element and is constantly formed during all operations of coal mining and in much larger quantities when machines are used.

To tackle the problem it is necessary to minimise the production of dust, to suitably treat such dust as has been formed, and to prevent it from rising into the air and forming a cloud.

For minimising the production of coal dust, precautions should start even before the cutting of coal starts, with water or steam. (However this has not yet been introduced in India).

Later on, precautions are necessary at every stage of coal handling to reduce breakage of coal. The object of treating coal dust is to prevent it from mixing with air to form an explosive mixture. This is achieved by cleaning and then watering and/or mixing with stone dust.

Were all these things done in the Dhori colliery?

If so, then how could one explain columns of coal dust, carbon monoxide, terrific blast and coal dust everywhere and bodies coated with coal dust?

Haldane's Remarks

Just after the Chinakuri coal mine disaster, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane wrote an article in the Hindu, on March 9, 1958:

"From the newspaper accounts of the Chinakuri explosion which I have seen, it looks as if the explosion of a small amount of gas might have started a much larger coal dust explosion. Enough gas to kill more than one or two men can only accumulate through very gross negligence. But a moderate amount may suddenly come out of the coal, and if it is accidentally ignited, will explode. However, if proper precautions are taken, it will not start a coal dust explosion."

The Amlabad Court of Enquiry in 1955 also came to a similar conclusion and one can see the similarities between the two. The report says:

"Dead bodies were found covered with coal dust. Coking is an indication that coal dust had taken part. The explosion was of great violence and caused enormous damage, throwing over tubs, switch-gears, cables, sand pipes, etc. These had been lifted from their original position and were lying against the dip side pillars. Such was the condition in the main intake airway. Firedamp (gas) explosion would originally be confined to working places and the return airways, but a coal dust explosion would probably extend to the intake airways even though it did not originate



Valiant Rescue Workers in action at Dhori

there, for the reason that the intake airways, being generally main haulage roads, are those in which the most inflammable kind of coal dust will accumulate, and the RESPONSIBILITY MUST PRIMARILY REST UPON THE MANAGEMENT."

Even the Court of Enquiry into Chinakuri coalmine, which was so bitterly criticised by all trade unions, had to admit the negligence of the management in suppressing coal dust. It said:

"In this state of fact, the conclusion would not appear to be unreasonable that in the mine air there must have been a certain amount of fine coal dust in suspension at all times and a much larger amount deposited on the floor, sides and roof so as to be available for propagation of an explosion."

It further said: "If coal dust takes a part in the explosion, necessarily the extent and the magnitude of the violence increases and in this case, evidently this is what has happened."

The report pointed out that stone dusting in the mine did not appear to have been adequate even to meet the regulations.

Law Violated

The Chinakuri mine had neither any stone dusting scheme nor any stone dusting plan nor there was any arrangement to test the stone dust to find out its dispersibility against coal dust. (Most of the mines in India use ordinary ash.) No sampling of coal dust was ever done in the Chinakuri colliery. And all these are required by LAW under the Mining Regulations.

Has the history repeated itself in the Dhori coalmine? This is the main issue before the Court of Enquiry.

What steps did the management take to suppress coal dust? Was it a gas or coal dust explosion to start with? If it was a methane (gas) explosion, did coal dust play a major part therein? How far, was the management responsible for it by not taking the necessary precautions which, if they were taken, would have averted the catastrophe? Did the Department of Mines discharge their responsibilities and duties satis-

factorily in ensuring compliance with the Regulations?

Lastly, the question remains—would the representatives of the workmen be allowed to go underground along with the employers and Mines Department's officers to inspect and prevent any destruction and tampering of evidence during the recovery operations? This is most vital.

The Amlabad Court of Enquiry understood its importance and stated "it is important that vital evidence should not be lost or destroyed during the recovery operations," and strongly recommend (a) that a special investigation team, besides the rescue party, should be sent underground after an accident and (b) labour representatives should go underground and inspect the places.

This was recommended in 1955. The government did nothing. The demand was again raised before the Court of Enquiry into Chinakuri coalmine in 1958 and at first the management agreed. Later they bluntly refused to allow workmen's representatives on the ground that "it was a private property."

