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AJOY GHOSH, A. K. GOPALAN BARRED FROM ENTERING PUNJAB VILLAGE

STOP SHEDDING KISAN BLOOD!

Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, has in a Press statement after visiting some villages of Punjab where the anti-betterment levy movement is going on, described the situation which exists there today. He says:

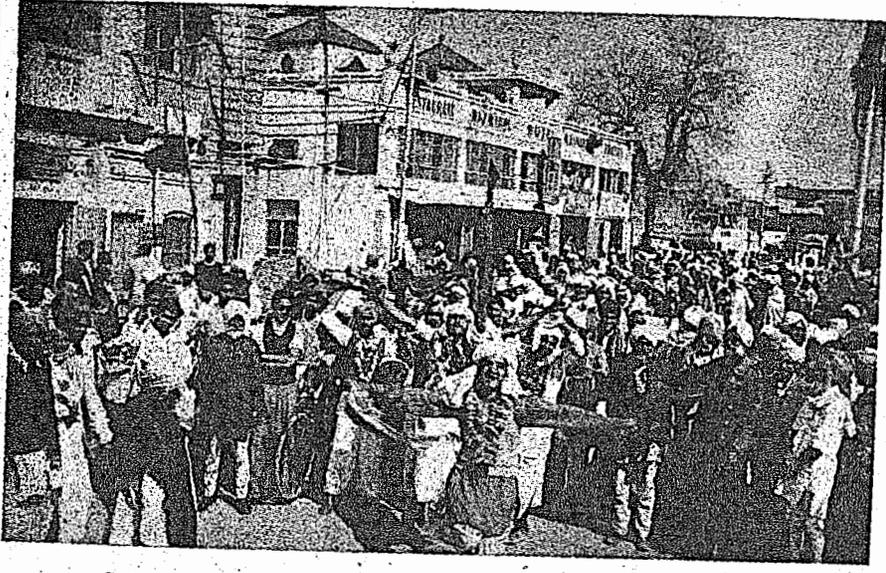
"THE struggle against the betterment levy which all the efforts of the Government have failed to crush, has attained vast dimensions and sweep. The whole of Punjab is astir. In tens of thousands, the peasants are coming forward to offer satyagraha. The Government, however, remains obdurate. And in its efforts to suppress the struggle, it is resorting to methods reminiscent of the worst days of British rule. On March 9, Comrade A. K. Gopalan, President of the All-India Kisan Sabha and Deputy Leader of the Communist Group in Parliament, and myself, went to village Aitiana, which only a few days ago had been the scene of a brutal police firing. The statement adds: "The police have not left the village in peace even after the firing. They sud-

denly appear at odd hours, forcibly enter the huts, arrest men, insult women and remove goods even without bothering as to whether they belong to satyagrahis or not. On Sunday, the 8th, five persons including two lambardars were arrested. Living in such constant terror of raids, the villagers are unable to relax even for a moment. Even children cannot sleep. Despite all this, the morale of the people remains high and they are determined to continue the struggle." Comrade Ghosh goes on to say that he, along with Comrade Gopalan, went to see the village of Sherpur on receiving information that a blood-bath similar to Aitiana was being planned there. Here policemen numbering about 500, armed with rifles, had surrounded the village.

"It appeared that the village was about to be attacked. We were stopped by the police from proceeding further. The Additional District Magistrate of Ludhiana, Sri Kuldip Singh Virk, who was present at the spot and on whose direction the police seemed to be acting, told us that he had 'besieged' the village and would not allow anybody to enter it."

Comrade Ghosh adds: "We made it clear that all we wanted was to find out what was happening in the village and whether his allegation that the people had collected arms was correct. He would not relent." The official told them that he would prevent their entry into the village by force.

Comrade Ghosh says that while these exchanges were going on, they were surrounded by armed policemen. "All this shows how even the most elementary rights of citizens are being blatantly violated by the Punjab Government which claims to be upholding law and order. The methods adopted by them reveal a clear



Satyagrahis in Jullundur District on their way to court arrest.

AGAINST THE U. S.-PAK PACT

Hold Protest Demonstrations On March 22

THE Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India has issued the following statement to the Press on March 6:

The bilateral military Pacts signed at Ankara between the U.S. Government and the Governments of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan must be viewed with deep concern. They are calculated to step up the cold war and mount new threats against the freedom and independence of Asian peoples.

Of special and ominous significance for us are the clauses in the Pact between the USA and Pakistan. The U.S. imperialists used to assert that the only objective of their military pacts was defence against "Communist aggression". The transparent hypocrisy of this assertion was apparent. But now all pretence has been given up. The real nature of the Pact has been revealed by the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Mr. S. A. Baig, who bluntly stated that the Pact is a guarantee against aggression "from any quarter." What this means needs no elaboration.

The rulers of Pakistan, who with U.S. support, have destroyed all vestige of democracy in their own country and placed the Pakistan people under the heels of military dictatorship have always proclaimed that the "aggression" which they fear is aggression from India. Under the cover of this false plea, they conduct a sustained campaign of hatred against India and indulge in border

provocations. The new Pact will further embolden them. It is meant to do so. It is meant to step up U.S. pressure on India, to further poison the relation between India and Pakistan and strengthen the position of the most bellicose and adventurist elements in the Government of Pakistan to betray their own people, and faithfully serve their American masters.

Our Party has repeatedly requested that the Government of India should issue a stern warning to the American Government and declare that U.S. aid to Pakistan in this context would be an unfriendly act against India. We feel—and we are sure we voice the opinion of all patriotic Indians—that this should be done without any further delay.

But we are sorry to find that the Government of India and the ruling party have hitherto taken a complacent attitude towards this question and have failed to put before the people the seriousness of the situation. They are relying too much on U.S. assurances as is evident from Sri Nehru's statement to the Parliament.

We are confident that the Pact will evoke strong protest from all Indians of every shade of opinion. This protest must find expression in mass demonstrations all over the country. We call upon all units of our Party to mobilise wide sections of our patriotic and peace-loving people and hold protest meetings and demonstrations throughout the country on March 22.

pattern. Alarmed by the sweep of the movement, they seem to be determined to step up terror and enact blood-baths in one village after another with a view to break the morale of the peasantry. People like us are prevented from going to villages, where such things are planned because they fear that the hollowness of the plea that the police opened fire in self-defence would get exposed.

"With the object of covering the brute offensive against the peasantry, the story is being put out that the Kisan Sabha was planning to enact a Telengana in Punjab. Anyone who has been to the villages can see that the struggle is perfectly peaceful and people have acted with admirable restraint under grave provocation. We are sure that they will continue to do so.

"Moreover, the Kisan Sabha has several times put forward alternative proposals for meeting the cost of Bhakra-Nangal Project, which shows its willingness to settle the dispute peacefully.

"The Communist Party appeals to all freedom-loving people in India to strongly protest against this high-

handedness of the Punjab Government, for in Punjab democracy itself has been endangered.

"In a border State like Punjab, where the menace to our freedom and sovereignty from U.S. imperialism has become real, a peaceful solution of this struggle has assumed national importance. Democrats in India, including honest Congressmen, should rise to the occasion and call upon the Punjab Government to peacefully settle the issue of betterment levy."

Meanwhile reports are reaching the All-India Kisan Sabha Sub-Office in Chandigarh which indicate that the movement is gaining momentum. Till today (March 10), nearly 11,000 peasants have offered satyagraha and during the last 24 hours alone, about 800 kisans have offered satyagraha.

In the Vidhan Sabha, Communist members raised the issue of not permitting the entry into Sherpur of Comrades Ajoy Ghosh and Gopalan through a motion of urgent importance. The Chief Minister promised to make a statement after enquiry. The Opposition staged a walk-out.

BIG BUSINESS DEMANDS

Editorial THE annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry is an event that calls for serious public attention. Representatives of India's Big Business meet, discuss the economic situation from their own point of view and formulate their class demands which they press upon the Indian Government. The Union Cabinet Ministers attend and the Prime Minister inaugurates it and this gives it added importance.

The session passed a resolution on the Plan which welcomed "the Government's desire for a bigger and more ambitious Plan," but it formulated two essential conditions which clearly disclose in whose interests they want it to be bigger and whose ambitions they want it to satisfy.

First, they demand such changes in fiscal policies so that they may make still more profits and have to pay far less taxes. Existing taxes are regarded as too burdensome by them. Existing profits which shock all decent people are not enough incentives for them. They would support a bigger Third Plan only if it means a greater profiteers' paradise.

Secondly, they insist that a bigger Third Plan is not possible without still bigger foreign aid. Total mobilisation of our internal resources and organised utilisation of our vast man-power are to them not the basic resources to be tapped. Even foreign loans, which can be paid off and the independence and integrity of the national economy preserved, are not enough for them. They are all for opening wide the gates of our economy to the foreign investors and removing all the obstacles that come in the way. They themselves are all set for collaboration with the foreign monopolist combines. Their idea of a big Third Plan is to mortgage in a big way the country's economy to foreign monopolists and themselves act as their junior partners. Nothing could be more anti-national or shameful. They are not for an independent development of our national economy but for an ignoble sell-out, in their own selfish capitalist interests.

They not only voiced aloud their views but demanded regular consultation with the Planning Commission which was conceded by Pandit Nehru. Some of their spokesmen demanded that the Planning Commission submit their drafts to them before the Government take final decisions and warned that it was "fatal" to rely upon the economists and statisticians. The leaders of Indian Big Business want to become the real bosses of the Planning Commission.

In the other resolutions and in the name of the middle classes, they warned against the "grave consequences" of State trading in foodgrains. They demanded restriction of the activities of the State Trading Corporation to trade with the Communist countries and a "high level review".

They also warned that ceilings on landholdings would cause a setback to agricultural production. They are for large farms and mechanisation.

They pleaded that "rigour" of labour laws and regulations be reduced and they denounced the Jamshedpur iron and steel and Kerala plantation strikes as "fissiparous".

The Prime Minister uttered some much-needed home-truths e.g. of the "unthinking instinctive reaction" which went with the vested interests and that there was "no passion as the passion of a vested interest." He ridiculed those who raised "bogies about cooperative farming leading to collectivisation and Communism."

He also said, "Vested interests progressively will have no place in this world. And any vested interest that comes in the way of the fellow man will have still less place."

After all these brave words Pandit Nehru asked for their cooperation. How can there be any honest cooperation with such a leadership of Indian Big Business. After all their anti-national, anti-people selfish resolutions, it will only become appeasement. Pandit Pant's words make this danger stand out: "I shiver to hear talk of cold war between the private and public sectors. We are all engaged in a national endeavour to raise the standard of living of the common man."

India's Big Business is on the offensive. The Congress Government is loud in words against the vested interests but as we know weak and conciliatory in practice. All patriotic elements must intervene to beat back this offensive, defeat the compromising policies of the Government to ensure the nation's economic development in the progressive direction so urgently desired by our people.

(March 10)

AJOY GHOSH'S PRESS CONFERENCE

GOVT.'S PATHETIC FAITH IN U. S. UNWARRANTED

Strong Protest Needed Against Pact With Pak

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, at a Press Conference in New Delhi, on March 8 commented upon the U. S.-Pak Pact, the question of ceiling and land reforms and cooperation between political parties. He said:

"OUR Party takes a serious view of the situation brought about by the new U. S.-Pak Pact. This is not the first time that U. S. imperialism has been saying one thing to India and another to Pakistan. It only shows the two-faced nature of their policy. But what we are concerned with is not the morality of the U. S. action, but with reality.

"It goes without saying that the Indian people have no quarrel with either the people of Pakistan or with the people of America.

"But three inescapable facts emerge: FIRST, Pakistan has repeatedly declared that the aggression she fears is aggression from India and that the military preparations in Pakistan are meant for defence against India.

"SECONDLY, these military preparations in Pakistan have forced India to spend a very

big part of her national resources for defence requirements.

"THIRDLY, American arms have been found in Pakistan's border raids on India.

"In the context of all this, it would have been proper for the Government of India not just to rely on American assurances but to lodge strong protests with the U. S. Government and to inform it that this military pact would be regarded as an unfriendly act against India. Not to do that shows complacency on the part of the Government of India, and a pathetic faith in the assurances of the U. S. imperialists. Such pathetic faith is not warranted by facts.

"It is a fact—as Sri Nehru says—that the Baghdad Pact received a strong blow because of the revolution in Iraq. Yet, we have to note that these bilateral pacts are meant to strengthen the old military

alignment of the Baghdad Pact countries for aggressive purposes as before. So, it is not a case of 'fading out' of the Baghdad Pact. Through these new bilateral pacts, and the arms all that is being poured in as a result of these pacts—the danger mounts. India, therefore, needs to be vigilant.

"Today India occupies such an important position in world affairs that American imperialism will think twice before pouring in arms or going in for such pacts. And the minimum that the Government of India can do in the matter is to lodge a strong protest.

"The latest assurances given in Washington are equivocal. Everybody knows—at least the USA knows—that India never intends to attack Pakistan.

"We would not say there is an immediate danger of war, but the armed forces in Pakistan are enormously strengthened and all powers there are in the hands of a narrow military clique. In such a situation, the danger of provocative action on the part of Pakistan is likely to increase."

Cooperative Farming — When and How

Referring to the Prime Minister's criticism of the Communist insistence on land distribution before cooperative farming, Comrade Ajoy Ghosh said:

"I don't know if it is fair on the part of Sri Nehru to make this sort of criticism. He seems to know our broad policy better than we know it ourselves. If he had studied our declarations, he should know that this demand for ceiling and distribution of surplus land to agricultural labourers and poor peasants was raised by us long long ago and we have not changed our position. This was also the position of the Congress in the past. Even in Nagpur, a good number of Congressmen raised it.

"I would make it clear that our criticism of this part of the Nagpur Resolution has nothing in common with the stand of those like Prof. Ranga who are attacking the Nagpur decisions.

"We want cooperatives, but the question is when and how. You cannot put the cart before the horse. The first step has to be imposition of ceiling. The second step then will be distribution of land to agricultural labourers and poor peasants, and the third step will be to induce them by every means to form cooperatives—not by force, but the State can encourage the formation of cooperatives by giving special aid to such cooperatives.

"The question of raising agricultural production is basically a question of rousing peasants, generating enthusiasm among them by placing something tangible before them.

"But, what actually is hap-

pening in the countryside? Before the ceiling is imposed, men like Prof. Ranga are going about frightening the peasants, so the whole idea of cooperatives is sought to be

scuttled. A very powerful weapon is thus given into the hands of the opponents of land reforms.

"So, while this controversy * SEE PAGE 13

Morning breaks—
bustle in home,
the kitchen fire is lit,
children are dressed
for school,
the tiffin box
for the office
is prepared,
bustle ends,
now the housewife
can relax over her cup
of refreshing tea!



I am Tea

I am the friend of the family



REF 210

INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

Steel And Govt.'s Mistakes

THE Estimates Committee's Report on the Steel Ministry, presented to the Lok Sabha last week, has served to focus attention on a number of irregularities and extravagances indulged in by the Ministry's executives. It has at the same time helped to pinpoint the difference, between the results of collaboration with a number of foreign private entrepreneurs on the one hand, and with a Socialist organisation, on the other.

Before dealing with this difference, however, it is pertinent to refer, in brief, to the Committee's strictures apropos the Government's dilly-dallying with the all-important issue of setting up a steel plant in the public sector. For well over five years it sat tight on its own Consultants' recommendations about establishing a plant, even before the First Plan had begun. As a consequence, the country lost nearly Rs. 320 crores worth of foreign exchange on steel imports during three years. In terms of the cost of the projects also, the increased world prices in later years pushed them up by about 40 to 50 per cent.

Thus, for the first time a Committee, comprising of members drawn, in the main, from the ruling party, has spoken in a vein, which was so long only a characteristic of the progressive Left parties. It has, in fact, corroborated what our Party has been reiterating over all these years—that in giving short shrift to industries in the First Plan, the Government had not been serving the interests of the country.

THE DIFFERENCE

Of greater interest, however, are the Committee's findings about the two types of results, obtained through collaboration with a West German combine and a British Consortium and those with Soviet organisations, to which we referred earlier. What is this difference concretely?

FIRST, in the total cost: while the capacity of all the three plants has at present been fixed at one million tons each, their cost would be: Rourkela—Rs. 170 crores; Durgapur—Rs. 138 crores; Bhilai—Rs. 131 crores.

