

LEAGUE'S BLACKMAIL TO ENFORCE UNDEMOCRATIC FEATURES OF BRITISH PLAN



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Meaning Of Boycott Of Constituent Assembly

The decision of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, not to enter the Constituent Assembly but to demand its immediate dissolution, brings to a head the conflict inside the freedom-front between the Congress and the League. Things are speeding towards a decisive show-down between the two organisations, thanks to the wily manoeuvres of imperialism.

What threatened to develop into a conflict between the Government and the Congress on the eve of the London Conference has been successfully turned into a prelude to another and a bitter round of fratricidal fight—which, whatever its outcome, will leave the whiphand with imperialism.

THE vicious logic of the present developments leaves only two unenviable alternatives:

● EITHER the show-down results in the Congress agreeing to accept in toto the undemocratic provision of the Imperialist Plan, viz., compulsory grouping of Provinces and a weak Centre, which is what the League is demanding.

In that case the League would come into the Constituent Assembly and the constitution which the latter would frame would be ratified by imperialism.

But that constitution would be one which would ensure the permanence of British domination through the retention of the Princes and through the perpetuation of Hindu-Muslim conflict.

OR, in the alternative, the show-down results in a permanent breach between the Congress and the League; the Congress continues in the Constituent Assembly and frames an all-India constitution, while the League remains out and continues fratricidal struggles against the Congress.

In that case, imperialism would not ratify the Congress-sponsored constitution but give a new award based on partition of India and ensuring British domination and slavery for both the parts.

But this is not how the Congress and League leading circles are looking at the outcome of the recent decision of the League Working Committee.

Congress Reactions

Official comment of the Congress High Command is not yet available. But there is justified anger, consternation in Congress circles, especially at the League Executive declaring that the Independence Resolution passed by the Constituent Assembly is "illegal and ultra vires."

Most of the editorial comments in the Press are in the spirit of what Pandit Nehru had already said in his concluding speech on the "Independent Sovereign Republic Resolution" in the Constituent Assembly:

"It should be made clear without any possibility of misunderstanding that no work will be held up in future whether anyone comes in or not."

The Hindustan Times said that "If the Constituent Assembly goes about to work with quiet confidence, the growing pressure of Muslim opinion will force the leaders of the League to give up their present tactics." (28-1-47).

There are Congress Press comments which go further than this and say that there is no more use in wasting time and breath in pleading with the Muslim League. They are demanding that the League should be thrown out of the Indian Government as it has finally rejected the Cabinet Plan so that any League resistance is finally dealt with.

The confidence and optimism with which the Congress circles hope to tide over the crisis is not based upon their

posed the formation of sub-States in the two groups of Provinces in the two Muslim-majority zones in the North-West and the North-East.

The Muslim League leadership clutched at this idea as the "seed of Pakistan", and insisted that the decision to form group States must be taken by a simple majority of the delegates in the Sections, thus overriding the right of the Provinces in the groups to decide for themselves.

This undemocratic demand was granted by the London Award of December 6 which is now a part of the Plan.

The imperialists have made grouping the crux of their Plan, not because they wanted to save the masses of the common Muslims from the supposed Hindu domination but because they wanted to perpetuate Hindu-Muslim conflict by encouraging the Muslim League leadership to persist in its communal disruptive policies.

The Muslim League leadership cheats its mass following among the Muslims when it tells

determination to make an effort to win the Muslim masses for a decisive and final show-down with imperialism throwing overboard the tricky Imperialist Plan.

On the contrary, the optimism is based on the hope that as the Congress has accepted the State Paper of May 16 and the London Award of December 6, the British Labour Government would honour its pledge. That is, it would ratify the constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly and transfer power to India, at least to the willing parts, despite the obstructions of the Muslim League.

Where Does It Lead ?

The Congress leadership is thus looking forward to a full-scale show-down with the Muslim League as inescapable and necessary.

Pursuing the bankrupt policy of collaboration with imperialism on the basis of its Plan, the Congress leadership is walking straight into another round of fratricidal war—planned by imperialism—which will lead not to independence and power to the Indian people, but to arbitrary partition and slavery to a divided India.

The Muslim League leadership has pompously declared that it has finally rejected the British Cabinet Plan; that it is demanding the dissolution of the present Constituent Assembly; and that it is fighting Anglo-Hindu imperialist conspiracy against the Muslims and for the freedom of the Muslims and the independence of India.

The vast mass of anti-imperialist Muslims who follow the League and believe in these protestations, are being led not into the common front for winning independence, but into a fratricidal war against the Congress, in the name of fighting Anglo-Hindu conspiracy, thus to split and sabotage the common struggle for freedom.

Why League Rejects

The fact of the matter is that the Muslim League leadership rejects the Plan and demands the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly not because it objects to the reactionary features of the Plan or to the undemocratic character of the Assembly.

On the contrary, its opposition and non-cooperation are a sort of a threat and blackmail to ensure all the more rigorously the enforcement of the reactionary features of the Plan, to ensure that the Constituent Assembly does not act in a sovereign manner but strictly in accordance with the restrictions and rules implicit in the British Plan.

Now it is well-known that the British Plan had rejected the Muslim League demand for setting up sovereign independent States in the Muslim majority zones in the North-West and the North-East.

But it went on to show hypocritical concern for the fear of the Muslims that they would be oppressed in a united India.

them that the Cabinet Mission Plan, in as much as it concedes the principle of compulsory grouping is a plan which guarantees freedom to the Muslims.

For, it does not tell them that under it, the oppressively autocratic rule of the Princes over 100 million States' people is guaranteed and not the freedom of the people and their democratic rights.

Support To Autocracy

In a recent interview which Mr. Jinnah gave to a foreign paper he stated that the Muslim League stood for complete non-interference in the affairs of the States.

In other words, the League leadership stands for the reactionary policy recently formulated by the Princes' Chamber (see page 5).

It does not tell them that under the Plan, the Indian people are not free to frame their own constitution without the interference of the foreign Power. It has never made the demand for immediate withdrawal of British troops. On the contrary, it wants the British Government to act as "mediators."

When the Constituent Assembly, under the initiative of the Congress, passes a solemn resolution proclaiming India an Independent Sovereign Republic, wherein all power and authority of sovereign India and its constituent parts and organs of Government shall be derived from the people, every patriotic Indian, whatever difference he may have with the Congress, would support it as the expression of our common aspiration for liberation from imperialist rule.

But not so the High Command of the Muslim League. It challenges the right of Indians to do so under the amazing plea that a British Government State Paper has not allowed them to do so!

The purpose of the whole long resolution passed by the League Executive on the Constituent Assembly is to denounce the Congress for not having accepted in letter and spirit the reactionary London Award on grouping, for having passed the independence resolution for having appointed Committees to coordinate the working of the Union Assembly and of the Sections to define the subjects of the Indian Government, etc.

The burden of the whole complaint is that the Congress

its above-named actions:

"Has destroyed the fundamentals of the statement of May 16 and every possibility of compromise on the basis of the Cabinet Mission's Constitutional Plan."

The alternatives which the League resolution places before the British Government are two:

● EITHER coerce the Congress so that it toes the line and agrees to implement the reactionary Cabinet Mission Plan in all its details through the Constituent Assembly, under which conditions alone the League would be prepared to withdraw its non-cooperation and join the Assembly.

● OR dissolve the Assembly and impose another constitutional solution based on partition of India.

Is This Freedom ?

Patriotic Muslims, who follow the Muslim League seeing in it an organisation fighting for the freedom of the country and the well-being and freedom of the Muslims; anti-imperialist Muslims, who are prepared to face lathi-charges and bullets at its behest, as they are doing in the Punjab in fighting for civil liberties, must coolly consider the meaning of these de-

mands, which their leadership is placing before the British Government.

Have these demands anything in common with the demands for the independence of the country and the freedom and equality for the masses and their well-being for which the League leaders claim to fight? Nothing at all.

How can a joint acceptance of the Imperialist Plan based on the retention of Princely autocracy which oppresses Hindus and Muslims alike, lead to independence?

How can the joint acceptance of the Imperialist Plan based on compulsory grouping which perpetuates Hindu-Muslim conflict and thus disrupts the joint struggle of Hindus and Muslim masses for land, bread and freedom, ever lead to the freedom and well-being of the Muslims?

Can a leadership which turns to the imperialist oppressor with the demand to divide the country, be ever said to be fighting for the freedom of the peoples?

In the last few weeks the communal tension was showing signs of subsiding. Muslim and Hindu masses were jointly participating in great common struggles, like the Tebhaga movement in Bengal, common strike struggles as in Cawnpore and Calcutta.

In the Punjab, in a struggle for civil liberties precipitated by the provocative action of White bureaucrats against the Muslim National Guards, the following of the Muslim League had shown political wisdom and strength in keeping the movement non-communal and tolling the efforts of riot-mongers and provocateurs.

But this new move of the League leadership is bound to precipitate Congress-League and Hindu-Muslim conflict in an intensified form.

The League Executive has not only called for the dissolution of the Assembly but has also passed a number of other resolutions raising grievances to denounce a number of Congress Ministers in Muslim minority Provinces.

In a general resolution the League Executive has denounced the Government and officials of the Congress-governed Provinces for their failure to protect the life and property of Muslims, urged upon the Governors to use their special powers to afford protection to Muslims, and has finally called upon the Muslims to meet "oppression and injustice of the tyrannical majority."

There is a resolution condemning the mass evictions of Muslim peasants from grazing reserves of Assam, another criticising the imposing of collective fines and taking of hostages from the tribes in the N. W. F. tribal area.

There is still another resolution condemning Bihar Ministry for failing to afford adequate shelter and security to Muslim refugees who escaped from the fearful communal carnage of Bhojpur.

A further resolution called for a disciplined non-violent dignified and non-communal fight of the Muslims in the Punjab for civil liberties.

Many of the grievances raised may be justified but the manner in which they are raised, viz., as Muslim grievances against Congress Ministers, is bound to lead to a greater communal tension.

We have already pointed out what the Congress counter-strategy to the League's move to boycott the Constituent Assembly is going to be. The Congress would continue to work it and frame the constitution taking care to follow as closely as possible the imperialist imposed restrictions on constitution-making. They thus hope to get the British Government to ratify the constitution and impose it upon the whole of India.

In the meanwhile, it would seek to put down any resistance of struggle launched by the League, by the use of Government repression.

It will be raising its own following against the Muslim League by denouncing the "Anglo-Muslim Conspiracy".

Break With The "Anglo-Muslim Conspiracy"

But it will never be able to win the Muslim masses, or turn them away from the reactionary policy of their leadership as long as it itself collaborates with the British Imperialist Plan, hoping to turn it against the League leadership. As long as it does so, will the League leaders be able to keep their mass following in the orbit of their reactionary policy by denouncing before them the "Anglo-Hindu Conspiracy"?

Thus both the policies—the Congress policy of compromise and of failure to win the Muslim masses and the League's policy of diverting the anti-imperialist urge of the Muslim masses into anti-Congress hatred—only lead to sharpening of the Congress-League and Hindu-Muslim conflict, leaving the initiative entirely in imperialist hands.

The London Times (4-2-47), commenting on the League decision, condemns its demand for immediate dissolution of the Constituent Assembly as preposterous. At the same time it chides the Congress:

"No impartial observer can deny that League has reasons to be dissatisfied with the attitude of the Congress Party."

MADRAS ORDINANCE DETENUS ON HUNGER-STRIKE

Madras February 8.
From February 2, the 129 Madras Ordinance prisoners in Vellore Jail have been on hunger-strike, in protest against the ill-treatment to which they are being subjected. They are all being treated as C-CLASS CONVICTS.
This is the monstrous extent to which the Madras Ordinance is being used.
Communism have known, better than anybody else, the horrors of prison-life, have fought for better jail conditions for political prisoners.
How then does a Congress Ministry allow political prisoners under its regime to be treated in this barbaric fashion?
From all over India, let the voice of patriotic protest rise.
STOP THIS BARBARISM! THE 129 HEROES IN VELLORE JAIL MUST BE TREATED AS POLITICAL PRISONERS.
This is the LEAST one expects of a Congress Ministry.

Reality Behind GHQ's Plans For "Indianisation"

BRITISH ARMY OF OCCUPATION WILL REMAIN

(As long ago as October 23, Auchinleck announced with a fanfare of trumpets: "India's armed forces of the future will be completely Indianised.")

But when? How long will Indianisation take? The Auk told Pressmen at that time:

"I do not know. I do not think anybody can tell you." Today things are different. Detailed plans for the so-called Indianisation of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force have been put on paper and are going the rounds of the men who matter.

From these plans, it is possible to know how long GHQ intends to take for Indianisation—and also that exactly Indianisation means.

Here is a report from our Special Correspondent exposing GHQ's plans for the development of our Air Force.

The report is of vital interest to every patriot. It is a scathing and sensational exposure of what is cooking behind our backs in that hive of imperialist intrigue—New Delhi's GHQ.

