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ANOTHER DURGAPUR SCANDAL

—Indian Workers' Lives in Jeopardy

NEW INDO-PAK BORDER SETTLEMENT

The historic achievement of our national independence was bedevilled by chronic tension in the Indo-Pak relations. Our Party was the first to declare that what the imperialists could not deny, they were thus seeking to damage and disrupt.

LOOKING back over the years, one can calmly recall not only the anxious months of the undeclared war in Kashmir but also several other critical situations when it had virtually come to the point of touch-and-go in our relations with Pakistan, our nearest neighbour, followed by an agonisingly long-drawn phase of tension, suspicion and deadlock.

Our Party is very justifiably proud that all through, it acted as the firmest organised vanguard of healthy, sane, peace-loving and patriotic Indian opinion, headed by Prime Minister Nehru, patiently calling and tirelessly working for peaceful settlement of all outstanding problems between our two countries. The old atmosphere was unnatural and it could not

by **P. C. JOSHI**

border"—such is the summation by the External Affairs Ministry of the new settlement.

"Fool-proof rules" have been agreed upon to put an end to the endless firings that were more than a nuisance. They kept the tension alive.

Rival claims of territory on the border have been settled. Pakistan has agreed to vacate Tukergram while India has agreed to give Pakistan part of the Patharia Forest.

Agreement has been reached on the interpretation of the Bagge Award and procedures formulated to finally demarcate the hitherto con-

"I do not say that all big problems between India and Pakistan have been solved.

"The border questions on the Eastern frontier between the two countries have been settled on paper and I believe that what is settled on paper would to a very great degree, also be a settled matter in reality except for any minor incident that might occur by chance.

"India and Pakistan had still many problems to solve, some of which caused anxiety."

Imperialist Creation

This is a sober estimate of what actually has been achieved and what needs watching and above all what more still needs to be worked for. The border problem was an artificial creation, it had no business to be there with elementary good sense on the other side. It was what the New

DURGAPUR has done it again. Defective piles to begin with. Then ISCON economic blackmail in the form of extra fees to commission the plant. Now comes news of the slaughter of Indian working men and women. It is going to be a costly affair this British-built plant—costly in Indian money, time and lives. But quick Government action can still remedy the loss or, at least, alleviate it. And some action seems to have begun.

K. Sen, General Manager of the Durgapur Steel Project Section of Hindustan Steel Limited, is said to have written a stiff letter to D. J. Bell, General Manager of ISCON, on August 4 this year.

Six Indians lost their lives in a gruesome accident on April 27. About this K. Sen reportedly wrote: "It was impossible to escape the conclusion that organisation and supervision of work were most deficient and the failure on the part of the supervisory staff to follow the necessary rules of safety was a contributory factor in the occurrence of the accident and the loss of life."

But in spite of strict warnings and instructions from the Indian side, the British ISCON bosses went their customary way—contemptuous and callous towards the "coolies." The result was three more deaths: Gopal Mandal Durgadahan on June 4; Anil Kumar Guha on July 25; and Nirsu (politely called "a female mazdoor") on August 3.

About these tragic accidents K. Sen is said to have acidly commented in the same letter: "I have not received full details regarding the three acci-

dents. But the brief reports that I have had from your office tend to indicate that most, if not all, of these fatal accidents were also due to non-observance of the rules of safety and lack of adequate supervision and that the loss of life could have been prevented if those who are responsible for the organisation and supervision of the work had given the necessary attention to the rules of safety."

The letter is particularly sharp when it comes to the accident which cost Nirsu her life: "This surely was a kind of accident that no reputable engineering organisation should allow to take place in the course of its work."

It concludes on a sombre note: "The situation, as it appears today, is most disturbing. You will no doubt agree with me that we cannot allow any more lives to be lost on the site by a disregard of the rules of safety."

The final reaction of the British bosses is not yet known. All that D. J. Bell is said to have done is to put this matter of "native lives lost" as another item on the agenda for a routine Site Management Committee meeting. It is quite likely that nothing further has been done—or will, voluntarily, be done.

Nine Indians have died who could have been alive today, if only the British ISCON authorities had not treated them as rather cheap and expendable tools. More Indian lives are in jeopardy unless a strong protest is made. British bungling and mangling of our national wealth and the lives of our workers cannot be allowed to continue with impunity. We made them quit—we can and will make them behave!

October 28.

What Next?

last for ever. Whatever the motives on the other side, that this atmosphere has begun to dissipate and a new atmosphere is coming into being is sincerely to be welcomed.

This is the significance of the latest round of Indo-Pak conferences which have been meeting in an atmosphere of cordiality and the Eastern border settlement which is a significant gain and a hopeful sign.

Peace On Eastern Border

The representatives of the two Governments have declared that this is only the beginning of their mutual efforts to settle all outstanding problems through continuous negotiations. It has been acclaimed as good and happy news by the Press and the common people. Our Party heartily shares this healthy and good-neighbourly sentiment.

It is necessary for Indian opinion to realistically understand what has actually been achieved and what remain the tasks ahead as also the pitfalls to be avoided.

"We can look forward with confidence to an era of peace on the Indo-East Pakistan

troverial sector of the border. The Eastern border with Pakistan extends to about 2,484 miles of which only about 1,600 miles had been demarcated. Further disputes will be referred to an impartial tribunal.

Both countries have also agreed to implement in full last year's Nehru-Noon agreement.

The Press of the two countries has also been called upon to lend its helping hand by exercising restraint and promote friendly relations. The Indo-Pak Information Consultative Council has been revived.

The problems of border trade, travel and visa, another source of constant friction, were not settled. They will be taken up later.

Realistic Appraisal

Both sides have asserted with confidence and hope that in a similar "spirit of give and take," they will tackle and solve the problems on the Western border when they meet next.

A realistic appraisal has been made by the Indian Prime Minister in his Meerut speech (Hindustan Times, October 25) when he called the new agreement "a welcome step.

York Times has called a "peripheral" problem, a minor one, an irritant, while the major one was the Canal dispute, the heart of the problem being Kashmir. The problem as a whole was an imperialist creation.

The very fact that the most irritating, the border problem has been solved, a big general desire has grown that other problems be also promptly tackled in the same spirit of give and take and Indo-Pak relations normalised. New possibilities have certainly opened up and they must be systematically pursued, and the people of both countries assured peace and security.

In welcoming these developments, we do insist on a realistic appraisal rejecting all exaggerations and warning against the attempts to turn these developments into a bridgehead to steps which would only bring permanent harm to the country and our national interests.

The sincere and healthy desire of our people for friendship with Pakistan is being exploited by the pro-imperialist politicians and parties to lead India up the garden path. The very elements who in the past demanded war against Pakistan today call for a defence pact with Pakistan! The

very elements who accused Pandit Nehru of appeasement towards Pakistan now charge him of the same weakness vis a vis China. The target has been changed and also the tactical approach.

The New Background

This enigma cannot be understood without taking note of the shifts in U. S. policy and drawing the necessary conclusions. In the heyday of Dullesism Pakistan was the ramming rod and India the victim in the long chain of U. S. policy of strength to achieve world domination.

The U. S. imperialist dream stands shattered, thanks to the wisdom of Soviet diplomacy, the strength and solidarity of the powerful Socialist camp, the determined refusal of the uncommitted nations to enter the imperialist system of military alliances and their support instead to the cause of struggle against international tension and for peaceful negotiations. It was visible even to the naked eye, it became the common consciousness of people, the world over, that the U. S. policy was insane, bankrupt and had failed. This bitter lesson was being driven home even to the U. S. rulers. Hence the new postures now being tried and

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POLITICAL REHABILITATION OF DISCREDITED ROY GOVT.

* FROM JNAN BIKASH HOITRA

Prime Minister Nehru visited West Bengal on October 21 to "see for himself," as officially announced earlier, the ravages caused by the recent floods. But it is extremely doubtful whether he could get a complete picture of the extent of the devastation and the colossal sufferings of the flood-affected people.

IN course of the 350-mile survey, mostly aerial, of five out of the nine affected districts, the helicopter in which he travelled, landed at only three villages. But the destruction and damage in and around these villages are far less severe than in any other areas. Yet these spots were selected by the district authorities under instructions from the State Government.

Neither in these villages nor in Calcutta did the Prime Minister deem it necessary to acquaint himself with the non-official viewpoints regarding the many urgent issues posed by the disastrous floods.

Even the Congress Mayor of Calcutta complained that the misery of the people of the

city and the need for immediate relief were not properly presented to the Prime Minister during his recent visit. "I have been waiting for an opportunity," he said in Calcutta on October 23, "to tell the Prime Minister about the acute distress of about 100,000 people in the city's south-eastern belt over an eight square mile area. But that opportunity never came."

Emphasising that serious differences existed between the Communist Party and many others on the one hand and the Government and other official agencies like the DVC on the other, a memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister on the same day by Jyoti Basu and

Bhupesh Gupta on behalf of the Party, rightly pointed out: "We should have thought that in view of this, your programme here would be so arranged as to make it possible for you to acquaint yourself with the viewpoints in addition to the official ones. But from the programme announced by the authorities, it would appear that they had thought otherwise in the matter."

Drawing the Prime Minister's attention to the fact that "all Calcutta papers are strongly critical of the Government and other official bodies like the DVC," the memorandum expressed the apprehension that "you are likely to have a one-sided picture of the entire situation."

Addressing a Press Conference in Calcutta shortly after his return from the tour, the Prime Minister said, when asked for a message to the suffering people of the State, "keep smiling and work hard."

But it is difficult to keep smiling when the stomach is empty. And when it came to

the question of the Centre's assistance to West Bengal for the relief of the distressed, the Prime Minister evaded a straight answer by declaring that it was too early to say anything in the matter.

He did not forget to repeat the moth-eaten slander that some political parties (obviously, referring to Left parties) were using the East Pakistan refugees, now living in Government camps, as pawns in their political game.

"We know," he claimed, "how the situation has been exploited by some political parties, coming in the way of dispersal, and how contributions came from camps to the coffers of these political parties. It is such a shameful position for any party to take up."

But, quite naturally, he had not a word to say about the utterly shamefaced manner in which his own party in West Bengal has been trying to make political capital out of the uncountable sufferings of the people.

This was why he gave an evasive reply when he was asked whether the Government would coordinate official and non-official relief activities.

Many people here are inclined to believe that the primary purpose of the Prime Minister's visit was to help in the political rehabilitation of the ruling party after its complete isolation from the masses during the recent food movement.

There is now little room for doubt that one of the chief objectives of the State Government in selecting the three villages referred to above, was to show the Prime Minister that the "model" houses built under its "Build Your Own House" (BYOH) scheme had withstood the floods while the mud-built huts in the same area had collapsed.

The memorandum further points out that the State Government and the Chief Minister, Dr. B. C. Roy, are showing an inexplicably narrow partisan attitude, lacking in imagination and human sympathy not to speak of a cooperative spirit. It points out that it is most unfortunate that in a national calamity of this dimension, which needs to be faced unitedly by all and by coordinating both official and non-official efforts, such should have been their attitude and approach.

What Nehru Was Shown

To cite an instance, many areas in Nadia District have been far more severely affected than Ballavpur. Yet this particular village was singled out for the Prime Minister's visit, obviously because the BYOH huts there have not been damaged.

But despite the official claim that these houses are more durable than the ordinary huts, the reality is that a very large number of them have been either severely damaged or completely razed to the ground by the recent floods.

Even the Statesman reported in its issue of October 24: "If the condition in the areas on both banks of the Ganga as one goes downstream from Katwa town is any indication, about 4,000 huts built under the 'Build Your Own House' scheme must have either collapsed or been seriously damaged as a result of the floods in West Bengal."

The State Government's attitude continues to be one of utter callousness towards the sufferings of the people. Little wonder that the amount of relief is still extremely meagre.

A Special Correspondent of the Statesman wrote on October 23:

"Those rendered destitute by this year's floods in West Bengal and now depending entirely on the Government's gratuitous relief take only one meal a day and that too 'in the nature of a snack' to quote a villager of Bablari, Nadia."

But even this token relief is now being stopped on the plea that "the phase of emergency relief operations has ended."

A few instances are given below:

● In Nabadwip town, no less than 40,000 distressed persons have been denied gratuitous relief on one pretext or another.

● One after another, camps which had been set up for the flood victims are being closed and the inmates are being asked to go back to their villages even when these villages are still submerged in waist-deep water.

● In many areas, the amount of relief given so far has been already cut by 40 to 50 per cent and the people who have lost their all, are being told to purchase their requirements from modified ration shops.

The Communist Party's memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister deals with the

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Communist Memorandum To Nehru

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many urgent issues posed by the disastrous floods. These relate to the more basic causes of the calamity, including the acts of omission and commission on the part of the authorities, and also to the immediate problems of relief and succour for nearly half a crore of distressed people who are now passing through unaccountable agony and sufferings.

The memorandum further points out that the State Government and the Chief Minister, Dr. B. C. Roy, are showing an inexplicably narrow partisan attitude, lacking in imagination and human sympathy not to speak of a cooperative spirit. It points out that it is most unfortunate that in a national calamity of this dimension, which needs to be faced unitedly by all and by coordinating both official and non-official efforts, such should have been their attitude and approach.

Suggestions For Relief

The memorandum makes a series of concrete suggestions for relieving the distress of the flood-hit population as also for controlling devastating floods.

The measures proposed are as follows:-

● Measures for relieving people's present distress and for their subsequent rehabilitation: In view of the magnitude of the distress, emergency relief operations must be continued till the end of December or the beginning of January next, when harvesting will start. Meanwhile, lists should be prepared of the number of people who need relief and the period for which they require it. Lists should also be drawn up regarding the number of houses to be repaired or built anew.

While this work goes on, relief operations should be continued in the following forms:-

1. Adequate number of tents and clothes should be immediately distributed.

2. Gratuitous relief should be given on an extensive scale to the distressed and unemployed people in the flood-affected areas till the next harvesting season.

3. Fodder should be supplied free of cost and arrangements should be made for the supply of straw at cheap rates.

4. Medical help should be rushed to the distressed areas, and preventive as well as curative measures should be undertaken on a large scale.

5. Emergency help should be given to the peasants for the sowing of alternative crops. For this purpose, seeds of boro paddy, masoor, khesari, gram, wheat, onions, etc. should be made available within the next 15 days.