In terms of the cost of the finished product—also, the Committee states that "based on the current export quotations of Japan, there would be a unit output of Rs. 50.2 crores, at Rourkela, Rs. 48.5 crores at Bhilai and Rs. 48.75 crores at Durgapur." (The Times of India)

SECONDLY, in respect of the Project reports: in the case of Bhilai it was "a large expert committee" which studied the Soviet offer. The Committee wonders why this method, "which yielded good results," was not followed in the case of the other negotiations so that "some of their undesirable features could be avoided." (Ibid)

It is in this context, that the Committee particularly refers to the impropriety of "package deals," such as entered into with the British Consortium, which "offer less scope for the project authorities to obtain the technical know-how in various matters."

THIRDLY, in respect of delays in starting the plants, the Committee observes that at Rourkela these have been specially "regrettable." Enumerating what it calls this project's "peculiar and undesirable features," the Committee says, "the site had to be shifted at an additional cost of Rs. three crores; limestone of the special quality required is far away; some of the contracts entered into are extraordinary; there would be a delay of about six months at every stage of production."

In respect of Bhilai, however, it "appreciates... that it will be completed within four years" and observes that "it should have been possible with better coordination, to complete the other projects also within the same period."

FOURTHLY, in respect of facilities for training of Indian personnel the Committee has confirmed the common apprehension that unlike at Bhilai, at the other two projects such facilities are few and far between. About Bhilai, however, it has expressed its surprise that "the valuable opportunities (available under the agreement) are not being fully utilised."

To the readers of New Age, the findings of the Committee will not be a matter of surprise, since they know that to have equated Socialism and capitalism in this respect was ridiculous.

THE LESSONS

But now that a Committee, which only a few months ago had gone to the extent of recommending the establishment of an oil refinery in the private sector, even though it meant by-passing of the Industrial Policy Resolution, has also pragmatically reached the same conclusion, it is heartening to find even avowedly Congress newspapers like the National Herald questioning the advisability of "permitting large-scale in-

trusion of private parties with intimate association with the private sector, into the planning, designing and construction of public sector projects."

The Estimates Committee's Report is also notable for raising a number of other important points—like the incongruity of entrusting work to contractors (contributing to avoidable delays and inflation of costs); the lack of a proper cost-accounting; and the scrapping of the plan to set up a steel-fabricating unit at Bhilai "given up for no good reason". To avoid repetition of these errors the Committee has suggested a number of measures, the most important of which—about a more comprehensive scrutiny into the projects' working—Parliament, we feel, can fruitfully adopt to unearth the weeds which inhibit the blossoming of a vibrant public steel industry in the country.

OIL RESOURCES

THE monopolistic hold of the foreign oil distributing companies on our market, and the enormous profits which they had all along been repatriating to the countries of their origin, had imparted a new edge to the demand for the development of our indigenous oil resources. Pending

Pakistan from the unsolved problems of Kashmir and the canal waters. He, too, ended his speech with a flourish: "We are prepared to take Kashmir and the canal waters to the extreme point."

On March 6, Pakistan Times carried a conspicuous report on its front page that Pakistan was about to move the U.N. about Kashmir and call for a consideration of Dr. Graham's report. Very conveniently for the Pak authorities, Dag Hammerskjold flew into Karachi at about this time and pronounced himself pleased with the new "spirit" in the country.

Ayub Fires First Volley

Reading through the Pakistan Press of the past two weeks a running thread is noticeable—a stepping up of the bellicose campaign against India. And this time "the man of destiny," Ayub Khan, has let loose the first and the most ferocious volleys.

As early as on February 26, he proclaimed at a public meeting in Lahore that Kashmir was a life and death matter for Pakistan. "Kashmir was vital for Pakistan not only politically but militarily as well." In a grand peroration he declared that help "in all possible ways" would be rendered. The Foreign Minister, Qadir, on March 2 at a Dacca students' meeting waxed eloquent on the grave dangers to

that development, however, it was necessary that the monopoly was negated, to the extent it was possible, through imports from an alternative market where the writ of these companies did not run. One such market was Rumania, which had even offered to accept our currency in payment of its oil.

In view of the manifestly advantageous character of the Rumanian offer it would have been surprising if no indigenous company had come forward to avail of it. But now that such a firm has offered to import oil from Rumania it would be much more surprising—nay, even ridiculous—if the Government did not do all it could to facilitate it.

According to the Times of India, however, the Government itself is believed to be contemplating setting up of an official organisation to undertake distribution of oil products. Pending the commissioning of the Gauhati and Barauni refineries, whose products the new organisation would be mainly handling, could it not on its own, or through the company or companies willing to serve as its agent, undertake import of oil from Rumania as well?

—ESSEN

March 9, 1959

INSIDE PAKISTAN

AYUB STEPS UP BELLICOSE CAMPAIGN AGAINST INDIA

men and other essential materials if matters come to that, but the stage has not reached that pitch yet."

Such were the words of the man, described by his colleague Bhutto in a recent speech as Kamal Ataturk, Sulamani the magnificent and Saladin in one man. It is not surprising that he is leading for a gamble, if only to keep up the myth.

Following the Pact, as has been reported in our Press, Pak officials blithely declared, "we are not concerned with the clarification that the U.S. may deem expedient to give to India" (Dawn, March 7). They point particularly to the clause in the treaty that guarantees Pakistan from "any threat to territorial integrity or political independence."

In view of the fact that the Pak rulers have always declared that Kashmir is a part of their country and the recent increase in bellicosity over the issue, it is clear that a dangerous situation is arising.

Equally it is clear that the officials, militarists and Press (especially Dawn) are a trifle jittery whether strong Indian protest might not force the U.S. to give further assurances that might nullify the reactionary gains made through the bilateral Pact.

Failure On Economic Front

Even the muzzled Press has to admit that Pakistan is going through fresh economic difficulties. On March 6, Ayub was confronted with questions about the price rise "demon" which has raised his head again and about increased blackmarketing. He brushed aside the questions with the sage reply that one had to be scientific and increase production.

Earlier on February 28, Shoaib, the Finance Minister, on an alarm mission to Washington, had bitterly to complain that the adverse terms of trade had hurt Pakistan. "All of the economic aid we have been getting is nullified by trade difficulties," he said. Then on successive days in the first week of March, reports appeared that the Government was reconsidering the decision to set up a steel plant at Multan, since the World Bank and U.S. aid agencies had evinced no interest.

Immediately after came the report that the Pak Government was revising the earlier policy of joint State-private oil exploration work. It would now be left entirely to the private sector, i.e. the British and American oil monopolies, as the Government had no money.

Naturally, then, failure on the economic front has to be covered up or conjured away by the traditional appeal for action against the Kafir enemy. India has, therefore, to sharpen her vigilance.

—M. S.

March 9, 1959

GRATITUDE TO THE USSR

INDIA and other under-developed countries have been pressing that the U.N. channel greater technical and economic aid directly through its own agencies. The imperialist countries have been resisting it.

On March 10, Prime Minister Nehru inaugurated the Indian Institute of Technology near Bombay for which the USSR has supplied through UNESCO 13 million roubles of equipment while India will spend Rs. four crores on the project.

Sri Nehru said: "It was a very good thing to have such ventures under international auspices. In the troubled world of today, this brings a breath of fresh air."

He stated that "Russia had made tremendous advance in the field of science and technology and cooperation from that country was not only to be welcomed but eagerly looked forward to for a number of reasons."

He explained that such association with the Russians had resulted in building up the steel plant and similar projects but above all, in training up new technical men for this country. "They (the Russians) are always taking care to build up these people with the result that we achieve what we aim at sooner than we would otherwise be able to do. I am particularly grateful and my Government is particularly grateful to them."

The visiting Soviet Goodwill Delegation heard the above and it has been in turn promising to render further selfless help in industrialising and modernising our country. What contrast with the U.S. bilateral Pact with our neighbour, Pakistan! Cooperation with the USSR and other Socialist countries, while relying primarily upon our own labour efforts and struggles, is a vital and readily available factor in rapidly building up our country and ensuring that the fate of Pakistan does not befall us.

NO RIVALRY WITH CHINA

It is good to hear India's Prime Minister reject the imperialist propaganda line of "democratic India" versus "totalitarian China" which we had exposed last week and that in the session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, for it is the propaganda organs of Indian Big Business who have been persistently preaching it.

Sri Nehru said, "People say that in Asia there is this great rivalry going on, a great competition between India and China. I have no sense of rivalry or competition with China. Our objectives are not quite the same, though partly they are raising standards of living. They (the Chinese) are welcome to do what they like in their country. It is none of my business. If I can learn from them, I shall do so. If anyone wants to learn from us, they are welcome.

But this entire approach of being against this or that is bad, both internationally and nationally."

The Prime Minister's words should help shut up those who are out to soil our friendship with China and prevent a sober objective discussion of the Chinese experience for our own benefit.

PROVOCATION FROM WESTERN PRESS BARONS

The London Times is indignant. On March 5, it wrote: "During the past few months, three out of four international news-agencies distributing world news in India, have been compelled to suspend their services or have been given notice by the Government to do so." The Indian Government has done nothing more than implement Indian laws on Indian soil. In fact, progressive circles have maintained that Indian laws on the subject are too lenient. Foreign news-agencies are free to distribute their news in India but they must do so only "through Indian news-agency with whom they have entered into an agreement for the purpose."

Agence France Press was distributed by the UPI, which had its teletypewriter lines stopped for failure to pay its dues to the postal authorities. The British-owned Near and Far East News (NAFEN) has been given notice for it has failed to enter into agreement with any Indian agency. For similar reasons, Associated Press of America has also had to close down.

The Times sarcastically comments: "Perhaps it is too much to expect even a most democratic Government to feel a sincere concern for the free and unhampered circulation of news where there is no alert public opinion to insist on it." Then follows the provocative appeal: "Certainly the prospects of improvement in the present situation would be brighter if there were more vocal pressure from the Indian newspaper proprietors."

It is an open invitation from the foreign Press barons to their Indian counterparts to become junior partners and then together pressurise the Indian Government to get all the needed facilities to broadcast foreign news as they want in India and thus help to influence India's foreign policy. This deep game of the Western Press barons needs wide exposure and sharp condemnation by all organs of Indian public opinion.

BEHIND THE EXPORT CRISIS

It has been the Communist case that it is the selfish discriminatory policies of the Western capitalist countries with whom most of our foreign trade is linked that is really responsible for our export crisis. This has in a way been admitted by our Commerce and Industries Minister, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri himself.

Speaking before the Export Production Advisory Council on March 2, he expressed the

NOTES OF THE WEEK

Indian Government's strong reaction to the European Common Market and stated that if these countries did not remove restrictions on India's exports, the Indian Government would be compelled to take suitable measures "to achieve a better balance between what we buy from these Western countries and what we sell to them."

The member countries of the European Common Market have placed discriminatory and unfair trade restrictions on India's exports to them while its imports from these countries continue to run at a high figure. These restrictions also cover the colonies of these European countries and they are big markets for our goods.

India's exports in 1953 totalled Rs. 5,800 million and the adverse balance of trade last year amounted to about Rs. 3,000 million, imports last year were estimated at Rs. 7,830 million.

Last year India's cloth exports declined by Rs. 182 million, our cloth exports to the U.K. declined by 40 per cent; while earnings from iron ore fell by six million rupees; earnings from manganese ore declined by 50 per cent.

Sell more, buy less plus sell dear and buy cheap. Such is the Western capitalist policy in their trade with India. And it is spelt out in unmistakable facts and figures.

The most effective way out is to rapidly develop our trade relations with the Socialist countries and firmly overcome all reactionary sabotage. Progress in this direction is too slow, tardy and tortuous.

MORARJI'S BUDGET

Morarji's budget boosted the share market and it was spontaneously and publicly hailed by all the well-known moneybags. The Indian Budget was being eagerly watched by the foreign monopolists as well. The London Economist (March 7) was happy that Mr. Desai had "done a workman-like job." The most important and the most welcome change was noted in business taxation.

The budget, however, was furiously attacked in Parliament by the Opposition, headed by Communist M.P.s, this was not all. On March 3, the Commentator of the Hindustan Times reported, "An influential wing in the Congress Parliamentary Party is making no secret of its disappointment with Mr. Morarji Desai's budget. They vaguely felt the budget was 'reactionary'."

The alarm was duly rung and the tune suddenly changed, from welcoming the budget, to criticising it from the Right, running down the concessions already won and demanding more.

The Times of India of March 4 in its editorial entitled "In Retrospect" wrote, "Despite its few redeeming features, Mr. Morarji Desai's

first budget has caused more uncertainty than relief."

The Political Commentator of the Statesman, March 4, wrote, "Mr. Morarji Desai's budget looked so satisfactory initially that experts are now busy searching for the snags, or, as someone put it, the stings in the tail."

"Touchstone" of the Hindustan Times, March 6, wrote, under "Budget that has misled its cue" of the "short-lived illusion in the stock exchanges that the sun had broken out of the clouds that cluttered up the fiscal horizon."

"Let there be no mistake about it, this budget extends no incentive of any substance to the entrepreneurial or investor classes in the country. At best it is a negative budget so far as incentives are concerned. At worst, it may even spell a positive deterioration in the unsatisfactory situation which is now prevailing."

The bourgeois Press began the pressure campaign and their class organisations took it up resolutely and the climax was reached in the annual session of the FICCI which we deal with in our Editorial this week. The Indian big bourgeoisie is loudly expressing dissatisfaction with the Morarji budget to hide their real satisfaction and to ensure that it may not get modified against their selfish class interests under pressure of the Parliamentary opposition and of progressive elements within the ruling party itself.

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THE control figures of the new Seven-Year Plan, elaborated in the brilliant and profound report made by Comrade N. S. Khrushchov have attracted world-wide attention. Opening up new and magnificent vistas before the Soviet people and the peoples of all Socialist countries, they have been hailed by the whole of progressive humanity. Even opponents of socialism and bitter critics of the Soviet Union no longer dare to scoff at these figures. They have seen what the Soviet Union has already achieved. They know that the performances of the Soviet people and of their leaders are as good as their words.

Comrade Khrushchov in his report did not however confine himself to over-all production figures. He also said what these figures would mean to the Soviet people in terms of their daily life. Leaders of capitalist countries never dare do that. There, increased production primarily means more wealth for the rich. Leaders of the socialist countries alone can tell the people the whole truth.

Within a few years the Soviet Union will have the shortest working-day and the shortest working-week in the whole world—a five-hour-day for those engaged in underground work and work involving harmful labour conditions and a six-hour day for all other workers; a five-day working week for all factory and office workers.

Confidence—The Keynote

Present at the Congress, besides the representatives of the CPSU, were fraternal delegates of seventy-two Parties. All of them were struck by the note of confidence that permeated the whole session. All of them felt that they were witnessing one of the most momentous events in history, an event which will profoundly influence the course of events in the whole world.

Stupendous has been the advance the USSR has made during the last 41 years. In 1958, the industrial output of the USSR considerably exceeded that of France, Britain and West Germany, together. But the USSR is not yet the first country in the world. In most spheres, it is still considerably behind the United States of America whose industrial output is nearly double that of USSR and whose agricultural output is about 20 to 25 per cent higher.

The exceptionally favourable historical and other factors which have helped the USA to attain this position need not be elaborated here. They are known to all. An essential and important task which the USSR has to carry-out in the course of the march towards Communism is to catch up with the USA, to develop into the first country of the world, to surpass the United States economically and attain the world's highest living standard.

Within five years after the completion of the Seven-Year Plan—or even

earlier—this task will have been completed. Socialism will have won a historical victory in peaceful competition with capitalism.

Together with the Soviet Union, and helped by its fraternal aid, all other countries of the Socialist camp with about one-third of the world's population, produce more than one-third of the world's industrial output and nearly half of the world's grain output. By the time the USSR completes and surpasses its Seven-Year Plan, the world Socialist system will account for more than half of the world's industrial output. The Socialist world will have attained absolute superiority over the capitalist world in every respect, in every sphere.

The balance of world forces will shift decisively and irrevocably in favour of Socialism in the vital and all-important economic sphere.

This will win for socialism millions of new adherents in every country. It will further strengthen the bond of friendship and cooperation between the Socialist world and the countries which have won independence in recent years, helping them to strengthen their own economies. It will make the cause of world peace invincible.