Thus the unions were denied any access to the mine which was left under the exclusive control of the management and the Department of Mines, both of whom were accused of gross negligence.

When the matter was again raised in the Parliament on April 2, 1959, Gulzarilal Nanda pathetically stated:

"The management did not allow the workers' representative. I do not know whether there was disagreement on the workers' side. Personally I am not quite happy about the position. I do not mean to cast any reflection on the court, but I do not feel happy about it. Why should not a workers' representative be there? The court first recommended or accepted that, and later on the mine management said that their property rights and all that. I do not see any point about that. But if need be this should be incorporated in the law—that their representative should be allowed to come inside every time."

Will the workers' representative be allowed this time? Or will the mine, on the ground of private property, remain in the hands of the Raja of Ramgarh who is already busy in spreading the story of "sabotage"?

CALCUTTA: West Bengal government has increased the price of rice and wheat supplied through ration shops in the Greater Calcutta rationing area. The increase is of five paise for rice and ten paise for wheat per kilogram. Prices in the modified ration shops in the mofussil areas have however not been raised.

ACCORDING to West Bengal government sources, this price increase is due to the central government's inability to supply rice and wheat at lower rates.

Whatever may be the immediate cause, the failure of the government to control the stock and prices has become abundantly clear.

Along with the rise in prices of rationed rice and wheat has come a sudden spurt in the prices of mustard oil.

From the controlled price of Rs. 2.90 a kilogram it has gone up to Rs. 3.50 and more. And then mustard oil has disappeared from the open market.

Again, the statements and counter statements as to the availability and non-availability, price of mustard seed and all that we have witnessed for the last two years have appeared in the press without in any way mitigating the hardships of the people.

The government has dismally failed to curb the oil millowners and they hold the market in their complete grip when government issues only empty threats.

Along with the high prices and non-availability of foodstuffs has come the revelation about the dangerous impurities in the food that people consume.

Cent per cent of the samples of baby food examined by the health department of the Calcutta Corporation was found to be adulterated. Same is the position regarding arrow-root, soda water, lemonade, vanaspathi, icecream, topioca, honey, sugar, wheat—in short all edible items.

This horrible state of affairs was revealed at a special meeting of the Corporation on June 2 by Communist councillor K. J. Majumdar.

He revealed that adulteration in milk was to the extent of 41.2 per cent, in butter 47.22 per cent, in lozenges 44.04 per cent and in sweetmeats 81.25 per cent.

UCC councillor K. P. Ghosh alleged that the lawyers appointed by the Corporation take money from the accused and many cases against adulterers were compromised. He said he could give proof of 18 such cases.

The Congress councillors pleaded helplessness in the absence of any power for the Corporation to stamp out this menace.

The Corporation passed a resolution urging upon the Government to initiate a vigorous anti-adulteration campaign in collaboration with the Corporation.

In this situation the com-

AMERICAN AID IN TRUE COLOURS

* From Page 3

loans is the Export Import Bank. The Hindustan Aluminium received three loans totalling Rs 14.12 crores from the Bank.

Two other beneficiaries of the Bank, whose names have appeared earlier too are the Coromandel Fertilisers (Rs. 12.00 crores) and the Union Carbide (Rs. 2.64 crores).

So, the US assistance is essentially meant to keep the private sector monopolies in tow to the American line. It helps the monopoly sections of the private sector in this country to grow bigger and more formidable.

A glance through the subject-wise division of American assistance grants or loans, would also show this clearly:

A total of Rs. 1,675.30 crores of the American assistance are claimed to have been allocated to the agricultural sector. Of this as much as Rs. 1,592.00 crores were for imports of PL 480 commodities!

As much as Rs. 881.4 crores of American assistance is claimed to be in the industrial sector. A little prodding would reveal that Rs. 568.50 crores of this went for importing raw materials and maintenance articles, which left only Rs. 312.84 crores for real investment in industries.

And the public sector got just Rs. 17.85 crores out of this: the National Coal Development Corporation Rs. 3.80 crores and the Banaras Diesel Locomotive Factory Rs. 9.05 crores.

Power generation was an

attractive field. As much as Rs. 317.00 crores were allocated for river valley projects (both irrigation and power, but emphasis on power generation) and Rs. 224.40 crores on thermal power projects.