Along with the supply of seeds, agricultural and subsistence loans amounting to about Rs. ten crores, should be distributed.

Special financial assistance should be given for the cultivation of paddy (betal leaves).

6. There should be remission of rents, agricultural loans and canal taxes for the current year,

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New String To U. S. Aid

THE return of the Finance Minister from the United States—where he had gone to sound the authorities and businessmen about the assistance they can give to India during the next Plan period—has ironically synchronised with the announcement of the new lending policy in Washington.

Covering as it does the credits from the President's Development Loan Fund (DLF)—the only worthwhile credits from the United States whose use was till now "open"—it has tied almost all American credits to purchase in the U. S. And since prices there are at least 25 to 30 per cent above the world level, the net value of the credits, too, gets to that extent depleted.

EXPLANATION

The U. S. has explained this step on the basis of some apparently very plausible reasons. Its Marshall Plan aid to West European countries, it says, has made them economically sufficiently strong to export substantial amounts of their capital to underdeveloped regions. These countries have further benefited from orders placed with them by recipient countries for purchases out of the U. S. assistance. The U. S. funds have thus gone to provide markets to other industrialised countries, leaving the original "benefactor" high and dry.

The utilisation of U. S. funds in other countries has enabled the latter to augment their reserves of dollars, while reduced off-take of American goods has resulted in the U. S. itself incurring deficits in balance of payments. On the face of it, such a situation, no doubt, sounds ludicrous, since an economy, supposed to be nourishing and feeding unmet needs, cannot possibly come to face such an unenviable situation. But now that such a situation has come to pass the U. S. authorities have naturally laid the blame for it at every door except their own.

The West European countries are thus to blame not only for snatching the maximum orders from the recipient countries, but also for restricting their imports from the United States. The recipient countries in their turn, are accused of being so inconsiderate as to go in for purchase of cheaper goods from elsewhere, rather than importing their requirements from one country which had been so generous in dispensing its largesse. The result has been a "hoarding" in U. S. gold reserves—with the drain during the first eight months of 1959 alone amounting to as much as 3.3 billion dollars. Obviously, these are disquieting

trends. And yet, could the role of the U. S. itself in the whole affair be as innocent as it has made it out to be.

To answer this question, however, we have to begin at the beginning—and that is the period when the war-ravaged economies of Western Europe were sought to be rebuilt out of the Marshall Aid, doled out by the U. S. to siphon off the surfeit of dollars, accumulated by it during the war years. These were indiscriminately handed out to reactionary Governments to buy U. S. goods to rebuild industries, the political string being suppression of Communist and other democratic elements which had emerged vastly stronger from resistance against fascism.

It was, however, a one-way traffic, with the West European countries denied the prospects of repaying the dollar credits through exports. The result was a "dollar shortage"—which forced these countries to curb imports from the United States. They also began to think more and more in terms of closed trade groupings, to pool their resources to lessen dependence both on the United States as well as on the underdeveloped countries from whom they imported raw materials.

The U. S. had, however, its own axe to grind through one of the groupings, the European Common Market—scheme. It sought to initially build it up against the U. K.—assigning the key role in this inter-imperialist conflict to its protégé, Adenauer's Germany. Little did it realise, however, that what is sauce for the goose might as well be the same for the gander as is borne out by the very same West Germany—reared by the U. S.—turning out to be its economic rival, both in Western Europe as well as in less developed countries.

REAL REASON

Thus a Marshall aid, doled out initially to build a chain of economic and political satellites, dependent on the U. S. for their sustenance, resulted in raising a number of economic entities strong enough to pose a challenge to U. S. suzerainty in the capitalist world. The restrictionist policies of these rivals resulted in bringing down the level of U. S. exports last year to even below the 1956 level. Still the adverse balance would not have been so disquieting, if the U. S. had not continued to provide military assistance to these very countries. The result has been a net payments deficit of 4,500 million dollars a year—with the consequent drain on gold running into billions. Hence the adoption of the new policy to at least partially retrieve the situation.

It is thus mainly the

INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

logic of the earlier U. S. policies of insisting on one-way traffic which has come home to roost in the form of payments deficits. And yet, it has failed to draw the proper lesson, as is evident from its reluctance even now to accept the goods of the recipient countries as payment for aid.

The United States has also justified adoption of the new lending policy on the plea that other aid-giving countries, too, enjoy spending of their aid on purchases from them. While there is no gainsaying the technical validity of this statement, it ignores to take note of certain very basic differences between the U. S. aid and assistance from other countries. FIRST, the prices in these countries are much lower than in the U. S. and SECONDLY, at least some of them—especially in the Socialist world—have always been willing to accept repayment in goods.

THE DILEMMA

The spokesmen of the U. S. Government have sought to mollify the disappointment which the new policy has caused in quarters banking on DLF aid. It would bring in more assistance from the West European countries, they say. Apart from the fact, however, that this capital will seek opportunities for investment in the private sector—which may not suit the requirements of some countries like ours—even its availability in any large measure is problematical. Even if it comes, however, its terms may be as irksome as that of the U. S., as is evident from the series of steps they have taken to impede imports from underdeveloped countries.

The United States is thus faced with a dilemma. If it continues to give aid on the former scale and terms, its payments position worsens. If it cuts it and makes the terms stricter its good name suffers. Hence, it seeks assistance of other capitalist countries to keep up the quantum of assistance, lest the underdeveloped world begins to shed its illusions about the capacity of international capitalism to help it rebuild its economy. Such an eventuality, however, can no longer be warded off, as even the spokesmen of capitalism have begun to realise now.

Thus, the London Observer has referred to "the most serious contradiction in modern capitalism" manifesting itself in "its inability to spread the fruits of growing productivity on an international scale." "Now that the dollar problem has disappeared," it says, "and even the United States itself is facing balance of payments difficulties, there is risk that the problems of the

underdeveloped countries will become still more serious".

As opposed to this note of dismay marking the expectations from the United States and other capitalist countries, prospects of obtaining assistance from the Socialist world are very bright. The terms on which this assistance is given are vastly different from those attaching to the capitalist aid. First, they provide for repayment through increase in trade. Secondly, the rates of interest (usually at 2.5 per cent) are also much lower than the four to five per cent charged by the World Bank and other western agencies.

The most notable feature of this assistance, however, concerns the projects for which it is given. Enough has been written in these columns about the great significance which projects like Bhilai, Ranchi, Baranli and those for drugs manufacture have for strengthening the foundations of our independent economy. The United States has not been able to offer a single project to the public sector to date to match any of these either in magnitude or quality. And whatever of projects the other two stalwarts of capitalism—the U. K. and West Germany—have offered are yet bogged in their "teething troubles".

The USSR has been the first country to offer assistance (totalling about Rs. 180 crores) for our Third Plan. More such assistance, repayable in our goods, is in the offing. The U. S. on the contrary, is invoking other capitalist countries to route their private capital here to build a nest for themselves in our economy. Its own capital, too, is anxious to invest provided enough safeguards are given. Its thus is a quest to strengthen the private sector to deflect the country from its nationally-accepted path to Socialism.

OUR DEMAND

The U. S. has appended a new string to its aid to make us repay it through our very nose. None, not even the most inveterate pro-U. S. circles, represented by Commerce, for example, have, however, been taken in by the dubious explanations which it has offered in its justification. To beat it we, from our side, have to append another string to all aid we receive: that we will repay it only through increase in our exports. If we do it, it will not be only the Socialist countries which will be willing to render us adequate assistance. Others, too, in need of our raw materials, etc., may in course of time curb their acquisitive propensities to offer us aid on honourable terms.

—ESSEN
October 26

FRIENDSHIP—AT WHOSE EXPENSE?

ASANSOLE'S small airport is usually deserted and in any case dirty. Suddenly early this month everybody at this airport was busy cleaning and polishing. For quite some days this went on to the astonishment of the general public.

At 11 a.m. on D-Day all the big-wigs and small-wigs of Asansole were seen scuttling to the airport, the memsahibs and chhotas memsahibs all spick, span and lipstick, ready with garlands and bouquets. At a few minutes past 11.30 a.m., a special plane of the Indian Airlines taxied to a halt and out of it popped Jagjivan Ram, Swaran Singh, the General Managers of the Eastern Railway and the Railway Project, as well as their deputies. The tumult of applause, the competitive rush with the flowers was all a sight indeed.

But had these Cabinet Ministers and top tinsdors arrived for some inspection tour? Or had they come to cheer up the miners and workers with messages to produce more? The town was agog to know.

The anxious queries were soon enough answered. The dignitaries proceeded in a body to the house of the biggest railway contractor in Asansole. This particular moneyed patron of the Congress was marrying off his daughter and for this purpose the Cabinet Ministers had hurried down. His only regret was that urgent business called them back to Delhi that very evening and only a ten-course lunch could be served—if only they could have stayed on for dinner!

This is all very well—

SCRAP-BOOK

friendship is a noble virtue, we know, and Ministers can indulge their fancies. But we would like to be told who paid for this special plane? Not the poor tax-payer, we hope!

PSP LEADERS' ANTICS

THE National Executive of the PSP pompously declared that it does not, at all, think in terms of a coalition with the Congress. Kerala and West Bengal, of course, tell a different story. And now has come the turn of Maharashtra.

S. M. Joshi had some very laboured explanations to offer about his conclave with Nehru. The whole game has, however, been given away in a letter by D. B. Karnik to Chief Minister Chavan.

Karnik is the Delhi Correspondent of the Marathi paper Kesari. He is also distinguished as that very rare specimen—a Royist. But his ideological affiliation has also its utility since Chavan, too, once flirted with Royist ideas and to this day treats benignly its adherents. So to influence Chavan, win Karnik as your contact—such was the conclusion N. G. Goray the PSP leader, came to.

Goray had written to Chavan but did not manage even to get a reply. And so on September 12, Karnik wrote: "I had long talks with Goray yester-

day.... You will be happy to know that he looks up to you as the one man thrown out by the States in the post-independence period to attain national stature.

"It is time, he says that all democratic schools of thought, of course, positively excluding the Communists, and men of democratic ideas should come together in Maharashtra to build up a real democratic prosperous Maharashtra State. That unity of democratic forces in one State may pave the way for bringing about the much needed unity of democratic forces in the entire country.

"Personally, I do feel that is the only way to stop the onrushing forces of Communism. Goray is quite sincere when he says this. I don't know if you could write to him or meet him in Bombay when he arrives there on or about the 22nd of this month."

There can be no questioning the authenticity of the letter—a full photostat has appeared in the Marathi of October 19.

The PSP leaders have always fed their followers on the lie that the Communists are never sincere about united fronts, that they let down their allies, etc. But the boot is on the other foot. Goray's stab-in-the-back is aimed not only at the Maharashtrian masses and the Communists; but at some of his own PSP colleagues—lest they get ahead in the race

to join the Congress in a Coalition Ministry! Let S. M. Joshi not count his chickens too early.

STRANGE LOANS

TWO queer cases have been brought to our notice from Uttar Pradesh.

● In 1954-55, five peasants from Itaunja were given Government loans, since they were backed by an influential MLA. Some money was paid on their schemes being sanctioned and when certified completed—the whole loan was paid out. But later when an inspector of the Agricultural Department went to the place he found—no scheme, no five peasants, and of course, no Government money!

● In the same area, thanks to the influence of the local MLA and Harijan Welfare Supervisor a loan was sanctioned for constructing a well for the Harijans. A report, duly certified, was received that the well had been constructed. But again some benighted inspector came on the scene and found—no well, no applicant and nobody who knew anything about the loan.

Inscrutable, indeed, are the ways of Congress Government financiers!

ONLOOKER

October 27

CPI Secretariat Statement On Ladakh Incident

THE Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India has issued the following statement to the Press in New-Delhi on October 24, 1959:

The recent clash in Eastern Ladakh between Indian and Chinese forces that resulted in the death of 17 Indians has naturally given rise to feelings of deep resentment and indignation among our people.

Coming so soon after the exchange of friendly greetings between the Prime Ministers of the two countries, this tragic event has shocked our people all the more.

Our Party shares the sentiments of our people and conveys its deepest sympathies to the families of those who have died.

Divergent versions of this incident have been given by the Indian and Chinese Governments. But, taking into account all the

circumstances and especially the fact that it was a disputed territory, the Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India, is of the opinion that there was no justification whatsoever for the firing which resulted in such heavy loss of life. We hope such incidents will not occur again and firing will not be resorted to under any circumstances.

Border clashes and firings not only cause casualties but also poison the atmosphere and make negotiations, which both Governments desire, more difficult.

The latest incident underlines the gravity of the situation and shows that it cannot be allowed to deteriorate any further without serious consequences. We would strongly urge, therefore, that the Heads of the two Governments, Jawaharlal Nehru and Chou En-lai, should meet immediately and take steps to

reduce the tension and settle the disputes amicably.

Later reports have brought the number of killed from seventeen to nine. A Press-Note of the Government of India on October 26, said that "It was presumed that these seventeen had been killed. It now appears from the Chinese note received yesterday that they arrested three persons on the first day and on the second day they captured seven Indians. They also recovered nine dead bodies. Thus, the latest information is that nine Indians died in this clash and altogether ten, including a porter, were captured by the Chinese forces. Of the twenty persons missing, nineteen are thus accounted for. One is still untraced. According to the Chinese account there were some casualties on their side also, but the number is not known."

Kidnapping—Congress Election Tactic

From V. HANUMANTHA RAO

TO the already long list of foul practices in elections, the Andhra Congress has added yet another one: kidnapping of candidates and elected representatives.

At the stage of filing nomination, at the stage of election of president or at the stage of presidents electing the president of the Panchayat Samiti—at any of these stages, persons involved in the elections from the Opposition side stand the risk of being whisked away to unknown places and released only after that stage is over.

This is being practised by the Congress Party and the landlords in the elections to panchayats which are being conducted presently, on such a scale that it is causing quite some consternation among the democratic-minded people.

Elections to panchayats have assumed great importance in Andhra after the enactment of a legislation to decentralise the administration.

The Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads Act has provided for a three-tier administration at the local level, local organs being elected on the basis of indirect elections. Elections are first held to panchayats, presidents of which will constitute the membership of the Panchayat Samiti. They elect one from among themselves as President of the Samiti. Again, the Presidents of all Panchayat Samitis, MLAs and MPs in the district along with a few co-opted members form the Zilla Parishad.