"Indeed, when the USSR becomes the leading industrial power in the world," said Comrade N. S. Khrushchov, "when the Chinese People's Republic becomes a mighty industrial power, and all Socialist countries together produce more than half the world's industrial output, the world situation will change radically."

"The successes of the countries of the Socialist camp will undoubtedly serve to strengthen the forces of peace throughout the world. By that time, the countries working for lasting peace will no doubt be joined by new countries that have thrown off colonial oppression. The idea that war is inadvisable will take still firmer root in the minds of men. This new balance of forces will be so patently evident that even the most die-hard imperialists will clearly see the futility of starting a war against the Socialist camp."

Backed by the might of the Socialist camp, the peaceful nations will then be able to compel aggressive imperialist groups to abandon their plans of a new world war. "In this way, a real possibility of excluding war from the life of society will take shape even before the universal triumph of socialism, with capitalism still existing in some parts of the world."

To the peoples of the world, living in apprehension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear catastrophe, this declaration will come as a message of hope and confidence and simultaneously as an exhortation to redouble the battle for peace. The Seven-Year Plan will make the cause of peace invincible.

But the supreme condition for its fulfilment is the preservation of peace today and in the coming period. There can be no doubt that the pro-



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spect which fills peace-loving people with cheer and hope is also the very prospect which would make the most aggressive and bellicose elements among the imperialists even more desperate. There must, therefore, be no complacency. The struggle for peace remains, as before, the most imperative task before mankind as a whole and before all Communist Parties.

Struggle For Peace Supreme

That is why pointed attention was drawn in the Report to the danger arising from efforts to turn West Germany into the principal nuclear and rocket base for the NATO, the aggressive designs of American imperialists against the People's Republic of China and new intrigues against the Arab countries which have won far-reaching victories in the struggle for national liberation.

The vital and significant role that the Republic of India has played in the preservation of peace was warmly acclaimed by the Congress. Here was proof, if further proof was needed, that the USSR entertains feelings of profound friendship towards all countries and governments that pursue independent foreign policies, policies that accord with the live interest of their own people.

Already the USSR has rendered substantial aid to the under-developed countries and helped them to strengthen their economy as well as national freedom. The Seven-Year Plan will enormously accelerate the process. The Seven-Year Plan is therefore a weapon to strengthen the forces of national independence.

The successes which the forces of freedom, democracy and peace have won in recent years are impressive. They give solid ground for confidence. At the same time, one would be blind to reality if one were to assume that the path ahead now is a path

free from difficulties and obstacles. Alarmed by the setbacks they have suffered, the imperialists and the reactionary circles allied to them have, in several countries, launched fierce offensives against the people. Finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their rule, while retaining democratic forms, they are striving to put an end to parliamentary institutions and popular liberties. Events in France, Pakistan, Thailand and Burma reveal a general trend in many countries—the trend towards fascism and reaction, towards militarist and semi-militarist dictatorship.

These events shatter the myth sedulously propagated by revisionists headed by the rulers of Yugoslavia about the progressive features of modern capitalism and the supposedly independent character of the State.

At the same time, they re-emphasise the need to stamp out all vestige of sectarianism from the ranks of Communist Parties so that a broad front of popular forces may be forged to block the advance of fascism, to maintain and extend democratic liberties. Unity of the democratic masses, unity of the working class, are tasks that acquire a new urgency in this context.

The achievement of this unity is hampered by the intrigues of the imperialists who raise the bogey of Communism with a view to divide the masses. It is also hampered by those elements among the bourgeoisie who fall a victim to the imperialist propaganda, who refuse to realise that national freedom can be placed on firm and unshakable foundations only if thorough-going democratic reforms are introduced in every sphere, who frown upon the struggles of the workers, peasants and democratic masses for such reforms, seeing "Communist plots" at the root of these struggles.

Answering those who adopt such an attitude, Comrade

★ SEE PAGE 12

by
AJOY GHOSH

NEW AGE

PAGE FIVE

GRATITUDE TO THE USSR

INDIA and other under-developed countries have been pressing that the U.N. channel greater technical and economic aid directly through its own agencies. The imperialist countries have been resisting it.

On March 10, Prime Minister Nehru inaugurated the Indian Institute of Technology near Bombay for which the USSR has supplied through UNESCO 13 million roubles of equipment while India will spend Rs. four crores on the project.

Sri Nehru said: "It was a very good thing to have such ventures under international auspices. In the troubled world of today, this brings a breath of fresh air."

He stated that "Russia had made tremendous advance in the field of science and technology and cooperation from that country was not only to be welcomed but eagerly looked forward to for a number of reasons."

He explained that such association with the Russians had resulted in building up the steel plant and similar projects but above all, in training up new technical men for this country. "They (the Russians) are always taking care to build up these people with the result that we achieve what we aim at sooner than we would otherwise be able to do. I am particularly grateful and my Government is particularly grateful to them."

The visiting Soviet Goodwill Delegation heard the above and it has been in turn promising to render further selfless help in industrialising and modernising our country. What contrast with the U.S. bilateral Pact with our neighbour, Pakistan! Cooperation with the USSR and other Socialist countries, while relying primarily upon our own labour efforts and struggles, is a vital and readily available factor in rapidly building up our country and ensuring that the fate of Pakistan does not befall us.

NO RIVALRY WITH CHINA

It is good to hear India's Prime Minister reject the imperialist propaganda line of "democratic India" versus "totalitarian China" which we had exposed last week and that in the session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, for it is the propaganda organs of Indian Big Business who have been persistently preaching it.

Sri Nehru said, "People say that in Asia there is this great rivalry going on, a great competition between India and China. I have no sense of rivalry or competition with China. Our objectives are not quite the same, though partly they are raising standards of living. They (the Chinese) are welcome to do what they like in their country. It is none of my business. If I can learn from them, I shall do so. If anyone wants to learn from us, they are welcome."

But this entire approach of being against this or that is bad, both internationally and nationally."

The Prime Minister's words should help shut up those who are out to soil our friendship with China and prevent a sober objective discussion of the Chinese experience for our own benefit.

PROVOCATION FROM WESTERN PRESS BARONS

The London Times is indignant. On March 5, it wrote: "During the past few months, three out of four international news-agencies distributing world news in India, have been compelled to suspend their services or have been given notice by the Government to do so." The Indian Government has done nothing more than implement Indian laws on Indian soil. In fact, progressive circles have maintained that Indian laws on the subject are too lenient. Foreign news-agencies are free to distribute their news in India but they must do so only "through Indian news-agency with whom they have entered into an agreement for the purpose."

Agence France Press was distributed by the UPI, which had its teletypewriter lines stopped for failure to pay its dues to the postal authorities. The British-owned Near and Far East News (NAFEN) has been given notice for it has failed to enter into agreement with any Indian agency. For similar reasons, Associated Press of America has also had to close down.

The Times sarcastically comments: "Perhaps it is too much to expect even a most democratic Government to feel a sincere concern for the free and unhampered circulation of news where there is no alert public opinion to insist on it." Then follows the provocative appeal: "Certainly the prospects of improvement in the present situation would be brighter if there were more vocal pressure from the Indian newspaper proprietors."

It is an open invitation from the foreign Press barons to their Indian counterparts to become junior partners and then together pressurise the Indian Government to get all the needed facilities to broadcast foreign news as they want in India and thus help to influence India's foreign policy. This deep game of the Western Press barons needs wide exposure and sharp condemnation by all organs of Indian public opinion.

BEHIND THE EXPORT CRISIS

It has been the Communist case that it is the selfish discriminatory policies of the Western-capitalist countries with whom most of our foreign trade is linked that is really responsible for our export crisis. This has in a way been admitted by our Commerce and Industries Minister, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri himself.

Speaking before the Export Production Advisory Council on March 2, he expressed the

NOTES OF THE WEEK

Indian Government's strong reaction to the European Common Market and stated that if these countries did not remove restrictions on India's exports, the Indian Government would be compelled to take suitable measures "to achieve a better balance between what we buy from these Western countries and what we sell to them."

The member countries of the European Common Market have placed discriminatory and unfair trade restrictions on India's exports to them while its imports from these countries continue to run at a high figure. These restrictions also cover the colonies of these European countries and they are big markets for our goods.

India's exports in 1953 totalled Rs. 5,800 million and the adverse balance of trade last year amounted to about Rs. 3,000 million, imports last year were estimated at Rs. 7,830 million.

Last year India's cloth exports declined by Rs. 182 million, our cloth exports to the U.K. declined by 40 per cent; while earnings from iron ore fell by six million rupees; earnings from manganese ore declined by 50 per cent.

Sell more, buy less plus sell dear and buy cheap. Such is the Western capitalist policy in their trade with India. And it is spelt out in unmistakable facts and figures.

The most effective way out is to rapidly develop our trade relations with the Socialist countries and firmly overcome all reactionary sabotage. Progress in this direction is too slow, tardy and tortuous.

MORARJI'S BUDGET

Morarji's budget boosted the share market and it was spontaneously and publicly hailed by all the well-known moneybags. The Indian Budget was being eagerly watched by the foreign monopolists as well. The London Economist (March 7) was happy that Mr. Desai had "done a workman-like job." The most important and the most welcome change was noted in business taxation.

The budget, however, was furiously attacked in Parliament by the Opposition, headed by Communist M.P.s. This was not all. On March 4, the Commentator of the Hindustan Times reported, "An influential wing in the Congress Parliamentary Party is making no secret of its disappointment with Mr. Morarji Desai's budget. They vaguely felt the budget was 'reactionary'."

The alarm was duly rung and the tune suddenly changed, from welcoming the budget, to criticising it from the Right, running down the concessions already won and demanding more.

The Times of India of March 4 in its editorial entitled "In Retrospect", wrote, "Despite its few redeeming features, Mr. Morarji Desai's

first budget has caused more uncertainty than relief."

The Political Commentator of the Statesman, March 4, wrote, "Mr. Morarji Desai's budget looked so satisfactory initially that experts are now busy searching for the snags, or, as someone put it, the stings in the tail."

"Touchstone" of the Hindustan Times, March 6, wrote, under "Budget that has misled its cue", of the "short-lived illusion in the stock exchanges that the sun had broken out of the clouds that cluttered up the fiscal horizon."

"Let there be no mistake about it, this budget extends no incentive of any substance to the entrepreneurial or investor classes in the country. At best it is a negative budget so far as incentives are concerned. At worst, it may even spell a positive deterioration in the unsatisfactory situation which is now prevailing."

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Simultaneously national income and national consumption will rise by over 60 per cent. The minimum wage will rise still higher—by 70 to 85 per cent. Taxes paid by the people which even now constitute only 7.8 per cent of the budgetary revenue will be completely abolished.

Medical service which has been free and universal for many years and whose excellence is testified by the fact that the USSR has the lowest mortality rate in the world, will be still further expanded.

A vast housing programme will make it possible to provide a separate flat to each family at—as now—nominal rent. And so on.

Nowhere in the capitalist world, not even in the most prosperous capitalist country, the United States of America, can the rulers speak in such concrete, tangible, terms about what they propose to do. No wonder therefore that they are worried.

But the significance of the 21st Congress does not lie only in these things. The significance is deeper. The Congress has focussed attention on the tremendous fact that the first country to achieve socialism, the first country to launch a man-made earth satellite and a man-made planet is now entering a new period—the period of extensive building of Communist

society. In this period it is to be laid the material and technical basis of Communism. For many many years people in all countries have dreamed of a society which will put into practice the noble principle, "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs", a society based on the lofty ideals of universal brotherhood of man, a society in which violence and coercion will have no place. The 21st Congress confidently proclaimed that the quest for such a society is nearing its end.

"Our contemporaries", said Comrade N. S. Khrushchov in his concluding speech at the Congress, "are to realise mankind's dream to build up Communist society, the most just society on earth."

Communism does not mean merely a super-abundance of material goods. It also requires remoulding the consciousness of man, development of higher ethics. Ruthlessly laying bare the shortcomings that still persist in this sphere, the 21st Congress has worked out concrete steps to be taken to wipe out the survivals of bourgeois ideology, habits and outlook that persist among the Soviet people and heighten their moral and spiritual qualities.

Confidence—The Keynote

Present at the Congress, besides the representatives of the CPSU, were fraternal delegates of seventy-two Parties. All of them were struck by the note of confidence that permeated the whole session. All of them felt that they were witnessing one of the most momentous events in history, an event which will profoundly influence the course of events in the whole world.

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"The successes of the countries of the Socialist camp will undoubtedly serve to strengthen the forces of peace throughout the world. By that time, the countries working for lasting peace will no doubt be joined by new countries that have thrown off colonial oppression. The idea that war is inadvisable will take still firmer root in the minds of men. This new balance of forces will be so patently evident that even the most die-hard imperialists will clearly see the futility of starting a war against the Socialist camp."

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by **AJOY GHOSH**

NEW AGE

PAGE FIVE

ANDHRA LAND REFORMS WEEK COVERS 35 LAKHS

Unprecedented Awakening In Villages

★ V. V. KRISHNABAO,
Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Kisan Sabha

The Andhra State Committee of the Communist Party had called upon the people to observe the Land Reforms Week from February 15 to 21.

The Communist Party had decided that during the week the bogus land reforms bill of the Andhra Pradesh Government should be thoroughly exposed and agitation carried on for radical and substantial changes to be brought about in the present bill so that genuine land reforms are carried out.

THE food problem having assumed the seriousness of a national problem, and the solution of the problem being dependent on the genuineness of land reforms, the Party felt that people of all classes, democrats in all parties should be rallied on a broad platform on the issue of land reforms. The Party asked its cadre to participate in this Week on a big scale and make the campaign a great event as then alone it would be possible to bring about changes in Government policies.

Great Awakening

It would be no exaggeration to state that the huge campaigning done during the Land Reforms Week in Andhra area and the mass propaganda carried out had not been seen since the 1955 elections. Attention was focussed on the important problems that are being faced by the people in hundreds of public meetings, in thousands of group discussions and some lakhs had been enlightened on the issues. There was a great awakening and upsurge in the villages which had been covered by the squads on foot. The welcome and the enthusiasm that the poor people have given and shown everywhere has not only been inspiring but also a new experience.

Details have not yet reached us from all districts. The Taluk and district executives are still reviewing the campaign in their respective areas. Even so, basing on reports appearing in the Visalandhra it can be said that the Land Reforms week has been a great success. On the joint call of the Pradesh Communist Committee, the Agricultural Labourers Association and the Kisan Sabha, the campaign was conducted on a big scale in Krishna, Guntur, Nallagonda, Nellore, East Godavari and West Godavari districts; the propaganda squads had covered wide areas and the campaign was done intensively in Medak, Warangal, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Kurnool, Nizamabad and Khammam districts the squads covered some areas. Reports have not yet reached from Ananthapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Mehboobnagar and Hyderabad districts.

According to the information available in Krishna District alone nearly 1400

niences of the members of the squad.

On the average each squad walked about fifteen miles and covered five to six villages daily. The daily programme was to have group discussion in small villages and to round off the day's campaign with a big public meeting in a centrally situated village. These squads were led by State, District and Taluk leaders.

Primarily it was the need for land reforms that was explained. It was stated at these explanatory meetings how the food problem had not been solved for the last 11 years and how on the contrary it was also getting more acute every year; that the critical food situation was also hampering the successful implementation of the Plan schemes because much-needed money and foreign exchange to the tune of 150 crores every year had to be spent on the import of food grains from the USA and other countries.

The relationship between greater employment and the land reforms and their consequent impetus to trade and commerce and industry was made plain. Finally, the welfare of the nation, the progress of the country are dependent on proper and genuine land reforms and all parties and classes should look at it from the point of a broad national viewpoint and come together to agitate for them.

Though the Communist Party had been demanding the distribution of land for the last ten to fifteen years, the Congress leaders were not prepared to take notice of it but also tried to ridicule it. But today even the Congress had been forced to recognise the need for such land reforms and the Nagpur resolution of the Congress had been welcomed.

The Communist Party appealed to the Congress, that if it implements the Nagpur resolution seriously without any reservations the Communist Party and other democratic forces would be able to cooperate with the Congress. The Party urged that the Nagpur resolution creates the right atmosphere and plank for the different parties to join hands and work for the land reforms.

It was explained to the people that the present Congress Government in the State was full of representatives of the landlords and landlords themselves and that was why the ministry had been consistently following a policy opposed to land reforms.