The army is the touchstone of freedom. In British imperialism's plans for our armed forces, one can see its real plans for India—behind all the honeyed talk of "transfer of power"—Editor).

PLANS are ready in Air Headquarters for the development of the Royal Indian Air Force and are being passed round for discussion among all officers of the RIAF.

These plans are being tom-tommed as being intended for the speedy nationalisation of our Air Force.

Indians Kept Out

In reality they are nothing of the sort.

From the very birth of the RIAF, the British have studiously kept it totally crippled and incapable of existence, independent of the British Air Force, by an ingenious trick: they have persistently refused to allow the Ground Branch of the RIAF (responsible for all administration and maintenance) to be nationalised. The Ground Branch has remained predominantly British all through.

This means that we can fly the planes, but cannot maintain them.

Even during the war, the British carefully prevented Indians from being given sufficient training to enable them to take over the skilled jobs connected with maintenance.

And today this sinister and deliberate lop-sided development of the RIAF is being flung by the British in our faces as the excuse for the continued presence of White officers and men to control our Air Force.

This is the background, which the British are maliciously stressing all the way through their so-called nationalisation plans.

They declare—obviously with a certain amount of glee—that we have ten fully nationalised squadrons, but by ourselves we have not all the necessary skilled maintenance personnel to maintain even ONE squadron.

Excuses

And so, they conclude, immediate nationalisation is just not possible. In fact, it will take a very long time, they maintain, because:

* It takes five years to train a skilled maintenance worker upto peace-time standards.

* It would be wrong to recruit and train all those required at one stroke, because that would create "problems". How would the men be promoted, and what a mess it would create when they all retire at the same time! And so they must be recruited in batches, spread over another five years at least.

* Then a good corps of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) is absolutely necessary for an efficient air force. And to become an NCO one has to have at least five years' service experience.

* Another five years to become a good NCO!

by
Our Correspondent

And so on! The long and short of the whole business is that it will take some twenty years or so, before we can possibly have anywhere near a nationalised air force!

Of course, even to start these plans would need the formation of apprentices, training schools. And that may well take some more time!

And this fantastic and criminal nonsense is down in black and white, and boasts of being a plan for nationalising the Air Force, okayed by the Interim Government.

Anyone who knows how any country has thrown off the old order, has built a new army, knows that this is NOT the way of building one.

The Second Stage

But "maintenance" is only one of the problems raised by the White Air Marshals. After that has been achieved—and maintenance has caught up with the Air Branch and we have enough skilled personnel to maintain our present ten squadrons (and according to the plans, this will take anything from ten to twenty years)—then—and then alone—will begin what is called "the second stage"; the formation of further squadrons and the expansion of administration and maintenance branches in step with, and in proportion to, each additional squadron.

The Auk has decided that twenty front-line squadrons are the minimum required as a Garrison Air Force for the peace-time defence of India. There are only ten RIAF squadrons at present.

And so the British Air Force must remain—for our "assistance", of course, till such time as we catch up. And, as I have pointed out, the "nationalisation plans" of GHQ mean to keep them here for twenty years at least.

The plans are quite specific about the type of Britishers who are to give us this "assistance."

Volunteers

They are to be VOLUNTEERS, as far as possible, with what I understand, are called "the understanding, experience and aptitude" essential for their task.

And their task is quite specifically laid down as being mainly Garrison duties—that is, not those in connection with "a major war" but with "tribal and internal disturbances".

It is quite clear from this that the type of "understanding, experience and aptitude" demanded of these "volunteers" is the type required of the soul-

less mercenaries of an Army of Occupation at the zenith of its ruthless career.

All sorts of inducements are to be given to these volunteers—including the "attractive and satisfactory financial inducement" of a big tax-free bonus at the end of their murder assignment.

Most alarming of all is the proposal in these plans of employing White officers and men in the Indian Air Force as well—so that we get the impression that the British Royal Air Force is becoming less, whereas in reality the British continue to stay—only masked in our uniforms.

The plans quite openly and shamelessly declare that it will be good to carry out this deception because of "political and psychological advantages".

Of course, all the way like a running thread through the plan is the assumption—made without caring a damn about the obvious national will—that India will remain a part of the Jolly old Empire. The Constituent Assembly's Objectives Resolution—Independence Pledges—and all the rest are so much gas, as far as the great British Army chiefs are concerned.

... In Sheep's Clothing

These are a brief glimpse of the Indianisation plans for the RIAF. Similar plans are being cooked for the Army and the Navy.

They are nothing but plans to keep the British Army of Occupation in India for years and years more. The wolf will now be in sheep's clothing: the British Army will be supposed to be merely "training" us and giving us "temporary assistance".

This is the meaning of "Indianisation" in British imperialism's dictionary for 1947.

Our Lahore Correspondent's Press telegrams regarding the Punjab League's movement have been suppressed under the special orders banning the sending out of all non-official news regarding the Anti-Ordinance agitation. As a protest, we are leaving this space blank.

DEFEND "PEOPLE'S AGE"

THE 'Operation Asylum' case against our Editor, Sub-Editor and Printer is the imperialist bureaucracy's studied and conscious effort to crush PEOPLE'S AGE; and its ceaseless campaign exposing the reality—the unwritten chapters—behind the British Plan; and put a stop to its relentless support and guidance to the mighty upsurge of the working-class, peasants, students and States' people.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone, which has, week in and week out, torn the mask of the hypocritical White Generals of GHQ and shows up before our people their secret military plans to blow the freedom movement into smithereens with their bombs and machine-guns, aeroplanes, bull-dozers, and all.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone, which has consistently shown how the fratricidal riots in India have been in each case not only the direct fruit of the British Plan, but actually deliberately begun and intensified by imperialism and its agents as an integral and vital section of that Plan.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone, which has continuously warned against—and laid bare imperialism's secret plans to build in the various Indian States powerful future political, military and economic bases, from which they can dominate the whole of the rest of India.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone which has exposed the real economic chapter of the British Plan, by which British Monopoly Capital would continue to feed on India, and in fact more British capital would pour into India, linking up with Indian monopoly capital through Indo-British Corporations for joint exploitation.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone, which has given a true and living picture of the great post-war mass actions, which have swept our land:

* The mounting strike wave—the postal strike, the S.I.R. strike and all the other smaller, but great actions of the working-class;

* The glorious kisan action of Bengal and other Provinces;

* The fighting peoples' movements of Kashmir, Travancore, Hyderabad and many other States.

* The courageous heroism of our student youth in the battles in defence of the INA in Calcutta and more recently in defence of Viet Nam.

● It is PEOPLE'S AGE alone which has exposed the Anglo-American intrigues to drag the world and India into a Third World War; shown up imperialism's fake "freedom" awards for Egypt, Transjordan, Burma and the rest of the colonial world; and reported fully the freedom upsurge all over Asia and the historic reconstruction plans of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

These patriots, who want the PEOPLE'S AGE to continue to carry out these vital national tasks, must fight back imperialism's attack. The best defence of PEOPLE'S AGE is:

MORE READERS. MORE SUBSCRIBERS. MORE FUNDS.

Every reader, every friend and sympathiser of PEOPLE'S AGE, every one who wants PEOPLE'S AGE to continue to serve the Indian people, should send his contribution—whatever he can afford—to:

The People's Age Defence Fund,
C/o, People's Age,
199-B, Khetwadi Main Road, BOMBAY 4.

(All cheques, Money Orders, Postal Orders, Demand Drafts, etc., to be made out in the name of KANTILAL J. SHAH.)



GURKHAS TO START FORTNIGHTLY ORGAN

DARJEELING district is one of the homelands of the Gurkhas who are among the most backward peoples of India.

There are eleven high schools in the district, six for boys and five for girls, of which seven are run by Christian Missionaries and there is only one high English school run by the Government.

There are only two second-grade colleges in the whole district, both of which are run by the Christian Missionaries. And so those who intend to prosecute their studies further have to go to Calcutta and other places. This involves heavy expenditure which obviously only sons of the rich can afford. And the Gurkhas are amongst the poorest of the poor in India.

No doubt then there are to be found not more than one hundred graduates amongst the three lakhs of Gurkhas of this district. (Even most of the graduates are those who appeared privately working as teachers in schools.)

Except the Gurkhas, a fortnightly journal, the organ of the All-India Gurkha League, there are no newspapers, periodicals, etc., in the Nepali language, coming out of this district.

There are not more than half a dozen printing presses in the whole district. And hardly anyone of these dare publish political matters except

with the written permission of the authorities—so much they have been terrorised! The Gurkha is also printed and published in Calcutta.

The Communist Party is trying to bring out a paper of its own in Nepali language in order to help the Gurkhas build up and strengthen their national movement. It has decided to start a fortnightly journal, to be named Vir Gurkha, and for this a petition has already been sent to the Supply Officer, Bengal Paper Control Department. But so far no reply has been received.

I would like to draw the attention of the authorities and specially the Bengal League Ministry to the above facts.

I would also like to draw the attention of the Interim Government that is now composed of the representatives of the popular parties to the above facts and remind them to implement their promises to "safeguarding every legitimate interest of every conceivable minority and ameliorating their backward conditions."

It is high time that they put their words into practice and the present case affords them an opportunity to do so.

Finally, I appeal to all patriots—Congressmen, League and especially Gurkha Leaguers—the country over, to support the demand of the Darjeeling Communist Party to start a fortnightly journal.

G. L. Subba,

Darjeeling, January 23.

KARWAR KISANS' DEMANDS

MR. S. S. Mirajkar, President of the 3rd Annual Karwar Taluka Kisan Sabha, D. V. Singh, General Secretary, District Kisan Sabha, and N. G. Mhalsekar, Secretary, Karwar Taluka Kisan Sabha, met Mr. Morarji Desai, Minister for Home and Revenue Departments, on January 20 and placed a memorandum before him, embodying the following resolutions passed by 10,000 kisans at their Conference on January 21:

1. The Tenancy Act enacted by the Congress Ministry is unsatisfactory. The Government should set up a Committee consisting of the representatives of the Kisan Sabha and landlords to settle the rent to be paid, taking into consideration the situation in each village.

2. It condemns the various decree orders passed by the Government against kisans for arrears of rent. Unpaid rent for previous years should be on the basis of the rent for this year.

3. It condemns the action of those landlords who have taken more than one-third of the produce as rent this year by misleading the kisans.

4. It appeals to the kisans not to fall a prey to this false propaganda of the landlords and their agents. It requests the Government to take necessary steps to restore the excess rent taken away illegally by the landlords.

5. It strongly condemns the action of the Government in forcibly searching the home of Purushottam Nalk, taking away various things from his home, brutally beating his old mother and others.

It particularly resents the action of the Mamlatdar and the other officers who resorted to this unbecoming repressive action. It urges the Government to set free Purushottam Nalk, return the things taken from his home and enquire into the whole matter.

Karwar, Bombay

D. V. Singh

INDIA'S CONSTITUTION-MAKING TO COST RS. 45 LAKHS

Princely Salaries For I.C.S. Bureaucrats, 1st. Class Travelling And Rs. 45 Daily For Members

by Y. D. SHARMA

The Constituent Assembly went into a secret session at the end of its last sitting. Why? What was so secret that the Press and visitors could not be allowed to listen in? Why had this undemocratic method to be adopted?

Here is the story behind it. It is a story which ought to fill any patriot with shame.

FOR years the Congress has been built on a tradition of self-sacrifice. The five-hundred-rupee maximum salary was a slogan of which the national movement was proud. The national leaders have spoken of their desire to frame in the Constituent Assembly a Constitution for "the hungry masses" which guarantees justice to all, equal opportunity for all. The first opportunity for the Indian people to get a taste of this was in the case of the Constituent Assembly's Budget. How would the framers of this Constitution for the hungry masses decide to spend India's money on themselves, on the officers and staff of the Assembly? The Staff and Finance Committee of the Assembly presented its estimates. Eight lakh rupees had already been spent on just two sessions. Forty-five lakhs was the estimate for the next financial year. Was this necessary expenditure?

Lahiri's Cut Motion

Communist member Somnath Lahiri moved a cut motion to raise a discussion on the high rates of pay to officers and allowances for members. Lahiri also moved amendments demanding—

FIRST, that the salary of the Secretary of the Constituent Assembly be reduced from Rs. 4,000 monthly to Rs. 1,900, the salary of the three Section Secretaries be reduced from Rs. 3,000 monthly to Rs. 800 monthly, the salary of 12 Deputy Secretaries from nearly Rs. 1,700 monthly to Rs. 700 monthly, and similar reductions in the salaries of other highly-paid officers.

SECONDLY, Lahiri demanded the abolition of certain superfluous posts.

By a THIRD amendment Lahiri proposed that the salaries of the lower-paid staff be increased, the salaries of peons, daftaries, jamadars etc., be increased from Rs. 14 or 15 monthly to Rs. 40, of clerks the grade be from Rs. 60 to 80 monthly, and so on for all lower-paid staff.

By a FOURTH amendment Lahiri proposed that members of the Constituent Assembly should receive only double third-class fares instead of 1-3/5th of I-Class fare for each journey.