In the transport sector, the Indian Railways were the main beneficiaries with Rs. 121.80 crores out of the total Rs. 148.42 crores.

The rest of the American assistance went to health schemes (Rs. 147.27 crores including Rs. 112.00 crores for malaria eradication), educational schemes (Rs. 60.64 crores including Rs. 42.00 crores for elementary education) and miscellaneous (Rs. 28.99 crores).

It is clear from the very nature of the allocations that the emphasis was on power and transport: the infra structure of the economy as it is called.

Strengthening of the infra structure helps the capitalists to grow more and expand. Power helps in setting up the industries; transport makes it easier to market it.

Indeed, as the blurb writer of the American magazine claimed, there is great variety in US-assisted projects. They extend from diesel locomotive factory through rayon and hotels right upto growing beetles and fungus.

Whether they are "tailored" to the needs of India's Five Year Plans—that is an entirely different question altogether. India is willing to stand on her own feet economically and strive for it. But helping in that is certainly not the aim of the United States.

W. BENGAL: PRICES UP, MUSTARD OIL SCARCE

From AJOY DAS GUPTA

campaign initiated by the Communist Party from May 10 is continuing in the state, particularly in the districts. In the Midnapore district 14 meetings were held during the campaign week which were attended by ten thousand people.

Besides these mass meetings a large number of 'hat' and 'bazar' meetings were held. In the subdivisional town of Tam-luk, street corner meetings were held on six days.

Three meetings were held in West Dinapore, beginning May 20 at Chalum village, Gangaram-pore and Buniadpore.

Speakers complained that just after the harvest the government procurement agencies did not offer fair price to the cultivators and now when rice has been sold out the price control had disappeared and the prices had soared up causing immense hardship to the poor people.

Police repression on local kisan workers was also subject of bitter criticism.

Nationalisation of food trade, adequate price to farmers, release of political prisoners, removal of US troops from Vietnam and defence of border against Pakistani aggression were subject matters of resolutions.

Big meetings were also held in Rahara in 24 Parganas and Arangghata in Nadia. At the latter place, apart from the campaign demands, demand for a bridge over the Churni river was also raised.

A significant meeting was held at Silihguri in the Darjeeling district, said to be the stronghold of Marxist Communists. Nearly 2,000 people comprising of teachers, professors, lawyers, students attended the meeting called by the Communist Party for the first

time after the split in the Party.

For this meeting also came old Party members from Kar-siang and Kalimpong, two subdivisions of the district, with whom the Party had no contact so long. Basis has been laid for the formation of the district council in the Darjeeling district.

Apart from these meetings organised by the Party alone, meetings jointly sponsored by the CPI, Marxist CP, RSP and RCPI were held at Adapur-Haltu. 'Centrist' Communists also joined.

In these campaign meetings state leaders Bhowani Sen, Biswanath Mukherjee, Copal Banerjee and district leaders Hrishik Bhattachary, Kanai Bhow-mik, Saroj Ray, Bhupal Panda, Satya Ghosal and many local leaders participated.

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CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

From MASOOD ALI KHAN

MOSCOW: Top level consultations are going on between the Parties and governments of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union through mutual visits of leaders and other regular channels.

RECENTLY the Hungarian leader Janos Kadar was here; Mikhail Suslov has just returned from Bulgaria; President Tito of Yugoslavia is arriving in the second half of June. Subjects which are under constant attention and review here are the mounting imperialist offensive in different parts of the world and the need of unity of the anti-imperialist forces for the defence of freedom and peace.

In spite of the mounting disruptive attacks by China on the Soviet government, the CPSU and the present Soviet leadership, the Soviet side has continued to display dignified restraint with a view to avoiding further deterioration and widening of the rift.

But the best answer to all this has been the firm anti-imperialist stand of the Soviet Union everywhere, concrete help to the people of Vietnam fighting American aggression, support to anti-imperialist forces in Asia, Africa and Latin America and firm friendship and collaboration with India in spite of all opposition.

Sanjiva Reddy Assured

Talking to India's Minister of Steel and Mines Sanjiva Reddy on June 4, Soviet Premier Kosygin again assured that all matters agreed to in principle during Shastri's visit will be implemented. He is understood to have expressed satisfaction over the fact that relations between India and Soviet Union were based on trust and confidence and developing on firm basis.