For the last ten years, since the passing of the Zamindari Abolition Act the Congress ministry did not take any steps creating rights for the tenants and agricultural labourers. On the other hand it was responsible for the large-scale eviction of tenants, and also of the cultivators of Government waste lands and lanka lands. That is how the Congress ministry had all along been determinedly try-

ing to protect the interests of the landlords. The Ceiling on Land Holdings Bill now before the select committee brought forward by the Sanjeevareddy Ministry is a big hoax as it would not enable even a single acre to be distributed to the landless poor, and that it needs radical changes before it would be of any use to achieve its objective of distribution of land.

According to the existing Bill each pattadar would be entitled to that extent of land which fetches a gross income of 10,800 rupees in addition to an extra extent of land in the name of pasture lands which fetches another 3,600 rupees of gross income. Now when most of the families have divided and obtained Binami Pattas in the name of different members of the families, in effect the provision of the bill would mean leaving an extent of land per family which gives a gross income of 72,000 rupees.

The net result would be after the indiscriminate sale of lands in the last two years' the position today would be that there would not be a single agricultural family which would have an extent of land which would fetch more than 72,000 rupees gross income and as such, not an acre would be available for distribution to the landless and the poor peasants.

Amendments In Govt. Bill

It was explained that the immediate amendments that would be required to make this bill of any use are to invalidate the binami transfers that have taken place in the last few years and also to impose the condition that the holdings of all the members of a single family would be taken as an aggregate and this holding of the family should be such as would bring their net annual income of 3,600 rupees. The excess over this land should be taken over by the Government and should be distributed to the agricultural labourers and other poor along with the Government waste lands. In this connection the provisions of the Kerala Agrarian Reforms Bill were also fully explained.

It was also clearly explained to the people how People's China was able to succeed in solving the land problem and could launch the food production drive and the tremendous results they could achieve in increasing the yield per acre.

In the campaigning by the squads the tax burden and the increasing numbers of taxes that are being levied were also stressed. In the recent past taxes had been levied without any discrimination, on all sorts of articles which are necessities and consumed by the ordinary people. For instance matchboxes, tobacco, sugar, cloth, drugs and medicines, books

etc had been taxed, either in the form of sales tax, excise duty or purchase tax. As a consequence the prices of consumer goods had enormously risen making the cost of living for the poorer classes very high.

Similarly the direct taxes imposed on the peasantry and ordinary people were also highlighted. It was demanded that the tax burden on the peasantry should be reduced as well as that taxes on daily necessities should be abolished.

The demands for house sites for the Harijans, the distribution of Government cultivable waste lands, lanka lands the issues of penalties in the case of unauthorised occupation of Government lands, the soaring prices of food grains and the need for opening cheap grain shops and the need for rapid and quick construction of irrigation projects have all been campaigned about during the squad propaganda.

The antagonism which was witnessed in 1955 when the need for radical land reforms had been stressed during the election campaign of the Communist Party was not visible during the present campaign. Even questions opposing land reforms have not been asked in the meetings. The propaganda and explanatory campaign conducted by the squads was very keenly and patiently followed by all people including Congressmen. The majority of the people had found the reasons advanced regarding land reforms very reasonable and logical. Great enthusiasm was particularly witnessed amongst the agricultural labour and the poor people.

The pertinent question asked by almost all the people was: If the land reforms advocated by the Sanjeevareddy ministry of retaining as much land as would fetch 72,000 rupees gross income were carried out what would be the land available for distribution except a nominal amount. Doubts were also expressed as to whether Government would yield to the agitation. Some expressed the confidence that if there was a determined struggle the Government was bound to yield.

When the phenomenal achievements of China in the matter of food production and the way they were able to produce some thousands of bags of paddy per acre were related there was great excitement and the information was received with surprise and joy mixed with a tinge of disbelief and some genuine doubts.

The opinion was expressed that at this rate even an acre or two would be able to yield quite a lot. There was a demand for pamphlets and literature on the Chinese methods of cultivation, Chinese land system. There was great anxiety to know more details and facts.

The recent taxes imposed by the Government on the peasantry and the common folk are increasingly making them antagonistic to the policies of the Congress ministry. Many people explained the miseries they are experiencing of the unbearable burden of taxation to the leaders and members of the squads. Similarly the villagers complained of the evictions and other issues connected with the banjar lands, house sites, tank beds and heavy penalties imposed for unauthorised culti-

* SEE PAGE 10

BHILAI AGREEMENT SHOULD HAVE SERVED AS MODEL

Estimates Committee Report On Steel Projects

The Estimates Committee Report on the Rourkela, Bhilai and Durgapur Steel Projects makes most revealing reading. The members of the Committee— which includes Comrades S. A. Dange and Renu Chakravarty—deserve the warm thanks of the public for the thoroughness and strictness with which they have gone about their job.

FIRST, let us take the standpoint from which the Committee makes its criticism. "There can be no two opinions that the Government-owned steel plants should be set up economically and run efficiently and that they should take the pride of place in an industry which is of strategic importance in the development of the nation's industry and prosperity."

Similarly, the so-called Birla proposal of 1954 is shown to have amounted to a demand for a government expenditure of Rs. 100 crores for Birla's Rs. 10 crores and with the steel plant placed in the private sector. Therefore, the Committee opines, "In view of the strategic importance of the steel industry... the Committee entirely agree with the decision of Government not to allow the erection of new steel plants in the private sector."

The Committee has thus taken a firm, patriotic stand and repudiated the offensive of the private sector, whose success would have spelled disaster for the plans of national development.

Story Of Negotiations

Second, the negotiations for the steel projects. Criticising sharply the inordinately low estimate of India's steel requirements (400 to 500,000 in 1958) made by the World Bank's Technical Mission—it is an old enemy of India—it goes on to report, that in 1952 "attempts to obtain financial assistance from the USA and UK were not successful."

Refusing to learn, the Government knocked at the door of another capitalist country—West Germany. The Secretary of the Ministry of Production set off early in 1953 on a one-man mission. He merrily and carelessly signed a memorandum of association with the Krupp-Demag Company.

"The Committee feel, in this connection, that it is always desirable that such negotiations should be conducted by a negotiating Committee consisting of officials, non-officials and experts instead of singly by officials."

Naturally enough, since the combine submitted a preliminary report only in May 1954 and a detailed one as late as January 1955. Finally, Government having made a fresh estimate of India's steel requirements, a revised project report was submitted only in November 1955—nearly three years had gone in the higgling and haggling.

Actually the delay would have been much more prolonged were it not for the fact of the Indo-Soviet agreement on the Bhilai steel plant entered into in February 1955—

him in his work. "The Committee doubt, therefore, whether there was any necessity for such a highly salaried Technical Adviser and his department for the Rourkela Project... and if it is considered necessary to continue the post, the possibility of appointing an Indian to the post, might be considered."

The British at Durgapur are hardly any better. "The Committee understand that under a package deal most of the designing and engineering work which is normally done by the consultants is done by the plant suppliers themselves and consequently the duties of the consultants are reduced very much."

In spite of the ISCON (which is the British consortium at work in Durgapur) claiming fees of Rs. 15 crores for technical services, the International Construction Company, however, reduced only £200,000 of its £1,600,000 fees!

And yet this company have been appointed consulting engineers to Government for a period of six years from December 1955, when much of the preparatory work of the three projects had been completed.

"The Committee feel that the appointment of consultants for general advice would have been understandable had they been appointed at a sufficiently early stage so that the necessity of appointing separate consultants for each Project could have been avoided. Considering, however, that they were appointed after separate consultants for each Project and already been appointed, the Committee feel that the utility of the General Consultants would be limited."

"Further the Committee do not understand why there should be a foreign consultant to advise on the work of other foreign consultants—an arrangement which could, perhaps, be appreciated if there was no technical know-how within the country. However, they feel that the agreements with foreign consultants might invariably provide for a second opinion being obtained from indigenous consultants who, with their knowledge of the local conditions, might be in a position to make better contribution."

And now the contrast—Bhilai, which is being built with the help of a socialist country.

"The Committee did not hear any criticism of the agreement or its working with respect to the consultation service for the project."

In addition we have the following appreciation: "Part of the work of technical consultants namely, preparation of the layout, the project report etc. is done by the designing organisations in the U.S.S.R. For the technical supervision of construction, erection and commissioning of the plant and machinery and for giving technical assistance in the training of Indian personnel in India, the

Government of U.S.S.R. is to provide a reasonably qualified expert as Chief Engineer. For his assistance an appropriate number of Indian and Soviet engineers are to be appointed. "A team of Soviet experts is to be provided to give technical assistance, supervision and advice on all technical matters relating to the work. The U.S.S.R. is also to provide a sufficient number of experts for a period of three years after the plants go into production to render technical supervision and consultant services as might be required by the Government of India.

"These are believed to be some special features of the agreement, which might with advantage have been introduced into with the other consultants."

The contrast becomes sharper when the increased costs are examined: Rourkela has jumped from Rs. 128 crores to Rs. 170 crores—Rs. 42 crores increase—while its foreign exchange component has increased from Rs. 89 crores to Rs. 122 crores—Rs. 33 crores more. Durgapur has increased from Rs. 115 crores to Rs. 138 crores, with corresponding foreign exchange increase from Rs. 72 crores to Rs. 92 crores. Bhilai's costs have increased the least—the total going up from Rs. 110 crores to Rs. 131 crores, while foreign exchanges have gone up from Rs. 67.5 to Rs. 78 crores.

Bhilai will thus be the cheapest steel plant and also cost us the least foreign exchange. About the increased costs at Rourkela the Committee states: "In this connection it is of interest to find that the largest single item of increase in the estimate is in respect of the rolling mills where the estimates have gone up from Rs. 48.44 crores to Rs. 72.36 crores. In this case the bulk of the supplies for the plant are to be made by firms who constituted the consultants."

"The Committee understood that the team of experts which examined the Bhilai project report had advised that if men of suitable experience and qualifications were not available for association with foreign experts, groups should be formed of persons of varied experience and associated with the consultants. While the Committee were informed that one or two such groups had been sent to Russia, they feel that this is not adequate, and therefore, suggest that the desirability of forming such groups in greater number and of attaching them to the consultants should be considered expeditiously."

Finally, on the need for indigenous consultancy service the Committee states: "The Committee consider it unfortunate that Government have not so far found it possible to utilise for the steel plants as well as for the ancillaries such as ore mines, limestone quarries, etc., the services of an Indian consultancy organisation which, according to the representatives of Government, was the only one existing in the country."

"In this connection they find it rather difficult to understand why Government found it necessary to enter in December, 1955 into a 6-year agreement with a foreign consultant, namely, the International Construction Company, since it might perhaps have the effect of reducing the chances of the services of Indian consultants being utilised till after the completion of the three plants."

It has been possible only to outline a few aspects of the Estimates Committee Report. Democratic and patriotic opinion, must ensure that its healthy recommendations are implemented as speedily as possible.

Failure To Utilise Opportunities

"As regards the Bhilai Project, it was explained that ten men were sent to Russia of whom some had returned and were engaged in designing work. It was admitted, however, that it had not been found possible to send to the Soviet Union as many people, and as quickly as envisaged under the original programme and this was due to the shortage of the right type of men..."

"The Committee are surprised that valuable opportunities available under the agreement are not being fully utilised for getting the maximum number of Indians trained. They suggest that suitable men among those available should be selected and got trained as early as possible."

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NEW PERSPECTIVES OF THE WORLD PEACE MOVEMENT

Never before had there been a meeting of the World Peace Council or its Bureau in the Soviet Union—never once during the ten years since the movement was born. This fact itself underlined the key significance of the session of the Bureau which opened at Moscow on February 21.

AND when, on the eve of the opening, participants were informed that the unanimous request made by them for meeting with Prime Minister Khrushchov had been granted and the interview would take place soon, every one knew that this would be a memorable session indeed.

As the cars went to and fro between Moscow airport and the Moskva Hotel (where all the Bureau members and invitees stayed), and more and more of the world's peace leaders gathered in the Soviet capital—it became clearer still that from both the political and the organisational points of view, this would be a Bureau session of greater importance than any held before.

The number of participants—well over a hundred—was itself far more than is usual for a Bureau meeting. And among them, not only were many more countries represented than before, but for the first time there were leading personalities sent officially by such great new movements for peace as the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Council and the All-African People's Conference and the national liberation movements of countries like Algeria, Kamerun and Uganda.

This new representation—symbolic of the vast growth of the peace movement as a whole—itsself clearly posed the new political and organisational problems which had to be tackled by the Bureau. The movement was becoming truly universal, developing with its own particular characteristics in different regions, different continents of the world. In Asia and Africa, in Latin America, the struggle for na-

tional independence, for solidarity against imperialism and colonialism had already become inseparable from the struggle for peace and was the main and special form of the peace movement in these regions.

The World Peace Council, by its bold and clear-cut stand on the issues of national independence, particularly since its meetings at Colombo and New Delhi and since the Stockholm Congress (of 1958), had already begun to win the co-operation of the vast mass movement for solidarity and for independence in these regions.

Difference In Emphasis

And yet inevitably in Western Europe and in North America, the peace movement would have somewhat different characteristics, different emphasis, taking into account the issues most deeply affecting the masses.

Some friends, when they saw this rapidly developing situation, would leap to the conclusion that now it would be impossible, or unnecessary to maintain a world movement—let the regional movements alone carry on. Others, unable to see the new reality arising from the growth of the regional movements, which had given a real mass basis and mass strength to the world movement, still sought to impose a single line and a single form of action for all regions, all countries. And there was inevitably a certain amount of misunderstanding and "tension" within the vast family of peace.

Is the peace movement an anti-imperialist anti-colonialist movement? Yes, in-

sisted many, particularly those from Asia, Africa and Latin America, for if it is not, it can have no meaning for our millions. No, said, some, for if it is, there cannot be a strong peace movement in the imperialist countries, where many who stand for peace, are not anti-imperialist.

Those who pulled long faces when they saw this discussion within our family, failed to understand that this "quarrel" was really the proof of our growing up, a matter for joy and not for neglect.

The Bureau settled down to tackle the new problems posed by our growth and tackled them successfully. I know that at the end, the most worried amongst us could say with conviction that now we were more united than ever before, and it was not the old unity of a large European movement, it was the new unity of a truly universal movement.

Who will forget the opening session? Professor Bernal of Britain presided and opened the discussion after the Mayor of Moscow and Soviet Peace Committee President Thikhnov had welcomed us.

And after that spoke Paul Robeson—how loved by all men is this great representative of the people of the USA! When at the end of a stirring, hard-hitting speech, Paul sang: "I shall study war no more," in his great big booming voice—the hearts of even the most prosaic must have burst with pride and confidence.

Apart from Professor Bernal's speech, which posed the key questions which had to be discussed, two other reports outlined developments since Stockholm and opened the debate on the main issues: one by Diwan Chaman Lal, M.P. (India) on "National Independence and World Peace", and the other by Signor Luzzatto, M.P. (Italy) on "The Cooperation of the Peace Forces."

Equally significant were the speeches from the Latin American delegates. How we clapped when we heard the speech of the Cuban leader Mariello! And our Asian and African friends smiled happily when Latin Americans repeatedly spoke of their desire for unity with the propagators of the Bandung and Cairo spirit.

Among the Asians, apart from the giants, the Iraqis made a big impression: a vast movement had grown in the few months since the Revolution.

The Europeans spoke of Germany, of Berlin, of the economic difficulties which beset them as a result of the cold war, of the dangers from the stationing of nuclear missile bases.

We are resolved to support unreservedly the efforts of all those who act, in whatever way, for peace, for we are convinced that the salvation of mankind requires the effort of all towards this common aim.

May the forces of peace create a new spirit of mutual understanding!

May they all together, open the road that the Governments will have to follow!

By ROMESH CHANDRA

For three days, the discussions went on. What a vast panorama unfolded before us, as from country after country we heard wondrous tales of the victories for peace, of the peoples' new urge to fight the cold war in all its manifestations—and at the same time of the serious situation which exists as a result of the desperate manoeuvres of the imperialists to retain their stranglehold over the peoples they rule or exploited.

The day before we began our session, February 20, was Cameroons Day. The Executive Committee of the World Peace Council sent a cable to the U.N. General Assembly supporting the demand of the people of the Cameroons for unity and independence. And nearly all members of the Bureau attended a public meeting called in honour of the Day by the Soviet Committee for Afro-Asian Solidarity.