He further proposed that the daily allowance of Rs. 45 should be abolished and instead the Constituent Assembly Secretary should make arrangements for boarding, lodging and transport during the members' stay for Assembly sessions.

Rs. 25 Lakhs' Saving

Lahiri's amendment regarding officers' salaries would have effected a saving of 2 1/2 lakhs of rupees in the Budget even after meeting the increased salaries of the lower staff. His amendment regarding members' allowances would have effected another saving of at least 22 lakhs. The total saving would thus have been nearly 25 lakhs of rupees.

These amendments caused a flutter in the ranks of Constituent Assembly members and considerable embarrassment for Congress Party leaders. It was

not easy to defend the I-Class fares and the heavy allowances for those claiming to represent India's poor millions. It was still more difficult to defend the pitifully low salaries for the inferior staff while proposing fantastic salaries for officers, in some cases 10 times the salary of the subordinate employees. And ironically enough these budgetary proposals stood in the name of N. V. Gadgil, Maharashtra Congress leader, who is also a member of the Central Pay Commission.

As a Pay Commission member, Gadgil is never tired of reminding the workers' representatives of "the size and content of the national purse" and of the Pay Commission's responsibility to the poor tax-payer of India.

It was, therefore, impossible to oppose Lahiri's proposals publicly because that would have been against all that the Congress has always stood for. The Congress Party found a way out by deciding to discuss the Budget in secret, thus avoiding publicity. This is the secret behind the

secret session—no great political matters of State but the dirty prosaic business of fat salaries and allowances.

When Gadgil moved the consideration of the Budget on January 22, Santanam, member from Madras, who is also Joint-Editor of Hindustan Times, moved that it was not desirable that the Budget should be discussed in the presence of visitors and, therefore, the Constituent Assembly should sit in camera. Professor Ranga seconded and Biswanath Das of Orissa, and Premier Kher of Bombay supported him.

Somnath Lahiri alone opposed the 'in-camera' sitting.

"The motion deals with public money. I don't see any reason why we should be afraid of discussing it in public." Santanam again said that members wanted to have freedom to speak openly.

On votes being taken Santanam's motion was passed much to the disappointment of the Press and visitors who had expected a lively discussion on the Budget.

Budget Passed

Two days later, on the 24th, the Budget was passed by the Constituent Assembly rejecting all amendments.

But during the interval it was a subject of discussion among the members and was also discussed in the Congress Party meeting. There was a section of members who stood for reduction in salaries and allowances in accordance with Congress ideals and tradition.

This discussion inevitably brought to the fore the question of salaries of Congress Members in the Interim Government who are drawing the same salary of Rs. 64,000-annually as their predecessors, who were always condemned and ridiculed on that account.

I understand that there was a considerable criticism of Congress leaders on this account.

I discussed this question with several Congress members of the Constituent Assembly and they told me that Congress leaders justify the officers' high salaries on the ground that they cannot touch the salaries of the Indian Civil Service personnel and they are against any increase in the salaries of the subordinate staff because they should await the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission.

Commenting on the budgetary proposals, Somnath Lahiri told me that it was most bureaucratic:

"Why should the Constituent Assembly which claims to be sovereign body have I.C.S. Secretaries and pay them four thousand rupees monthly?"

"Why not appoint non-officials as Secretaries who would be more efficient?"

He added that the office organisation, based on the I.C.S., was meant to help imperialism and if the Congress wants to do away with the imperialist system of office organisation, it must make a start with the Constituent Assembly.

The Poor Must Wait!

Referring to the lower-paid staff, Lahiri told me that Pandit Nehru had, while commending his resolution to the Assembly, said that prosperous ones can afford to wait, but the hungry and starving cannot afford to wait any longer.

And now the Constituent Assembly wants the poor peons and orderlies and others to wait for the recommendations of the Pay Commission. Why should the people believe this Assembly's resolution of justice to all and equality of opportunity for all when we don't implement this, even in matters relating to the Constituent Assembly?

On the question of members' allowances, Lahiri commented that these should bear some relation to our people's lives. What would the Indian peasant think if you tell him that you are travelling First-Class and drawing Rs. 45 daily because you are making a constitution for him?



A PATRIOT'S NOTEBOOK

Mutual Admiration

ON January 22, the Governor of Madras promulgated the so-called Public Safety Ordinance. On January 23, from all over the Province, Communist, Trade Union, Kisan Sabha leaders were arrested.

On January 29, Sjt. Prakasan, Premier of Madras, was waxing eloquent at a function in the Banqueting Hall of Government House on "the catenmanship and foresight" of His Excellency, and declared:

"I have no doubt, and my colleagues share the same view, that you have been a Governor who from the very first day has been doing his best to put democracy on a firm basis." (Associated Press of India).

The Governor replied with equal enthusiasm:

"Nowhere in India", he said, "could anybody possibly have had better, happier and warmer relations with the Ministry than I".

"The Prime Minister," went on the White Lat Sahib, "is a wonderful example of not only wisdom, but also of old world courtesy and fineness to me....The Premier and his colleagues have listened to me with extreme politeness. They have taken me as a member of their team...."

No better commentary is needed on Sjt. Prakasan and his Ministry. To be the darlings of a White imperialist Governor may swell some people's heads with pride. It should make anyone with a spark of patriotism left in him sick with shame.

The Raids And The World

THE London Correspondent of Pandit Nehru's National Herald has sent an interesting report of the reaction in Britain of the raids on Communist, Trade Union, Kisan Sabha and other offices on January 14, in connection with Operation Asylum. Here is what he writes.

"It would be idle to pretend that the news prominently displayed in all the papers here about the swoop on Indian Communist offices in different parts of India has not evoked concern here among friends of India. The vast majority of these latter are non-Communist and even anti-Communist. Labour circles, who in this country are anti-Communist, and some Left-wing intellectuals who are rabidly so, are staggered and look upon the business as another Meerut Conspiracy Trial...."

"There is little doubt that actions of this kind will isolate liberal sympathies from India and cast Congress leadership in the same role as is assigned to the Kuomintang in China. Those who are closely connected with Indian national aspirations remain silent, but here, as among people generally, criticism is not directed against the Home Department at New Delhi...."

Reality Of British Power

"This is significant as showing deeper understanding of the intricate character of the Indian situation and some ominous appreciation of the reality of British power of India. Today's disclaimer from New Delhi that the Interim Government is not responsible, has not, however, helped matters, for it brings home the responsibility of the Congress Governments of the Provinces concerned." (National Herald, January 25).

Here is Pandit Nehru's own correspondent on the effect the raids have had on progressive opinion in Britain. It is bound to be the same all over the world.

The progressive movements in every country will undoubtedly concentrate their fire on British imperialism and point out, as the London Daily Worker pointed out, that the responsibility for the raids is that of imperialism and its Army of Occupation.

But it will become increasingly difficult for them to explain the state-

ments of Congress Ministers like Sjt. Prakasan and Morarji Desai, proudly taking the "credit" for every undemocratic action of the bureaucracy against the Communists and the working-class and Kisan movements.

Whose Responsibility?

TALKING of the way British public opinion has reacted to the police raids of January 14, we have just received a cable from London, telling us that the British Communist Party's campaign against repression in India is continuing, full steam ahead.

A delegation of Trade Unionists met Pethick-Lawrence and protested strongly. The Secretary of State was forced to promise them a written reply.

Pethick-Lawrence has replied to the letter of protest sent to him by Harry Pollitt, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain, in connection with the 'Operation Asylum' raids. This is what he has to say:

"The Secretary of State has not been concerned in any way in these measures".

Pollitt, of course, replied back immediately, saying: "It is impossible to regard the answer as satisfactory....We regard this as an all-India police action, the responsibility for which falls on the ruling power in India as a whole. The ruling power unquestionably is the Viceroy under the Secretary of State".

I wonder what Pethick-Lawrence will have to say now. But it seems quite clear that the British Labour movement has reacted so sharply to this wave of repression, that the Labour Government will be compelled to disown all responsibility for the raids and arrests, and, encouraged by the latest pronouncements of Sjt. Prakasan and others, will throw the blame on the Interim Government and the Congress Ministers.

What will Pandit Nehru then cable back to all those in Britain and the rest of the world who respect him as

one of the greatest fighters for democracy?

Will he take up Pethick-Lawrence's challenge, withdraw the 'Operation Asylum' Cms and order the prosecution of the guilty butcher Generals of GHQ? Or will he, by his silence, let Pethick-Lawrence get away with his sham denial of responsibility?

Union Jack

ON December 19, at the annual sports of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, the Governor of Orissa (the INDIAN Governor—Trivedi) was present. And the Union Jack was flown in his honour.

Patriotic students hauled it down and tore it to pieces.

The Principal fined three students ten rupees each—obviously at the orders of Governor Trivedi.

The students were enraged. Fines under a Congress Ministry for hauling down the flag of Imperialism? Never. They took deputations to Pandit Lingaraj Misra, their own Education Minister, to protest against the fines and to assert their right to haul down the flag of imperialism.

Pandit Misra, however, rebuked them and said:

"The students who pulled down the Union Jack, have done an act of savagery. Such students are of ill breeding!"

And then, to cap it all: "The Union Jack is a fraternal flag."

Yes, hang your head in shame. It is a Congress Minister speaking, not Wavell or one of his bureaucrats. Fraternal flag, indeed!

The students struck on January 20 to assert the national right to tear the symbol of imperialism again and again. The latest news is that they have won a glorious victory and the Ministry has been compelled to declare that the Union Jack will not be flown again over any school or college.

By the way, the Orissa Governor, Trivedi, is the same Trivedi who was Secretary of the War Department in the Government of India when the British Generals were preparing "Operation Asylum" and all the other murder plans, and rehearsing how to shoot of the Indian freedom movement.

It is common gossip that he got his Governorship because he was such "good" with the Auk and his gang.

ROMESH CHANDRA

Tramway Employees Begin Battle For Minimum Wage

United, Hindu-Muslim, Worker-Clerk, Strike From Jan. 21

Calcutta's 8,000 tramway employees, Hindus and Muslims, workers and clerks, even Anglo-Indian girl employees, are fighting together from January 21 a common battle for a living wage.

SIXTY-SIX years ago, a handful of White bosses from England started this monopoly concern with a capital of about Rs. 125 lakhs. Today its Reserve Fund alone amounts to Rs. 110 lakhs. In 1942 and 1945 it showed profits of Rs. 46 lakhs apart from Reserve Fund contributions of Rs. 46 lakhs. Every year the bosses keep apart Rs. 10½ lakhs for repairs, whereas all that they have spent in the last four years is only Rs. 11 lakhs. In profit tax alone, they pay nearly Rs. 38 lakhs to the British Exchequer.

As for passengers' convenience (about which the company bragged so much in their full-page advertisements in Calcutta's nationalist Press on the eve of the strike), while the daily traffic increased from 3½ lakh passengers in 1939 to 8½ lakhs today, the number of cars has only increased from 390 in 1939 to 395 today.

Workers' Demand

Against this loot, the workers demand a rise in basic wage (from Rs. 22-8 to Rs. 40 per month) and a bonus equivalent to two months' wage. For seven weeks since November 27 the White bosses just ignored these demands on the plea of referring the issue to their London Board of Directors. Meanwhile, they continued to flood Calcutta's nationalist Press with advertisements extolling their "public service". But the workers' case was so overwhelmingly just, that notwithstanding all these advertisements, the Press could not help supporting their cause editorially.

by **Nikhil Chakravarty**

Despite all this, however, the Bengal Ministry persisted in ranging themselves behind these White monopolists. They just took no note of the Union's notice of strike, though 90 per cent of the ballot had revealed a vote in favour of strike. The Labour Commissioner called a joint meeting of the owners and Union representatives but himself managed to remain absent.

Ruse To Mislead Public

A bare week before the strike was scheduled to begin, the Government announced their intention to refer the dispute to the arbitration of an I.C.S. Officer, R. Gupta.

It was the usual ruse to mislead the public and also declare the strike illegal in case the Union refused to accept the offer. Repression then was expected to do the rest.

Promptly the Union exposed the Labour Commissioner's negligence in handling the dispute and showed how two previous adjudications under the same officer had utterly failed to secure any real relief to the workers.

Nevertheless, it declared its willingness to accept arbitration, provided the Government undertook to statutorily enforce the basic minimum wage demand.

On January 21, when the strike did begin, the Government came out with a show of sympathy for the public in their in-

convenience and warned the workers against an illegal strike. Indeed, it was reliably reported that inside the Secretariat a confidential note was being passed round by the Burma Sahibs calling for the arrest of Union leaders, under the Special Ordinance which was originally meant to fight the riots.

But such has been the workers' unity that throughout these days there is a complete strike, without even having recourse on a single occasion to picketing.

The Calcutta public is fully supporting them despite the indescribable inconvenience the strike is causing them.