It is natural that in this system of representation, the possibilities of capturing Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads depend wholly on the prospects in the elections to the panchayats. A majority in

the panchayat, a majority of panchayats and a majority of samitis—the whole system is so fabricated that one depends very much on the other.

Because of the importance assumed by panchayats, villages which have so far been comparatively peaceful have now been dragged into active election politics, diverting their energies from development activities and vitiating the atmosphere. It would be wholly wrong to presume that things would settle down in villages once the elections are over, if one remembers the ferocity of village feuds and politics.

At the time of the formation of the panchayat itself, grouping of small villages into one panchayat is so done that the strength of the Opposition parties in any village is more than off-set by adding a few Congress strongholds. This happened in Khammam and Warangal Districts.

At the time of division of panchayats into different wards, in the Andhra area, voters from different blocks are picked and put together in one ward for the purpose of election to suit Congress purposes. In the Telangana area, a section of the voters in a village in the panchayat are clubbed together with a section of voters in another far-flung village.

While this is the general pattern, there were cases of a different nature also. For example, in a village in Guntur District, five small villages were clubbed together with a main village and constituted into a panchayat. Five seats were allotted to the five villages and three seats to the main village. But since the Congress held sway in the main village a change was made in the allocation of seats—five seats were allocated

for the main village and three for the five villages!

For panchayat elections, people can enlist themselves as voters up to a week prior to the polling day. But in many instances, lists were submitted by Congressmen even on the day before polling and they were accepted by the polling authorities. Sometimes, just to make a show of impartiality, Opposition parties were also invited to send their lists, but in the scrutiny a majority of the names from the Opposition lists were rejected. It happened in the taluk from which the President of the Pradesh Congress hailed, it happened in another village in Kurnool (Durveesi) and in Ponnasala (Guntur District), to quote only a couple of instances.

The stage is now set for nominations. If the Congress felt that it stood little chance of winning the elections, candidates of Opposition parties were whisked away, while there were on the way to file their nominations. Only Congressmen file nominations and they are declared elected unopposed! After that the kidnapped persons are released. This happened in Nellore, Krishna and West Godavari Districts.

At the time of polling, the usual harassment of voters—threats, reprisals, beating up, purchase of votes, all the Congress malpractices—follows.

At the time of declaration of results, too, Congress leaders interfere, hold up announcement of results or tear off election papers.

In a village in Nellore District, after declaration of result in a ward which went in favour of the Communists, the local MLA intervened. He forcibly took away papers along with the election officers.

In a village in Chittoor District, a relative of the Food Mi-

SALUTE ALGERIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Editorial

On November 1 it will be five years since the people of Algeria took to arms to regain their national independence. In

course of these five years, the entire resources and all the brutality that a dying decrepit colonialism could muster have been called forth and put into action to suppress this just struggle.

France has by now concentrated in Algeria all its ground forces—some seven lakhs, sixty per cent of its air force and ninety per cent of its navy. Throughout this campaign of suppression, it has enjoyed the moral and material support of the Holy Alliance of imperialism, NATO.

An unarmed people have not only withstood this combined might and repeated onslaughts, they have successfully wrought the weapons to carry the fight to a victorious finish. The Algerian National Liberation Army has scored brilliant victories, inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and liberated vast areas from French control.

A Provisional Government composed of leaders of the national movement, constituted over a year ago, has become the focus of this national resistance. While support and recognition for this Government has snowballed both internally and externally, the oft-repeated French claims of having attained or approaching the attainment of the so-called pacification of Algeria, have all turned out to be so many hoaxes, latest of these being the referendum organised by the de Gaulle Government.

Caught in the mess of their own creation, the French imperialists have now come out with a new plan claiming to grant self-determination to Algeria. This new plan, however, demands that the Algerian people give up their arms and disband their national army and only four years after the French are satisfied that peace has been restored in Algeria, they will be pleased to hold under the benign supervision of their occupation army, another referendum like the last one. The Algerians will have the option of declaring for secession from France—with Sahara continuing to remain French at all costs!

Even for this plan, the French would not enter into negotiations with the Provisional Algerian Government.

Although fascist elements in France have come out in open opposition to this plan which at least formally recognises the principle of self-determination, it remains a fact that as it stands the plan is another manoeuvre of the colonialists on the eve of the discussion of the Algerian question by the United Nations.

The cause of Algeria has become the cause of entire Asia and Africa. The heroic struggle of the Algerian people has become a source of inspiration for the people all over Africa. At this crucial stage in the course of their struggle, we are sure the people and Government of India will step up their support to Algeria, both outside and at the U.N. The French imperialists must be compelled to enter into negotiations with the provisional Algerian Government on the basis of genuine recognition of self-determination.

(October 28)

minister hearing that his group was defeated, rushed to the office of the polling officer, tore up the papers and went out.

In a third village in Guntur District, when the election results went against the Congress Party, Congress leaders rushed to Hyderabad and got a stay order from the Ministers.

Cooption of the woman member is yet another occasion when such foul methods are adopted. Meetings of the newly elected members are called for cooption of a woman member, but suddenly cancelled.

In cases where the strength of both the parties is equal, lots are drawn by the officer himself. There were complaints that the same name was written on both the chits, that the chit on which the name of the Congress candidate was written was folded in a different way, that the polling officer unfolded the chits and read out the name of the Congress candidate refusing to show the chit to those present. Thus, the results were deliberately sought to be turned against the Opposition, in collusion with the officers.

The most shocking example of malpractices at the time of presidential election comes from a village in West Godavari District, where the Congress candidate was declared elected despite the fact that he got less votes! Elections were suddenly postponed.

Despite all these machinations, if the Opposition managed to capture any panchayats, Ministers, who are approached directly by Congressmen, issued stay orders, sometimes even without consulting the department concerned.

With the elections to Panchayat Samitis in progress, reports are coming in of presidents of panchayats being whisked away and kept under illegal custody (Medak District) until the Samiti elections are over.

It is to be noted that people who employ such undemocratic and illegal methods, who do not stop at anything to win, will adorn the presidential chairs in Samitis and Parishads, which are gaddied with wide powers and at whose disposal lakhs of rupees are kept. One can easily imagine the fate of these Samitis and Parishads, the fate of the people under administration by such people.

The Government of Orissa also has drafted a Land Reforms Bill though Chief Minister Mahatab is one of those who have in the past been a bitter critic of ceiling. He had written a number of articles in his daily "Prajatantra" against ceiling. His overnight change to become a protagonist of ceiling and a strict adherent of the Nagpur Congress resolution has not deceived anybody.

His real intention becomes evident when it is seen that the Orissa Land Reform Bill is so drafted as to satisfy both the Nagpur resolution as well as the arch feudal elements of the State. The Bill was published in March and in June the Congress-Ganatantra Parishad coalition Ministry was formed. It is against this background that the main provisions of the Bill have to be examined.

Concentration Of Land

Before analysing the Bill and its ceiling provisions, it is necessary to know something about landholdings in the State.

According to the 1951 census, 79.3 per cent of the population lives on agriculture. Seventy per cent of the families, holding land from one to five acres, possess 30 per cent of cultivated land, fourteen per cent of the families, holding land from six to ten acres, possess 22 per cent of the cultivated land and 9.1 per cent of the families, having land from ten to thirty acres, possess 30 per cent of the cultivated land and 2.4 per cent of the families who have holdings of more than 30 acres possess 13 per cent of the cultivated land.

Thus while 84 per cent of the cultivating families having land from one to ten acres possess only 52 per cent of the cultivated land, 16 per cent possess 48 per cent of the cultivated land. On the one hand there is the predominance of small peasantry and on the other there is the concentration of land. Besides there are nearly twelve lakh families who are landless, constituting nearly 33 per cent of the population.

Any land reform worth the name, in such a situation, will have to solve the three basic problems: FIRST, the land concentration must be broken; SECOND, the landless must be given land; and THIRD, the small peasantry must be protected, defended and strengthened.

Land Reform In Reverse

The Orissa Bill not only fails to satisfy these three basic demands, it also acts against the very purpose of land reform. Without any exaggeration it can be said that the Bill is a caricature of land reform.

Section 39 of the Bill provides for a ceiling of 33 standard acres. Sub-section 27 of Section 2 defines standard acres as follows: "standard acre means one acre of perennial irrigated land or one-and-a-half acres of seasonably irrigated land, or two acres of rain-fed land or three acres of dry land." As



ORISSA LAND CEILING FARCE

the ceiling. So in a joint family several persons individually will be entitled to hold land up to the ceiling area.

SECONDLY, the ceiling is laid down for a person as landholder or ryot or tenant. But what about a landlord? How much land can he hold? Landlord as defined in Sub-Section 17 of Section 2 is a person whose land is cultivated by a ryot or tenant on payment of rent. By subsequent explanation a ryot also can be a landlord in relation to his tenant and Government shall be deemed to be the landlord in respect of land directly held by it. If the term landlord is omitted to exempt Government land from ceiling, one can perhaps understand it. But the Bill leaves it deliberately vague making it possible for a person to claim exemption from ceiling as landlord.

Section 40 provides for the exemptions to ceilings and they offer the best opportunity to those who want to evade the provision of ceiling itself. Exemptions are: coffee and casuarina plantations, compact blocks of orchards, specialised farms engaged in cattle-breeding and dairy, sugar-cane farms operated by sugar factories, efficiently managed farms, lands held by cooperative farming societies, lands held by religious, charitable or education institutions and so on.

Evasion Made Possible

After all these exemptions one wonders to whom the ceiling will apply.

LAND FOR THE LANDLORDS

Everybody knows that these are the methods generally applied by the landlords to evade ceilings. But in Orissa, these methods have not yet been resorted to. There are neither any efficiently managed farms nor any cooperative farms worth the name. By providing for such exemptions, the Government is actually suggesting to the landlords the methods they should adopt to escape the ceiling provision. Religious institutions in Orissa possess thousands of acres of land and if ceiling is not applied on these lands, where is the point of providing for ceiling at all?

Section 41 of the Bill deals with the maximum extent of land which can be held by a person. Under this section, no person is entitled to hold either by himself or through any member of his family for personal cultivation either as a landholder or a ryot or a tenant, any land in excess of ceiling area excluding homestead.

An analysis of this gives interesting conclusion.

FIRST instead of a family, a person can hold land for self-cultivation not exceed-

more than 80 per cent of land is rain-fed or dry, for all practical purpose, the ceiling will be 66 to 99 acres.

Not only this, another provision in the section, according to which the ceiling may vary having regard to the situation of the land and its productive capacity, will further add to the ceiling given above.

Section 40 provides for the exemptions to ceilings and they offer the best opportunity to those who want to evade the provision of ceiling itself.

THIRDLY, illegal transfers, mutation, sales, etc., are not banned and no definite time limit is fixed as to when the Bill will be brought into force. Sufficient opportunity and time are thus given to the landowning class to make the necessary arrangements for evading ceiling.

Section 29 provides that a landlord may, subject to certain conditions, terminate a tenancy, if the landlord intends to personally cultivate the lands and for that he gives a notice in writing to the tenant within a period of three

Fair To Landlords

months from the appointed day.

There are certain restrictions also. The first restriction is that a landlord holding under personal cultivation land exceeding the ceiling area shall not be entitled to terminate the tenancy. Second, a landlord holding under his personal cultivation land more than an economic holding may resume land not exceeding the ceiling area, provided that no such resumption shall be made where a tenant as a result of such resumption is left with lands less than an economic holding. Third, a landlord holding under his personal cultivation land less than an economic holding shall resume land up to the economic holding including land under his personal cultivation and if as a result of this resumption, the tenant is left without an economic holding, the tenant will get some amount of compensation from the landlord.

Here the drafters of the Bill have made an effort to make out that justice has

been done both to the landlords and tenants. By giving the right of resumption, justice has been done to the landlord, by putting restrictions, justice has been given to the tenant. But the latter is a myth, only the former is the truth.

When the landlord is given the right to keep land for self-cultivation exceeding the ceiling, it serves a double purpose. In the name of self-cultivation, the landlord is allowed to keep more than the ceiling and then wide scope is given for evictions. Against this, the restrictions have no meaning. The big landlords will be hit to the extent that they will lose the land if they cannot resume it and they cannot resume it because they cannot cultivate it. So the small landlord will be compelled to let out the land to cooperatives.

In the name of giving relief to the share-croppers, what is craftily devised is promotion of landlord's cooperative farms and this is the main direction of the Bill.

Section 32 deals with the rights of tenants to acquire the right of occupancy in land. A tenant who is in lawful cultivation of the land on the first day of July 1954 and

continues thereafter may apply for purchasing the right of occupancy on payment of compensation if the landlord has not given notice under Section 29 for termination of tenancy or having given such a notice, has subsequently withdrawn it.

The compensation payable by a tenant for acquiring the right of occupancy is provided for in Section 34: "By agreement between the landlord and the tenant which may include mutual appointment of land or (b) where no agreement is arrived at, the rate shall be the value of 120 standard maunds of paddy per standard acre or three-fourths of the market value

* SEE PAGE 12

of the land whichever is less."

The tenant or the share-cropper will thus have to satisfy too many conditions to purchase occupancy right. First of all the option of selling the land lies with the landlord. Only if the landlord does not resume the land for self-cultivation, can the tenant apply for purchase. The provision for resumption is so wide as mentioned above that there will hardly be any land left for the tenants to purchase.

Secondly, the tenant will have to prove that he was cultivating the land on July 1, 1954, and continued thereafter. Share-croppers are not recorded and many share-croppers have been evicted since then. While it is laid down that the tenant has to prove that he had been in cultivation since July 1, 1954, there is no such condition laid down for the landlords. On the other hand, the landlord is given sufficient time to evict the tenant in order to show on some uncertain future date that he holds land even exceeding the ceiling under his personal cultivation.

Thirdly, for payment of compensation there should be mutual agreement between the landlord and the tenant. With such a provision in the Bill, it is not difficult to guess that it is the landlord who will gain in the agreement.

Fourthly, the rate of compensation will be nearly Rs. 1,000 at the present rate of paddy prices and these may go up still further by the time the Bill comes in force. So the provision for the purchase of occupancy right by the sharecropper will virtually remain on paper.