The day we began the Bureau session was the day when the British Prime Minister Macmillan arrived in Moscow for talks with Prime Minister Khrushchov. The Bureau adopted a statement welcoming the visit, wishing both Prime Ministers success in their talks and hoping they would promote friendship and lead towards a summit meeting. This visit was a tribute to the deep desire of the British people for positive action, to destroy the cold war demons for all time. They had compelled the Tory Prime Minister to rush to Moscow.

During the debate, of great interest were the speeches by the representatives of the national movements of Africa. The flame had been lit and could now never be put out till freedom had been won.

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New Organisational Structure

A whole day we discussed the new organisational structure of the world movement which would correspond to its growth. And by the end we had prepared tentative proposals to be worked on by a special committee which would place them in a final shape before the coming meeting of the World Peace Council at Stockholm on May 8-13.

The unanimity we achieved was remarkable. The main resolution is a Decla-

ration calling for the ending of the cold war for ever. Its confidence and its clear-cut statements indicating the responsibility of the imperialists for the cold war, its unqualified support to all who work to end the cold war—make it one of the most remarkable documents ever adopted by the world peace movement.

A second resolution on nuclear tests is again a pleasant departure from the old and rather over-simple documents of the past ("So simple they taught no one anything and took no one forward, in his understanding", as someone said rather exaggeratedly but not too widely off the mark).

Recommendations on Algeria, supporting the freedom struggles of Kamerun, Kenya, Uganda, etc. and the resolutions of Cairo and Accra, opposing the repression against peace workers in many lands—were also read out and became part of the records of the Bureau.

SOVIET NOTE SHOWS WAY TO SOLVE GERMAN PROBLEM, SETTLE BERLIN QUESTION

"The Western powers are suggesting that the German problem be discussed in all its aspects, but at the same time they themselves have destroyed the basis for such a discussion", says the Soviet Note of March 2 addressed to the U.S. Government.

"A joint four-power policy towards Germany has since become a thing of the past. No one, for instance, will hold the Soviet Union responsible for the fact that the Federal Germany (West Germany) has adopted a militaristic road of development. It is commonly known that the Soviet Union has repeatedly warned the Western powers of the danger to the cause of peace and Germany's unity from such a road of development of West Germany.

"The Soviet Government's proposal for the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany has received the full approval of nine States whose armed forces took part in the war against Nazi Germany. The population of these countries numbers nearly one billion. At the same time, this proposal has found support and approval among broad sections of public opinion in many other countries. Are these not convincing facts in favour of the signing of a peace treaty with Germany in the nearest future?"

"As to the problem of Germany's reunification, the Soviet Government clearly and definitely stated in its Notes of November 27, 1958 and January 10, 1959 as well as in a number of documents brought to the knowledge of the United States Government that it considered impossible and impermissible interference in the affairs of the two German states and their substitution by anyone in solving the reunification problem.

The organisational proposals envisage a real collective leadership through a Presiding Committee of representatives of all the main countries and movements in all regions and a more effective and political world Secretariat. A universal movement—with different problems and different outlook—calls for such a collective head to replace our beloved Founder President Joliot-Curie.

The real solution to the difficulties of different approaches on questions of national independence was found in the call for the encouragement of greater regional initiatives. While certain central world forms would naturally remain and the unity of the world movement must be preserved, at the same time regional initiatives, actions and movements must be given all possible emphasis. For Asia and Africa, clearly the solidarity movement had a special role to play in uniting and drawing into action for peace the widest sections—basing itself on the anti-imperialist sentiments of the masses.

No longer should we attempt to impose on all regions, all countries one single centralised action to be car-

ried out in the same way, through the same forms. That would destroy the movement. Nor at the same time should we underplay the vital significance of world action on common issues albeit with different emphasis and forms. That would also destroy the movement. The universal movement and the regional movements acting together, complementary to each other, could help to carry the peoples forward.

The great campaign now, "To end the cold war for ever", called for by the Bureau will take different forms in different countries and regions—all linked together round the single goal. Through it the World Peace Council will cement its bonds with other movements for peace.

What a vast screen was covered in the two hours during which the Soviet Prime Minister answered questions put to him by the Bureau participants. The vigour and the frankness with which he spoke inspired all with confidence. There was still plenty of work to do before we could be sure of peace—and Khrushchov spoke of all the various manifestations of the cold

war.

The Afro-Asians were delighted at his strong support of the struggle against imperialism and colonialism, against military pacts and bases, and his open declaration of Soviet preparedness to give more assistance freely to underdeveloped countries to ensure their independent economic development.

When the meeting ended, we were tired... how long the drafting had taken! But we had found our way out of our forest of problems. And the movement had emerged stronger, more united than ever before.

In the land of the Sputnik and the Lunik, confidence is everywhere. The Seven-Year Plan will change the face of the world, will so tilt the balance for peace that it may well be possible to banish war for all time. Now is the moment of greatest desperation for the imperialists—for it is now or never, for them. That is why we need action now on the biggest scale ever in history. The Moscow Bureau meeting has made this possible—it is for us to implement its decisions in every region, in every country, in the way that the masses can understand best.

It would be natural to expect that the United States Government which professes

accordance with the national aspirations of the Germans and with the interests of peace and security of other peoples....

"A peace treaty, provided there is a genuine striving for it on the part of the countries concerned, can be concluded with both German States for they alone can now speak on behalf of Germany, which signed the act of surrender.

"And a peace treaty should record the existing state of affairs. One must live under illusions to count on changing the social system of either of these states by means of interference from without....

"The conclusion of a German peace treaty would also mean settling the Berlin question.

Remove This Source Of Tension

"The Soviet Government has more than once drawn the attention of the Government of the United States to the fact that the situation in Berlin is abnormal and that it represents a grave source of international tension, particularly with respect to relations between the nations of Europe.

"The Soviet Government wants this question to be settled on a basis acceptable to all the parties concerned with a view to safeguarding the peace and security of the peoples of Europe. It is for this reason that it has proposed the conversion of West Berlin into a demilitarised free city whose independence and all the necessary business, cultural and other contacts with the nations of the West and East would be guaranteed by re-



Paul Robeson singing at the World Peace Bureau meeting at Moscow.

THE BUREAU'S APPEAL

IN every part of the World the people detest the Cold War and wish to see it ended. This feeling is so strong today that it is one with which every government must reckon.

The refusals to ban nuclear weapons, and even to agree to end nuclear weapon tests, the spread of nuclear bases throughout the world, expose humanity to incalculable risks.

Natural resources, manpower and scientific progress are being diverted to preparing war. The burden of armaments reduces the living standards of the peoples and hinders economic development. The obstacles to the free flow of trade injure the prosperity of all.

The sovereignty of states and the rights of peoples to determine their own destiny are violated by repeated interference in their internal affairs and jeopardised by military pacts and treaties, old and new, by bases, and by stationing of foreign troops on their soil. The policy of the cold

war is used in an attempt to justify colonial domination, and the right of peoples to independence is denied by force and even, in some areas, by war.

Today in the heart of Europe insecurity and tension have grown worse. The refusal to set up in Europe a zone of security, of disengagement, and to negotiate a peace treaty with Germany, the arming of Western Germany with nuclear weapons, have intensified the cold war and roused immediate new dangers.

The time is long overdue to press forward with negotiations and to hold a conference at top level to find solutions to the questions at issue.

Today the public will for change has grown so strong that it can put an end to the cold war forever.

The world peace movement itself is now much stronger. Great new movements appeared in some parts of the world; the close relationship we have

established with them and our common efforts have given a new impetus to the struggle for peace.

In other parts of the world, political, trade union, pacifist and religious organisations and movements have come newly into existence or developed new peace activity backed by the public opinion of their own countries. We are sure that these bodies and movements all desire the end of the cold war, even if they differ from ourselves about the responsibility and origin of present difficulties.

We are resolved to support unreservedly the efforts of all those who act, in whatever way, for peace, for we are convinced that the salvation of mankind requires the effort of all towards this common aim.

May the forces of peace create a new spirit of mutual understanding!

May they all together, open the road that the Governments will have to follow!

liable international safeguards

"These safeguards can be provided also, in the Soviet Government's opinion, by the great powers with all of their weight and authority, which in itself ensures the effectiveness of these safeguards and reliably protects the rights and status of the free city of West Berlin. It is also quite possible and in the interest of the population of a free city and in the interest of strengthening peace to invite the United Nations to share in providing these safeguards.

"It goes without saying that the Soviet Government is prepared to consider the question of safeguards together with the other countries concerned in order to arrive at an agreement acceptable to all...."

After proposing a summit meeting and a broader range of questions to be discussed there, the Soviet Note says:

"If the Governments of the Western Powers are not yet prepared to take part in a meeting at the summit, the Soviet Government considers that the question of a peace treaty with Germany and the question of West Berlin could be considered at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, France, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Government announces its consent to the proposal of the Governments of the USA, Great Britain and France that both German States, the GDR and the FRG, should be represented at this meeting. Since both these questions are long ripe for solution, the Soviet Government considers it expedient to set a time-limit of no more than two to three months to the work of a Foreign Ministers' meeting...."



A demonstration against the setting up of rocket bases in Dortmund, West Germany.

How Mazdoor Muhaz Won All Seats

From OUR CORRESPONDENT

Five days before the polling for elections to the Municipal Committee, Chheharta, a women volunteer of the Mazdoor Muhaz said to me—"Chheharta has never seen a fight like this before. Even the 1955 strike battle was nothing as compared to this election."

YET, even less than a month ago before the polling date few in Chheharta attached more importance to the pending elections than an average voter would attach to the elections of any second class municipality of only 12,000. How was it that the electoral battle developed and assumed such exceptional importance.

First ever elections to the Municipal Committee of Chheharta took place in 1954. Four out of the 9 seats were won by workers' representatives while a popular doctor had been returned unopposed. A workers' representative Comrade Satyapal Dang was elected President. For five years Chheharta's working class with the help of its friends managed the municipal affairs. It was able to provide civic amenities to the people which its predecessor, the Notified Area Committee with the Deputy Commissioner as Chairman and local millowners as members, could not do in 15 years.

It pursued a tax policy which offered a glaring contrast with the tax policy of the Congress-controlled Amritsar Municipal Committee, the biggest Committee of the Punjab. In Chheharta the poor man did not have to pay any tax or license fee for his cycle, rickshaw, cart, projection before or on the shop, etc., while in Amritsar all

fight all the nine seats on the Congress ticket. Jan Sangh leaders too followed the Congress and declared that they would fight on their own.

Thus the fight began—Congress contesting eight out of nine seats and Jan Sangh five out of nine. Against them were pitted nine candidates of the Mazdoor Muhaz—five of them Communists, two non-party workmen, one non-party doctor and one small press-owner. The last two had refused the Congress tickets despite all persuasion and pressure. They took the principled stand that if one were honest in his desire to run the municipality in the interest of the people, he could not but cooperate with the workers who constituted the majority of the town population.

Chheharta Committee was rid of group rivalries and fights as well as of red-tapism and corruption. It was not a small thing that all the resolutions adopted during the five years — they were about 5,000—were adopted unanimously.

These taxes have been levied. In Amritsar the big millowners do not have to pay any professional tax, while the Chheharta millowners have to pay Rs. 200 per annum instead of Rs. 15 which they had to pay in the past.

Offer To Congress

All these achievements did not turn the heads of Chheharta working class. Before the new election, leaders of the Textile Mazdoor Ekta Union approached the General Secretary of the Chheharta Congress Mandal and some other prominent persons and made them the following sincere offer:

"Let there be a common citizens' front and let us all together select nine persons who would be best fitted to run the municipality even better than before."

The Congress secretary agreed that this was the correct approach. Yet the Congress rejected the offer. They had instructions from the bosses that in Chheharta Congress must

Workers asked: "Why Amritsar Committee with an annual budget of more than a crore refuses to raise the minimum salary of this class of employees to Rs. 60 when a small committee like Chheharta has that minimum? Why is your Congress Government at Chandigarh ordering Chheharta Committee not to fix the rate of annual increment at more than —[8]— when the Chheharta Committee has decided at Rs. 2[—]?"

Again there was no answer. No wonder, therefore, that in their public meeting and door to door canvassing, the Congress leaders hardly talked of their manifesto. Attempts to bribe and threaten voters and above all slander against Communist Party and Mazdoor Muhaz became their main election weapons, as of the Jan Sangh.

The first item ran:—"Congress is against Oetroi without refund. This hated tax where it existed and would not let it be imposed where it did not exist."

Workers asked Congress leaders: "Why have you not so far abolished this tax in Amritsar where you have a majority? And why did Congress Government at Chandigarh threaten to impose Oetroi in Chheharta by using its special powers when Chheharta Committee refused to impose it?" There was no answer.

The second item of the Congress manifesto read: "The Congress would increase the salaries of conservancy and dispensary staff — class IV Harijan Employees."

900 women were on street. And this was on a working day with the second shift workers on duty!

The final rally of the Mazdoor Muhaz was estimated at 5,000.

February 2 was the polling day and polling was over at 4 p.m. By 6 all results were out. Mazdoor Muhaz had won all the seats and with big margins. Entire Chheharta was again on streets. They were jubilant, happy but silent.

Section 144 was in force till mid-night. How to celebrate—that was the question. Celebrate they must. They lifted the newly elected Municipal Commissioners on the shoulders and marched to Pultighar area, outside Chheharta Municipal limits. Police looked on. Such a "procession" did not come within purview of orders under 144.

As soon as the area covered by the prohibitory orders was crossed, scenes of wild enthusiasm broke out. Singing and dancing Bhangra, the procession reached Pultighar. News had reached earlier. Hundreds of workers living in that area had already assembled there. The biggest ever public meeting was held in the Chowk. From there the new Municipal Commissioners were taken to Haripara — another working class area of Amritsar. A massive public meeting was held there.

On the 27th, the nine Municipal Commissioners together visited different areas to thank the people. Huge processions marched with them. Crackers were fired to welcome them. Sweets were offered and in every Mohalla there were feasts. Workers danced Bhangra throughout the day. One shop-keeper alone sold garlands worth Rs. 60 on that day. At night there was Deep Mela in most areas. Dancing and feasting continued on the 28th, and the celebration was rounded off with a massive public rally on March 1.

Attempts To Gag Workers

Two days before the polling a security of Rs. 20,000 each was demanded from Comrades Satyapal Dang and Vimla Dang on the basis of alleged objectionable speeches. Mazdoor Muhaz called a protest demonstration. Within three hours 2,500 persons including about

FORTY YEARS OF POLISH COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

THE Polish United Workers' Party, now meeting in its Third Congress, recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Poland.

At a meeting to mark that anniversary, Comrade Wladislaw Gomulka delivered a comprehensive report tracing the history of Poland during this period, the role played by the Polish Communists, and the achievements of the Polish people since the assumption of power by the Polish working class.

In the major part of the report, Comrade Gomulka has shown how "the foundation of the Communist Party of Poland was an event" which "had a fundamental impact on the entire further course of the history of the Polish people and states"; how, although "all major political trends, except the Communists, had held, in the inter-war period, the power in their hands for varying lengths of time," and yet "no government of the inter-war period was able to steer Poland in a direction which would create conditions for her economic and social development and which would permanently guarantee her independent existence"; and how "in our circumstances and in our times the economic and social progress of Poland and her strong international position could be achieved only by the overthrow of the rule of the parasitic classes, by the creation of a workers' and peasants' government, by the conclusion of an alliance with the Soviet Union and the progressive forces of the world," — a programme which was put forward "only by the Communist Party of Poland and by the left wing of the Polish Socialist Party and peasant movement which cooperated with the Communist Party of Poland."

Permanent Achievements

"These are permanent achievements which are changing the face of the country and laying the foundations for future welfare and are the starting point for future development. For, even today, there are shortages in our country. No power, and that applies also to the power of the working class, is able to make good within a few years the age-old neglect left by its own and by foreign exploiters. But the power of the working class in alliance with the working peasants, the socialist system creates the most favourable conditions for eliminating the state of backwardness. Moreover, it creates increasingly better, increasingly more favourable conditions for further development and progress. The proposals which the Party is bringing to its Third Congress are indeed incomparably broader and bolder, and they are changing far more fundamentally our economic situation than the plans which we could fulfill up till now.