Sanjiva Reddy told correspondents that for planning further expansion of Bhilai, Soviet experts will be going to India in June or July. A designing Bureau is to be set up at the Ranchi Heavy Machine Building Plant to make India self-sufficient in this respect. Twelve Indian experts of Hindustan

Steel are to come to the Soviet Union soon to get training for the Bhilai designing bureau and the designing work for the big Bokaro plant will be carried out by Soviet experts in association with Indians.

Sanjiva Reddy said he was very satisfied with the results of his visit: Soviet side was "very cooperative in whatever we wanted."

The Soviet Union is going to supply India a powerful 1000-kw. medium wave transmitter and details have been finalised here. Indira Gandhi during her visit last year initiated the talks for the supply of a Soviet transmitter. The Soviet Union has given the transmitter without any precondition and it will be a great help in putting India's case in Asia and Africa and to counter hostile propaganda.

Increasing interest is being displayed here in the second conference of Afro-Asian states to be held soon at Algiers. Soviet circles are showing heightened interest in Soviet participation and satisfaction has been expressed at the increasing support Soviet Union has gathered in Asia and Africa in spite of fanatic Chinese opposition. The prospect now seems to be that a big majority of countries attending the Algiers conference will support Soviet Union's participation.

The Soviet circles have expressed deep satisfaction at India's constant advocacy of the case for Soviet participation. Indications here are that North Korea and North Vietnam too will not vote against Soviet participation.

USSR and Algiers

The Soviet official view is that Soviet Union's presence at the second Afro-Asian conference cannot be anything but useful. Without Soviet Union's participation, it is felt here, forces interested in splitting Afro-Asian opinion would gain an upper hand and the conference would be turned into their platform for attacking other countries.

The Soviet Union is deeply interested in the success of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial struggle, and in the cause of world peace would do its utmost for the success of the conference.

Whereas there is appreciation here of India's support for the Soviet Union, observers here express apprehension at the tendency displayed in India to bracket the question of Soviet participation with that of Malaysia. India's enthusiasm for Malaysia could only reduce Indian influence among the countries of Africa and Asia. Both the western imperialist and Chinese attempts to wreck the Conference and create disruption have to be carefully watched and countered.

While the Soviet press has refrained from replying to Chinese attacks, the speech of Todor Zhivkov, the Bulgarian Party leader and Premier was reported in PRAVDA on June 5. Speaking at a meeting on the occasion of Suslov's visit, Zhivkov declared, "we Bulgarian Communists like Communists of the whole world firmly condemn those who abuse the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet government and the present leadership of the Party and state of the Soviet Union. All those who slandered the CPSU and Soviet state always ended on the rubbish-heap of history. Bulgarian Communists and their Party consider the defence of the CPSU against all abuse and slanders as their international duty."

Suslov declared that the Soviet Communists were far from underestimating the present differences, their depth or the difficulties in the path of overcoming them. "We think that still a long period will be required to remove them." Time and patience were required, he said.

It is wellknown that the rival party in India has been intent on avoiding the discussion of the controversies in the international

Communist movement—for their own ends.

Dealing with the attempts at artificial isolation, Suslov had this to say: "Now as never before the international education of Communists and all working people has become important. All attempts to artificially fence in one's own Communist Party from those problems and tasks which arise before the world Communist movement, in the end leads to the weakening of the Party."

"The Communist movement is international in its very character, no national detachment of this movement can accomplish any task to the full if it isolates itself, shuts itself in the national shell and adopts a programme of national egoism."

The CPSU along with all "Marxist-Leninist Parties adhering to the principled line of the Communist movement", fought and will fight for strengthening the unity of the socialist commonwealth and Communist movement.

AFRO-ASIA In The Headlines

ONSLAUGHT ON S. ARABIA'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

ON June 5 the Front of National Liberation of the South Arabian Peninsula was officially pronounced a "terrorist" organisation, which comes under the purview of the special legislation, in addition to the decree on the state of emergency in Aden.

This decision vests the British Supreme Commissioner in Aden Richard Turnbull with broad powers to combat the liberation movement in this British colony.