Glorious Traditions

For, they know that it is these workers under their Red Flag, who have always stood by them ever since they went in for that series of mighty demonstrations, beginning with the Azad Hind Day to July 29 last when, the city staged its mightiest popular demonstration in support of the postal strike.

On August 16 also, during Calcutta's worst communal riot, it was these Hindu and Muslim workers who together fought the flames of civil war. It was they again who first sent Relief Squads to Bihar and Noakhali.

Today it is they who have begun the battle for a minimum wage, the battle of their co-workers in all other industries. What is more they have launched it against the main bulwark of Big Business in Calcutta as the first step in the people's battle for nationalising transport in Bengal.

That is the meaning of their battle and that their record. It must rouse Calcutta's fighting humanity to defeat the White bosses and the bureaucrats and rescue the Ministry from making an abject surrender to them.

RED FLAG'S GLORIOUS VICTORY IN BOMBAY: PRIMARY ELECTIONS

42 Out Of 73 Seats Won

The Red Flag has won a glorious victory in the primary elections for the Railway Constituency of Bombay, a victory bigger than the earlier one; for the first elections to the Bombay Legislative Assembly. Against the 35 then won, today the Red Flag candidates can claim 42 against Congress 23 and Royists 8.

As a result of a decision in an election petition, the BCCI Railwaymen's Union at two MLAs from the Railway Labour Constituency had been unseated. The primary elections had long since been held, but not completed in the city and suburbs of Bombay, owing to the disturbed communal situation. These were held on January 27. And the final results reveal the following picture in an electoral college of 73.

Constituency	Total seats	Red flag	Con.	Roy.
BCCI Railwaymen's Union	21	21	—	—
BCCI Railway Employees' Union	14	4	4	6
GIP Railwaymen's Union	24	10	12	2
MSM Railwaymen's Union	14	7	7	0
TOTAL	73	42	23	8

While the Red Flag candidates in every constituency won more seats than in the February 1946 elections, their most remarkable victory was in the BCCI Railwaymen's Union. Here not a single seat could be won by any of their opponents.

The Congress had put up 16 candidates for these seats. All of them were completely routed. While the average votes they secured were a bare 14 the average votes secured by the Red Flag candidates were 105.5! Four of their candidates failed to secure even a single vote while seven more secured less than 10 votes each.

Good Polling

Despite short notice and curfew restrictions and disturbed conditions in the city, 58.5 per cent of voters—Hindus, Muslims and Scheduled Castes—cast their votes in Bombay, while on the line the voting was 63 per cent. In vain did the Railway officials in some places try to prevent the staff from casting their votes. The latter had in some cases to cover a distance upto 70 miles to be able to cast their votes. But they did it. An insight into the remarkable

Token Strike On Feb 27

The meeting requested the General Council of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation meeting in New Delhi in early February to direct the affiliated Unions to take ballot before May 1, 1947, for general strike on all railways should their demands be not met before March 31. As an earnest of their resolve, it has asked for a call for token strike for four hours on February 27, 1947.

That the workers were wholeheartedly behind this demand was revealed in the very first meeting after the OEC dispersed. At Dohad about 2,000 workers unanimously passed this resolution moved by the Union's General Secretary, Nadkarni.

And it was this mood of theirs that was revealed at the elections!

FIRESTONE STRIKE WON

THE employees of the American-owned Firestone Tyre and Rubber Co. have won a glorious victory. Hindus and Muslims, Parsees and Sikhs, workers and clerks, they all fought together for 48 days.

And it was a fight not only against American Big Business, but against police terror—Section 144, lathi-charges, arrests and firings. Above all it was the first big and successful battle against the imposition of arbitration to stifle a strike.

It began on December 17 after the Rubber Workers' Union (Red Flag) had fruitlessly negotiated for settlement for over 100 days. In vain did the Manager then rush about with his offer of arbitration. The men did go on strike.

But then started the usual round of police repression. Though the workers had twice secured permission from the Ministers for peaceful picketing, yet the police physically prevented them from exercising their right. In all, about 80 workers were arrested, several lathi-charges made; there was firing twice.

The Government's Employment Exchange sent in blacklegs. But many of them, when they saw this wonderful strike, went away.

As against the Ministry's indifference, a number of Unions—and not only those under the Red Flag—supported this battle. This was more so in the case of the workers of European-owned firms like the Standard Oil Co., General Motors, I.C.I., Good-lax Wall and others. They contributed cash for relief and offered their full moral support.

The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee Secretary, Sjt. Silam, also supported their cause.

And so, after 48 days the workers forced down the Management. The representative character of the Union was accepted.

*The workers would not be victimised.

*Wages for strike days would be paid by way of paying 3½ times the wage for any extra day's labour.

*The strike period would not be counted as a break in the services.

*Two months' bonus is to be granted and to compensate the losses in strike Rs. 50 out of it would be paid promptly.

*Demand for 15 days' leave with pay was also conceded.

*The Management has further promised to intervene on behalf of the arrested workers to ask the police to withdraw prosecutions against them.

*Any other points in dispute would be settled in consultation with the Union.

That is a victory any Union would be proud of!

PRIMARY TEACHERS

ON March 12, Bombay Province will face the second general strike of its 45,000 primary teachers within a year. That was the unanimous decision of 400 teachers' representatives who met on the Independence Day at Satara in a special session of the Bombay Provincial Primary Teachers Association.

Remarkably enough this decision was taken despite numerous efforts to disrupt the teachers' rapkas before and during the Conference.

What is most striking is that this decision was wholeheartedly supported by all the leaders of Satara's famous Patri Karkar-Nana Patil, Pandu Master, Nivrutti Kaka and others, as also by Congress MLAs like Sjt. Datta Deshmukh and Kharat; by the President of the Satara District Congress Committee, Sjt. Ramanand Swami;

and by a number of other prominent leaders.

About ten months ago these teachers had gone on strike. Then the strike was withdrawn on the assurance of Premier Khar who offered to redress their grievances soon. What the teachers got, however, was a ridiculously poor scale of pay and even this till date has been only on paper.

The result is that in a number of places the primary teachers get no more than Rs. 15 to 20 per month and even the promised dearness allowances is not to hand. The Ministry's drift is scandalous.

But no sooner the teachers' strike mood was known than the Government promised to pay up all their dues by February 21. Obviously they were bidding for time. Simultaneously they called upon the Local Boards to raise the Local Fund Cess by one anna to meet this new burden. The crude trick was to put the peasant against the teacher.

Meanwhile, the Executive Committee of the Maharashtra P.C.C. had passed a resolution calling on the teachers to accept the wage scale and not to strike. Minister Tapse went to Satara to bring pressure on the leaders of the Patri Sarkar. Even N. G. Gore, Secretary, Maharashtra Congress Socialist Party, was tellably reported to have visited Satara for the same purpose.

UNANIMOUS DECISION

Against all these efforts, however, the session unanimously voted for a general strike. The bitter life of the 400 delegates and about 5,000 primary teachers who attended this session, forced them into this decision. Five thousand teachers marched in

the Presidential procession and about 10,000 in all (including over 400 women) attended the session.

BARANG ASTIR

ON January 29, Cuttack town saw a grand demonstration by 1,000 workers and kisans of Barang, ten miles away. They marched through the main streets and waited at the Secretariat to get a hearing from their Premier for their demand of withdrawal of Section 144 at Barang (where a two month old strike is being fought out) and release of their leader Baidyanath Rath, Orissa's Labour M.L.A., who was arrested for violating Sec. 144.

What they got instead was a baton-charge and arrests. Six of them were arrested, six were injured in the charge.

The owner of the glass works at Barang is habitually perfidious. He promised the workers their demands regarding a wage increase, etc. But he never fulfilled it. When the workers approached the Ministry, they only appointed a bureaucrat—"To look into the matter". The latter just did not turn up for his assignment.

Emboldened by this, within a few days the boss dismissed 26 workers. As a last resort the men struck work from December 1. An usorater they struck than goonda and police violence was let loose on them. The former forced the workers to remain inside the factory, the latter introduced Sec. 144 and Sec. 30 of the Police Act.

This reached an extent when the peasants would not be allowed even to have "kirtan" on the lunar eclipse day. Two hundred armed police guarded the area.

Against this, the villagers around took out processions and also formed active Relief Committees. Since nothing could break the strike, Union leaders were arrested and these included Baidyanath Rath, M.L.A.

Repeatedly were efforts made to get the Ministry to intervene in the dispute. Repeatedly they refused to help. In the end after about 60 days of strike, 1,000 workers and kisans marched from Barang to Cuttack, ten miles away, to meet their Premier and get their grievances redressed.

At the Secretariat they waited for him with over 200 armed and reserve police blocking their way. The Premier only pleaded ignorance and asked for time till 1 p.m. that day. The men patiently waited.

But at the fixed hour the Premier again asked for time. That 1,000 men were sitting in the sun after marching for ten miles did not seem to worry him.

SATYAGRAHA

The men, therefore, offered satyagraha in front of the Secretariat gates. While picketing was on, Sjt. Naba Krishna Chaudhary's, (Revenue Minister) car came along and had to halt. Straight the Minister ordered the police to disperse the picketers to make room for his car to pass.

The police was, of course, too willing to carry out his orders. At once they baton-charged the people in his presence. Six were wounded. After this the police bounded out the people for over two miles heading them all along the way. They were beaten in the evening also as they tried again to return to Cuttack.

The strike, however, is far from being broken up by such terror. For not only their cause is just, they are getting fullest support from their kisan brothers.

Workers On The March

PRINCES LAY DOWN CONDITIONS FOR JOINING CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

No Transfer Of Paramountcy; Autocracy Must Remain Intact

The long and laborious deliberations of the Princes and their Ministers organised last week at Delhi to humbug the world into believing that the Princes functioned freely and independently, of their own volition, were in reality held to put a formal seal and sanction to the Plan of the Political Department.

PRIOR to this jamboree at Delhi, Their Highnesses were fully tutored and drilled up by the Political Department with the help of secret addresses, circulars and audiences in respect to the part that their Highnesses are to play in the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The sordid details of these "activities" of the Political Department have often been exposed in the columns of the People's Age. Only three weeks ago, in the issue of January 12, 1947, we had published the contents of one such secret circular of the Political Department laying down detailed instructions to the Princes about how they were to conduct themselves in the working of the Cabinet Mission Plot.

Britain's Plot

This plot, briefly and simply put, is to retain one-third of India's territory and one-fourth of its population under the abject slavery of the British with the help of their "Princely stooges", and then to use this territory and its resources spread over in the form of a vast network of Ulsters all over India to sabotage the onward march of freedom of the Indian people.

And not only the Indian people. By converting the 584 States into military and economic bases, the British imperialists want to use them to police and dominate all their South Asiatic possessions.

Sitting on the smouldering volcano of the Asiatic people's revolt, the British know that their offspring, the Indian Princes, are their last desperate hope.

On their part, the Princes are ever willing to oblige them because they also know that without the "protection" of British bayonets their autocracy would not last a single day in the face of the gathering storm in the country.

The proceedings of the much-advertised Delhi Conference of 60 Rulers and 100 Ministers fully show how they are working up to carry out the mandates of their masters.

Hypocritical Talk

After expressing their hypocritical anxiety to "cooperate in drawing up an agreed constitution" for India, their resolution declares:

"The entry of the States into the Union of India... shall be on no other basis than that of negotiation and the final decision shall rest with each State... it being understood that their participation in the constitutional discussions in the meantime will imply no commitments in regard to their ultimate decision which can be taken after consideration of the complete picture of the constitution."—(Clause I, Article A.)

This should be an eye-opener to those who counted upon the patriotism of the Princes, their concern to join independent and democratic India!

They will negotiate and "bargain" with the other parties in the Constituent Assembly and agree to join hand only if they get their assurance that the corrupt, medieval regimes in the States will not be questioned.

And finally, even if Their

by **Ramesh Sinha**

Highnesses agree to join in making a constitution for the Indian Union, these creatures of the British would not be bound to accept it, because they would decide their attitude only after seeing the "complete picture"!

That is, the Princes would never accept any constitution which may threaten to jeopardise the imperial interests of their masters in the Indian States.

The resolution goes on to make the point clear:

"Paramountcy will terminate at the close of the Interim period and will not be transferred to or inherited by the new Government of India. ... Every State shall continue to retain its sovereignty" — [Clause II—Article A]

In 1858, paramountcy was transferred from the East India Company to the British Crown, and later, it was transferred from the British Crown to the Political Department. So long as the British were the masters and the British held the whole of India under their sway, it was all right, paramountcy could be transferred!

But now that the Centre will be in Indian hands, now that a democratic Government may be installed at the Centre which might try to introduce some element of democracy in the States, paramountcy has become untransferable.

To Stop March Forward

Why? Because the Union Centre is not being created by the Cabinet Mission Plan to free and democratise the whole of India, but these 584 Ulsters are being armed with all the clap-trap of freedom and sovereignty to prevent the march of the rest of the country towards freedom and democracy. That is why the resolution further says:

"The Constituent Assembly is not authorised to deal with questions bearing on the internal administration or constitution of individual States or groups of States."—(Clause IV—Article A.)