"A great victory of the Polish working class, victory multiplying its strength, thus the strength of the entire nation, has been the ending of the split in its ranks which lasted for over half a century. For, simultaneously with the fortieth anniversary of the CPP we are celebrating now also the tenth anniversary of the unification of the Polish Workers Party and the Polish Socialist Party, and the foundation of the Polish United Workers Party based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

"Our achievements and our prospects are most closely linked with that which has always been the basis of the strength of the CPP fighting for the fulfilment of the ideas of socialism, this idea to which the future of the world belongs. Our success and our hopes are most closely linked with the successes and hopes of all peoples building socialism; they are linked most strongly with the power and

today forty-five per cent less rural population for each 250 acres, than at the time of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the landlords; at the same time this land yields forty per cent more of agricultural produce. The nightmare of "redundant people" has disappeared from the countryside, as well as the dire poverty of the many millions of peasants.

"We have pushed forward the industrial development of Poland, we have reduced the gap which previously separated us from the industrialised countries of Europe. At present our industry gives production five times bigger than before the war and employs three times more workers. The nightmare of mass unemployment has vanished. The number of school pupils has doubled, the number of those getting higher education has trebled, the number of students of vocational schools has increased four times, the number of engineers and technicians is five times higher.

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News from brother parties

immense achievements of the first socialist country—the Soviet Union, with the endeavours and efforts of the great family of socialist countries numbering one thousand million people. Within this family we have a feeling of strength, we feel able to oppose the designs of the renaissance militarism and territorial revisionism of Western Germany which is being given nuclear weapons.

"The Communist feeling of responsibility for our

nation and our country bids us to safeguard like the apple of the eye the brotherly alliance with the land of the Soviets which is guarantee of our independence and of the integrity of our frontiers.

"The Polish Communists, the members of the CPP and of the Communist Youth Union, dreamt in their prison cells of the day when the Polish working class, the Polish nation under the leadership of the Party would un-

dertake the great work of transforming our country from a country of backwardness, poverty and illiteracy, from a weak country left at the mercy of imperialist robbers into a progressive, strong and wealthy country.

"Under the leadership of the heir to the best traditions of the CPP—the Polish United Workers Party—we are giving these dreams the shape of an ever better reality.

MOROCCO'S STRUGGLE

COMRADE Ali Yata, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Morocco has outlined the immediate tasks and other problems that face Morocco in a recent article from which we publish a few extracts below.

Drawing attention to big U. S. military bases in Morocco which belong to the NATO aggressive bloc, as well as to French and Spanish troops occupying wide areas of his country, Comrade Ali Yata said that recognition of Morocco's independence did not mean that the foreign ruling forces in the country have been wiped out completely, nor did it mean that the support of foreign rule in the country has been destroyed.

He noted that the areas occupied by foreign troops are rich in mineral deposits, such as the Moroccan Sahara, Mauritania and Rio de Oro. The imperialists still hold the life-line of Morocco's economy, Moroccan mines, communications, enterprises, po-

wer plants and banks are still controlled by foreign monopolists.

On the other hand, the article continued, most of the feudal lords who served as lackeys of foreign oppressors still maintain their economic foundation almost intact.

"The most immediate task for the whole of the Moroccan people of all strata is to safeguard and consolidate the national independence of Morocco," Ali Yata stressed, citing as the examples the rebellions in the Tafilalet area and in the Northern Rif area and in the central part of the Atlas mountains, all instigated by imperialists and Moroccan feudal traitors as attempts to re-establish their rule in Morocco.

The article called on all patriots to do away with the differences among themselves, unite and heighten their vigilance to counterattack the plotters.

The article discussed the issue of achieving the unity of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. The people of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia are bro-

therly Arab people, the article said. "Except the artificial boundaries erected by the French imperialists, there is nothing that can separate them on this integral piece of land on which they live. They belong to a common cultural system, speak the same language and have a common culture and tradition. Their interests are common, in defence of which, they have been fighting against the common enemy—the imperialists. For these reasons, the people of the Arab Maghreb demand the realisation of unity, and they regard this unity as a reliable measure to ensure their complete liberation from the imperialist rule and attain a prosperous future."

He said he was convinced that 1959 and the ensuing years would be an era of great historic change in Africa and Latin America. The two continents, underestimated and nearly unnoticed not long ago, were now put on the agenda. The peoples of these two continents through their anti-imperialist struggle for emancipation have made great contributions to the just cause of world peace and the victory of democracy and freedom.

ANDHRA LAND REFORMS WEEK—EXPERIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

* FROM PAGE 6

vation of Government waste lands. These are agitating the minds of the people. In spite of repeated complaints to the Government they are indifferent to these pressing problems of the people and consequently the people poured out their bitterness and resentment against the Government wherever the squads visited the villages. All these are factors in the new upsurge amongst the people.

Some of the landlords and followers of Ranga are carrying on a nefarious propaganda against the Nagpur Congress resolution on land reforms. They are trying to misguide the people by insinuating that in the name of cooperative farming the Congress is out to reduce the peasants to mere farm labourers. All the arguments advanced by Prof. Ranga against cooperative farming are being insidiously propagated.

On the other hand the Congress committees are absolutely silent about the Nagpur resolutions. Instead of carrying on a large-scale campaign bringing out the truth of the Nagpur resolutions and allaying the fears and anxieties of the people consequent on the misleading arguments and slander being carried on by Ranga

against the Nagpur resolution and cooperative farming and assuring that there will not be any compulsion in any form, the attitude of the Congress leaders in Andhra is only to cash in on Nehru's popularity. They are neither interested nor do they believe in the programme that has been enunciated at Nagpur.

During this Land Reforms Week the squads and leaders explained the real significance of the Nagpur resolutions and also exposed the false arguments and theories advanced by Prof. Ranga and his landlord followers systematically. It was made clear that as long as the Congress gives shelter to reactionary interests in Congress, it would not be possible for them to implement the resolutions in any substantial measure.

However it must be realised that the arguments and the ideological stand of Prof. Ranga have many votaries among the people and a persistent, unceasing campaign patiently explaining the real significance and meaning of the Nagpur resolution and cooperative farming needs to be carried out.

This state-wide campaign has roused the people in a good measure. In spite of the fact that the peasants and

people are busy with tobacco season and other agricultural operations of the season, they showed great enthusiasm and welcomed the squads and participated in the campaign. Particularly significant is the determination and confidence of the agricultural labourers and other rural poor. Many agricultural labourers had joined the squads.

It is very significant that unlike other parties, the Communist Party had gone to the people and tried to explain to them not at a time of election but just in "normal" times to focus their attention on basic problems and to rouse them for determined action and this factor has been taken note of by the people and was responsible for many coming nearer to the Party.

It has also helped to enthuse the leaders and workers of the Party who participated in the squads. In fact it is being expressed by some that every six months such a raging campaign on some important public issue should be carried out.

Though to a limited extent, another noteworthy feature of this campaign is the participation of members of other political parties.

One question asked often is whether the Government is capable of taking note of the

widespread resentment among the people over the provisions of the existing Bill and of making radical changes in it in response to the people's agitation.

The people are getting ready to take to more serious forms of expressing their feelings. The Party and its workers are feeling that the squad campaign is only the first step in the programme of mobilising the people in large numbers and are already thinking of steps to follow up this week.

It is being expressed that when the Select Committee on the ceiling on Land Holdings Bill goes on tour to different areas to elicit public opinion, people should be mobilised to meet the members in large numbers and also if necessary to organise

a huge march and to rally the people at Hyderabad from the different corners of the State.

It is very correct to think in terms of rallying and mobilising people in ever greater numbers. But in the next stage of the campaign it is very essential that as far as possible the other parties should also be made to join in mobilising the people. Till the proper changes are brought about in the existing land ceilings bill, this campaign must be carried on.

The experience and lessons drawn from this Land Reforms Week campaign should be carefully assessed and the lessons of it should be taken advantage of in the following weeks in the agitation, and in going ahead with the campaign.

NEW AGE

Political Monthly of the Communist Party of India
EDITOR: B. T. RANADIVE

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LABOUR NOTES

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

MORARJI AGAINST INTERIM RELIEF

THE Union Finance Minister, Sri Morarji Desai was soulless and callous when he spoke in the Lok Sabha on February 27 intervening in the debate on Sri S. M. Banerji's resolution for a second instalment of interim relief for the Central Government Employees pending the Second Pay Commission's Report and the Government decision on it.

Sri Morarji Desai clean avoided straight answers to all the relevant points raised in favour of the motion and went about hiking all around trying to prove that the Pay Commission had to examine 800 witnesses, go through 5000 memoranda and 750 replies to the questionnaire—as against 400 witnesses, 950 memoranda and 370 replies that the First Pay Commission had to deal with.

What was he trying to impress? That the Pay Commission is not wrong in taking more time! Conceded. Hence the demand that a second instalment of interim relief be granted.

Sri Desai tried to hood-wink people even in matters that are so obvious. In fact the record of Central Government

in relation to First Pay Commission is a matter of shame and not pride. When the Central Pay Commission had recommended a rise in D.A. by Rs. 5 for every 20 point rise in the cost of living, what had the Central Government done to implement this recommendation?

Sri Anthony Pillai argued in Lok Sabha that even according to this recommendation of the First Pay Commission, which was obviously the argument even for the Second Pay Commission to award an interim relief, the employees were entitled to get a second interim relief of Rs. 10.

As regards the argument of inadequacy of resources repeated ad nauseam by the Government and its apologists Sri Nath Pai reminded the Lok Sabha:

"The other day the House was told that two firms alone, the Tata Iron and Steel Co. and the Indian Iron and Steel Co., owed Government Rs. 17 crores. One crore of rupees were being lost to the exchequer annually by way of interest on those dues. While Government did not take steps to recover this amount, it should not grudge paying the employees...."

Ajoy Ghosh On 21st Congress

* FROM PAGE 5

N. S. Khrushchov said: "There are no people more resolute and loyal to the struggle against colonialism than Communists. There are no forces more resolute in the struggle against imperialism than the forces of Communism."

Why then, it may be asked, do conflicts arise? Khrushchov answered:

"... Within the nation, there are classes with different interests. After imperialist oppression is abolished in the colonial countries, the workers want shorter working hours and higher wages; the peasants want more land and an opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labour; both workers and peasants want political rights. Whereas the capitalists want to make more profit and the landowners want to keep their land. The progressives want their country to make social progress. They strive to strengthen its national independence and to protect it from imperialist plots. Internal reactionary forces, often spurred on by imperialists, are resisting all this."

Anti-Communism does not serve the interests of the nation. It only serves the imperialists and their agents. Despite the fact that this role of anti-Communism has been laid bare many a time, despite the fact that its consequences have been tragic for democracy and for the working class in many countries, anti-Communism still sways the minds of many hon-

est elements. It is a major weapon which imperialists and reactionary bourgeois leaders and right-wing social democrats wield in the battle against the popular forces. In this they are zealously aided by the leaders of Yugoslavia.

They allege that Communist Parties have no independence of their own and are "subservient to Moscow". In a number of brilliant and convincing passages, Comrade N. S. Khrushchov nails down this allegation as a lie and a slander.

He shows how ridiculous it is to assert that mass parties with lakhs and even millions of members who, moreover have won the confidence of the head of all patriotic and democratic forces in the countries where they work, are guided from abroad.

He pointed out that while all parties in the international Communist movement hold the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in high respect for what it has achieved, there are no "superior" or "subordinate" Communist parties. All of them are equal and independent. All of them bear responsibility for the strengthening of the Communist movement, for its successes and failures.

The bourgeoisie can never understand that the independence of Communist parties is in no way inconsistent with the principle of the unity and solidarity of the international

Sri Morarji Desai claimed that the emoluments of the employees had gone up since 1939 and trotted out figures to 'prove' his case.

Sri Desai has no case. The Central Government Employees are not yielding.

That is why the statement of Sri Dalvi, the President of the National Federation of Post and Telegraph employees that the employees shall continue to fight for their four urgent demands.

- Early publication of Second Pay Commission Report,
- Early implementation of the Report,
- Second instalment of interim relief,
- Removal of Service Conduct Rules 4A and 4B banning strikes and demonstrations.

And we have witnessed the universal "pay refusal" demonstration of the P & T employees on the call of their Federation. Will this open Sri Morarji's eyes?

ANDHRA EMPLOYEES PROTEST

EXACTLY at the time when Sri Morarji Desai was asserting in the Lok Sabha on February 27 that the Central Pay Commission would "realistically" consider the wages position in the country and the salaries of the State Government and local

Communist movement. They can never understand the nature of the bond that unites all Communist parties of the world, the bond that it is the bounden duty of every Communist Party to maintain and strengthen.

"We are brought together," said Comrade Khrushchov, "by the great common purpose of liberating the people, of fighting for universal peace. We have one common concern—the concern for the welfare of nations, for their prosperity and security, their happy future, which can only be achieved on socialist lines. We are united by the great teaching of Marxism-Leninism and by the struggle to put it into practice. We shall always preserve the purity of Marxist-Leninist ideology. We shall fight against opponents, against revisionists of all shades and shall always be loyal to the working class. It is in this that we see our international duty to the world Communist and workers' movement."

The 21st Congress not merely marks the beginning of a new period for the Soviet people and formulates the tasks of this period. It also arms the world working class movement with weapons of exceptional power. The documents of the Congress, creatively developing the all-conquering ideas of Marxism-Leninism, chart out the path of further advance.

(March 8, 1959)

NEW AGE

bodies employees in recommending the revised emoluments of the Central Government employees, Andhra Pradesh was witnessing the greatest demonstration so far in the history of State Government employees for better emoluments.

Three lakh employees, among them one lakh teachers, moved in united action expressing what they called "disappointment" against Pay Committee Recommendations.

It was in May 1958 that the Andhra Pradesh Government appointed a Pay Committee with the State Finance Minister himself as the Chairman.

First the appointment of a Pay Committee could not satisfy everybody when the demand was for the Pay Commission for a "scientific and rational pay structure commensurate with the cost of living."

Secondly, the Pay Committee was very much circumscribed by its terms of reference themselves. P. Venkateshwarloo bitingly remarked in the Legislative Assembly, "Any Pay Committee would generally be asked to suggest improvements in the conditions of service personnel. But our Pay Committee has been asked to suggest measures to augment the resources of the State."

In view of the fact that the pay structure evolved in 1947 for the State Government Employees either of composite Madras State or of ex-Hyderabad State was patently unrealistic even in 1947; and further in view of the rise in the cost of living index to 390 in October 1958 (with 1939 = 100), the employees were justly worried and agitated.

But the Pay Committee in complete disregard of all these developments evolved a structure that could satisfy nobody. An employee getting Rs. 30/- in 1939 might well get a money wage of Rs. 84/- in 1959 according to the recommendations. But the real wage in view of the cost of living index pointing the figure 440 would amount to only Rs. 19.6 nP.

The Committee had, in the name of rationalisation of the wage structure and reduction of accounting work, done away with all other allowances, but the DA.

The teachers, worst sufferers so far among the employees got a raw deal.

There was therefore a universal disappointment and discontent.

On February 1, 1959, the employees organised under the Andhra Pradesh Non-Gazetted Officers Association, the Andhra Pradesh Government Class IV Employees' Association, the Government Secondary Grad Teachers Association (Telangana) and Elementary School Teachers' Association (Andhra) organised a day for wearing badges, bringing out processions and holding meetings.

This State-wide demonstration had no effect on the Government.

Their action committee therefore decided to observe "Quit Work" Day on February 27 on the basis of mass leave.

Meanwhile negotiations went on. And on the eve of the "Quit Work Day" the Finance Minister is reported to have assured the delegation of the Action Committee that "adequate and reasonable relief" would be provided in two or three days time. The Action Committee therefore decided to stay the Quit Work move to create the atmosphere for the Government "to translate their expressed sympathies into concrete action."

The Association is reported to have called upon the Union Labour Ministry to intervene. Meanwhile the authorities are reported to have decided on unilaterally implementing their proposal.

The Association has therefore decided to resort to direct action including strike if no mutually satisfactory solution to the question of bonus for 1957 and 1958 is reached before April 30 next.

But the Government came out with a statement that no new promise was given except the reiteration of their old stand that "the Government would carefully consider the claims for relief".

Meanwhile the Radio announced that the Action Committee had stayed the Quit Work demonstrations.

All the offices in the city were empty in the morning. After Radio broadcasts the employees began to trickle in the secretariat which worked to 50% complement by the evening according to press reports.

In Kurnool even the shops had closed in sympathy with the NGOs.

In Cuddapah even the bus workers went on a two-hour strike in sympathy.