Occupancy Rights

Section 4 of the Bill seeks to give occupancy right to some classes of persons with heritable rights, called ryots. They are: a) Recorded non-occupancy ryots; b) Inam ryots in Ganjam and Koraput; c) Sub-tenants under the C. P. Act 1898 or the C. P. Act 1920 (in vogue in Samalpur and some parts of Kalandi); d) Under-ryots under Orissa Tenancy Act 1913; e) temporary lessees on land

continues thereafter may apply for purchasing the right of occupancy on payment of compensation if the landlord has not given notice under Section 29 for termination of tenancy or having given such a notice, has subsequently withdrawn it.

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* SEE PAGE 12

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BURY THE BLACK BILL

Amidst mass protest, hundreds of arrests outside the Assembly, forcible removal of Opposition MLAs, protest walk-out and cries of 'shame, shame', the Madhya Pradesh Congress Government with the help of the brute majority behind it in the Assembly, murdered the very spirit of our Constitution by railroading through the legislature two Draconian Bills—the Madhya Pradesh Essential Services Maintenance Bill and the Madhya Pradesh Public Security Bill.

IN Madhya Pradesh, there is no danger to the ruling Congress Party from the Opposition parties or from any other quarter for that matter. Why then such legislations in Madhya Pradesh of all the Indian States?

The answer is to be seen in the developments on the labour front in this State. For a long time now, the Madhya Pradesh branch of the INTUC and its leader Dravid, who is also the Labour Minister of the State, have been worried over the growing challenge from non-INTUC unions, specially the AITUC whose influence has been steadily increasing. All the more were they worried over their position in the newly-built steel industry—though it is well-nigh impossible for any opposition trade unionist to go into Bhilai, due to the continued suppression, harassment and persecution of trade union workers not belonging to the INTUC.

The INTUC has all along been given every facility and protection by the owners and the Government to sit tight on the workers but that has not prevented INTUC influence from waning. So, in order to wipe out all the opposition unions and to extend the monopoly grip of the INTUC, Labour Minister Dravid introduced two Bills in the legislature—the Industrial Relations Bill and the Trade Unions Amendment Bill. It needs no mention that the edge of both the Bills was directed against the opposition unions and this in complete violation of all the tripartite labour conventions.

Conference Of Trade Unions

It was only natural that all the different trade unions rose to a man against these Bills and in defence of their trade union rights. Initiated by the AITUC, a conference of all unions irrespective of their political affiliations was called at Bhopal and representatives from 52 unions with a membership of 60,000 from all industries like textiles, mines, bidi, bank, insurance, etc., attended the conference, chalked out a programme of action and set up a joint action committee.

Meanwhile Government employees were also getting ready to fight for their demands. After the integration of areas from four States, they were facing innumerable difficulties. Moreover, questions of their pay-scale and dearness allowance and the problems of integration had remained unsolved despite repeated requests.

Their patience exhausted, the Government employees moved into peaceful action. The successful one-day mass leave action on September 17, refusal to take pay on October 1, the decision to go on strike of October 7 and their growing unity and militancy unnerved and infuriated

the habit it should be with people."

● The Hindustan Times found it "difficult to discover the precise justification for the extension powers sought."

Protest Movement

The first action of the protest movement was the hunger-strike by five trade union leaders led by Govind Shrivastava and Dr. Gupta of the AITUC on September 24. This was the signal for mass protest actions. Jathas after jathas began to pour into Bhopal from different centres of Madhya Pradesh at the call of the Anti-Black Bills Trade Union Action Committee.

In utter disregard of the sentiments of the workers, employees and other democratic sections,

Struggle Continues In Madhya Pradesh

● FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

and employees who protested, but every section of the people conveyed their anger to the Government.

Even those sections of the Press, never known to be champions of the rights of the working people, wrote in protest.

Press Comment

● Under the caption, A Fell Measure, the Indian Express wrote, "The measure is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution. ... Emphasis is placed, rather, on the need to deal with 'subversive activities' ... This emphasis has caused considerable apprehension not only in the Opposition parties, but in the Congress itself. ... The Bill seems all the more unwarranted in view of the fact that effective steps are already being taken to counter the dauntless menace. ..."

● The Statesman wrote: "But the risks inherent in conferring such sweeping powers on the executive are hardly less serious in terms of democracy and fundamental rights. Restrictions on freedom have a habit of becoming unrestricted and then freedom sometimes ceases to be

THE BILL

THE Madhya Pradesh Public Security Bill empowers the Government or the Collector to restrict the "movement and actions" of any person, including the power to intern or intern any person and order him to report to the police. (Section 3)

● Section 12 gives the Government powers to control publications.

● By Section 14, the Government can impose collective fines. There is

no maximum limit on the collective fines that can be imposed nor any limit to the portion that should fall on an individual. So any amount of fine can be levied and realised from an individual.

● Under Chapter IV, drills and parades are brought under control and various restrictions are placed on processions and meetings by empowering the Collectors to ban the use of roads and pathways.

There was a complete general strike in the city, and a massive demonstration, estimated at about 20,000, marched with hundreds and hundreds of black flags shouting slogans like, "Withdraw Back Bills", "Down with the Congress dictatorial regime."

The huge procession wended its way towards the Assembly and was stopped at the regulated area. The leaders of the Action Committee addressed the people and then the first jatha of 24 led by Adhule (PSP), Utsavchandra (Jan Sangh) Ramachandra Sarwate, MLA (Communist Party) defined the ban on entry into the regulated area. They were arrested and sentenced to 15 days' simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 15 each.

On October 4, another jatha of 109 volunteers under the

The Select Committee on the Public Security Bill reported on the Bill without any Opposition member being allowed to write on it. It took the Committee just eight days to report on it. It is on the record of the Assembly proceedings that the Select Committee did not even consider the petitions addressed to the Assembly on the Bill.

Only five hours were allotted for discussion of the Bill in the Assembly, the Opposition getting about two hours giving about 12 to 15 minutes to each group. No member was allowed to move his amendments, not even reading of the amendments was allowed. All amendments numbering over a hundred were moved and voted together.

It was thus that a Bill of doubtful constitutional validity, a Bill most certainly undemocratic and against the spirit of the Constitution and the rule of the law was pushed through by the Congress majority in the Madhya Pradesh legislature.

But the battle is not over by any chance. The Bill has to be sent to the Rashtrapati for assent. A Statewide signature campaign, protest meetings and other forms of demonstrations are being organised to demand that the Rashtrapati withhold his assent and refer the Bill back to the Assembly.

Communists In Forefront

In the struggle so far against the Black Bills, the Communist Party has been in the forefront, a role it will continue to play in the next stage, too.

Without losing any time after the Bills were published, the Party launched a movement in the whole of the State and because it was an issue which had so much of importance for civil liberties and fundamental rights, the Party was able to unite a large number of democratic elements in the struggle to oppose the Bills.

As a result of this struggle, the first to be organised by the Party on a Statewide scale since the formation of new Madhya Pradesh, the Party's prestige, as a real defender of the democratic rights of the people, has gone every high.

Undemocratic Methods

The way the Bills were rushed through speaks a lot for the democratic methods by which the Congress swears. The Bills were published just on the eve of the September session of the Assembly, leaving almost no time for public opinion to express itself. An Opposition motion to circulate the Bill for eliciting public opinion was turned down.

While this INTUC farce was going on, workers were in action right in Bhopal itself.

ment has taken the right to place entire areas under surveillance and turn them into "controlled camps."

● By Chapter VII, Special Judges are constituted for trying offences under the Act, which are severely punishable, and the ordinary Criminal Procedure will stand waived.

● Every police officer has been given the power to arrest and search without any warrants.

Punjab Municipal Elections Reveal

Last week saw the end of the second round of elections to the Municipal Committees in the Punjab. The results of this round in which 57 towns of the State went to the polls, throw revealing light on the political situation in the State.

THE Congress and the Jan Sangh, the two major parties of urban Punjab, entered the elections in a big way and with high hopes. The Communist Party contested some selected seats under its own banner in the working class wards of some towns, while it sponsored a number of its members and friends as independent candidates in middle-class wards. Besides, it lent its support to a large number of independents who had clean records of public service and in a few places it also succeeded in forging a democratic front of all forward-looking candidates.

The results show a general move away from both the major parties, a big gain for the non-party independents and a significant advance by the Communists and their allies.

While the Congress has secured some impressive successes in a few small towns in Bhatinda and Amritsar Districts it has not fared well in medium towns, and in the two big towns, Jullundur and Ambala, it has come nowhere near its expectations.

The Jan Sangh has fared badly everywhere except in Ambala City, where alone it has emerged as the largest single group holding ten out of the 22 seats. The Congress won 11 seats out of 33 in Jullundur and the Jan Sangh only nine. The representation of both the parties has been reduced as compared to their strength in the outgoing municipality.

The Communists, for the first time, entered the civic life of Jullundur where one of their two official candidates was returned by a comfortable majority from the working class area of Bhanga camp. Besides five independents won due to the decisive support of the Communist Party.

In Ambala City, where the Congress got only six seats, two Communists and two Communist-supported independents have come out successful.

Significant Gains

The Communists and Communist-supported independents have made significant gains in medium towns. In Dharamsala, headquarters of Kangra District, six out of the eight independents who won, had the support of the Communist Party, while the Congress could get only two seats and the Jan Sangh was completely routed.

In the second biggest town of the district, Kangra, the President of the District Congress, Dr. Salig Ram, and a member of the Pradesh Congress, Sukdev Raj, both lost their seats. The President of the District Jan Sangh, Baij Nath and its General Secretary Govardhan, met a similar fate. And this despite the State Congress and Jan Sangh leaders concentrating on this hilly district and whipping up anti-Communist campaign by dragging in the India-China border and Tibet issues.

In Phillaur, the second most important town of Jullundur District, two Communists and

★ SHIFT AWAY FROM CONGRESS

★ SETBACK FOR JAN SANGH

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Our Constitution and parliamentary democracy are being assailed from various angles. A recent article in the Tribune by former Supreme Court Chief Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan called for giving up the federal system and adoption of a unitary system of Government. Here Punjab Communist leader Master Hari Singh makes an analysis of Mahajan's article. —Editor.

IN his article Mahajan has reiterated the suggestion which he says he had made three years earlier for scrapping the present federal Constitution and replacing it by a unitary one. Under this constitution, all legislative power would be concentrated in the Central Parliament and executive power in the Central Cabinet. Elections to Parliament would be held indirectly through village, district and provincial panchayats. The State legislatures would be scrapped. Existing linguistic States would disappear and in their place large-sized administrative units analogous to railway zones would be created. Governors assisted by advisers appointed by Central authority would administer these new provinces. Centrally-enacted uniform laws would prevail all over the country.

Mahajan's proposal which he himself calls a drastic solution seeks to change the federal bourgeois democratic Constitution, which to a certain extent embodies the fundamental and democratic rights of people, although in essence it is meant to protect the property rights of the vested interests, into a unitary authoritarian Constitution. It is a suggestion for setting up a personal or oligarchical dictatorship a la de Gaulle, if not a la Ayub, to check the advance of the democratic movement which may take advantage of direct elections under the present Constitution to break the monopoly of political power of the bourgeoisie and make dents in the privileged position of the monopolists and big landlords.

Fear Of Communist

The writer fears that in States other political parties than the Congress might come into power through elections, thus creating conflicts with the party ruling at the Centre. He especially dreads the emergence of Communist Ministries in a number of States as in Kerala. He poses the question: what about Bengal after Dr. Roy? And himself answers: "Thinkers predict a Communist regime with worse results than those in Kerala." So in order to guard against this "dangerous eventuality", he suggests restricting and strangulating parliamentary democracy to the maximum extent.

Indirect elections are proposed so that adult voters may not exercise direct influence upon the members of Parliament.

The latter is to be 'immersed' from direct mass pressure so that it may become a pliant tool in the hands of monopolists and big landlords. The bourgeoisie of linguistic States, mainly the middle bourgeoisie, would also be denied a share in political power. Such a Central Government could be persuaded to change the independent foreign policy of India and adopt more and more reactionary internal policies.

The ex-Chief Justice enumerates the various ills of parliamentary democracy, not all of which have been correctly diagnosed, and pers-

brought further grist to their mill. They are taking advantage of the Sino-India border dispute and the Dalai Lama's presence to attack the foreign policy of our country. Land reforms, State trading and development of heavy industry in the public sector are all under severe fire. A nefarious conspiracy is being hatched against Indian democracy. All this is being done in the name of unity and integrity of India, preservation of its spiritual and cultural values, individual freedom and good and honest Government.

Exploiting Discontent

The common mass of people feel frustrated under Congress Raj. They see corruption, nepotism and injustice all around. They are reeling under the burden of ever-increasing taxes, while Ministers and high officials lead ostentatious lives. They hear stories of sensational scandals

involving crores in Government expenditure. They feel the legislators whom they themselves sent into the Assembly have broken their promises. In such a situation the reactionaries feel emboldened to launch their attack on parliamentary democracy, for they feel confident of a responsive echo in sections of the masses frustrated and demoralised by Congress misrule.

And this is not the first time Mahajan has come out with such anti-democratic proposals. He himself is a

by MASTER HARI SINGH

big landlord of district Gurdaspur. He claims to be a practical farmer. Last year, too, in the month of September he wrote a series of articles in the Tribune and the Delhi English Press, frontally attacking ceiling and land reforms. His main argument, like all ideologues of the big landed interests, was of course national well-being. Big mechanised farms, he argued, alone could add to food production. Their break-up on "ideological" considerations would lead to a fall in production with consequent ac-

centuation in the food crisis. He opposed land reform as the representative of his class which in the Punjab organised itself as the Dehati Janata Party to carry on a crusade against ceiling. The Maharaja of Patiala, the leading ex-prince, blessed the formation of this party by inaugurating its first convention in Doraha district Patiala. The Janta Party is now getting itself converted into a State branch of the Swatantra Party.

Misleading Analogy

Mahajan's analogy of India with Britain is wholly misleading. Britain is a small country with a comparatively small population. The people speak the same language English with certain variations in dialect. Its industrial economy is highly centralised and unified. A unitary Constitution fits its needs admirably. India, on the other hand, is a vast country, almost a sub-continent, with a population of forty crores and consisting of a number of nationalities speaking different languages and with different historical backgrounds. It can be built as a strong and united nation not by suppressing various nationalities, but by giving them each free field and initiative for development of their language, culture and economy. It can only be strong as a composite, not a homogeneous, nation like the British. A federal democratic Constitution fits in with the requirements of its economic, cultural and political development.