How could it be? In 1931, the father of the present Ruler of Alwar, Tej Singh, was ignominiously kicked out of his throne by the British. But today, speaking in the Rulers Conference, this man has the cheek to boast of the inviolable "virtues" of the Princes and demand that the Indian Government shall not "interfere" in their dirty cess-pools of anti-national conspiracies!

Speaking about this very point Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, than whom a more tested watchdog of imperialism does not exist, indignantly asked:

Is the Union Government to interfere with the retention of "armies" in the States? Is the Union Government to impose 'direct taxation' on the Indian States?

In these blunt questions are revealed the dirty designs of the British and their puppets, the Princes.

The Princes are not going to tolerate, if they can, any interference in the right of their British masters to main-

tain large modern armies in the States or to dump their tax-free goods in them to be distributed to the whole of the country!

The Princes further want the nationalist parties to repudiate at the very beginning the claim of the 100 million States' peoples to speak for themselves and recognise the Princes' Negotiating Committee as the sole arbitrator if they want to have any negotiations with the Princes.

Such are the "fundamental" conditions laid down by the Princes for their "acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan."

If they are not accepted, they will have none of it.

In the Conference, the main fire was directed against the Congress and specially Pandit Nehru. The Congress was contemptuously referred to as "a certain party in British India" and Pandit Nehru's statements were jeeringly characterised as the "claims" of a "spokesman" of such a "party in British India."

The Rulers want the Congress to retreat even from those few halting commitments which it has made to the States' peoples and to abandon them completely to the tender mercies of these Rulers.

Bullying, bargaining and blackmailing, the Princes are using every weapon to achieve this objective.

Checks And Brakes

While summing up the results of the Conference, Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar warned up and declared:

"Some checks and brakes had to be provided for against the contingency of a majority party running amok in the future Government of India. The retention of monarchies in the States would exercise a restraining influence on those quarters which believe in deciding everything by brute majority...."

Here, then, is the unfolding of the crafty Ramaswami let the British Cabinet Mission's discarded forthwith.



"The Princes owe their existence not to anybody's charity or indulgence, but because of their intrinsic VIRTUES"—The Maharaja of Alwar

Kashmir Resumes Battle Against Dogra Raj

KAK'S MEN DRAG NAKED MEN AND WOMEN OVER ICE

From Our Correspondent

Kashmir at present is covered under deep snow. The thermometer is recording a temperature many degrees below zero. Everything in this world of white seems to be sunk into a mystic slumber. Only the people of Kashmir are awake and Kak's army and police get no respite even in their sleep because the battle in Kashmir is continuing.

N EARLY three months ago these people were asked to withdraw their struggle and fight elections to the Kashmir Assembly.

They obeyed the command of the leadership, and though their leader and 11 out of the 14 members of the Working Committee of the National Conference were in jail and the other leaders like Ghulam Mohiuddin had to work underground, they set up candidates for the Assembly.

But it was impossible to face the open brazen-faced corruption of the State authorities. So they withdrew from the elections and reverted to their positions to join in the battle.

Quit Slogans Again

After a few weeks of enforced silence, the hills and the valleys

now in the forefront—meetings and processions with "Quit Kashmir" slogans are being organised in almost every village. Similar things are happening in Jammu and Chenani.

Kak, who had thought that he had vanquished his people, is in jitters and, therefore, hitting out with all his fury.

Military Raj

A Military Raj has been set up in large tracts of the State. The Army hordes strut about the villages arresting people, breaking into their houses, gobbling up their fowls, goats and sheep and molesting their womenfolk.

In Pulwama Tehsil they have arrested 57 men, in Chenani 80; and in Jammu jail, where they have herded a big group of political prisoners, Prof. Saligram Sangho, Sheikh Mohammed Akbar (President of the Baranulla National Conference) and A. G. Trali have been forced by their treatment to resort to hunger-strike from January 20.

The City Police Station at the 4th Bridge has been turned into a Concentration Camp with 49 prisoners.

The worst atrocities, however, (Continued on page 11)

"L'Humanite"—Voice Of New French Renaissance

Marcel Cachin Tells Story Of Communist Daily

By Ramesh Sanghvi

The paper with the largest circulation in France today—exceeding the half-million mark—the paper which is most loved and most hated and feared, is the organ of the French Communist Party, L'Humanite.

It is loved by the common people of France, for it has struggled and suffered with them for over forty years, battling uncompromisingly in their interests, stoutly championing the cause of the working-class.

It is hated and feared by reactionaries and imperialists at home and abroad whose policies it has ruthlessly castigated. It has been with the people during the two wars, and even in the dark days of Nazi occupation, it was there—banned and hunted, coming out as an underground illegal sheet—guiding and inspiring French resistance.

When the first communal riots broke out in Calcutta in August last, all the newspapers published in Paris, both English and French, carried the news in blazing headlines depicting Indians as semi-barbarians sternly quarrelling amongst themselves—all but one. That solitary exception was L'Humanite.

Exposing Imperialists

It carried the sad story of Calcutta riots on the front page with a footnote in bold letters asking the reader to refer to the International Section. There, its star-writer Piere Courtarde exposed the role of the British imperialist rulers and showed how the tactics of the Cabinet Mission had accentuated communal bitterness.

In regard to Viet-Nam too, it is L'Humanite which is campaigning most vigorously for the reversal of the policy of war against Viet-Nameese being pursued by French imperialists.

Knowing all this, when I was in Paris last, I was curious to know more of the inspiring story of this remarkable paper—how it had started, what storms it had weathered, the battles it had fought.

Talking to journalists and ordinary workers about L'Humanite I heard one name all the time—the name of MARCEL CACHIN. "L'Humanite is his life, you go and see him", they told me. I was, therefore, very keen to meet the maker of L'Humanite, and I was fortunate enough to meet him.

Marcel Cachin is well over eighty years of age. Half a century of hard struggles has left its indelible marks on him. He related to me for three hours the inspiring story of L'Humanite. I will give you this story as far as I can, in his own words, as interpreted to me by his wife.

Born In Midst Of Struggle

"It was at the dawn of the century," he began, "that we felt the need of a paper to fight for the cause of social justice. Those were the days of rising French imperialism and wars for colonial possessions. Jaures, one of the immortal fighters for French democracy, was leading the fight against this. We were his junior colleagues.

"In 1904, we raised some money from the people and the first issue of L'Humanite came out. Thus, you see, it was born in the midst of a struggle and was meant to be a weapon in the interests of the people.

"I was a contributor to the paper then. For over a decade it remained a forum for broad humanitarian ideas, though it was given to the Socialist Party by Jaures. In the Socialist Party, there was the group led by Leon Blum which would not allow it to be the fighting organ of the French working-class.



Marcel Cachin

"But the paper changed its character with the Russian Revolution. I was elected editor as far



A section of the ten-lakh crowd that attended the L'Humanite fete in Paris in Sept. last.

back as 1912 and was striving to make it the voice of French workers. As the revolution swept over Russia, we from France hailed it as opening a new era for mankind.

"I visited Moscow in 1920-21 as one of the delegates of the Socialist Party and I had long discussions with Lenin.

"Soon after, the French Socialist Party, by a majority of 3 to 1, decided to join the Third International, and with the majority went the paper of the Party. From 1921, L'Humanite became the organ of the French Communist Party. I was elected Chief-Editor and they have found me fit to continue in this post for all these 25 years.

For Colonial Freedom

"Now began our real struggle. The French bourgeoisie tried its hardest to crush our paper. The test came on the question of colonies.

"The French Government had started its war of conquest against the people of Morocco in 1933. For three years the war to enslave the people of Morocco lasted and for three years we fought with all our might against that war. It was

a lone fight—a very difficult fight.

"Thirty-five of us had signed a manifesto against that war. We were all prosecuted and then sentenced to heavy fines and imprisonment. They thought that L'Humanite would die that way.

Its Source Of Life

"But they misjudged. The source of life of L'Humanite was the working-class. The workers rallied to save their own paper and we came out triumphant.

"There were other hard times, very hard times. In 1939, we were in a very bad state financially. The depression had overtaken France. I had sold everything that could fetch money, so had all the other comrades. And yet we needed money desperately.

"We tried to borrow some money from a bank. The bank agreed, but the Government saw to it that the bank should crash and it did crash. The French bourgeoisie heaved a sigh of relief, fondly imagining that its long looked-forward dream had

materialised. Now, at last, they thought, the paper would cease publication.

"Once again their roseate dreams were dashed to pieces. The Party appealed to its mother—the people of France. I made a personal appeal and went round slums of workers and huts of peasants all over the country. The people responded magnificently. In spite of the severe depression, they gave us 20 lakh francs—an enormous sum for those days. We emerged from the crisis even stronger than before.

With the attack on us, the French Resistance began.

"Soon the French bourgeoisie sold France off to German Fascism. Those were the darkest days of our history.

Voice Of Defiance

"But we kept on. In the wayside farms, distilleries, slums and even in fishing boats, we composed types, printed the paper on hand-machines. Illegal copies were published at different centres and distributed all over the country. And in those illegal little sheets, the voice of

French Renaissance sang out. That was the voice of France, defiant, full of all the revolutionary fire that is France.

"Have you seen those issues?" I had not. Smilingly, Marcel Cachin got up from his seat and brought out a file. There were copies in it, closely printed on hand-machines, some were cyclostyled, of different sizes and different colours. Poems, cartoons and slogans were strewn all over the issues.

There were 311 issues of L'Humanite published illegally under the worst terror history has known.

A Hazardous Period

"Of course, the most difficult period was that of the last war. In 1939, the French Government refused to accept the Soviet hand of co-operation and wanted us—L'Humanite and the French Communist Party—to abandon our sympathy for the Soviet Union. We refused, and we were illegalised, our paper banned.

"But have they ever been able to silence the voice of Communist Party anywhere by such methods? Nor could they stifle our voice for we had roots deep down in the hearts of the French people.

"Some of the best staff," said Cachin, "ever to appear in L'Humanite has appeared in these issues. They throb with the life, passion and emotions of France under occupation. They began a new French Renaissance which is sweeping the country today.

On To Barricades!

"It was in August 1944 that Paris rose in revolt. During the underground days, we had decided among the different resistance groups to take over the presses of the collabo-

rators. I had insisted that we take over the press of Petit Parisien—one of the most reactionary papers. The place is not very big, but it has one of the best printing machines in Europe.

"So when Paris rose in revolt, a battalion of our comrades with loaded machine-guns entered the building and occupied it. The battle to free Paris was raging outside and our comrades got down to the job. In less than 30 minutes the first issue was out on the streets with the call—'Parisians, On To The Barricade!'

"It was just like L'Humanite, always the first on the battlefield.

"When I entered this office, where we are sitting now, I was full of emotions. This used to be the office of billionaire Deaul, one who had done all he could to malign and destroy us. This office was now ours for good, and the hand of history moving forward had swept him away.

"But where were my comrades, my colleagues, my brothers and sons—at this moment of victory? Where was Gabriel Peri? Where was Louis Sampaix? Of the old team of 20 only four were now left. The majority of the rest had fallen martyrs in the cause of the Party and France.

"They fell in the battle, the battle which is still on.

"L'Humanite has fought many brave and courageous and glorious battles and it shall continue to fight in every noble cause.

"One of the greatest merits of L'Humanite was to have hailed and supported the first workers' State—the dream of the heroes of the Paris Commune. We have supported the Soviet Union against all calumnies and tried to tell the truth about it.

'Serve, Guide, Fight'

"Lenin once said to me: 'Cachin, a Communist paper must serve the people, guide them and fight for them. Then the people will make it their own.'

"We have striven to run L'Humanite on these lines."

When Cachin said that L'Humanite was the voice of French Renaissance, I was reminded of the L'Humanite fete which I had seen in September 1946 in Paris.

This fete was held in a big open space. From far the scene looked like one of our annual Kisan Conferences. There were tents with Red Flags flying over them.

It was a whole town. Ten lakh people had come there paying an entrance fee of 20 francs—about 10 annas.

It was the festival of their paper and so they sang and danced as only the French can do. They listened to the speech of Marcel Cachin and they saw a grand open-air performance of a living newspaper presenting the whole recent history of France.

There were sports in which some of the best sportsmen took part. In the evening the best ballerine of France gave performances. The best architect had planned the stage, and the best sculptors and artists had decorated it. There is no exaggeration in this because the best elements in French cultural life today are inside the Communist Party.

The glory that is France was there. The country-dances and the revolutionary songs and the will to fight and live were writ large over the faces of the people—true symbols of the new French Renaissance.



DANS UN DISCOURS AUX ALLEMANDS, A STUTTGART
M. Byrnes se fait le protecteur
des "Etats-Unis d'Allemagne"

Qui veut rompre avec le Viet-Nam?