In one town the tehsildar had to do the work of jailor and cashier.

In all the towns big rallies were held jointly by the employees and trade union organisations. At many places even Congressmen addressed the rallies sympathising with the State Government employees' demands.

In Guntur the AITUC affiliates organised a 10,000 strong rally in support of the NGOs' demands.

And in the houses of the State Legislature all the leaders of the Opposition Parties, supported the NGOs' demands. All of them demanded an expert body to go into the demands.

In fact they are much more united. They are much more confident because of the general support and solidarity that they got from other organised workers, employees and the common people.

The Government should take note of this and move quickly to concede the most urgent demands.

WHITHER LIC ?

THE Life Insurance Corporation Authorities it appears, have decided to provoke the employees for a trial of strength.

Earlier their case was that 'bonus' could not be granted in a public sector concern. But when the united demonstrations and the patient and long-drawn struggle grew irresistible the Government withdrew their objection to the payment of bonus to the employees.

All that they were now expected to do was to settle with the Life Insurance Corporation Employees' Association the quantum of bonus to be paid.

Instead the authorities wanted to be very clever and suggested to the Association that they should choose between the continuation of free policy benefit as at present or its replacement by a month's bonus and term assurance.

Under this term assurance the amount of insurance is payable only in case of death occurring while the employee is in service.

The employees have been, even before nationalisation enjoying both free insurance and bonus. There was therefore no question of giving up either.

The Association is reported to have called upon the Union Labour Ministry to intervene. Meanwhile the authorities are reported to have decided on unilaterally implementing their proposal.

The Association has therefore decided to resort to direct action including strike if no mutually satisfactory solution to the question of bonus for 1957 and 1958 is reached before April 30 next.

MARCH 15, 1959

AJOY GHOSH'S PRESS CONFERENCE

* FROM PAGE 2

goes on to the crucial question of how ceiling is to be imposed and how rapidly cooperatives are to be formed, no immediate steps are worked out.

"I am amazed by Sri Nehru's statement about land transfers now taking place (that these could not be called immoral but only clever). Sri Nehru argues that it is a frightfully difficult problem. I don't know if he remembers that the Planning Commission itself had warned about these 'mala fide transfers' in different States and urged steps to be taken to prevent these."

"Why cannot the Government issue an Ordinance to ban such mala fide transfers? The Congress Working Committee can give a directive to all State Governments that immediately Ordinances should be issued."

"The Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee, as early as 1949, had laid down the principle of ceiling: ceiling is to be three times an economic holding. The purpose of ceiling is to make land available for distribution."

"If the whole intention was only to induce landlords to partition their property, then nothing better could have been done than what is taking place today. The purpose of ceiling is to break the present concentration of land in the hands of a few."

"But what is being allowed to happen now is to reduce the whole idea of ceiling to a farce."

"On the question of surplus land being given to Panchayats, we have to note that the Government had not accepted even one of the many recommendations of the Second Five-Year Plan regarding the purpose and functions of the Panchayats. The result is that the majority of the Panchayats are dominated by all

kinds of people, by landlords, the village rich and hence, all kinds of manipulations take place.

"We are not saying anything new: we are only saying what the Planning Commission has recommended. The Government of India has violated the healthy recommendations of the Planning Commission itself."

"If the Congress succeeds in achieving what it has set forth in the Nagpur Resolution, we have absolutely no quarrel over the matter. We have only expressed our apprehensions about some of the steps advocated."

"But let us not quarrel: there is immediate agreement that ceiling should be enforced within a year. There is need to stop mala fide transfers."

"What is being done is that Sri Nehru is indulging in shadow-boxing by allowing this question about cooperatives to be made the main issue today. It enables reactionaries to rally peasants and also gives time to landlords to defeat the ceiling itself by going in for large-scale mala fide transfers. The way things are being allowed to go on, there will be no land by the time the law is passed."

Asked about nationalisation of land, Comrade Ghosh said: "It is totally untimely. The idea is to see that the mass of the peasantry supports it. The peasant has got to be convinced about it through his own experience."

Regarding ceiling on urban incomes, Comrade Ghosh said: "Let us not mix up issues. Our Party has advocated for a long time that there should be a ceiling on profits, and also we are in favour of limiting the maximum personal income. But we don't want to mix up the two issues—ceiling on income and ceiling on land."

"On the question of cooperation between different political parties, I would like to make certain things clear."

FIRST, there cannot now be any general cooperation between all parties, because there are fundamental, vital differences.

"SECONDLY, I realise that despite such vital differences, it is possible sometimes to come together on agreed common programmes, and so a coalition Government is formed. We are not visualising any such possibility."

"Then, where is the necessity of cooperation? This necessity arises because the Congress Party cannot claim that it represents the country as a whole, as a number of elections have shown. At the same time, there are specific issues on which agreement between different political parties is possible as far as declarations go. For instance, the Nagpur Agrarian Resolution. We do not agree with the whole of that resolution, but on the most important points—like ceiling before end of the year—we entirely agree, despite differences on the question of how the surplus is to be managed. So, on such issues of agreement,

MARCH 15, 1959

PUNJAB : A MOVEMENT THAT CANNOT BE SUPPRESSED

* FROM BACK PAGE

grahi jatha from the village and was in jail. It was from the younger son, Raghbir Chand, that we heard the story of old Godamal's death.

Raghbir was sleeping in his shop when two police constables came at about 5.30 in the morning and woke him up and asked him where his elder brother was. He was then taken to his house. There he saw a sub-inspector and some constables kicking and beating his father while his mother was standing in a corner of the room weeping.

Old Godamal was already ill when he was so cruelly man-handled and within 24 hours he succumbed to the injuries and the shock.

On March 5, a police official, we were told it was the DSP, came again to the village with some constables. They called some people and threatened them that if they did not give evidence that the old man died a natural death, their gun licenses would be cancelled. They also got a thumb impression of the widow who cannot read or write. The villagers are certain that the police are trying to create evidence to prove that Godamal died naturally and was not killed by the police manhandling.

Everywhere we went to, whether it was morning, midday, evening or night within seconds the entire village would gather and a large section of the audience was always the women of the village who had left all the household chores and come to the meeting carrying their babies.

In most of the villages, there was no prior intimation of our arrival. The first person who saw the Red Flag on the car would come up to find out who we were—only in a few cases could we find people who already knew Comrade Gopalan—most of the activists are already in jail and those who are leading the movement today are ordinary peasants who have never been in the Kisan Sabha.

When we suggested to some of the citizens that cases should be filed against the police, including one for murder

should call together all parties, because the Congress by itself has proved to be incompetent to carry out many of its own progressive declarations.

"Regarding the Punjab betterment levy, our Party has made concrete proposals for financing the Bhakra-Nangal Project without this imposition on the peasants. The Congress Government may say that our calculations are not correct. But then, let them sit down together with us and discuss the matter concretely. But what has actually been done is to order the collection of this betterment levy by Ordinance issued two days after the Punjab Assembly was adjourned. This is reducing democracy to a farce. Let not the Government stand on false prestige, but discuss with all how the cost of the Bhakra-Nangal Project can be adequately met."

"We are not opposed to betterment levy on principle. We say that in the specific case of Punjab, the cost of the Bhakra-Nangal Project can be met by other measures. We have to see how the cost can be split up, we have made a number of concrete suggestions."

In Dhalival village, where

the police had opened fire first, there was an unusually large gathering of women. Comrade Gopalan after addressing the meeting went to where the women were sitting and asked them: "Two of your sisters have been killed in Aitiana. What will you do if the police came here again?" Without a moment's hesitation the answer came: "The police can shoot, but they won't be able to take a thing from this village."

In Tikhriwal we went to the house of the widow of Seva Singh, the first martyr of the Patiala Praja Mandal movement. She bitterly complained against Kairon and told us that the Government had stopped the pension that was being given to her. "They have erected a memorial for him in Patiala as a hero," she said, "but ask me what his services are to entitle me to a pension." And then she said, "I will offer satyagraha if the women of the village want me to go with them." An old woman, near seventy, bent and unable to stand up by herself, she was offering to lead a jatha of women satyagrahis—that is the hold the anti-betterment levy struggle has come to have on the peasantry as a whole.

Comrade Gopalan was talking to the peasants in Ghalakalan about the police repression and the need to resist it, when a grey-bearded peasant, Channan Singh, got up and said quietly: "Nobody told us peasants about this movement. It has been born out of our difficulties. No repression can stop us."

These words not only expressed their determination to fight. They showed the all-embracing character of the movement—a movement in which the peasants themselves are organising, which they themselves are fighting, which they are determined to win.

Kandola is the village of martyr Malkiyat Singh. This young satyagrahi died in jail of pneumonia due to the callous negligence of the police.

When we reached the village it was late in the night. The men had waited for a long time and dispersed. But a group of girls had stayed on. They shouted slogans and led us to Malkiyat Singh's house.

Comrade Gopalan paid his respects to the martyr's mother. She said, "I expected her to cry and I was ready for it. But she did not shed a drop of tear. She told me that all of us were her sons and she blessed me and said the movement would succeed. I have rarely seen such a bold woman."

In the Sudhar hospital, we saw the seriously wounded from the Aitiana firing. None of us will ever forget the face of one of them—18-year-old Ajai Kaur. She has been shot in her right arm and she probably knew that she would never use that arm again. Her clothes were still clotted with blood, but when she was told who had gone to visit her, her face lit up with a smile. One could find no regrets on that face. When we came out of the hospital we were sure of one thing—no bullets will ever be able to choke that smile.

der in the Pehni Mehraj incident, they told us that even this was being made difficult because lawyers were being arrested and intimidated. Mukandi Lal, an advocate of Barnala, had been arrested. In Ferozepur, a lawyer had been put behind the bars. Another lawyer, Hardal Singh, of Sangrur has been involved in a case by the police.

We were in the Punjab only for three short days and we went only to a few villages. But these stories we heard, we were told, would be repeated in almost every village in the nine Districts of Punjab where the anti-betterment levy struggle is going on.

Satyagrahis and onlookers are being beaten up mercilessly, indiscriminate arrests are being made even of lawyers and their clerks, though both the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party are legal, people flying the Red Flag or going to the Kisan Sabha office are being taken into custody, armed police raid the villages keeping the villagers terrorised, they make a special target of the women—the picture of the villages of Punjab present today.

But during this short visit we also saw the other side of the picture—the enthusiasm of a determined people.

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NEW AGE

PAGE THIRTEEN

PAGE TWELVE

SOVIET PROPOSALS KNOCK OUT WESTERN OBJECTIONS

Steadfastly pursuing its policy of live and let live, the Soviet Government, in its latest notes to the Western Powers, presented proposals that make still more difficult for the latter to stick to brinkmanship.

A FEW excerpts from the Soviet note of March 2 to the Government of the United States are published elsewhere in this issue. The Soviet note reiterates non-interference in the internal affairs of both the German States and proposes the conclusion of a peace treaty with both the German States.

The Soviet note emphasises once more the fact that the conclusion of a German peace treaty would also mean settling the Berlin question.

The Soviet Government rightly demands the participation of Poland and Czechoslovakia in any Summit or Foreign Ministers' Conference on the German question if the conference is meant to reach concrete decisions on this problem.

With the Soviet Government's acceptance to have a meeting even at the Foreign Ministers' level, topples yet another obstacle put by the Western Powers in the way of starting negotiations on the German problem.

Khrushchov, in a recent speech at Leipzig, deprived them even of the objection they had been raising to the time-limit set by the USSR—May 27: "If you, gentlemen, are willing to speak with us reasonably, we can postpone this date from May 27 to, say June 27. Let us postpone it to July if you like. But the question of West Berlin, the question of a peace treaty with Germany, must be solved."

And the last blow to their obstructionist tactics came in Khrushchov's Berlin speech where he offered: "If need be, we are even ready to have the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union or neutral countries to maintain in West Berlin some minimum of troops to assure the observance of the free city status, which, however, would have no right to interfere in the City's internal life. With such guarantees no one would dare to infringe upon the independent life of the free city."

Reactions In West

These fresh moves on the part of the Soviet Union, following on the heels of the recent Khrushchov-Macmillan talks, are being hailed in all countries and by all peoples who cherish peace. And their positive effect can be felt even in the Western circles.

In Britain, a very large section of public opinion has welcomed the Soviet Government's proposals. Daily Mail, editorially welcoming the proposals, said, "East and West would at least be equally represented round the table." The Times and the News Chronicle, writing in a similar vein, highlight the Soviet Government's consent to meet at the Foreign Ministers' level.

In France also those papers which have been whipping up a tendentious campaign against the Soviet Union, are now forced to acknowledge the great positive significance of these proposals.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

have donned upon themselves the mantle of world's shepherd are desperate.

The New York Times (of March 1) editorially evokes "several thousand years of the moral and religious codes that grew up around the Mediterranean" to plead for "not what is prudent but what is right", to "save" Paris, London, New York from "betraying" the newly liberated people of West Berlin!

Resort to this line of argument only shows that under the impact of Soviet initiatives to end the cold war, its strategists are finding it increasingly difficult to keep the temperature low and are, therefore, getting furious. Hence the need, all the more today, to campaign persistently and unflinchingly for an East-West settlement.

Faced with these prospects of a "thaw", the nuclear-happy maniacs who

Dark Africa Is Aglow

THE darkest part of the Dark Continent—Africa—is aglow. Falling in step with time, the African people in the Central region of that last citadel of colonialism have raised aloft the banner of national independence.

Algeria, Kenya, Nigeria, Camerouns, French Congo, and now Belgian Congo, Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia have shot into the headlines, the world over.

A short background to the events in these two territories is given below:

BELGIAN CONGO

Colonialist Powers used to talk of Belgian Congo as a "model" colony, where perfect harmony was achieved between the oppressors and the oppressed. Over a territory, a third the size of the United States and over 80 times the size of Belgium, the Belgian colonialists were supposed to

Yet, the much trumpeted "rhythm of democratic evolution" in Congo, introduced by the Belgian colonialists was such that Congo's population of 30 million in 1894 has by now dwindled to just about ten million—an average of 220,000 Congolese were done away with every

year. Ruthlessly destroying the fabric of the country's economy in pursuance of their aims of colonial exploitation, the Belgian colonialists have already uprooted 23 per cent of the former peasant community and have transformed almost 40 per cent of all male adults into unskilled labourers.

On the other hand, Europeans in Congo, although comprising one per cent of the population, were possessing, by 1957, nearly half the average salary of a European was 64 times that of a Negro.

Being a "model" colony, there was, of course, no question of any political rights for the "natives".

Meanwhile, to make things worse, a considerable amount of American capital has been penetrating into Belgian enterprises in Congo in recent years. The U.S. investing an average of \$80 million in Congo annually, has risen to hold second place in Congo's foreign trade.

So when the 1957-58 economic recession came and the world price of raw materials registered a drastic drop, one half of the working population of Leopoldville, capital of Belgian Congo, was thrown on the streets. Official figures declared about 50,000 as unemployed.

The increasing discontent of the African people, aggravated by large-scale unemployment, their increasing resistance to colonial rule in Belgian Congo and their growing demand for national independence, found expression in the mighty demonstrations of the inhabitants of Leopoldville, which started on January 4.

The colonial regime sought to drown the people's struggle in blood. On the very first two days of the demonstrations, at least 30 people were shot dead by the police and over a hundred were reported wounded. The colonial forces patrolled the streets of Leo-

poldville with tanks and armoured cars. The Belgian Minister for Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, Maurice Van Hemelrijck, reporting on the bloodshed in Leopoldville, to an emergency session of the Belgian House of Representatives declared that Congo was "on the brink of catastrophe," that "all the conditions were there for a single spark to touch off a blaze."

Reports of strikes and people's resistance to the colonialists are pouring in steadily from different parts of Congo. On March 5, the Belgian authorities ordered the military occupation of Louzi, lower Congo area, because the population there refused to pay taxes. In other localities, cement workers, oil workers, etc., are on strike, demanding higher wages and resisting higher tax impositions. Government employees are also joining the struggle.

NYASALAND

Pitted against machine-guns, tear-gas bombs and vampire jet fighters, the people of Nyasaland have also risen against the British colonialists.

The territory of Nyasaland was federated with the adjoining colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia in 1953, when the Central African Federation was imposed upon the African people to ensure "absolute white supremacy."