Moreover India has embarked on planned development of her economy through Five-Year Plans. Mass enthusiasm and mass participation in development work is essential at all levels to ensure its success. This requires democratic decentralisation and not its reverse—complete centralisation—as suggested by Mahajan.

Mahajan proceeds to detail the evils in the working of State legislatures and Ministries. Evils no doubt are there in plenty. He makes no positive suggestions to remove them. Instead he uses their existence to make out a case for scrapping the State parliamentary institutions. He argues that the money spent on State legislatures and Ministers is a huge waste. There are unseemly wranglings for power among politicians. V.I.P.s continuously interfere with the administration, ruining the morale of services. Referring to his own home State, the Punjab, he complains that there has been no stable Government or satisfactory administration, except during the period of Presidential rule. There have been constant ministerial intrigues during the last ten years. People are groaning under heavy taxes and controls. There is feeling "of dislike for Ministers. Nothing gets done without sifarish or greasing the palm of somebody." Presidential rule, he says, would have been far better, for under it Punjab "would not have become a land of scarcity."

But he cannot turn back the wheels of history and deprive various nationalities of their linguistic States. Will the people of Kerala, Andhra or Tamilnad allow him to deprive them of their national States and State autonomy won after heavy sacrifices? Or who can now hold back the creation of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

I can make a far longer catalogue of charges of misrule against the Punjab Ministry. But I would not draw the conclusion he arrives at—and sing hymns to Presidential rule. The evils of Congress misrule

flow from its general policies and measures which go counter to popular interests. Therefore, the alternative is not Presidential rule (which, too, would implement Central Congress policies) but reversal of Congress policies or replacement of the Congress Ministry by a progressive democratic Ministry wedded to implementation of the very programme of the national movement.

One might ask Mahajan: what is the State of affairs in Centrally-administered areas—Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Tripura, etc? Is there no corruption, sifarish and mass discontent there? Have they become lands of plenty? The entire thesis of Mahajan reads like post facto justification of the thesis of British rulers in their days that Indians are not fit for

self-government! Mahajan's dangerous thesis has evoked support among sections of the intelligentsia who tired of the existing state of affairs see no way out. A number of letters have appeared in the Tribune in support of his thesis. The Editor of the paper has invited further articles on the subject from its readers so that the issue may be thoroughly debated in public.

In a later issue of the paper has appeared another feature article entitled "Problem of Democracy: more education, less freedom" by G. D. Sondhi, former Principal of the Government College, Lahore. The writer in the main supports the thesis of Mahajan. He thinks that we got political freedom sooner than we were fit for it. He suggests two-directional action, namely im-

provement in educational system and curtailment of political institutions. Says Sondhi: "The current misrule and the struggle for personal power among our politicians are not only filling the people with fear and uncertainty, but are making them distrustful of democracy itself. Many openly sigh for a dictator's paradise to come." The trends represented by Mahajan and G. D. Sondhi are not mere straws in the wind.

Though there is no cause for panic, complacency, too, would be dangerous. The events in neighbouring countries had already warned us to be on guard and vigilant. Voices have begun to be raised openly by eminent persons for scrapping the federal democratic Constitution. This trend, though yet weak, must be fought stubbornly.



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Reaction Demands Scrapping Of Federal Constitution

U. S. COMMUNIST PARTY LOOKS BACK ON ITS FORTY YEARS

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of the United States an article in their theoretical journal *Political Affairs* states, in part:

On September 1, 1919, the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) was born. The world was passing through a period of revolutionary advance. The highlight of this entire process was the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In the United States, it was a period of intense labour struggles, and the eve of the great 1919 steel strike led by William Z. Foster. It was the eve, too, of the infamous Palmer raids, which signalled the start of a ferocious counter-offensive by reaction.

The founders of the Communist Party, men like Charles E. Ruthenberg and Alfred Wagenknecht, had been leaders of the Left wing within the Socialist Party. The split within that party, culminating in the expulsion of the Left, arose from a revolt against the opportunist policies of the Right wing—against its ill-concealed support of American imperialism in World War I, its hostility to the Socialist Revolution in Russia, its conciliatory attitude to class-collaborationist policies in the AFL (American Federation of Labour) and its general reformism and desertion of militant struggle.

In the period immediately

following its formation, and as it became consolidated, the ranks of the Communist Party were swelled by an influx of trade unionists from the Trade Union Educational League, among them such figures as Jack Johnstone and William Z. Foster, of members and leaders of the International Workers of the World, notably William D. Haywood, and of youth, Negro and other groups.

In essence the history of the CPUSA has been a history of its struggle to fulfil its vanguard role. The Party has always been small and it has never achieved the status of

ant advances of the American working people since the 'twenties. The USA would not have been the same without the Party.

But at the same time, the Party has been plagued, throughout its history, by opportunist trends which have deterred it from fulfilling the role of a vanguard party.

On the one hand, it has suffered severely from the Right-opportunist evil of revisionism. This anti-Marxist trend, which has developed in successive waves threatening at various times to engulf the Party, is invariably advanced in the name of "Ame-

rican exceptionalism" in one form or another. In the 'twenties, it was Lovestoneism with its thesis that American capitalism had found the secret of eternal prosperity. In the World War II years, it was Browderism with its hallucinations of "progressive capitalism." And today the Party is barely recovering from the recent onslaught of Gates revisionism.

The CPUSA has once again won the main ideological battle against conscious revisionism. But Right-opportunist, revisionist tendencies

persist in various forms, principally that of reducing the Party's role to one of mere participation in mass struggles, of underestimating and failing to fight for the Party's independent role and programme. Such tendencies lead to reducing the Party to the level of the mass movement, to making it a tail to the mass movement, and so negating its vanguard character.

The Party must wage a relentless fight against all revisionist ideas and tendencies in its ranks. Indeed, in the present period this remains its chief ideological task. At the same time, the Party applied with equal vigour to the Party's predecessor, the Socialist Party. Because it has, from the first day of its existence, fought for support to the Soviet Union as the first land of Socialism, because it has persistently advocated American-Soviet friendship, and because it has at all times fought to expose the fraudulence of the charge of "Soviet aggression" with which Wall Street cloaks its own aggressive schemes, the Communist Party has been attacked with special vehemence as a "Soviet agent." From the Palmer raids to the McCarran Act, which seeks today to compel the Party and its members to register as "foreign agents," the attack has been unrelenting.

These slanders, however much they may be disguised in high-flown legal terminology and the pompous rulings of Government boards, are, of course, without foundation. The Communist Party, here as elsewhere, exists because capitalist exploitation exists. It grows out of the American class struggle and has deep roots in American history.

Glorious Traditions

American Socialism goes back to the utopian Socialists of the first half of the nineteenth century and the numerous cooperative colonies which they established. Marxism appeared as a factor on the American scene by the middle of the last century. American Marxists were active in the anti-slavery struggle and in the Civil War. One of their leading figures, Joseph Weydemeyer, was made a colonel in the Union Army by Lincoln. Karl Marx himself played an important part in relation to the Civil War with his brilliant writings in the *New York Daily Tribune* and other publications.

Marxists were instrumental in setting up the National Labour Union, the first effective national organisation of labour. They were actively involved in labour struggles throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, with men like Eugene V. Debs playing a particularly prominent role.

The Communist Party, therefore, is the inheritor of a tradition going far back in American history, and long preceding the birth of the Soviet Union.

Our Party has supported the basic policies of the Soviet Union because, being the policies of a working class Socialist State, these are in the interests of working people elsewhere. And it has fought for American-Soviet cooperation and friendship because this is vital to the American people.

From the beginning, the Party fought along with other Americans for recognition of the Soviet Union, a battle which was finally won when Roosevelt extended recognition in 1933. In the 'thirties,

* SEE FACING PAGE

News from brother parties

a mass party. Moreover, beginning with the Palmer raids in 1919, it has been subjected to repeated attacks, reaching a peak in the McCarthyite persecutions of the cold war years.

Nevertheless, it has left an indelible imprint on the life of America—in the fight against war and fascism, in the organisation of its basic industrial workers, in the advancement of the fight for Negro rights, in the winning of social security and unemployment compensation, and in other import-

has suffered habitually from the weaknesses of dogmatism and sectarianism. In fact, these have been chronic weaknesses of the Marxist movement in the United States, long antedating the birth of the Communist Party. And they persist today, making it more difficult to combat the isolation from the masses which the Party's enemies have succeeded in forcing upon it.

The earliest years of the Communist Party were marked by extreme sectarianism which effectively isolated it from the working class, and which it took years of struggle to overcome. A principal manifestation was dual unionism—an effort to build "progressive" unions as a substitute for working in the existing, "reactionary" unions. A successful fight against this Leftist error was led by William Z. Foster. At other times, sectarianism has expressed itself in premature third-party moves as a substitute for working within the existing two-party framework.

Today, sectarianism takes the form of an overemphasis on the independent role of the Party, which inflates the Party's independent actions in its own name into the totality of its activities. Party meetings and the distribution of Party literature become a substitute for the difficult task of working within the mass movement and striving to build united front relationships.

Scott Nearing, a veteran fighter for Socialism and peace for the last half century, who is astonishingly virile and glowing at 75, paid a tribute to the Communist movement in his opening words.

Two years ago he had the "great privilege" of witnessing the 40th anniversary celebration in the Soviet Union, he said. And he felt it also a great privilege to be present at the 40th birthday meeting of the American Communist Party.

We, Indian Communists, take this opportunity to offer our fraternal salutes and profound admiration to our comrades in the United States, who have so consistently and courageously fought the most powerful imperialism the world has ever seen in its very citadel.



EUGENE DENNIS

GRAND CELEBRATION MEETING

ON September 25 a birthday celebration meeting of the CPUSA was held at Carnegie Hall, New York. A huge and vivacious crowd far larger than last year's, turned up. Messages and greetings were received from Communist Parties of many countries. A stirring call was read out from William Z. Foster, beloved honorary Chairman of the Party.

The meeting opened in a fresh, vivid way as dozens of pictures from the stirring past flashed on the giant screen. One saw New York workers demonstrating for jobs and bread in the first big unemployed movement of the 1870's, and in the vastly bigger movement of the 1930's. One met the early picket-line martyrs, who gave their lives for the steel worker's union, that is battling today. One felt the dignity and beauty of Sacco and Vanzetti and Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. One thrilled at the sight of Lenin addressing the workers of revolutionary Petrograd in 1917.

Eugene Dennis, the National Secretary of the Party, centred his talk on the struggle for peace.

"The prospects for world peace are much stronger today," he pointed out, "as the result of the Khrushchov-Eisenhower get-together."

But peace must be fought for, Dennis stressed, because "aggressive and reckless giant monopolists still dream of ruling a world moulded in their own

image...and pin their hopes on Cape Canaveral, not Camp David."

"The cold war is not yet defrosted," added Dennis, "the evil plans of the warmongers... must be decisively defeated. The peace of the world, our lives and the lives of our children, hang on this."

Scott Nearing, a veteran fighter for Socialism and peace for the last half century, who is astonishingly virile and glowing at 75, paid a tribute to the Communist movement in his opening words.

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Third Plan And Kerala

-STEP-MOTHERLY ATTITUDE AGAIN

If Kerala is again deprived of her legitimate share of the country's Plan development, none else than the Congress Party both in the State and at the Centre will have to be held responsible. And indications are that Kerala is fast on the way to losing what is her due of the Third Plan.

KERALA Government Press release on October 19 has admitted that nothing has so far been decided about the overall size of the Plan or the projected outline under any sector of the Plan.

The present administration seems to be blaming the Government of India for the delay in preparing Kerala's Plan. In the words of the Press release, "It may be stated in this connection that the State Government has had no invitation from the Government of India regarding the size of the Third Plan for Kerala, and naturally therefore is not in a position to indicate what the allocation for each sector of development in the State is likely to be."

Dismal Record

According to Government sources, all that has been done so far is the setting up of 22 working groups, some of whom have completed their work and submitted their reports to the Government. This while many States like neighbouring Madras have completed their Plan preparations and have approached the Centre with concrete proposals and financial demands.

U. S. COMMUNIST PARTY

* FROM FACING PAGE

the Party supported the Soviet policy of collective security as essential for curbing fascist aggression and defending democracy. Communists were most prominent among what the pro-fascist elements dubbed the "premature anti-fascists." They were in the forefront of the fight against Franco in Spain, and they fought unswervingly against the appeasement of Hitler.

In the depths of McCarthyism, the Communist Party held high the banner of peace in the face of persecution and attack. Today our Party fights without reservation for peaceful coexistence, for an end to the menace of nuclear war.

All these policies have been in the best interests of our own country. They have been, despite sectarian errors at times, the policies of an American political party. Nevertheless our history has been one of unending struggle against the "foreign agent" slander, which is designed to weaken and undermine the fight of the American working people against the oppression of the trusts. And this struggle continues.

NOVEMBER 1, 1959

END REIGN OF TERROR

RESTORE NORMALCY

-Kerala Communists Call

WHILE the Kerala Governor and his Adviser, now joined by Deputy Home Minister Datar, go on repeating that the situation in the State is more or less normal, the reality is anything but that.

Attacks on agricultural workers and Communists and sympathisers continue. Just at this moment, a jatha of those who have been forced out of their homes and villages by the terror, has begun its march in Kottayam District.

And it is not only political violence that marks the situation. All the anti-social forces unleashed by the so-called "liberation struggle" are having a field-day and crimes, murder and murderous attacks, have been very much on the increase in the days after the Communist Ministry was dismissed.

The Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party which met in Ernakulam from October 10 to 16 took note of this situation and appealed to the democratic-minded and patriotic people of the State to direct their energies to end the present dangerous situation in which all civil liberties of the people are being trampled underfoot and the lives of the vast majority of the working people have become insecure.

DANGER TO DEMOCRACY

The resolution adopted by the State Committee said: "The Communist Party cannot remain a helpless onlooker. Especially at this juncture when an election of decisive importance to the future of the State is about to take place, the Committee believes that it will be a great danger to the democratic movement itself if the reactionary forces are allowed to run amuck in the country."