The new step of the colonial administration, aimed at suppressing the liberation movement of the people of South Arabia against the British domination is yet another grave violation of the extremely limited democratic liberties which existed in Aden.

The decree on the state of emergency was extended to all the seventeen states of the South Arabian Federation, including Aden, as early as December, 1964.

The people and the progressive organisations of the South Arabian Peninsula have condemned the adoption of the decree as a pretext under which Britain strives to consolidate her shaky positions in this area.

Arab nationalists have stated that the new step of the British government is yet another anti-democratic act. The British Supreme Commissioner now gets the right to detain any person, to restrict the movement of citizens over the country, to arrest at any moment all "suspects", to block roads, confiscate any property, including ships and

economic development of Asian and African countries and the struggle against neo-colonialism are among the important questions on the agenda of the Algiers conference.

Economic experts have made a detailed study of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva and will present to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs when they meet on June 24 a draft decision on this matter.

Algerian officials have expressed confidence that the Chairman of the United Nations General Assembly Alex Quaison-Sackey and the General-Secretary of the Arab League Abdel Khaleq Hasuna will also be guests of the Conference.

TRIBES SUPPORT YEMENI REPUBLIC

THE Yemeni people bears main responsibility for the strengthening of peace in its country, Prime Minister of the Yemeni Republic Numan told a correspondent of the Egyptian newspaper AL AKHBAR.

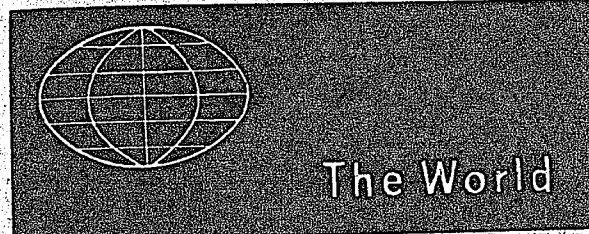
The decisions of the conference in Hamar late this April of representatives of Yemeni tribes form the basis on which we must organise our work and create an army to defend our borders, the Prime Minister pointed out.

At this conference, he stressed, the representatives of Yemeni tribes signed an agreement on the strengthening of the unity of their country and the republican system as well as on the ending of the civil war in Yemen. The Yemeni tribes have resolutely come out in support of the Republic.

READY FOR AFRO-ASIAN MEET

THE stage is being set for the second Afro-Asian Conference to open in Algiers on June 29. The conference preparatory committee, composed of delegates from 15 African and Asian countries, is already through with its work.

The problems of the eco-



JOHNSON PUTS ON ANOTHER GARB

Johnson has suddenly put on a new garb; his attire is now decorated by olive branches instead of double six-shooters in Texan style. He would like the world to believe that he has now developed a sense of revulsion at bloodshed and hence given out a clarion call for ending 'all wars'.

FROM Chicago on June 4 and Washington on June 6, President Johnson appealed to the people, particularly of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, to renounce war and inform them that the US was prepared to take all steps for ensuring world peace.

The burden of Johnson's speech was that the people of these countries should know "the cost and catastrophe to their homeland in 20th century warfare" and hence must force their leaders to negotiate peace. The implied threat in this apparently "objective" statement was that the US would inflict terrible damages on the socialist countries in the event of a third world war.

Thus Johnson's approach to peace is once again an approach from a position of strength. He wants other nations to come crawling to him in submission for taking terms for world peace. This means that the talk of peace in reality is a phoney talk and Johnson does not aim at creating an atmosphere of détente. Speeches are galore, so are the US aggressive actions. Which one is true? The continuous escalation of aggressive actions or the talk of world peace and renunciation of force? At a moment when the US President is talking about peace, there are over 700,000 US troops deployed on foreign soil. Even

after the so-called withdrawal of US marines from the Dominican Republic, more than 12,500 US soldiers still remain there. The bombing of North Vietnam territory is being augmented with every passing day. In South Vietnam, US troops have actually begun combat actions shedding off their mask of 'advisers' and 'sentry duties'.

The love of peace which is supposed to be "the passion" of US warlords finds expressions in the napalm, phosphorous bombs, chemical warfare and wanton use of -murder gas against the hapless South Vietnamese population. In a number of other countries, the United States has arrogated to itself the functions of a police force and is trying to block the national upsurge for freedom. More than 100,000 US army officers and troops are engaged in battles against the national liberation movements.