The European population in Southern Rhodesia being relatively higher than in Northern Rhodesia or in Nyasaland, the Federation of these territories was imposed by the British colonialists to swamp the united governing bodies with white settlers.

The Federation also secured the economic interests of the European copper and coal mines which were being threatened by U.S. penetration into their fields while the territories were separate and their forces disunited.

The African people took to the path of struggle against such a Federation.

The African National Congress provided a political platform, which was, in fact, quite moderate. It only demanded the dissolution of the Federation and an autonomous Government. It envisaged Nyasaland's full independence by stages, while remaining at the same time, in the British Commonwealth.

Even this was too much for the British colonialists to grant. Instead, they fell upon the African people, and banned their organisations.

A "state of emergency" has been declared in Southern Rhodesia and in Nyasaland. Leaders of the Nyasaland African National Congress, including its President Dr. Hastings Banda, have been arrested and deported. Office-bearers of the Congress are liable to imprisonment for 14 years, and even its ordinary members are threatened with seven years in jail.

Undaunted by repression, the African people are fighting back. Revolts have broken out in some 30 places in Nyasaland. The African people are determined to see their cherished "Kwacca" materialise soon.

—RAZA ALI

MARCH 15, 1959

WEST BENGAL

The West Bengal Government came in for withering criticism from the Opposition when the State Assembly discussed the budget demand for General Administration on March 4.

THE House heard in tense silence Opposition members level a series of grave charges against several Ministers, including the Chief Minister, and many high Government officials, while visitors in the packed galleries greatly enjoyed the utter discomfiture of the Government.

In a devastating attack on the Government's policies and methods, Comrade Jyoti Basu, Leader of the Opposition, nailed down the Government's call for cooperation from the Opposition parties as a big bluff. Its attitude, he emphasised, continued to be one of discrimination and non-cooperation.

Referring to the newly-elected Congress President's appeal for cooperation from all parties, he cited several specific cases to show how utterly dishonest were the intentions of the Congress and its Government.

He pointed out that Opposition MLAs had been shut out from such important bodies as the Social Education (Adult) Scheme Committee for 24 Parganas District, the Khadi & Village Industries Board, the West Bengal Handloom Board, the Employment Exchange Advisory Board at Kharagpur, etc. The Regional Transport Authority, which issued permits for trucks, buses and taxis and had been transformed into a veritable centre of corrup-

tion and nepotism, had been packed with only Congress M.P.s, MLAs and MLCs, defeated Congress candidates and henchmen of the Ministers.

Citing another example of the "cooperative" attitude of the Government, Comrade Basu said that with liberal contributions from the people the West Bengal Committee of the Communist Party had brought a rotary machine from People's China for transforming its daily Swadhinata into an eight-pager. Dr. B. C. Roy's police had already visited the office of the Calcutta firm which had imported the machine, to make "enquiries" as to whether the price had been duly paid and as to how the Party had secured the amount!

He firmly demanded to know whether or not the main Opposition party in the State had the right to purchase a new machine and bring out its paper.

Referring to the Chief Minister's claim that the administration was not top-heavy, Comrade Basu pointed out that as much as 25 per cent of the total expenditure under the head "General Administration" was incurred on account of the salaries and allowances of the Governor, Ministers and gazetted Officers, who constituted less than one per cent of the total strength of the Government.

No Help To Check T.B. Because Govt. Brands Students' Home As A Communist Organisation

WHILE speaking on the budget demand for General Administration in the West Bengal Assembly on March 4, Comrade Jyoti Basu said that the Government indulged in tall talk about cooperation with the Opposition, but the Students Health Home, Calcutta, provided a classic example of the Government's destructive attitude.

He pointed out that the Home had been established in 1951 with the objects of making arrangements for the treatment of students suffering from tuberculosis and also serving other health needs of the student community free of cost or at concessional charges.

Eminent medical practitioners of the city were associated with the Home. The authorities of the Calcutta, Vishwabarati and Jadavpur Universities had highly spoken of the services rendered by it. The Calcutta University had also made a token grant of Rs. 5,000.

At the beginning of 1956, the Union Government proposed to make a small capital grant to the Home. But in June of that year the West Bengal Government issued a secret circular branding the Home as a "Communist organisation."

Subsequently, the representatives of the institution met the Chief Minister, Dr. B. C. Roy, to urge upon him to withdraw the secret circular,

to nominate a Government representative on the Working Committee of the Home and to give it financial assistance.

Dr. Roy asserted that the institution had been "sponsored" by the Bengal Students' Federation, Sri Snehanu Acharyya, a well-known Communist barrister, was associated with it, and that the Home had received help from Communist countries only. As such it was a Communist organisation.

The representatives pointed out that the Home had not been sponsored by the Students' Federation. They said, "We did not seek help from Communist countries only. We merely appealed for help and these countries came to our aid and others did not. We cannot force anyone to help us; France, which is a non-Communist country, has recently agreed to help us."

At this the Chief Minister remarked, "there are Communists in France!" When Comrade Basu quoted this comment of the Chief Minister, there was loud laughter in the Opposition benches.

Dr. Roy categorically told the representatives of the Home that the matter could be considered by the Government only if no help was taken from "iron curtain" countries.

Comrade Jyoti Basu then read out to an excited House a letter written by Governor Padmaja Naidu to Dr. Roy and said that he could not

SCATHING INDICTMENT OF ROY GOVERNMENT

Top-Heavy Administration, People's Money At Disposal Of Vested Interests

If this was not top-heavy, he did not know what was.

Why was it necessary, he asked, to maintain 13 Ministers, three Ministers of State, 14 Deputy Ministers and two Parliamentary Secretaries in a State of the size of West Bengal, specially when the Chief Minister himself monopolised as many as six major portfolios. The Ministers of State and the Deputy Ministers had practically no work to do. They were not even allowed to see some files. These were simply party appointments—the poor tax-payers' money was being utilised to satisfy the various groups and factions in the Congress party.

The party in power had been using the administrative apparatus not to protect the lives and properties of the masses of people, not to safeguard civil liberties and democratic rights but to help the big landlords, Big Business and other vested interests.

Comrade Basu further said that in the capacity of the Finance Minister the Chief

Minister had thrown lakhs of rupees by paying inflated prices to purchase the land and buildings of big landlords and other influential people. He said he was in possession of facts which showed that the Chief Minister had wasted over Rs. 40 lakhs and demanded a public enquiry into these transactions.

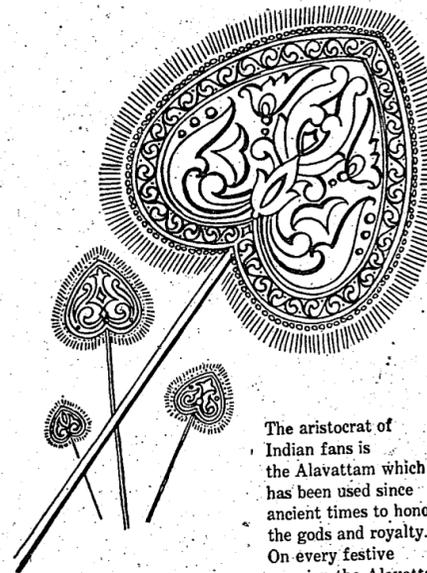
An instance is the palace of the Raja of Lalgola (Murshidabad District) which was purchased at Rs. 8.5 lakhs although the Collector of Land Acquisition had assessed its value at Rs. three lakhs. The building was a very old one and Government engineers had declared the upper floor rooms as "condemned". An additional sum of five lakhs would be required to make it fit for human habitation. Lakhs of rupees, earmarked for the rehabilitation of East

Pakistan refugees, had been wasted on such rackets as the H. B. Industries, Parnashree Colony, etc.

Comrade Basu said that the West Bengal State Electricity Board had agreed to supply electricity to the aluminium factory at Asansol, owned by the Singhania's, at a rate which would involve an annual recurring loss to the State exchequer to the tune of Rs. 25 lakhs.

Comrade Basu asked the Chief Minister whether he had already arrived at an agreement with the Birlas to hand over the proposed fertiliser plant at Durgapur, which had been originally decided to be set up in the public sector, and whether the optical glass factory and pharmaceutical industries, offered by the Soviet Union, would be set up at all in this State, as proposed earlier.

FACTS ABOUT FANS



The aristocrat of Indian fans is the Alavattam which has been used since ancient times to honour the gods and royalty. On every festive occasion the Alavattam is much in evidence.

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PUNJAB GOVT. MUST ANSWER FOR THESE CRIMES

● From RAMDASS

I have seen enough in the villages of Punjab to damn a dozen Governments like Kairon's. What has happened there in the last six weeks since the mass peasant struggle against the betterment levy began on February 2 can never be defended by any civilised Government.

I HAD accompanied a party of Communist Members of Parliament—A. K. Gopalan, K. T. K. Thangamani and Sarjoo Pande, with Punjab MLA Achar Singh Chinnna—who had left Delhi on hearing the first report of the police firing in Dhaliwal village in Jullundur District.

When we reached Jullundur, the report awaiting us was that the police had opened fire in another village in Ludhiana District, killing two women and injuring many.

So it was to this village Aitiana, fifteen miles off Ludhiana town, that we went first.

The village was still under the shock of the previous day's incidents. The villagers were already assembled in the square, talking about the wild attack. They were visibly relieved to see us—we were the first to reach the village from outside, after the police firing.

They invited us to sit with them and one of them, an old Sikh peasant, began to tell us of the previous day.

Nine peasants from the village had offered satyagraha and had been fined Rs. 200 each. The police came to the village about mid-day on the 5th to attach property to collect the fines.

The villagers asked them to give a week's time. But the police party insisted on making the collections then and there. The DSP and a Magistrate asked the people to disperse and before they could even properly understand the order, tear-gas shells had begun to explode. People ran in all directions and simultaneously the police opened fire.

The people came back to the square when they heard that some had been injured. They saw 60-year-old Chand Kaur on the blood-soaked sand. She had been killed on the spot. About 20 of the villagers were lying on the square, injured and bleeding—three or four of them unconscious.

The police were still watching but they did not lift a finger to give any medical attention. One of the villagers had to go to the hospital three miles away in Sudhar and get a doctor to give first aid to the injured.

When all this had been done, the police got a bus, put all the injured along with the dead body of Chand Kaur in it, and took them away. Another woman, 40-year-old Bachini, died in the Civil Hospital in Ludhiana.

The police came back to the village when night had descended—with reinforcements, some villagers said a hundred, some said 300. They announced their arri-

val with gun shots and the frightened villagers, men, women and children, ran out of the houses and took shelter in the fields among the crops.

Then began what the police called attachment of property but what can rightly be called looting. At night after all the villagers had been frightened away, when the owners were not present, the police broke open locks, entered into houses and took away buffaloes, beddings, furniture, whatever they could lay their hands on. Nobody knows what has been taken from which house.

The law of the land is that when a person is convicted and fined, only his property can be attached. But here in Aitiana, properties had been attached of people who had not been among the satyagrahis, of fathers and brothers of those who had been fined. We were given a list of such names.

This was not the story of Aitiana alone. For the Kairon Government the relevant section of the Cr.P.C. no longer existed.

In the village we were taken to the house of Dhanl, a Harijan woman. Till we reached the house we didn't know what we were going to see. What we saw was the woman who had gone out of her senses as a result of shock from the tear-gas attack. She caught hold of Comrade Gopalan thinking he was her son who had offered satyagraha and was in jail. She wouldn't let go of him and when we left, began wailing, "they are taking him away." One couldn't see the scene without hatred rising against the Government which could perpetrate such atrocities.

Later in the day, we went to Dhaliwal village where the first firing had taken place on the 3rd.

The police had come to that village in the evening at about 5 o'clock with orders for attachment of the property of a villager, Bachan Singh, whose son had been in the satyagrahi jatha. When the police arrived the women of the village were seeing off a marriage party.

The police began threatening the women and asked them to open the house of Bachan Singh. One of the women told them to get the owner of the house to open it. A constable hit her and when the others protested, the policemen began their mad attack. They beat the women and dragged them on the ground by their hair. The men came running to protest against this ill-treatment of the women.



In Aitiana village just after the police firing: sixty-year-old Chand Kaur who was killed on the spot and her son who rushed to see what had happened to his mother.

Just then a satyagrahi jatha which was in its way to the district headquarters entered the village. Without any warning, the police opened fire—thirteen or fourteen rounds. Among the injured, eight or nine were women. The police rounded up about a dozen villagers.

They came again to the village to threaten the witnesses after a magisterial enquiry had been ordered. Some of the witnesses were told they would be arrested if they did not leave the village. What earthly use would an enquiry be after such intimidation of the witnesses?

In Moga, we were told the story of how the police had raided the kitchen camp that had been set up for the satyagrahis. The police entered the place and took away all the utensils. What infuriated the people most was that the police trod on the food that had been cooked. A few people, about 17 or 18, who did not know about the attack, when they later went to the kitchen camp for food were caught, tied up and beaten.

Ever since the struggle began, one feature has been the sympathy of the urban population for the satyagrahis. They used to collect in their hundreds to see the volunteers courting arrest. So the police are now beating them up. We met a person in the Kisan Sabha office in Moga who said that he was standing over a hundred yards away from the satyagrahis when he was man-handled by the police. Later we heard many such stories.

It was here again that we were told of how satyagrahis were being sentenced in one room of the court, while in the next they were being beaten by the police.

In Barnala, we saw the extent of the mass terror. Policemen were all over the place and whenever we enquired from anybody about the location of the Kisan Sabha office, the moment we left we could see policemen going up to the person to ask about us.

Finally, when we located the Kisan Sabha office, we found it locked. From neigh-

hours, we learnt that anybody who came to sit in the office was being arrested.

When we came back to the centre of the town to find out the situation on our own, a medical practitioner stopped us and took us to the spots where lathi-charges had taken place.

People began gathering and immediately a few policemen came along, obviously to intimidate—the people and see that they did not talk to us. When we asked them to move away, their reply was, "we are on duty."

A jatha of 60 satyagrahis sat there for three days before the police arrested 12 of them.

We were told that the police sent some men on to the roof of a nearby building to throw a few stones. Then began a lathi-charge without any warning.

Another place in the town where lathi-charges had taken place was a narrow mandi about a furlong away from the court. The police here assaulted the satyagrahis during the day and in the night, when they were trying to get some rest—lathi-charged them again.

From Barnala, we went to village Tikhiwal to hear the story of the lathi-charge from the satyagrahis themselves. This is the village of Seva Singh, the hero of the Praja Mandal movement in Patiala who had died during a hunger-strike in jail in the late thirties.

The satyagrahis started from the village after swearing in the Gurudwara to fight till victory was won. They raised slogans and went through the villages on the way. They went round the three mandis in Barnala before reaching the court to offer satyagraha.

The police officers asked them to go back but the villagers said they had gone to court arrest, not to go back. They squatted there. At night they went to the Gurudwara. Next day they moved and sat near the tehsil court. The police surrounded them and would not allow them to move anywhere.

Later they arrested 12, the rest sat on for two days and nights. The people of

Barnala brought them tea, but the police took the tea and threw it away.

Then they lathi-charged. When the satyagrahis held on to the Kisan Sabha and Gurudwara flags they were beaten on the knuckles and the flags taken away and torn up. They were dragged to the Gurudwara and left there. Only the seriously injured were taken away by the police and the villagers still do not know what has happened to five of them, including the leader of the jatha, Pritam Singh. They have not returned to the village and anyone who goes to the police station to make enquiries is beaten and thrown out. Thirty of the satyagrahis, we were told, had been beaten so badly that they have been maimed for life.

In Bhathal village, a middle-aged woman, Kartar Kaur, told us of how the police behave when they raid villages.

At midnight, a police party came to her house, knocked at the door and asked her to open up. She refused to open the door but the police used force and entered the house. They asked the woman to take the children out and began hitting her husband, Makhan Singh, right in front of her and the children. Then Makhan Singh was taken away along with some utensils, beddings, etc. When he came back his arm was broken. When we asked the woman why the police had done this, she said the only reason was that they were neighbours of Hardit Singh, the local Communist leader, whom the police had not been able to arrest.

We went to see the house of Comrade Hardit Singh. The house was totally empty—devoid of not only human beings but also of anything else. The police had taken away everything—all that remained in the house were a few bits of broken crockery and newspapers scattered on the floor.

From Bhathal we went to village Pehni Mehraj where an old man of sixty had died as a result of police man-handling. His eldest son, Ved Perkash, had led the satya-

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