The resolution has demanded that the following measures be taken immediately to restore normalcy:

- Give necessary protection to all those who have been forced to leave their homes because of the terror let loose by the "liberation" volunteers and other goondas and enable them to go back to their villages and live and work peacefully;
- Make arrangements to rebuild the huts and houses burnt or destroyed by the goondas;
- Guarantee work to all agricultural labourers as before, whatever be their political affiliations;

- Ensure that members of all political parties can go about freely without the fear of being assaulted or attacked;
- See that no public meeting or demonstration organised by any political party is disturbed; and
- Guarantee that all political parties are enabled to conduct their election campaigning freely everywhere.

The resolution pointed out that it was the duty of the Governor and the Adviser to see that these fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution are not denied to anybody.

The Committee has also stressed the urgent need for sending relief to the numerous victims of the terror unleashed by "liberation" goondas.

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NEW AGE

PAGE ELEVEN

Punjabi Writers Hold Successful Conference

By **SANT SINGH SEKHON**
General Secretary,
KENDRI PUNJABI
LEKHAK SABHA

The Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha, the central organisation of Punjabi writers held its Third Annual Conference at Ludhiana on October 3 and 4.

THIS organisation came into existence in 1956, as a part of the countrywide preparations that Indian writers were then making as hosts to the Asian Writers' Conference in Delhi during the last week of 1956. The first conference of Punjabi writers was held in October 1956, at Jullundur, the second at Delhi in September 1958, again on the eve of the Asian and African Writers' Conference in Tashkent.

From its very start the Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha has been recognised by all concerned as representative of Punjabi writ-

ers of all shades of opinion. The Third Annual Conference was presided over by Giani Gurmukh Singh 'Musafir', M.P. (Congress), President of the Sabha for the year.

It was addressed among others by Serebrev, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in India, who is one of the editors of the Punjabi-Russian dictionary, shortly to be published by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Moscow University.

Serebrev spoke briefly of the work of translation and editing of Indian literature that is being done in the

Soviet Union. He delivered his address in Punjabi, reading from a written draft. The audience were delighted to hear for the first time Punjabi of a literary style spoken by a foreigner in a public meeting. Of course some British administrators did study Punjabi in the past, but it was generally for a limited utilitarian purpose; seldom if ever did an Englishman address anywhere a public meeting in Punjabi.

Dr. K. M. George, Assistant Secretary of the Sahitya Academy, was another important guest. He spoke on language and literature, making it clear that while simplicity was a virtue to be aimed at, the language of literature could not be limited to a mere two thousand words or so that

make up the working vocabulary of most languages in India and perhaps elsewhere. His speech was very well received by the audience and by the Punjabi Press.

A. N. Vidyalkar, Minister of Education, Punjab, addressed the Conference.

Giani Gurmukh Singh 'Musafir' in his presidential address stressed the necessity of an organisation of Punjabi writers which should be above party affiliations and affirmed that the Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha was such an organisation.

The Conference was attended among others by many prominent writers like Gurbaksh Singh, Editor, "Freet-Lari", Nanak Singh, novelist, Mohan Singh, poet, Dr. Roshan Lal

STRUGGLE FOR RADICAL LAND REFORM IN ORISSA

* FROM PAGE 5

vested with Government. The lessees must be in continuous possession since July 1, 1954; f) persons entitled to acquire right of occupancy under the merged States Act of 1950. Except the persons in category a, b, and f, others will have to pay compensation.

There is really no justification for realising compensation from these persons, because they are recorded tenants in respect of those lands for a pretty long time. Moreover, so far as Government lands are concerned, they are mostly the ex-zamindari lands vested with the Government as a result of the Zamindari Abolition Act. The zamindars have already got compensation for those lands. How will the Government be justified in realising compensation from the lessee for giving them occupancy right?

Termination Of Tenancy

Though by Section 4, occupancy right is given, that right has been weakened by Section 8, which deals with the termination of tenancy. The conditions of termination of tenancy are: if the ryot has done any act injurious to the land, if he sublets or fails to cultivate personally, or uses such lands for any purpose other than agriculture. If the ryot is to sublet, he can sublet only to the cooperative farming societies. All these conditions will show how weak occupancy right has been made.

Excess lands instead of being distributed amongst

the landless and poor peasants will be disposed of in such a way that cooperative farming societies will get the first priority and the second priority to a contiguous ryot on adjacent land who holds lands less than the ceiling area. Landless persons will get the third chance. The intention of the Bill is quite obvious.

Vague Provision

Persons who get occupancy rights will pay rent to their landlord. Here it is not clear whether the landlord will be the Government or persons from whom the tenant will purchase the occupancy right. Nowhere in the Bill is it clear that the tenants will come under the Government straight after getting the occupancy right. This is probably kept vague deliberately to satisfy the rajahs and zamindars on the one hand and by legal quibblings to lull the vigilance of the people on the other.

For example persons entitled to acquire right of occupancy under the Merged States Act will pay rent to whom—the Government or the former rulers? As Sub-Section 2 of Section 4 is now worded, it will mean that the ryot will pay rent to the ex-ruler. This will create a new intermediary between the Government and the ryot.

So also with zamindars. According to the Zamindari Abolition Act, the zamindars can keep all the lands which were in their khas possession. Unless this is amended there will be legal difficulty in applying ceiling to their khas land. The Government wants

to protect the zamindars and the rajahs by taking advantage of these legal difficulties. Anyway if the Bill is not suitably amended, a new rent-receiving class consisting of the ex-rulers and zamindars will come into being.

Until the rent is fixed by the land tribunal the ryot will pay rent like the sharecroppers under the Tenants' Protection Act. Though it is not categorically mentioned, it is implied by Sub-Sections 2, 3 and 4 of Section 4. So the fixing of fair rent rests with the land tribunal.

In Orissa one-sixth of the gross produce will not be considered as fair rent. At present ryots are paying rent at the maximum rate of seven to eight rupees per acre. One-sixth of the gross produce will come to more than Rs. 40 per acre. So for the same kind of tenancy there will exist two kinds of rents, one very much higher than the other and the Government will use this as justification to enhance the rent in the name of standardisation. Hence demand for fixing the rent at choudhadi or the surrounding rate.

Serious Repercussions

The main direction of the Bill, irrespective of what it professes, is promotion of the interests of landlord and rich peasant cooperative farming societies. The Bill envisages that nobody either as a ryot or tenant or landholder should possess land under personal cultivation less than the economic holding. An economic holding is fixed as seven standard acres. So the economic holding will be from

seven to 21 acres. As stated above ceiling is fixed from 33 to 99 acres so widespread eviction is inevitable under the Bill. Distribution of land to the landless is out of question. If the Bill comes into force without being drastically amended, its repercussions on Orissa's agrarian economy and more specially on the small peasantry will be serious. In course of time, small peasants will be compelled to surrender their lands to the landlords and cooperative farming societies. It is not for nothing that this Bill has acted as the basis of the Congress - Ganatantra coalition.

Struggle Has Begun

In Orissa the democratic forces are still very weak. The PSP due to its anti-Communism is not prepared for any joint action with the Communist Party and the Kisan Sabha. It is also not prepared for any mass agitation and mass mobilisation for radical land reform. It confines its criticism to the four corners of the Assembly.

So the struggle for a radical land reform mainly falls on the shoulder of the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party. The Kisan Sabha has already started a campaign for amending the Bill, meetings and demonstrations are being held throughout the province demanding radical land reform. Nearly 30,000 signatures have been collected in favour of a radical land reform. The demand is for fixing the ceiling at 15 to 30 acres and to ban eviction forthwith and distribute the surplus land amongst the poor peasants and landless.

Ahuja, dramatist and Sujan Singh and Kulwant Singh 'Vir', short-story writers.

Papers on the year's literary works in drama, poetry and general prose were read in special literary sessions that were largely attended, and evoked great interest, especially about the literary style that modern Punjabi seems to be evolving. The general feeling was that Punjabi writers were generally carrying the process of Sanskritisation rather too far.

A special task which Punjabi writers and others interested in Punjabi literature and culture found set for them as a result of this and the previous conference of this nature was the building of a Punjabi Bhavan at Jullundur and a Punjabi Theatre at Ludhiana for which purposes land sites have been donated to the Sabha at both places.

The Conference was inaugurated by Guru Jagjit Singh, head of the Namdhari sect in the Punjab, whose late father, Shri Guru Pratap Singh, had donated the land site at Ludhiana. He promised substantial aid for the building of the Punjabi Theatre at Bhawan at Jullundur.

One other fact that has clearly emerged from this conference is that Punjabi writers and people have earnestly taken up the work of developing a common secular literary culture in the Punjab, for want of which in the past the Punjab has suffered heavily indeed. And there are indications that in this task they, both Punjabi writers and the Punjabi people in general, will achieve commendable success in the near future.

The Kendri Sabha has sixteen local Sabhas affiliated to it, two of which are outside the Punjab, one in Delhi and another in Calcutta. It has taken in hand publication of translations and original works in Punjabi and intends to organise shortly a Punjabi Writers' Co-operative Society, which is regarded as an urgent necessity.



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Fantastic Feat Accomplished Again

—THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOON

★ by Cable from Masood Ali Khan

MOSCOW, October 27.

The miracle, the fantastic feat, has been accomplished again. Soviet scientists have photographed the unknown far side of the moon. Photos have been successfully transmitted to the earth. Here they are for everybody to see. Last night, for the first time in human history, people saw the other side of the moon on Moscow television programme. You can imagine our feelings.

THIS morning millions all over the world are examining the pictures on pages of their newspapers. Since the beginning of man there has never been a picture like this. Here it is before me, spread over more than half of the first page of Pravda and it is not a dream but a reality.

The quality of the picture is so good that last night one astronomer on London television declared, "It is amazing, I am staggered by its clarity."

At A Command From Earth

Pravda today devotes three pages to the performance of the third cosmic rocket. And what a performance it has been! At the right moment when the interplanetary station had reached the desired point between the sun and the moon on the far side, command was given from the earth.

A special motor turned the whole station into position with camera lenses facing the moon and pictures were taken for full forty minutes by two cameras. One photographed the whole lunar disc and the other detailed parts of its surface. Films were automatically developed and dried half a million kilometres away. Then the television apparatus started to transmit pictures one by one to the earth, all the way.

Some idea of the clarity of transmission can be had from the following facts: the London television system scans its pictures into 450 lines, Moscow TV has a 650-line system in use. For the moon pictures, transmitters at times used a maximum number of 1000 lines per picture.

Now about the power of the receiving stations. Due to the colossal distances involved, picture signals received were a hundred million times weaker than those normally received by an ordinary television set. In spite of this, pictures of astounding clarity were obtained. New craters, mountains, de-

pressions or lunar seas have been discovered. Forms of those objects situated on the borders of the visible disc of the moon and seen from the earth in a distorted perspective due to the curvature of the lunar sphere have been exactly fixed.

The possibility of obtaining pictures from far away planets and TV broadcasts from space has been practically demonstrated for the first time. The riddle of those famous canals and question of life on Mars, for example, could be settled by a few such pictures transmitted to the earth. A rocket like Lunik I with apparatus of Lunik III on board could easily do the job.

Joliot-Curie Honour

Now there is the Sea of Moscow on the moon (there is one on earth as well; so do not mix up the address) and there is a mountain range 2,000 kilometres long called Sovetsky; there is a crater named after Tsolkovsky, Soviet rocket pioneer who died in 1935; one after Lomonosov, Russian 18th century scientist, and one after the French atomic scientist and great fighter for peace, Joliot Curie. What a grand gesture this is and what a well-deserved tribute!

After further exact calculations, the rocket station is now expected to last till April 1960 and will probably make 11 or 12 rounds on its orbit. On its first round it passed the earth far beyond its atmosphere and on this orbit it could go on for ever. But gravitational pulls of the sun and moon also act on the rocket and change its orbit. Each time it passes the moon at short distance, its direction will change and in the end it will burn up in the earth's atmosphere. But its exact future will be forecast after further scientific measurements.

Apart from three big photographs of the unknown side of the moon, Pravda publishes to-day photos of the automatic inter-planetary station and details of its apparatus and working.

A long article describes all the mechanisms and the colossal technical organisation involved. All this valuable material has been released for the scientists of the whole world to study. As

KERALA NOTE-BOOK

DINNER PARTIES

I AM labouring under a great difficulty. The problem is: what should I call what is going on now in Trivandrum between leaders of the anti-Communist front? Normally I would have called it high-level confabulations to iron out differences, but then Mrs. Sucheta Kripalant doesn't like it.

She doesn't like it because the talks are going round and round and nothing tangible is coming out. As she was leaving Trivandrum, at a Press Conference, she was asked about the previous day's conference. One could see the despair in her face as she said there was no high-level conference, it was just a dinner at Mannam's place.

KPCC President Sankar was present there and a Pressman informed Sucheta that it was Sankar who had said it was a high-level conference and if he cared he could contradict it. Sankar decided this was one of those occasions when silence was golden.

But Sucheta insisted it was only a dinner. So let us also call the incessant activities in the Kerala Capital dinner and lunch parties and wait for that final day, if at all it comes, when we can say that a high-level conference has been held and agreement has been reached between the parties and leaders of the anti-Communist front.

CANDIDATE-LIFTING

MEANWHILE? Meanwhile, what is going on outside these dinner and lunch parties gives one no confidence that the final day will ever arrive.

And it isn't just the fight for seats between them that I am referring to. Much worse is going on and nothing conducive to the steeling of the grand alliance that is said to have been forged.

Instead of steeling the alliance, they are now stealing from each other.

This has been quite an art in Travancore-Cochin politics. Pattom Thanu Pillai's Ministry fell when Panampilly stole some members from his side. Panampilly himself fell

when somebody else repeated the trick against him. Now it is beginning all over again.

The PSP had made a hard bargain with the Congress for the Puthanambitta seat. A local leader, Vengayil Mathew, toured the constituency as the PSP candidate. But when he saw the "reception" in some places, he decided it wiser not to contest the seat. Some people called it cowardice. Why should one person withdraw in this fashion when most of the 35 PSP candidates would be brave enough to fight and lose. Mathew perhaps did not agree with this logic.

Pattom & Co. began rushing up and down to fill the vacuum created by Mathew's desertion. Just at that moment the name of one Harishechandra Nair was proposed. He was a Congress leader of Puthanambitta taluk. But that was not going to deter Pattom. Pattom met Mr. Nair, negotiations followed and Nair got into the PSP bag.