AUNG SAN BULLIED INTO ANOTHER COMPROMISE

Not One Single Demand Met

A White Paper issued in London on January 27 announced that on all matters affecting future relations between Great Britain and Burma, agreed conclusions had been reached. After the end of the talks, General Aung San confidently stated:

"Burma's independence now lies in her own hands... We are going to have a Constituent Assembly about May and it depends upon us how soon we decide to make Burma independent." (Times of India, January 30).

Do facts warrant this gushing optimism?

IN October last when the Governor of Burma formed a new Executive Council, six out of whose 11 members were nominees of Burma's premier national organisations, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), the step was similarly hailed "as a historic milestone in Burma's progress." Experience soon proved that it was nothing of the sort.

Aung San failed to see then that Governor Rance had drawn the AFPFL leaders into a circumscribed Executive Council with a view to saddling them with the responsibility of curbing the growing people's upsurge. The bulk of powers, and the veto, remained in the Governor's hands.

Pursuing a policy of compromise and unable to tackle any of the pressing problems facing the country, Aung San acquiesced in the launching of repression against the innumerable struggles which were breaking out.

Three months of this policy exposed its utter bankruptcy. Repression failed to quench the spirit of the people and popular discontent continued to mount higher and higher.

Realising the inadequacy of his powers and pressed from below, Aung San once again formulated certain demands on the British and threatened a struggle if those demands were not conceded.

What were these demands? In the FIRST place, Aung San demanded an immediate declaration of Burmese independence to be granted by the end of 1947.

SECONDLY, the setting up of a sovereign Constituent Assembly to frame the constitution of a free Burma.

THIRDLY, the Governor's Executive Council to be transformed into a real National Government.

FOURTHLY, the Project Boards (economic schemes of the British for the re-annexation of Britain's economic domination over Burma) to be revised or abolished according to the recommendations of the AFPFL.

FIFTHLY, one of the most important demands of the AFPFL was that the independence of Burma should be for the whole of the country without any reservations on the part of the British Government in regard to the Frontier areas, especially the Shan States.

For as Aung San rightly pointed out to a Press Correspondent on January 25, "Independence would be nullified if the Frontier areas were retained under direct control of His Majesty's Government." (Hindustan Times, January 26).

What are these Frontier areas? Except for oil, these areas are the richest in natural resources available in Burma. There are rich deposits of silver and zinc and huge timber forests.

The exploitation of this wealth is almost wholly concentrated in the hands of three or four British concerns.

Strategically also, these areas are important for British imperialism. The pre-war Burma

by V. M. KAUL

Army was composed mostly of tribal levees; even today Britain aims at tribal levees forming at least 50 per cent of the effectives in the Burma Army.

Backward and fed on anti-Burmese racialism, they have always formed a hard core of imperialist shock troops against the Burmese national movement.

The Shan plateau dominates Indo-China, Thailand and Burma. Kachin and Chin regions in the North and North-West are next to Naga hills and Manipur, and it is reported that British imperialists have already a plan to carve them into a separate tribal State, from where a check can be kept on both East-India and Burma.

The British aim is to use the toady reactionary chiefs of these areas for separating them from Burma, appease the rising national sentiments of the people with a show of sham democracy, while they themselves remain the real masters.

In short, the British game is to use these areas vis-a-vis Burma much in the same way as they want to use the States in India.

Bullying Tactics With this background, let us come to the negotiations themselves.

Our London Correspondent reports that the Burmese delegation was greeted there with a two-pronged offensive. The extreme Tory circles branded Aung San as a "Fascist", a "cut-throat" and a "scoundrel."

The second line was adopted by Tory and Labour papers alike. They averred that the delegation "does not represent the tribes", meaning the people living in the plains, forming 2/5ths of the population.

The British Cabinet representatives also adopted a surly attitude; they insisted that the delegation was unrepresentative of the tribes and hence there could be no discussion on a United Burma.

Further, the delegation was easily split up, with U Saw and U Ba Pe ranged against Aung San, calling him a Fascist. They also demanded British supervision of elections.

Dorman Smith, the reactionary ex-Governor of Burma, acted as the chief British adviser. Cripps shed crocodile tears over the lot of the tribes calling them "Burmese Untouchables". How, indeed, could they be left to the tender mercies of the AFPFL?

Subjecting him to these bullying tactics, the British forced him into another compromise without conceding a single demand of his.

The independence of Burma has not been recognised, not even in words. This was made abundantly clear by Premier Attlee in his reply to Churchill in the House of Commons debate:

"This statement does not mean that we go. It means that the people of Burma have the right to decide in future

whether they should stay in the Commonwealth or go outside. Therefore, there is no decision to go." (Times of India—January 30).

The British troops will not only remain but it is also made clear that "all British forces stationed in Burma will remain under the ultimate control of His Majesty's Government.

No Gains Even after the new constitution is framed, British troops do not automatically quit Burma.

Their use or retention "will be a matter for agreement between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Burma."

All that is promised is a Constituent Assembly for drafting a constitution. For this purpose the electoral machinery of the discredited 1935 Act will be used. There will, of course, be no representatives from the Frontier areas. This means that it will be an Assembly heavily weighted in favour of vested interests, quite incapable of producing a constitution of a free country.

It is, indeed, a far cry from the sovereign Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage and free of foreign control, which Aung San himself had demanded before joining the Governor's Executive Council.

There will be an Interim Legislature. This will be the Legislative Council as provided in the 1935 Act, with no additional powers, only its number

WHERE STANDS THE LEFT?

CONGRESS SOCIALISTS AND REPRESSION

THE entire nationalist Front—even the Rightist among them—came out to condemn the raids on Communist and other offices on January 14.

But not the Janata, organ of the Congress Socialist Party. This is what it had to say about the raids in its issue of January 19:

"Focusing on an organisation for objectionable propaganda through its literature is perhaps a duty of all governments. But by dramatising what should be no more than a routine performance and waking up to the need for doing this six months after the event, the Bombay Government has lived up to the tradition of its bureaucratic predecessors...."

One would have expected that the Congress Socialists would be the loudest in their condemnation of what was obviously an attack by the imperialist bureaucracy against a brother Left Party, and when the "crime" was that of exposing the GHQ's plans against the freedom movement.

But the Janata provides an excuse for the Intelligence Bureau—the type of excuse which no other nationalist paper has stooped to use, namely, that "it is the duty of all governments" to "pounce" on organisations for their "objectionable literature."

The Janata goes further and condemns the imperialist police—not for raiding the offices—but for the delay of six months in taking action. Petty factionalism could not go further.

"Worst Menace" S. J. Anoka Mehta, the C.S.P. leader, at a Press Conference in Travancore on February 2, declared:

"There is not the least doubt in my mind that the Communist Party constitutes the worst menace to the peace and welfare of India." (Associated Press).

In South India, the biggest question before the public is that of the Congress by which the Communist

will be increased from 50 to 100. Not only that. It will be nominated, NOT elected, even though the nominated members "will be drawn from among those elected to the Constituent Assembly with the inclusion of a small number of persons to represent non-indigenous minorities."

The Governor's Executive Council will continue as of old—some verbal assurances have no doubt been given that it will function like the Interim Government of India, which itself is not a sovereign body.

Defence and External Affairs will remain the special concern of the Governor, but now "the Executive Council will be fully associated with the disposal of such matters." Nothing more.

The question of the Project Boards has also been left vague and has not been settled in the manner demanded by the AFPFL.

On the crucial issue of the Frontier areas, no final decision has been taken, but enough scope has been left for British manoeuvring to utilise these areas to the best possible advantage.

Thus, on each of the major issues, the AFPFL has had to retreat from its original demand and the British have won all along the line.

Afraid of the developing mass struggles in Burma, Aung San has played into the British hands—and the bureaucrats can now go ahead to hit at the struggles of workers and kisans, using the Popular Executive Council as their shield, and disrupt the national movement.

In fact, the game already started when the negotiations were still on. On January 23, Thakin See's Communist group was banned. Repression has been intensified. Lathi-charges, tear-gas and firing are becoming the order of the day.

Further Disruption The British are planning further disruption. It is obvious that the old social basis of the pre-war British toadies like U Saw and U Ba Sein who used to form the Min-

istry then, completely collapsed during the war. Some other device had therefore to be thought of to give them some popular prestige. And so U Saw and U Ba Sein were quickly switched on to a role of opposition to Aung San from the Left. They have denounced the present agreement as a betrayal of Burma's national aspirations.

But all that their blunder and fire amount to is that they want to ride the wave of anti-compromise revolutionary sentiment that is already appearing in spite of Aung San's tremendous prestige.

The British visualise armed clashes between different parties during the elections and they will, as is their wont, incite one party against another, till all appeal to the British as the only neutral force to restore law and order!

British Stooges At Work In fact, U Saw and Thakin Ba Sein are already talking of one party dictatorship and demanding British intervention "as in Greece and Bulgaria" to ensure peaceful and free elections!

Ba Sein has opened attack from another flank also. He has stated that the tribal peoples should be left to fend for themselves as the Burmese national movement is not yet in a position to take up this arduous task. In other words, he defends the present imperialist subjugation of these areas.

In addition, the British are raising the bogey of foreign aggression, to persuade Burma to remain within the Commonwealth.

Besides stressing the "danger" of a strong China", reports the Special Correspondent of Hindustan Times, "it has actually been pointed out to the Burmese that a powerful India might possibly have 'designs' on their country." (January 25).

Grim days are ahead of Burma and only a total break from the compromising policy and a united struggle led by the AFPFL can lead the country to real freedom and independence.

—Ramesh Chandra

Party, Trade Union and Eisan Sabhas have been virtually banned; their leaders put under arrest. A large number of Congressmen—ranging from the Left to the Right—and the public in general have spoken strongly against the Ordinances.

S. J. Mehta had nothing to say regarding these questions or on the raids. Instead by his words, he provided encouragement to the bureaucracy to continue its oppression, in the name of crushing the Communists, now that even the Socialist Anoka Mehta had admitted that they were "the worst menace."

Imperialism should be grateful to S. J. Mehta for attempting to take the limelight of hatred off its face and focussing it on the Communist Party instead!

What is even more reprehensible is the fact that S. J. Mehta vented his spleen on the Communists in Travancore State, where the notorious Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer has banned the Communist Party and jailed many patriots (including Congress Socialists) in the name of checking the "Communist menace."

S. J. Mehta's own visit to Travancore was at first banned, but he was later permitted to enter.

S. J. Mehta's visit, if its real theme was anti-Communism, as it arose from the A.P.C. report that his Press Conference—because—must only have helped Sir C.P. to tighten repression against all fighting elements in the State, including S. J. Mehta's own comrades of the Travancore C.S.P.

The Congress Socialist Party should know that to applaud repression against the Communist Party is to live in a false paradise for tomorrow the same repressive machinery will be used against the C.S.P. itself, if it is not crushed today.

In fact, the three weeks that have elapsed since the January 14 raids have seen the beginning of attacks against the C.S.P.

In Bihar, C.S.P. offices were searched.

In Poona, the C.S.P. offices and residences of C.S.P. leaders were searched.

In the latter case it was "objectionable literature"—a patriotic leaflet addressed to the armed forces—which gave the bureaucracy the excuse. The Janata Editors will, obviously, not write again that it is "the duty of every Government to pounce on an organisation for 'objectionable' propaganda through its literature."

Bhagyaraj Kulkarni, Secretary of the Maharashtra Committee of the Communist Party, immediately issued a statement sharply condemning the raids at Poona and the bureaucracy, and calling on all, particularly the Left parties, to come together to resist such attacks.

This is the sort of attitude one expects of the Congress Socialists also—flaming condemnation of all imperialist attacks on patriotic organisations, irrespective of political differences.

Welcome Sign It is a welcome sign that some at least of the Congress Socialist leaders are beginning to see this, and are speaking out against anti-Communist repression.

At a public meeting at Agni on January 20, S. J. Damodar Swarup Mehta, Congress Socialist President of the U.P. Congress Committee, declared (according to a report in the Congress Hindi daily, Samaiti):

"Recently the Communists have exposed the military plans, made by the British Army Headquarters to crush the freedom struggle. Our country is grateful to the Communists for these exposures."

It is such expressions of honest anti-imperialism, rising above class party-bias, which are worthy of a party, which claims the revolutionary heritage of the August Revolution and flies the banner of Socialism.

The national components of the Janata and S. J. Anoka Mehta are a disgrace to any patriotic party.

WHITE SAHIBS SEE TEBHAGA AS BIGGEST BLOW TO ANCIENT FEUDAL BASE

Withering Repression Against Kisans Stepped Up

By Nikhil Chakravarty

Overwhelming pressure from rank and file League workers all over Bengal has compelled the Suhrawardy Ministry to recognise the justness of the Tebhaga demand of Bengal's share-croppers. But the White Sahibs of Writers' Building (Bengal Secretariat) and their agents in the districts see in the victory of the Tebhaga struggle the heaviest possible blow at their ancient feudal base of the zamindars and jotedars, and have accordingly stepped up their withering repression on the kisans.