If Johnson really had any desire for ensuring peace, then why is it that his representative William Foster opposed the Soviet proposals in the United Nations Disarmament Commission? The Soviet proposal had offered all states that have military bases in other countries to liquidate them immediately and not to set up such bases in the future; and second, suggested measures for the prohibition of the use of

CPSU when a fraternal delegation of the CPSU was also present on the occasion. Our Moscow correspondent reports that PRAVDA on June 7 published a statement of the CPSU delegation to Indonesia. The delegation was led by S. Rashidov, candidate member of the presidium of the CC CPSU.

The statement, which was issued at Jakarta, protests against the anti-Soviet speech of Peng Chen and describes it as "provocative and slanderous attacks on the policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government." The statement points out that the Chinese speech undermines "the unity of anti-imperialist forces, which is particularly essential now that American imperialism is conducting aggression against fraternal Vietnam. Such a pronouncement can only gladden the American imperialists."

nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. So the new role of Johnson, of a great peacelover, is nothing but a hoax; sooner it is exposed, the better.

Signal For Success

IT is true that US aircraft still continue to bombard North Vietnam even sustaining heavy losses. It is also true that in South Vietnam, the liberation forces have now the upperhand in the fight against the combined US and South Vietnam government troops.

These two statements are not contradictory but complimentary. They provide a measure of what is happening in Vietnam today. In the last four years, more than 4,500 US troops have been killed in Vietnam. This year alone the Americans have lost 1,127, including two brigadier-generals and 16 majors.

In the first 20 days of May, the liberation army fought more than 20 big battles. Nearly 4,000 enemy soldiers were killed, including 156 Americans. Writing from Saigon, THE OBSERVER correspondent Gavin Young says: "The most important battle of the summer has started; 'The summer campaign could be decisive...' phrases like these are common in official circles in Saigon today as the drenching rain showers are in the streets."

Detailing the US disposition of forces and the morale of the marines, the Vietcong losses etc.,

Young adds: "Still the fact remains that at present the Vietcong, generally have the run of the interior while the South Vietnamese prepare to defend isolated enclaves."

Hate-Soviet Campaign

ON June 3 President Johnson sent a message to a rally held at New York under the auspices of the reactionary Jewish War Veterans Association. The message propounded yet another thesis that if the Soviet leaders acted for the removal of "restrictions" against Jews, it "would go a long way towards removing a moral and emotional barrier between us and contribute to a relaxation of tensions."

Such a hypocritical statement could come only from the US and was not wholly unexpected if one remembers the treatment civilised Americans give to their brother Negroes in the "land of freedom".

The message of Johnson, in the language of THE WORKER, New York, is a shameless prostitution of the charge of anti-Semitism for a further addition of fuel to the cold war tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States. It is in this context one has to also take into account the US manoeuvres as regards Israel and of its being used as a pawn in the United States global chess-board.

THE WORKER further points out that the calculated purpose of the latest edition of the Hate-the-Soviet-Union Campaign, which is under way in the name of freedom of the Jewish people from the anti-Semitism is to serve as a smoke-screen to befog the eyes of the people to real crimes that are being perpetrated against humanity during these days, by the US.

Sanctions Against Colonialists

THE 24-nation UN Committee now holding sessions in Africa in pursuance of the world body's resolution calling for speedy steps to liquidate colonialism, brought out shocking details about colonial and neo-colonial manoeuvres of the imperialist powers.

It was revealed that in order to earn huge profit, the US, Britain and other NATO countries are rendering aid and support to the Salazar regime of Portugal to help perpetuate its colonies in Africa.

The US government has so far supplied to Portugal arms worth half a milliard dollars free of charge. West Germany not only supplied Portugal with weapons but also sent military advisers. It recently purchased 60 aircraft from Canada and transferred them to Portugal. These facts only further establish the immediate necessity for the rupture of all diplomatic, economic and trade relations with Portugal. If that is not done, the

aggressive imperialist powers would continue to render active assistance to Portugal helping it to keep the colonies under subjugation.