Pattom came out of the place with a big grin on his face. He was happy not only because he had succeeded in filling the vacuum, he was happier still that he had been able to pay the Congress back in its own coin.

Earlier, it seems, the Congress had bagged a PSPer who wanted to contest the Changanassery seat.

I have heard that in Andhra, some Congress leaders have made a practice of kidnapping and locking up Opposition members on the eve of filing nominations for elections. But the practice of stealing each other's candidates, that, too, after an agreement, is solemnly signed and sealed, is perhaps possible only in an alliance as unprincipled as the Kerala one.

PRICE OF BETRAYAL

THE RSP leaders, pity them, are having a different experience. Having betrayed the Red Flag and sold their Marxism for ten seats, they find not only their ranks in revolt but themselves in the humiliating position of being dictated to by the Congress as to whom they should choose as their candidates.

a large number of photographs and after information has been obtained, it will be published from time to time after proper examination and scrutiny.

The incredible brilliance of this Soviet achievement has again astounded the world. It shows that no part of the universe is too remote or too hidden from man. And more than anything else, it reveals the new Soviet truth which probably could best be expressed by the formula: human genius plus Socialism means conquest of the universe.

Last Saturday, the grand project of Soviet engineer Pyotr Borison was published here. He wants to build a dam across the Bering Straits joining the USSR and the United States. He wants to turn the Gulf Stream into Arctic

The Kottarakara Taluk Committee of the RSP had decided on putting up its Secretary K. S. Warriar as the RSP candidate in Kottarakara—a decision which was stayed by Kerala Secretary Srikanth Nair. The RSP Committee began its election campaign also on that basis.

But the Congress leaders had a different idea about the seat, they said they could not support Warriar. They put forward another person—one R. R. Chandran Nair. The RSP had no other go but accept him.

This Mr. Nair was a Congress candidate in the last election and had lost. Later he joined the RSP. Recently KPCC President Sankar is reported to have met him and promised him the RSP ticket.

A pretty picture, isn't it? The Congress graciously gives a seat to the RSP and then gets the RSP to accept the Congress choice as the RSP candidate. And the RSP leaders dare not even protest. This is the fate of all betrayers.

BETHINKING BEGINS

WHILE this thuggery is going on in the name of fighting the Communists, there are signs still very few of the beginning of a healthy rethinking in the ranks of those who fought the "liberation struggle."

P. C. Zacharia, Joint Secretary of the Meenachil Taluk Kerala Student's Union (KSU) and a member of the Kottayam District Committee of the KSU, who went to jail more than once during the struggle, has resigned from primary membership and all official positions in the organisation.

He has said that the "liberation struggle" did not result in any benefit either to the students or any other sections of the people. On the contrary, it had created chaos in the State.

Another person who has taken a similar decision is V. D. Devassy, who had also courted arrest more than once during the struggle. He was the captain of the Christophers in Kadappattam and Vice-Captain of the "Liberation" volunteers. He has now given up both these positions. His reason: The aims and methods of the "liberation struggle" had come in the way of the State's progress.

Both of them have pledged to work under the flag of the Communist Party. A few more cases like these two have been reported. Straws in the wind, yet, portent of the storm ahead.

TAIL-PIECE

A CONGRESS campaigner in the course of an impassioned oration appealing to the people not to give even one seat to the Communist said: Look at the enlightened British voters who did not give a single seat to the Communists. Voice from the audience: And how many seats did the enlightened British voters give the Congress?

—OBSERVER

Dilatory Tactics

On Summit

THE Soviet Union has declared once again that it is ready and keen for an early Summit meeting. Well-known opponents of such a meeting had been deliberately spreading false rumours in the West casting doubt on the Soviet position.

The TASS statement issued on October 23 asserted that "the Government of the USSR regards a meeting of the heads of Governments as necessary and is ready for such a meeting. It also holds the view... that the earlier such a meeting is called, the better it will be for the cause of peace."

The experience of the few weeks that have elapsed since Khrushchov's visit to the United States and the signing of the joint communique at Camp David has fully confirmed the view that there are groups and Governments in the West that are dead set against the further unfolding of the process of thaw in international relations.

Reversing The Gains

They are striving their utmost to postpone the Summit in order that they may be able to utilise the intervening period to dig into their prepared war positions, accentuate the existing local conflicts and even create new ones so that the relaxation achieved so far in international tensions is reversed and a top level conference becomes impossible and is again pushed far into the remote future.

On the other hand, the vast masses of people everywhere, and many sensible people in Western Governments as well, realise that an early Summit carrying forward the thaw achieved by Khrushchov's

U.S. visit would be beneficial not only for the over-all international environment and for the solution of the major world problems but would also arrest the process of creating new hotbeds of tension.

De Gaulle's Tactics

Simultaneously with extending an invitation to Khrushchov to visit France, de Gaulle has come out in an open bid to delay the Summit. The statement he made on October 21 sought, first, to sow doubt whether there should be Summit talks at all. He insisted next that if it had to be, it should not be before spring in any case. He seems further to make Soviet attitude in the U.N. over the Algerian war one of the tests for French agreement to a summit meeting.

In the United States, a desperate bid is on to reverse the thaw ushered in by Khrushchov's visit. From certain pronouncements and the haste with which certain militaristic measures are being pushed, it would appear that the missile manufacturers and the Generals are in utter panic over the prospect of "peace breaking out."

This panic started with the very announcement of the exchange of Eisenhower-Khrushchov visits. The day Khrushchov addressed the U.N. General Assembly and put forward his proposal for general and complete disarmament, a high State Department official confessed to A.P. Correspondent John M. Hightower that the proposal was very popular adding privately, "The terrible thing about this is that you cannot be against it." He tried to explain to the Correspondent how it would be very difficult to advance "one inch towards the

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

goal (general and complete disarmament)." This was reflected on the stock exchange again in a drop in the U.S. ammunition companies' stocks.

A section of the Press and politicians started playing up the theme of impossibility of ending the cold war. Besides Vice-President Nixon's address to the CENTO Council, warning member nations of U.S.-dominated military blocs not to "relax" their military efforts, the Defence Secretary Neil McElroy repeatedly emphasised on October 13-14 that the "West's military strength must be maintained" and that U.S. military expenditure in the next year would continue to maintain its present level of forty-one thousand million dollars. He was followed a few days later by Assistant Secretary of State Wilcox insisting that the Western world "must not relax its defence."

Why They Fear Relaxation

At the same time these very circles began to reveal their fear that relaxation of international tension would make it still more difficult for the U.S. to control its allies. A "Study" on U.S. Foreign Policy in Western Europe was made public by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on October 15. It noted with apprehension that the development of the present trend might affect the "morale" and "determination" of the Western countries and might possibly "bring about the demoralisation and disintegration of NATO."

The "Study" said that the U.S. should "exert more dynamic leadership," dispatch more troops to Western Europe and urge the West European countries to set up more "nuclear forces."

The recent SEATO and CENTO Council meetings have been utilised for further tightening on them the screw of the U.S. military machine. An American General has taken charge of the CENTO command and a top-level meeting is fixed for early November in Teheran where very serious practical steps are planned to be taken.

Missile Bases

It is also worth noting that it is within this one month since Khrushchov's visit to the United States that the U.S. has accelerated steps for setting up missile bases in all possible places and holding military exercises in various parts of the world. It was reported that the U.S. had reached agreement with Turkey to set up missile bases in that country and that U.S. missiles equipped with nuclear warheads would be shipped to Italy in December.

Before the year is out, the U.S. would supply West Germany and Britain with more than thirty missile units, and Japan would also obtain U.S. missiles. Just within the period of less than one month after the NATO bloc staged some ten large-scale naval manoeuvres on the broad area from the western part of the Atlantic Ocean to the eastern part of the Mediterra-

nean Sea, the CENTO would again hold, like last year, its naval exercises in the Arabian Sea.

The U.S. would also carry out missile tests in Okinawa. Pressure is meanwhile being increased on Japan despite terrific resistance from public opinion for the revision of its treaty with the U.S. thus removing all remaining obstacles to a full-fledged rearmament of Japan and its becoming the base for the long-projected NEATO (North-east Asia Treaty Organisation). Secret negotiations between the U.S. and France for the creation of a military bloc off the Mediterranean have also been going on.

It is as part of these moves that the American game of raising Tibet at the U.N. has to be seen. So much of fuss was made on this issue and everything was done to revive the cold war atmosphere both inside the U.N. and outside.

It is interesting to note that while this was being discussed ostensibly as an issue of human rights, there was a discussion in another U.N. Sub-Committee on the rights of the child. One would have thought that these great protagonists of upholding human rights would be the foremost in championing the rights of the child and agreeing to concrete ways proposed for these rights being actually granted in practice. The Soviet proposal for a clause which would safeguard children's rights through "legislative and other action" required a heated debate before it was passed.

Another clause proposed by the Soviet Union called for free medical aid for all children, expectant and nursing mothers was violently opposed by many an upholder of human rights — "free world" countries whose budgets are in no way inferior to that of the Soviet Union. Still more appalling was the U.S. representative's opposition to the Polish proposal for providing material help to orphans and families!

Intimidation Tactics

Obviously the U.S. and others raised at U.N. the question of Tibet not because they were interested in an imaginary violation of human rights, but to challenge the rights of a sovereign people to order their social system as they liked, as a means of pressure and intimidation against independent countries and for fanning up the cold war.

It was this interventionist cold war outlook that still dominates the U.S. which simultaneously manifested itself in the most blatant attempt at staging a counter-revolution in Cuba. Timed with an attempt on Field Castro's life, planes took off from U.S. soil and dropped bombs and leaflets on Havana. The Government of the USA demanded that Cuba abandon its land reforms, which hit American sugar barons and their stooges in Cuba.

Not only was this attempt — one in a series — defeated by people rallying round the Castro Government but the latter announcing its intention to go ahead with the agrarian reform poured scorn over the

mighty paper tiger sitting right at its very door.

There is, however, another trend in the United States—the trend which wants the process of the thaw to develop and unfold itself to the full. For only in the unfolding of this process lies the way out of the blind alley into which the cold war and the mad armament policy have got the USA. War which earlier seemed the way to preserve and expand capitalism now starts to reveal itself as the surest means of its self-destruction.

From being forced to accept peaceful coexistence as a necessity, there are sections of U.S. capitalists who have already begun to explore the possibilities of peace as the road to survival and prosperity in the new world situation. They begin to see that the arms race not only increases the war danger but also aggravates the USA's economic difficulties and start giving serious thought to regaining the U.S. economy to peaceful needs of the world.

An influential American organisation called the Economic Development Committee is currently working on the inspiration of a leading financier Robert Dawling, himself a convinced opponent of the arms race—on the possible economic consequences of disarmament, the question of using for peaceful purposes money saved from discontinuation of arms production. And this is no longer an isolated instance.

People On The Move

The people also are on the move. On October 25, three thousand packed the Carnegie Hall in New York City in connection with a nation-wide campaign to support the Eisenhower-Khrushchov exchanges and to urge immediate action for permanent end of nuclear weapons tests and inspection and control.

The principal speaker Dr. Linus Pauling, Nobel Prize Winner in Chemistry, hailing Khrushchov's visit to the U.S. as "a great event" in the struggle for peace and security demanded acceptance of "complete and total disarmament" as proposed by Premier Khrushchov. He demanded that the People's Republic of China must be included in the disarmament talks and should be seated in the U.N.

Another prominent speaker at the meeting was Norman Cousins, Editor of the Saturday Review, who declared that nuclear rearmament of Germany "could not be accomplished without the gravest danger" and urged the U.S. to take the Soviet Union's disarmament proposals "very seriously."

From across the Atlantic, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, raising his voice before the British Council of Churches, called for acceptance of Khrushchov's disarmament proposal. "At last somebody has said what every Christian has been praying for for years—total disarmament and full control," the Archbishop said.

—ZIAUL HAQ

October 27

NOVEMBER 1, 1959

In Memory Of The Martyrdom Of The Punnapra—Vayalar Heroes

This is the sacred spot which draws one every time one is in Travancore. Stand there under the gently swaying coconut trees where the bones of hundreds of martyrs have mingled with the earth and memories come crowding. There is so much to remember... so much... and most of all, the heroism of the ordinary workers and peasants who wrote with their blood the brightest page in the history of Travancore's struggle for democracy and immortalised two villages unknown till then — PUNNAPRA and VAYALAR — two names the mere mention of which even today frightens the landlords and exploiters.

It was thirteen years ago, in October 1946, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer was the Dewan of Travancore then. The State was groaning under the blistering heel. There were no liberties for the people, all that his regime gave them was growing unemployment, endless starvation.

The patience of the people was at an end, they were ready to sweep the Dewan and his coterie away. But the Congress High Command, in keeping with its character, told the State Congress not to create any trouble for the Princes.

But the working class, led by the Communist Party, was already on the scene and the Congress betrayal could not keep it back.

Workers were strengthening their organisations, agricultural labourers and fishermen were organising themselves in trade unions and fighting for their demands. Nothing to the liking of the big landlords.

Union activists began to be arrested, workers raised their voice in protest, landlords' goondas began attacking them and their women, reserve police beat the question of using for peaceful purposes money saved from discontinuation of arms production. And this is no longer an isolated instance.

The Government used emergency powers to arrest and detain leaders of the Communist Party and the mass organisations, warrants were out against those who could not be arrested. All presses were instructed not to print any statements of Communist and trade union leaders; all papers were told not to publish them. All that one could find in the Press those days was the slander that Communists were indulging in violence, robbery, murder and arson.

But the popular movement was far from suppressed, Sir C. P. was furious. Reserve Police camps were set up in Punnapra and Shertallai and they were asked to occupy the trade union offices.

They Defend The Red Flag

They entered the office of the Shertallai Coir Factory Worker's Union in the first week of October and got ready to remove the flag flying over the building. The report spread fast, faster came the workers running to the office. Within seconds there were 2,000 of them there.

They stood under the flag—the Red Flag dyed redder by the blood of their comrades the world over. They stood there ready to give their lives rather than give up their precious flag. The Inspector pointed his revolver at a worker's chest. Did he hope to frighten them? A worker next to him put his hand firmly over the weapon. The police had to beg on their knees to be allowed to get away from there.