WHEREVER the kisans have stood up against the jotedars, the police have stepped in, not only in support of the jotedars and zamindars, but have gone all-out to use all the forces at their command to grind the kisans' fighting spirit to smithereens. Take a look at the repression facts in Cols. 2 and 3. They tell their own story. Read the names of the Tebhaga martyrs and you know that the bullets of the police and the lathis of the jotedars have hit at all—Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled Caste—without discrimination. What this repression means can be realised if one takes a brief glance at some of the more important Tebhaga districts.

One Thousand Warrants

In Dinajpur, where the movement has practically covered the whole district, warrants (mostly non-bailable) have been issued against one thousand kisans (in Chirirbandar Thana alone, there are two hundred warrants out!). So far, ONE HUNDRED have been arrested.

FIVE HUNDRED search warrants have been issued. What the police have been doing in Dinajpur is typical of all districts.

Armed police parties come and camp either in the local schools or in the jotedars' houses. The jotedars feast them, entertain them. In return the police pick up kisans, bring them to the jotedars' houses and let the jotedars and his men have a "treat", beating up the kisans, before they are removed to the lock-up.

At Mahalbari in Chirirbandar Thana, a police party imprisoned some kisans in the jotedar's house and had them beaten by him and his gang of toughs. The cries of the tortured kisans brought fifteen hundred villagers marching on the village, demanding that the beating be stopped.

The Police Inspector, in charge of the beating party, was so scared that he bolted as fast as his legs could carry him.

False Complaint

To cover up the true facts, he lodged a false complaint that the kisans had snatched rifles away from the police—and were committing "violence", and so on.

On January 3, the police raided another village Talpukur in the same Thana. Sixty armed policemen came, stayed with the jotedar, and in the early hours of the morning, before dawn, they broke open the kisans' huts, dragged them out of bed, brutally assaulted men and women, put a large number of them under arrest.

Lathis and bayonets wounded many kisans seriously. Despite urgent demand that women should not be beaten and assaulted, the mad police bent on mass terror repeatedly and provocatively attacked women.

This infuriated the people, and in a body they came forward, demanding that the police should stop. Instead, without the slightest warning, the police opened fire killing three kisans and wounding several. In the open scuffle one constable was also killed.

At Rani Sankall in Dinajpur, the police opened fire again on December 23. Unparalleled vandalism was perpetrated on the kisans.

Even a blind old man of sixty, named Sudam, was beaten so severely that for weeks he was unable to move about. In Mymensingh district, the number of warrants issued comes to about five hundred. In Netrokona Sub-Division alone,

Fifty-one kisans have been interned in Jessore town so that the movement may be weakened in the interior. The police are entering kisan huts at night in the absence of male members and are trying to seize paddy.

The Special Ordinance has been invoked to ban meetings in Sadar Sub-Division.

In Khulna, the kisan struggle is going on in two Sub-Divisions of Dumuria and Dakope, where police raj has let loose regular terror. Prosecutions have been launched against one hundred kisans. Twenty kisans have been interned, while mainly Kisan Sabha and Mahila Samiti leaders have been externed.

The District Secretary of the Communist Party, Pramatha Bhowmick, is a Security Prisoner under the latest Bengal Ordinance.

Since January 14, armed police bands have been going to villages perpetrating atrocities.

At Jitala village, they raided practically every house,

attacked and abused women and arrested 25; at Abhoy Charan's house, the police orgy continued for nine hours in the course of which they looted his paddy, cash, utensils, ornaments, clothes, fowl, and food-stuffs; Abhoy's 50-year old mother was bayoneted and fainted, while his pregnant wife had a premature delivery.

Two days later, the police raided without warrants Tejama Haldar's house and committed similar atrocities.

Fire Without Warning

On January 23, in the village of Balabunia, the police fired without warning and without the slightest excuse on a group of kisans crossing the river. They killed the Communist Party member Hajari Mandal, while another Banamali Bechar was wounded and is lying in a precarious condition. It is reported that the police now intend to frame-up a false charge against the kisans of "violence".

Reports from other districts reveal similar harrowing incidents.

In Rangpur district a jotedar's men killed kisan Tatanarain while Manikrishna Sen, the veteran kisan leader, was seriously wounded.

In Jalpaiguri, Madhab Datta and other Kisan Sabha workers were severely beaten by jotedar's men and narrowly escaped death.

At Shyampur thana in Howrah district, Prankrishna was murdered as a result of shooting by jotedar's men.

This is the way Governor Burrows and the White lords of Writers' Building are seeking to crush Bengal's awakened share-cropper, who is giving his life blood in the heroic struggle which has wiped out the shame of Hindu-Muslim riots which had blackened Bengal's name in recent months.

During the last two months during the Tebhaga struggle:	
Total number of warrants	5,000
Total number of arrests	1,000 (including 300 women)
Police firing	FIVE TIMES
Number killed	NINE
Cases of police assault	1,000
Huts damaged or destroyed	1,000
Section 141 in	FIFTEEN DISTRICTS.

With Their Lives They United Bengal Again

These are the share-croppers—common Bengali kisans—who have given their lives in the Tebhaga battle. By their blood they have cemented the unity of Bengal's Hindus and Muslims, prevented the shame of riots spreading across Bengal, proclaimed aloud how the common people of our land can and do fight together for their common rights and their common demand for freedom.

- We dip the Red Banner in their memory.
- SARVESWAR DALU—of Mymensingh—killed by Jotedar's men.
- SAMIRUDDIN—of Dinajpur—killed by police bullets.
- SHIBARAN—of Dinajpur—killed by police bullets.
- FRANKKRISHNA—of Howrah—killed by Jotedar's men.
- HAJARI MANDAL—of Khulna—killed by police bullets.
- TATANARAIN ROY—of Rangpur—killed by Jotedar's men.
- Another unknown Kisan—of Khulna—killed by Jotedar's men.

three hundred Hindu and Muslim kisans are facing prosecution on a charge of "theft" of having removed paddy, grown and reaped by them and taken to their own barns!

In Kishoreganj Sub-Division arrests were made under the Special Powers Ordinance, which is supposed to have been promulgated by the Governor to keep communal peace!

The District Magistrate here dared to countermand the Premier's own orders to cancel the warrants issued under this Ordinance, while one Additional District Magistrate went a step further to insist that none of the arrests made should be bailiable.

Instructions were issued by the Sahibs to all Union Board Presidents to "help the jotedars to the best of their power and ability to recover their share of the crops from the share-croppers."

In the Hajang area, Sarveswar Dalu was killed by jotedar's men, no action was taken by the police; instead prosecutions were started against some Kisan Sabha workers.

Brutal Atrocities

On January 8, terrible atrocities were perpetrated on the villagers of Jigatala Langara and its neighbourhood: women were brutally attacked, resulting in the death of a 3-month old baby and the arrest without warrant of twenty kisans.

In the district of Jessore, warrants of arrests number 1,000 in just two Sub-Divisions, Narail and Sadar. Already the arrested number over 250, with non-bailable warrants in many cases.

The police camps in the villages are centres of harassment. All types of people—even teachers, lawyers—and doctors are assaulted. In Panjia shop-keepers were beaten in the bazaar by the police and arrested.



The Great Conspiracy Against Russia

By Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn. Special Edition \$1.00. Publishers: Boni & Gaer, New York. Distributed in India by People's Publishing House, Bombay.

AND a conspiracy meant no less against the oppressed but awakening people in all lands. Here is a damning exposure of all the machiavellian intrigues of these anti-Sovieters. A timely exposure it is, too, for the Anglo-American imperialists have unleashed a new campaign of lies in preparation for another war against the Soviet Union.

The Soviet State came into existence twenty-nine years ago. And during each day of these twenty-nine years, reactionaries of every land have dreamt of murdering the State.

Practical men that they are, and of a wisdom gained in savage struggles against people's liberties in many lands, they have tried many and devious methods to realise their dream—from wars of open intervention and counter-revolution in the 1910's, to diplomatic double-dealing, terror and fifth-column treachery in the '20's and '30's to desperate attempts at Munich and later, to turn against Russia the Fascist monster they had reared.

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KRISHNA REDDY

The Bookshelf

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WORLD YOUTH COMMISSION VISITING INDIA

Delegates From Soviet, France, Yugoslavia Included

By Samuel Israel

On about February 6, India will be visited by an international Youth Commission. It will represent the 45 million strong World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY).

THE WFDY was formed at the World Youth Conference in London in November 1945. Representatives of youth organisations of 63 countries, including the All-India Students' Federation (AISF), participated in the Conference. All sections of working-class, student and other youth were represented—from Catholics and Student Christian movements to Socialist and Communist youth.

Its members include a number of Asiatic youth organisations like the 500,000 strong youth organisations of North China, the 1 million strong Chinese organisation, the Malay New Democratic Youth League with 50,000 members, the 220,000 strong Viet-Nam youth organisation and the Indonesian youth organisations.

For Liberation Of Colonies

The WFDY Council in its first meeting in July in Paris discussed the colonial question at great length. While severely condemning the South African Government for its anti-Indian legislation, it called upon its member organisations to bring pressure on their Governments to support India in the United Nations Organisation against South Africa. It also opposed the move of the South African Government to annex South West Africa.

The Council decided that to be able to give practical help to the struggle of the colonial people for national liberation, it must try to break through the very strict censorship and "black curtain" maintained over all colonies and to tell the youth of the world—especially those of imperialist

countries—what colonial rule has meant for the young people of these countries.

With this aim a Colonial Bureau has been set up at Paris as an integral part of the WFDY headquarters to collect and send out information about the colonies and bring about closer contact between youth organisations of colonial and other countries. Vidya Kanuga of the AISF has been put in charge of the Bureau.

It was with the same object that the Council decided to send a Youth Commission to India.

Who Will Be In The Commission?

*OLGA CHETEBOKINA, ex-Editor of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, will represent the 30 million strong Soviet Youth Anti-Fascist Committee. Through her the Indian youth will be able to come into direct contact with the Socialist Youth of the Soviet Union.

*ROJKO TOMOVIC, a member of the Executive of the International Union of Students. An engineering student, he will represent the two million strong People's Youth of Yugoslavia.

*JEAN LATOVSSIER of the Union of Republican Youth of France.

*DOROTHEA LANCASTER will represent young Britain.

*OLSEN MARIUS will represent the Danish Common Board of Youth Organisations. This Board co-ordinates all the major youth organisations of Denmark—youths of all parties, scouts, guides, trade unions as also religious youth organisations.

The Viet-Nam youth representative who was also to be included in the Commission will not be able to come as he is now busy fighting in his freedom struggle.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent a cable to the WFDY promising all facilities to the Commission while in India.

Public-Men Extend Support

Amongst those who have welcomed the visit of the Commission are Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the Education Minister of Madras and Bengal, the Secretary of the All-Bengal Teachers' Association, prominent trade union leaders like M. Kalyanasundaram, (President, S.I.R. Labour Union), R. A. Khedgikar, (Vice-President, All-India Railwaymen's Federation) and P. Chakkarakal Chettiar, (President, Madras Provincial T.U.O.); Poet Vallathol; and a large number of Principals, Professors, Editors, Journalists and Writers. The All-India Trade Union Congress and the All-India Kisan Sabha have promised to help the Commission in every possible way.

In Assam the Reception Committee includes two Ministers, Rev. J. J. Nichols Roy and Sjt. Bhimbar Deuri, representatives of the hill students and of the Muslim Students' Federation.

In Bombay Prof. P. A. Wadia, Dr. R. N. Cooper (one of Bombay's most prominent surgeons), trade unionists like Mr. Dinkar Desai, and representatives of the All India Women's Conference are on the Committee.

The Lahore Committee includes representatives of the AISF, MSF, YMCA, trade unions, the Kisan Sabha and a number of professors.

Similar Committees are being formed in other places.

Against Abuse Language, Despicable Conditions

"KUKRI" RATINGS' STRIKE

Colleagues From Shore Establishment Refuse To Arrest Strikers

(By Our Correspondent)

Eighteen hours' hard work a day—which included the jobs of menials—serving of food to chief petty officers and even washing of their plates, insulting treatment and the use of filthy language by White officers—all these forced a strike on the men of HMIS Kukri at Cochin on January 6.

The ratings made every possible effort to send their grievances to the Interim Government. But again and again officers sat on their complaints, refusing to send them to New Delhi.

THE ratings decided to go on strike realising that this alone would enable them to draw the attention of the higher authorities. The strike was complete—all the 200 ratings including the petty officers joining it.

The White Naval bosses immediately struck back. They ordered the ratings of HMIS Vendaruthy, a shore establishment, to arrest the strikers. But they flatly refused to do this dirty job. Finally the authorities brought in their own men—200 British ratings of HMIS Jamaica were rushed in. Fully armed, they arrested 55 ratings of HMIS Kukri.

The arrested ratings were put in cells and had to face the worst treatment possible. In protest they resorted to hunger-strike for one day. One of the ratings, T. Swami, was summarily convicted and sentenced to 89 days' rigorous imprisonment that very night, and sent to Calicut jail.

The remaining ratings met and decided to refuse to do any job that affected their self-respect.