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-SADHAN MUKHERJEE (June 8)

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AMEND SCHEDULE VI, GIVE MORE POWER TO COUNCILS

ASSAM CPI SUGGESTS MEASURES TO SOLVE HILLS TRIBES PROBLEM

From SUREN BHATTA

SHILLONG: The Assam state council of the Communist Party of India has demanded the amendment of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to give greater powers to regional councils of the Assam Hills people so that the urgent problems facing the eastern region of the country are solved expeditiously.

THE council noted that the eastern region comprised of Assam, Nefra, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura is facing a difficult situation, both because of external threat to the country's security and because of fissiparous and disintegratory tendencies within.

In a memorandum to the Commission for Hills Areas of Assam, the CPI council has traced the root cause of the trouble to the "divide and rule" theory and practice of the British rulers of the past.

The imperialist rulers had successfully kept the tribal people secluded from the mainstream of national movement in the name of protecting their interests.

The Congress also helped them in this dubious scheme, when the Communist Party tried to draw the tribal people also into the anti-colonial struggle and the freedom movement.

Even today, the imperialists have not given up their nefarious schemes in this region, as is evidenced by the role of Michael Scott in the Naga problem and the activities of the christian missionaries in many of the hill areas like Mizo Hills.

More Missionaries

Latest reports show that more missionaries have arrived in Assam from Pakistan and Thailand and are trying to get through to Nagaland.

Even after independence, the Congress rulers did not attempt at any real integration of the tribal people with the rest of the country, without upsetting the tribal traditions and set-up.

A new class of traders and petty capitalists have grown up in the hill areas who in league with the government officials exploit the poor tribals and fatten on the miseries of the people.

All these have led to disintegratory forces gaining influ-

ence in the area, the most manifest being in the Naga hills, where an armed war went on for a long time between rebel Nagas and the government.

The creation of Nagaland as a separate state was intended to solve the problem, but it has only encouraged other hills people also to step up their movements for separation.

All this has proved that the problem cannot be solved piecemeal, an integrated approach to the whole problem, including the economic, cultural and political development of the entire eastern region is called for.

Such an integrated approach must recognise the basic fact that the whole region must sink or swim together; must have a common plan of development, and plan security measures and other steps to defend the country, along with the rest of India, against foreign imperialists and their agents.

The CPI council warned that integration of the region cannot be realised through force or coercion; it has to be based on democratic principles and the will of the people. Emotional integration is possible only when people find themselves free citizens of a happy and common family.

Nothing should be done to accentuate the causes of disunity and disruption in the hills areas. All efforts should be made to safeguard the genuine interests of the hills peoples without undermining the interests of India as a whole and as a nation.

The Communist Party has always stood for extending more powers and privileges to the hills people so that they can mould their own way of life. The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution is totally inadequate for this.

Again, after granting a separate state to the Naga people, there is no moral justification in keeping the people in other hills areas under the provisions

of the Sixth Schedule. So, this schedule has to be amended.

The Nehru Plan also fails to cope with the situation on a vital point. It treats all the hills people on the same footing. It lumps all of them together and tries to cure the disease with one single shot of medicine.

That certainly is not going to help because every tribe is a distinct entity and they are in different stages of development. They will develop into separate national groups when social progress comes about.

So any plan which aims at a proper solution of the hills tribes problem must base itself on this realisation. Powers and privileges sought to be conferred upon the tribes should be according to each one's needs and aspirations, so that each would be helped to grow as it wishes.

The council therefore demanded that the Nehru Plan should be amended on the following lines:

★ Every hills tribal area should be divided on the basis of language, culture, tradition and geographical location. Garo, Khasi, Jaintiya, Mizo, Mikir

and North Kachari are distinct tribes.

★ Every tribe should have their own district or regional council and regional governments with more powers and privileges to run their own internal affairs.

Subjects like administration, education, health, agriculture, horticulture, forests, internal roads, ordinary police, judiciary, etc., should be administered by these regional governments.

This will require amendment of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

★ Each such area or region should have a quota of representation in the state assembly and Parliament based on the population but with special weightage to the tribals.

★ The hills areas representatives in the legislature should constitute themselves into a Hills Representatives Coordination and Advisory Council.