They escaped but the rancour, born out of their humiliation, had to find an outlet. Police and goondas swarmed the area. The landlords feted and feasted them. This was their opportunity to frighten the agricultural wor-

kers, cut their wages and deny them their rights.

Agricultural workers were brought from the fields, tied to coconut trees under the blistering sun outside the landlords' bungalows and beaten... beaten till they fainted from the blows and the thirst they could not quench.

The show of armed might began. On October 19, a reserve police party began its march along the sea coast. As they reached near the Port Worker's Union office, the DSP who was leading the party aimed his revolver at the workers there.

The DSP thought he could frighten them. It was he who

When Workers

Of Travancore Faced And

Fought The Armed Might

Of The State

got frightened and panicky when he saw what they did. The workers fell on the ground and began crawling—towards the police party and the pointed gun. The DSP hastily put his revolver back in its holster and started pleading. The workers mapped out a route for the police party and they had to stick to it.

Martial Law

Nine workers were killed in the battle, but a number of them had fallen wounded. In the night, the police and goondas came round and bayoneted them—160 of them—and then poured petrol over them and burnt them. There were many who were alive when they were burnt, many who asked for water and had petrol poured into their mouths and set fire to.

Battle Is Joined

Just as the battle here was going on, a van load of reserve policemen had left Alleppey for Punnapra. A procession of ex-servicemen met them on the way and stopped them. The police opened fire and killed two. These two saved the lives of many in Punnapra. If the police van had been able to get through to Punnapra when the battle there was on, one can only imagine the massacre that would have taken place.

Another day passed. On October 26th, there was a clash in Mararikulam. The workers who were killed were buried there itself. The same day, Sir C. P. declared Martial Law. Next day planes began flying over Vayalar distributing handbills announcing the Martial Law. About midday, five boatloads of troops landed in Vayalar where 5,000 people — men and women — were having their food in the stockade camp they had set up to defend themselves

from police attacks and save the honour of their women.

NEW AGE

under a democratic set-up, in the State. Before a decade was over after this anniversary, the Communist Party, the Party of the Vayalar and Punnapra martyrs, the bravest of the brave, was the ruling party in Kerala. The rights and demands for which the workers bore lathi blows, went to jail and faced bullets were guaranteed by law by the Communist Government.

The troops landed spitting bullets from their machine-guns. The people again began to crawl forward. As they reached near the troops one of them got up and shouted: Comrades, we are ready to die because we cannot live. If you can live only by killing us, shoot. The firing stopped—as at a command. There was pin-drop silence, which was broken a few seconds later by the ratings and shoutings of the DSP. Fire, he thundered his order. The troops fired—in the air.

The Betrayers

What followed afterwards is a saga of unparalleled courage and supreme self-sacrifice. Vayalar is surrounded by water on three sides. One-fourth of the might of the Travancore Army had been hurled against it and they were attacking from all four sides. They were 5,000 people there—with only long, sharpened sticks as their weapons. They threw stones and wooden spears at the advancing troops.

Simultaneously, under fire of the troops, the decision was taken: as many as possible swim across and escape. But for this the troops had to be engaged elsewhere, so that a way could be found for the

escape. Two hundred militants decided to make the stand and fight to death to give the chance to the rest.

They crawled forward in small parties, with stones and spears in their hands to kill as many as possible before getting killed.

Unforgettable Heroism

They knew that death was certain and they marched to it, these two hundred proud sons of our working class, with death-defying courage. And their lives were not sacrificed in vain — the large number of people who had gathered in the Vayalar camp for shelter were able to make their way to safety.

What happened afterwards was what happens everywhere under army occupation—burning, looting, rape. The workers continued their strike for ten days, but betrayed by the Congress, with the entire armed might of the State to face, they had to call off their general strike. But they went back with their heads erect, and when the employers wanted to impose cuts on their wages, they said: "We faced death outside not to accept wages-cuts inside."

Within a year, Travancore won responsible Government and the first anniversary of Punnapra-Vayalar was observed

report then said about Sankar: "Sankar did the work of a contemptible spy."

The landlords of the area—the Kuttiadans, Anthrappers and others — in whose houses reserve police camps were set up then, were the leaders of the "liberation struggle," who courted arrest and went to jail.

It is these betrayers of the people whose hands will always remain stained with the blood of the martyrs, who say that they will defeat the Communist Party, that they will wipe out Communism. They will get their answer from the inheritors of the glorious traditions of Punnapra and Vayalar.

Still, in Kerala, there are people who insult the haloed memory of these martyrs.

Patton Thanu Pillai, then President of the State Congress, first opposed the Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's Amercan Model constitution but later did a volte-face and said he was prepared to consider it. He betrayed the Travancore people's struggle for responsible Government then but now thinks he alone can become the Chief Minister of the Government, won with the blood of the Punnapra-Vayalar martyrs.

R. Sankar, now President of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, was then a trusted lieutenant of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer. The coir factory workers in their annual

report then said about Sankar: "Sankar did the work of a contemptible spy."

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WEST BENGAL

* FROM PAGE 3

and realisation of arrears of dues should be stopped.

7. Adequate subsidies, loans and sufficient quantities of straw, corrugated sheets and other material should be made available for repairing or rebuilding houses. In view of past experience about the Government's "model village" scheme, it will be wrong to rely solely on them.

8. Adequate subsidies and loans should be made available to the State Government by the Centre, and the conditions normally imposed for such financial help should be waived.

PAGE FOURTEEN

including its municipal areas, and to suggest remedial measures.

2. The construction of the Farakka Barrage and improvement of the drainage capacity of the Bhagirathi-Hooghly river should be accorded top priority and taken in hand without any further delay.

3. A comprehensive policy should be formulated regarding the embankments.

4. Immediate steps should be taken for afforestation and soil conservation in the catchment areas of the rivers in accordance with the recommendations of the Flood Enquiry Committee (1956).

NEW AGE

5. The Union Government should help the State Government, where necessary, to implement schemes for the improvement of drainage, draining of the Bhagirathi, Hooghly, afforestation, soil conservation, etc.

Missile Bases

The memorandum concludes by emphasising the point that "only if measures as suggested above are implemented can West Bengal be saved from such terrible recurring disasters."

5. The Union Government should help the State Government, where necessary, to implement schemes for the improvement of drainage, draining of the Bhagirathi, Hooghly, afforestation, soil conservation, etc.

NEW AGE

UNDEMOCRATIC STEP

—Reported Govt. Move To Abolish Double-Member Constituencies

THE Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party in a resolution has requested the Government to favourably consider the just demand of the backward Christian community and other sections of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes converted to other religions from Hinduism, for all the special concessions including reservation of a legitimate number of seats in the State Legislature given to Scheduled Castes and Tribes in our Constitution and proposed to be extended from 1960 for another period.

The Backward Christians and other converts belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes are a considerable section of the people in Kerala. Because they are not Hindus, they are not considered as Scheduled Castes or Tribes though their economic and social conditions are no better and they deserve preferential treatment and help on an equal footing with the Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The Communist-led Gov-

ernment of Kerala extended to them almost all the educational concessions allowed to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and also treated them as a backward community in the matter of reservation of posts in recruitment to public services and in admission to professional educational institutions.

What is demanded now by the Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party is to extend all the special concessions to Backward Christians and other converts from Scheduled Castes and Tribes also, as provided in the Constitution for the Hindu Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

At the same time the Kerala State Committee has expressed concern over the reported move of the Government of India, on the basis of the recommendations of a Congress Sub-Committee, to abolish double-member constituencies and reserve an equal number of them for candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tri-

bes alone in the coming mid-term elections in Kerala to begin with.

The Kerala State Committee pointed out that such a step would be retrograde, wrong and undemocratic. It would mean the beginning of a dangerous tendency to go back to the reactionary and disruptive system of separate electorates imposed by the British rulers, aimed at dividing the people, against which our national movement had carried on a consistent struggle.

Even if any such amendment is contemplated, it should not be rushed through Parliament to suit the political exigencies of the party in power. All the State Legislatures and political parties must be given ample time to discuss the merits and demerits of such a basic change.

The State Committee warned that any attempt to introduce any such far reaching change in the mid-term elections in Kerala would be unjust and discriminatory and could not be allowed.

INDO-PAK PROBLEMS

★ FROM FRONT PAGE

new manoeuvres set in motion.

India could not be brought to heel by a frontal offensive, hence new flanking movements are being tried.

India had gone anti-U. S. because of U. S. support to Pakistan. Now new offers of support and help to India, at all levels, are being made to win Indian confidence. The tactic of intensification of Indo-Pak tension had upset India, the manoeuvre of help in the solution of outstanding problems is being tried out. This is one part of the new picture.

India served as the bridge between the Socialist camp and the powerful group of uncommitted. Afro-Asian nations. Destroy this bridge by exploiting and intensifying India-China differences. This is the other part of the same picture and aim.

Defence Pact with Pakistan; strong measures—albeit short of war—against China. These become the new slogans.

The atmosphere of improved relations with Pakistan and worsened relations with China is being utilised to engulf our country in the cold war. What the U. S. has failed to achieve in the West it is trying out in the East with our country as a base.

The basic facts about Pakistan—that it is a naked military dictatorship and it is tied to military blocs not only held valid but have become truer during the last one year. The new military regime in Pakistan came to power to save the Pak military alliance with the USA. It is now dutifully trying to draw India into a defence alliance with itself and thus by the backdoor, with its real master.

President Ayub, after noting the "happy trend" revealed through border settlement announced that Pakistan would like to settle the Kashmir dispute next.

This would have been an admirable sentiment except for what followed next.... The Field Marshal, whose greatest exploit has been the stamping out of the democratic traditions Pakistan had inherited from the common struggle of the Indian people in pre-partition days, with solemnly assumed deep political-military vision, forecasts, that the recent happenings not only in Tibet but in Afghanistan, too, showed that in about five years time, this sub-continent will become "vulnerable militarily." Hence he wants us to realise that peace in the "sub-continent and its defence is "dependent on these two countries being together and not in their facing each other with loaded revolvers." (Hindustan Times October 24)

One would have thought that every patriotic Indian and newspaper of our country would genuinely welcome every move for peace and amity with Pakistan but equally sternly refuse any tie-up with a military bloc, in line with our neutral foreign policy. This, however, is not so. It is very much worthwhile noting this.

The Tribune (October 28) in its editorial entitled "Five Years Hence" has stressed the need of listening to the Pak President as the new Messiah of wisdom and security.

On the same day, the Indian Express also wrote editorially: "At this critical phase in our relations with China, there is urgent need to consolidate understanding

with our neighbours particularly Pakistan which to a smaller degree faces the same threat from the same quarter. If Pakistan were to sign a no-war agreement with India which in our opinion would certainly be worth much more than the Panch Sheel Pledge with Peking, there is no reason why India in turn should not arrive at a joint defence arrangement with Pakistan."

The same sentiments were expressed in a public meeting by the Jan Sangh spokesman, Prof. Madhok, that "steps be taken for devising a common defence policy with Pakistan ... to meet the challenge from China" (Statesman, October 26)

That Party that once wanted war with Pakistan, now wants war with China and alliance with Pakistan. The Jan Sangh slogan has changed with the U. S. policy switch!

Last week we called attention to the similar understanding contained in the resolution of the PSP National Executive.

This week, Masani, too, has gone on record for a similar course while inaugurating the South Kanara Conference of his Swatantra Party.

This new imperialist slogan and its vendors need to be publicly exposed. They must not be allowed to exploit the national concern over the Northern border nor the popular desire for peace and goodwill with Pakistan to hitch India behind the U. S. wagon.

The Path Forward

The Pakistan Press and Radio has been denouncing

our Party as being hostile to Indo-Pak settlement. Our principled documented exposures of new imperialist tactics not only against our country but equally against Pakistan's sovereignty seem to have hit the nail to cause such an upset.

We are all for prompt settlement of all outstanding disputes with Pakistan, restoration and maintenance of neighbourly and fraternal relations with Pakistan, despite the nature of the militarist regime in Pakistan.

We are only warning our nation against the imperialist traps ahead with the confidence that we can and will escape them and yet achieve a peaceful solution of problems and strengthen our bonds with Pakistan whose people are our own flesh and blood, essentially closer to us than to any other.

We only want our Government to proceed in such a manner that this is successfully achieved, and we not only escape the imperialist trap but also overcome the obstacles that have been artificially raised.

The two outstanding problems are Canal Waters and Kashmir.

A gigantic Indus Project is being planned to solve the Canal Water issue, financially aided by and under the auspices of the World Bank. The U. S. plan is to keep the World Bank and its representatives as the permanent arbiters and thus bring the economies of both our countries under its control.

We are the bigger country and relatively better off. Let us make all the possible concessions to Pakistan. That would be fraternal and worthy of us. But let us accept no bossdom of the World Bank and mortgage our own economy. Let the huge Indus Project be a genuinely joint Indo-Pak Project but with no foreign monkeys atop.

We are all for a peaceful solution of the Kashmir pro-

blem. The British rulers have realised that their oldline of getting the whole of Kashmir for Pakistan, by whatever device it be, cannot be carried out.

Therefore, to win Indian confidence and forge our military link with its Pakistan ally and base, they are quietly taking up the old British slogan of working for a solution on the basis of partition on the present cease-fire line. Knowledgeable circles report that Pakistan's strong man, the real power behind the Ayub regime, General Sheikh, suggested such a solution, suitably modified to suit Pakistan more, to Pandit Pant and others during his New Delhi stay.

We are all for any peaceful solution of Kashmir, mutually acceptable to India and Pakistan.

We are against any solution whose price would be any military alliance or compact with the U. S., directly or via Pakistan. We only want to safeguard and advance and not risk and lose our national sovereignty.

The anti-Chinese hysteria is the enemy's opportunity to turn our country away from its independent historic path. They are out to exploit all the weaknesses of the situation.

Let us rely upon the basic strength and historic aims of our country to simultaneously fight for peaceful solution of all outstanding problems with Pakistan as also China, in terms of our independent foreign policy, and the noble traditions of our country.

We can and must turn the tide against evil men and the various agencies of imperialism running riot at the moment.

Let the ancient wisdom of our ancestors and the noble traditions of our nation guide our Government in the difficult negotiations ahead of great significance to India, Pakistan and the world at large.

(October 28)

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