Captain Tries Disruption

Having arrested the militant sections of the ratings, the Captain tried his old trick of disrupting the unity of the men. He prepared a statement condemning the 'leaders' and tried to force the remaining men to sign it. But in each case he had to face blunt refusal.

On January 11, a Board of Enquiry was set up with two Lt. Commanders—one British and the other Indian. The ratings and Nair—under arrest. About 500 soldiers—300 British and the Captain and demanded rest to that an impartial civil officer of Vendaruthy base to terrorist their choice should also be on the ratings.

This demand was rejected.

In the meantime, the authorities began to tutor the ratings for evidence before the Board. One M.K.D. Sheriff was picked up as a "leader" and he was put in solitary confinement. Two stokers were asked to give evidence before the Board. The First Lieutenant took up the job of tutoring them and threatened them with dire consequences if they failed to behave as tutors.

Authorities' Plan Upset

But the authorities had miscalculated. Both of them came out with the truth—it was a sharp indictment of the Naval bosses. Both demanded the immediate release of Sheriff.

The entire plan of the authorities was upset and they immediately called off the enquiry.

A similar situation is arising in the Signal School in HMIS Vendaruthy. Here also the ratings have been making representations against the ill-treatment of the authorities. Seven hundred ratings made individual requests to exempt them from menial jobs.

The Officer Commanding of the Unit, Commander Bird, openly told the ratings:

"These orders (about doing menial jobs) have been promulgated by the Indian Defence Member and apply to all HMIS ships and establishments. If you refuse to obey them, you will be punished severely."

On January 13, the Special Police searched all the ratings and put two of them—Hamid and Nair—under arrest. About 500 soldiers—300 British and the Captain and demanded rest to that an impartial civil officer of Vendaruthy base to terrorist their choice should also be on the ratings.

★ ★ INSIDE THE FORCES ★ ★

An Airman Protests

EVER since the Interim Government came into power, many appeals have been issued by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh calling upon the youth of the country to join the Indian army. Some of these appeals have characterised the armed forces as completely national.

I have just received a letter from an Indian airman of Yelahanka, Bangalore, who strongly protests against such statements. He writes:

"The armed forces are British-sponsored and maintained under the Union Jack, influenced by British imperialism and exploitation... For all practical purposes the Indian soldier owes allegiance to His Majesty's Government and the Union Jack. How could one say that the armed forces of a slave country... functioning under the British flag, are truly and completely national?"

Patriotism A Crime?

He goes on to quote an instance of British tyranny in the Indian armed forces:

"Quite recently in an issue of the *Blitz* was published a report stating that Pilot Officer Mandhal of R.I.A.F., Secunderabad, was placed under arrest and taken to Peshawar for Court Martial for having hung a photograph of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his room. Is this act of outrageous impertinence of a White man, possessing autocratic authority... punishable by a truly national armed force?"

He concluded by saying: "It is my strong conviction and considered opinion that the Indian armed forces could never be truly and completely nationalised as long as they

are on our soil the British imperialists and their vested interests.

"The Indian youth could never be attracted to the armed forces controlled and guided by British Jack-boots and their boot-lickers. So the very urgent and most important duty of the Interim Government is to remove the Union Jack flying over the Indian armed forces and thus create a truly national colour, aspect and atmosphere..."

Three Points

Three points emerge from the extracts which I have quoted from the airman's letter:

- (1) The Indian armed forces are under the control of the British imperialists and their stooges;
- (2) No patriotic youth can join such a force;
- (3) The Interim Government must immediately remove British authority to nationalise the armed forces.

Everyone will agree with the first and last points but the second point is debatable issue. Should patriotic Indian youth join the armed forces as it is today? I shall try to answer the question in brief and welcome any comments.

What is the composition of the Indian armed forces? The majority of the officers are British. The Indian officers mostly come from a certain section of the people. They are usually sons of feudal Princes, big industrialists and toady government officials.

The men who join the forces come from the lower classes. They usually come from loyalist military families, or are people who have been forced by hunger to join the army. The patriotic elements generally stay

Moreover, the armed forces are so organised today that all patriotic and democratic-minded youth who may have managed to get in are being thoroughly weeded out.

Under such circumstances mere removal of the British Officers and their control will not change the character of our armed forces. Something more is required. There must be a hard core of patriotic officers and men. What is that going to come from?

We know that the British military authorities are trying their best to sabotage independence of our armed forces. How can the people of the country help the Popular Government to fight this sabotage?

Patriots Must Join Up

The answers to these questions are simple. All patriotic youth must join the armed forces in large numbers. Their presence will strengthen the democratic element inside the armed forces today and help them win their democratic demands of elected mess committees, free access to political literature, better pay, leave regulations and so on.

Their presence will strengthen the hands of our national leaders and force the British saboteurs to give way. This is the only way in which the foundation of a truly national army can be laid.

Today when Independence is on the agenda, a situation has arisen when our patriotic youth must join the armed forces and help to transform the Imperialist Army of Occupation into a patriotic Army of Liberation.

I must point out in this connection that the Editor of the *Blitz* is reported to have refused to publish the letter I have quoted above.

—Our Forces Correspondent

FIGHTING DOGRA RAJ

(Continued from page 5)

were committed on the prisoners taken at Rajpore (in Pulwama Tehsil).

They were manacled and dragged over ice for eight miles, blood dripping from their wounded bodies. Samad the Sheikh, an old peasant, lost got his feet so badly snow-bitten that now it is difficult for him to move about.

Dragging naked men and women over ice has become a common pastime of Kak's soldiers who vie in their brutality with Nazi Huns.

But the people of Kashmir are fighting for their life not only in the spiritual sense, but even in the grossly material sense.

In the snow-bound Kashmir of Kak's Raj there is neither food nor fuel. Fuel costs Rs. 5/- a ton only in the blackmarket run by Kak's relatives and hangers-

on is available at the following rates:

- Elew — Annas 12- per seer.
- Dal — Rs. 7/20/- per seer.
- Affs — Rs. 1 per seer.
- Meat — Rs. 3/- per seer.
- Cooking oil — Rs. 5/13/- per seer.

The unemployment in the State has increased several times.

The people are, therefore, fighting not only valiantly but grimly, desperately, with their backs to the wall. Their anger is rising. And it is in this light that the underground War Council of the National Conference has given a warning to the State authorities through a publicly displayed poster that—

"Now if the people resort to violence the responsibility is of the criminals who have the run of the State."

Yes, the thick layers of Kashmir's snow are hiding a volcano which may erupt at any moment.

Jan. 14 Raids Had Central Govt.'s Approval

SARDAR PATEL'S ADMISSION IN ASSEMBLY

From Y. D. Sharma

New Delhi, Feb. 3.

On the floor of the Central Assembly, Sardar Patel, Home Member, Interim Govt., today admitted that police raids on the offices of the Communist Party, Trade Unions, Kisan Sabhas, etc., on January 14 were carried out with the approval of the Home Department of the Government of India and with the help and coordination of the Central Intelligence Bureau.

Regarding the advice tendered by the Central Government regarding these raids, the President of the Central Assembly remarked that prima facie it was a very important matter, but he would like the Home Member to enlighten the House about the facts of the case.

His Statement

Sardar Patel, thereupon, made his statement and said:

"This is a matter which involves a complaint filed before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, by the Commissioner of Police, Bombay. Certain secret documents of the Defence Department appear to have been stolen between the months of April and August last, and there has been some correspondence between the Bombay Government and the Central Government on this matter."

"Subsequently, it was suggested that if the Bombay Government were advised by its legal advisers that it was a proper case for action, that action may be taken. The legal advisers of the Bombay Government advised them that there was a proper case for prosecution under the Official Secrets Act."

"The Government of Bombay accordingly issued an order on December 18 empowering the Commissioner of Police to lodge a complaint, under the Official Secrets Act, against the Editor of People's Age in respect of eight articles which appeared between April 14 and August 4."

"On December 23 a similar order was made against the publisher and author of the pamphlet Operation Asylum which was published in September 1946."

"In connection with these investigations the Bombay Police had to make searches."

Adding that besides the documents mentioned above, other materials of a secret nature from the General Headquarters and other Government Departments were alleged to have been stolen, Sardar Patel said that it was found necessary (he then corrected himself and said that the Police Commissioner considered it necessary) that the searches should be made simultaneously, otherwise the materials and persons concerned would go underground.

Coordinated Action

Sardar Patel explained that in order to coordinate the searches, steps were taken by the Bombay Government and the Central Government to coordinate their action. "The Central Government has done nothing for which you can censure it."

Sardar Patel admitted that the Central Government had given advice to the Bombay Government but such advice was given according to the provisions of Section 165 of the Police Act, Bombay, under which the Commissioner of Police is entitled to ask for the assistance of the Central Intelligence Bureau to coordinate searches.

The Central Intelligence Department, Sardar Patel further added, did nothing more than assist the Bombay Police in the normal discharge of their duty and it was done so that the object of the prosecution might not be frustrated.

Patel's statement today contradicted the earlier communique of the Home Department and Pandit Nehru's telegram to the British Communist leader Palme Dutt, stating that the searches took place without the knowledge or authority of the Interim Government.

Sardar Patel's statement today left no doubt whatsoever that the Home Department of the Central Government was consulted beforehand and it sanctioned the use of the Central Intelligence Bureau to organise simultaneous raids all over India.

Regarding the advice tendered by the Central Government to the Bombay Government, Sardar Patel stressed that it was proper advice which the Central Government could give a Provincial Government.

Contrary to expectations, Sardar Patel did not say that the matter is not concerned with the Central Government as he had said in his official communique published on January 15.

He, however, opposed the admissibility of the motion on the ground that the matter is sub-judice as he understood from Press reports that the bail application on behalf of the arrested persons had been rejected by the Presidency Magistrate, Bombay.

Matter Not Sub-Judice

Syt. N. M. Joshi protested that the matter could not be treated as sub-judice. The Home Member, however, insisted that the matter was sub-judice and no discussion could take place in the House.

The President, thereupon, ruled the motion out of order.

One of Sjt. Joshi's motions related specifically to searches in Delhi—a matter which could not by any stretch of imagination be called sub-judice.

Although discussion in the House was gagged, considerable surprise has been caused among Pressmen and Assembly members by the fact that Sardar



"The matter is sub-judice"

Editorial

Sardar Patel's Quibblings

SARDAR Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member of the Interim Government, had at last to admit, on the floor of the Assembly, not only that the Interim Government knew and organised the all-India raids, but that it in fact advised the Bombay Government to take action against "People's Age".

This belated admission came only in reply to N. M. Joshi's adjournment motion raising the question of the country-wide attack not only on our Party, but on several mass organisations.

Though the motion was disallowed, it served to expose the technical side of this messy affair and let our people know that the Interim Government was responsible for the initiation of action against "People's Age" and the raids on an all-India scale.

Admission Still Purely Technical

But Sardar Patel's belated admission is still purely technical and evades the main political responsibility of the leaders who are in the Interim Government.

For, all that Sardar Patel said boils down to this: That the Defence Department complained that some secret documents had been 'stolen' between April and August last year; that the Interim Government entered into correspondence with the Bombay Government and ultimately the Bombay Government, which had neither any connection nor any special interest in the affairs of the Defence Department, agreed to file a prosecution; and that, finally, the Bombay Police requisitioned the aid of the Central Intelligence Bureau of the Home Department which with its usual obliging ways, carried out the all-India raids.

This statement flatly contradicts Pandit Nehru's reply to Palme Dutt that the raids were made without the knowledge or authority of the Ministers of the Interim Government. Because at least two of them, namely, the Defence and Home Members, know about them well in advance.

It gives the lie to the earlier communique issued by the self-same Home Department of the Sardar which said that the Central Government did not know anything about the matter, that the Bombay Government had launched a prosecution on its own and that the Intelligence Bureau only gave such help as it would normally have to do.

Now Sardar Patel had to acknowledge the technical responsibility of the Interim Government, but he took shelter

What He Now Contradicts

ON January 16 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru cabled as follows to Rajani Palme Dutt, British Communist leader:

"The police raids on the Communists took place without the authority or knowledge of the Ministers. They were due to police action in connection with the investigation of a case instituted against a newspaper in Bombay."

This cable was in reply to the following cable from Palme Dutt:

"Deep concern here over police raids on Communists. Can you inform if authorised by Indian Ministers? Anxiously awaiting details."

On January 15, the Government of India issued the following Press note:

"The attention of the Government of India has been drawn to a news item stating that searches were conducted in many parts of India on Tuesday by direction of the Government of India."

"In order to remove any misapprehension, the Government of India announce that the searches were not made under their order, but in exercise by the police of their powers Under Section 165 of the Criminal Procedure Code, on a requisition made by the Bombay Police under Section 166 of the Criminal Procedure Code in connection with the investigation of a case instituted against a newspaper in Bombay."

All over the country, in most of the nationalist papers, Pandit Nehru's denial and the Interim Government's Press note were welcomed as a proof that the Interim Government had nothing to do with the raids.