This council will have no other power except helping the state government and the legislature to coordinate the activities in the hills areas, since the real power would be transferred to the regional or district councils and governments.

★ The leader of the house in the legislature, in consultation with this advisory council, should select members of his cabinet from the hills areas.

★ There should be additional secretaries and heads of departments to deal exclusively with the work of the hills districts or regions.

★ All central allocations for the TAD department should be exclusively and judiciously distributed to the district or regional governments.

The state's financial allocations should also be done in the same manner. The budgets should be drawn up by them and approved by the state legislature.

★ All the expenditures of the regional councils and governments should come under the state audit department.

★ Non-tribal and non-hills people living in the hills areas should be ensured all the rights and privileges of minorities.

The CPI council said that the state legislature and government should reserve for themselves only the minimum powers to deal with subjects which are essentially common to both the hills and the plains.

The Assam state council of the CPI is convinced that such an approach will pave the way for rapid development of each region inhabited by distinct tribes as a family free to decide their own destiny and also to associate with their neighbours for better integration and progress of the entire nation.

The Party views the problem in the context of the desirability of greater integration of the entire eastern region consisting of Assam, Nefra, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura in a new form which has become the urgent requirement of the situation.

BIG BUSINESS SABOTAGES SANTHANAM COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON IPC

By OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Big Business and their contact men in the capital have successfully sabotaged the Santhanam Committee's recommendation to amend the Indian Penal Code to bring antisocial and economic offences under its purview.

THE Law Commission, to which the Union Home Ministry had referred the recommendation for expert legal advice, has virtually come to the conclusion that it cannot be done.

What is intriguing is the fact that it is not legal difficulties which the Law Commission is worried about but administrative problems that would arise if these offences are covered by the IPC.

And to crown the farce, the Commission is opposed only to bringing the major crimes listed by the Santhanam Committee under the IPC; minor ones can be covered by it according to its opinion.

The Santhanam Committee had recommended that the following offences among others, should be covered by the penal code:

Offences calculated to prevent or obstruct the economic development of the country and endanger its economic

health, evasion and avoidance of lawfully imposed taxes, misuse of their position by public servants in granting contracts and disposing public property.

The Santhanam Committee had also recommended that profiteering, blackmarketing, hoarding, adulteration of foodstuff and drugs, trafficking in licences and permits, supply of articles below standards—all to be punishable under the IPC.

The very inclusion of these offences under the purview of the IPC would have had a deterrent effect on shady businessmen, it was held, even if they are not strictly enforced.

But then that would have given the shivers to the hoarders, black-marketeers and under invoice and over invoice experts. So, overtime work was assigned to the contact men in Delhi.

The outcome was that the Law Commission found many

"loopholes" in the recommendations of the Santhanam Committee.

The main argument of those opposing the suggestion was that there were already specific laws to deal with the offences mentioned by the Committee. No gain would be achieved by bringing them under the purview of the IPC too.

They also contended that if the recommendation is implemented, the administration of the IPC would become too unwieldy and several new problems would be created.

A new central enforcement machinery would have to be created; separate cells to deal with each offence would have to be set up under this central machinery.

All this would cost much more than what the results would warrant, the lobbyists for Big Business have argued. And they plugged in the line that the existing laws could be enforced more strictly.

The ultimate result is that the Law Commission is quite averse to accepting any of the recommendations of the Santhanam Committee regarding anti-social and economic offences of the capitalists, hoarders, blackmarketeers and profiteers.

BONUS BATTLE

★ FROM FRONT PAGE

All public sector concerns whether departmentally run or otherwise and whether enjoying monopoly or not must pay bonus to all its employees without any discrimination, on the basis suggested herein.

All workers including casual, temporary, contract workers shall be paid pro rata bonus according to the number of days put in by them with the concern in the relevant year. This also applies to dismissed workers.

Bonus shall be recoverable through Payment of Wages Courts.

Employers failing to pay bonus due before the expiry of the eighth month after the end of the bonus year shall be punished.

Wherever there exist awards/settlements for payment of higher quantum of bonus, or customary bonus is paid, these shall continue.

The working class of India will now forge a mighty united front to defeat the unholy alliance between the government and the employers to deprive the workers of a proper share in the fruits of their toil and to achieve the above demands.