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G. ADHIKARI**

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The End of World War II and the Defeat of Fascism

(Editorial from the "New Times" No. 6 of August 15.)

THE DECLARATION BY THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT OF ITS CONSENT to unconditional surrender puts an inglorious end to the sanguinary venture of the Far Eastern aggressor. Japanese imperialism has shared the fate of its German comrade-in-arms, its fellow protagonist of the fantastic theories of race superiority and its partner in the piratical schemes of world domination.

Japanese aggression on the Asiatic continent began long before Hitler's aggression in Europe. Yet Japan's whole policy was closely linked with that of her stronger European ally. Japanese militarists based their plans on the expectation of German victory over the Soviet Union and its allies. In fact, it was at the height of the unparalleled struggle on the Soviet-German Front that the Japanese marauders struck their treacherous blow at the United States and Great Britain. But the Japanese aggressor miscalculated as grievously as his German *confrere*. The chief and decisive front of World War II was the Soviet-German Front. The Red Army bore the full brunt of the struggle against Hitler Germany's main forces. In a long and stubborn struggle it smashed the backbone of the German army. The fact that Germany's war-machine was pinned to the Soviet-German Front gave our allies, the United States and Great Britain, an opportunity not only to limit Japan's initial temporary successes but also to pass on to the offensive against the common enemy in the Far East.

last received an opportunity of resurrecting her national state and developing her economy and culture. In their efforts to rid themselves of the dark forces of stagnation and reaction which are dragging them back and threatening them with new calamities, the Chinese people may count on full understanding and support of the democratic forces all over the world. The aims, for which the Chinese people have been waging a struggle of national liberation for so many decades, can be achieved only by progressive democratic development and by close co-operation with other great democratic powers. Highly valuable in this respect is the treaty of friendship and alliance concluded between the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic.

With Japan's capitulation a number of serious problems demanding urgent solution arise in countries of the Far East and the Pacific Ocean. Lessons of the Pacific war cannot be discounted, especially as far as the colonial countries are concerned. Certain general principles for the settlement of the colonial problems are outlined in the Charter of the United Nations drawn up at the San Francisco Conference. The turn has now come for practical settlement of these urgent colonial questions in a spirit of respect for vital interests and rights of dependent peoples, including the right of self-determination and achievement of full national independence.

The end of World War II signifies the advent of universal peace. Peoples who have suffered so much and have borne such heavy sacrifices for the sake of victory over the aggressors are vitally interested in peace being as stable and lasting as possible. This demands unrelaxing vigilance to thwart the machinations of the anti-popular reactionary forces which are hostile to the cause of peace; it demands effective union of the efforts of all sincere champions of peaceful intercourse among nations.

The seats of aggression in Europe and the Far East have been destroyed. A crushing defeat has been inflicted on German and Japanese imperialism. But history teaches us that, under favourable circumstances, the vanquished aggressor may recuperate his strength and develop new fangs. Hence the paramount necessity for the solution of post-war problems that will remove every likelihood of a recrudescence of German or Japanese aggression. That is the prime task of the Allies today. Foes of lasting peace, whose views are kindred to those of the aggressors, are doing their utmost to vilify and frustrate concerted policy of the Allied powers whose chief and fundamental aim is to consolidate

peace, disarm international brigands, punish war criminals and raise reliable barriers against any possible revival of the forces of aggression. This policy is reflected in the historic decisions of the Berlin Conference.

Problems of post-war settlement are only just beginning to assume a concrete shape. The fight for enduring peace will still demand no little effort. But its foundations have already been laid. They were laid while the war was still on, as co-operation became closer and mutual understanding deeper among the Allied great powers who were bearing the brunt of struggle against the aggressors. By furthering and promoting such co-operation on behalf of the security of freedom-loving nations the Allied great powers and the United Nations in general, will be really able to ensure lasting general peace just as successfully as they ensured victory in World War II.

Manchuria--Japan's Base Against The U.S.S.R.

By V. AVARIN

(From the "New Times," No. 6 August 15)

A GLANCE AT THE MAP IS SUFFICIENT TO SHOW THAT MANCHURIA occupies a peculiar geographical position with regard to the Soviet Union. It is like an immense wedge driven into our territory. The Soviet-Manchurian border is about 3,500 kilometres long. The most fertile and densely populated regions of the Soviet Far East lie in close contiguity to it. Balgoveschensk, Khabarovsk and other large Soviet towns are situated practically on the border itself.

Manchuria is centrally placed in the midst of the surrounding Soviet territory. Owing to this, armed forces of the aggressor, who holds the sway over Manchuria, are able, if they possess suitable communications, to strike along short lines of the operation at any point on the adjacent Soviet territories.

The Amur and Ussuri Railways run in close range of the

Manchuria as far as we can... That is our opportunity for open conflict."

This former Japanese Premier and leader of the Seiyukai Party, repeatedly reiterated in his memorial "Sooner or later we shall have to fight Soviet Russia."

He cynically declared "In our wars with Russia and the U.S.A. we shall have to compel Manchuria and Mongolia to experience all the horrors of the war."

In this same memorial Tanaka outlined the programme for further Japanese aggression.

"The way to gain actual rights in Manchuria and Mongolia is to use this region as a base and, under pretence of trade and commerce, penetrate the rest of China... Having China's entire resources at our disposal we shall proceed to conquer India, the Archipelago, Asia Minor, Central Asia and even Europe."

The documents, originating in high Japanese military circles in the period subsequent to the occupation of Manchuria, clearly confirmed Japan's military designs on the Soviet Union. In one of them (published in the *Izvestia* of March, 4, 1932) the Japanese militarist declared "I consider it necessary that the Imperial Government pursue a policy which will make it possible to start war on the U.S.S.R. as early as possible."

As the Japanese General did not intend this document for the public eye, he did not deem it necessary to mask his plan of war on the Soviet Union by talk about the "Bolshevik peril" and the like. The aim of the war, in his opinion, was not to protect Japan from communism but to seize the Soviet Far East and Eastern Siberia. His minimum programme was "penetration as far as Lake Baikal." As regards the Far Eastern territory, he wanted to "completely embody it in the Japanese Empire."

Even in their public utterances the Japanese leaders spoke in very clear terms. Matsuoka, prominent politician and diplomat and special Japanese delegate to the League of Nations conference in Geneva in 1932, explained that Manchuria had been occupied by Japan in order to make it the "Japanese bulwark against the Soviet Union." Not only the Japanese Press but even leading military men and officials like General Araki openly advocated in their speeches the need for an early seizure of Siberia.

It was absolutely clear that the Soviet Union must take appropriate measures against the threat of Japanese attack from the Manchurian base. Such measures were taken. And when the Japanese aggressors began to probe the Soviet frontiers they in-

Soviet-Manchurian border for practically their whole length. Important waterways form a part of the border itself. The aggressor, operating from Manchuria, may, therefore, by a successful surprise attack, sever vital communications in a number of places and, if he can exploit his success, cut off the Soviet maritime region and the Amur region from the rest of the Soviet Union.

In the event of aggression against the Soviet Union armed forces that control Manchuria also possess the advantage of being able to manoeuvre along the internal lines of operation.

By virtue of these geographical conditions any aggressive nation that controls this country enjoys great facilities for attack on the Soviet Union. This circumstance was taken advantage of in the early years of the Soviet Government by White Guard chieftains operating at orders of the Japanese. Semenov, Khorvat, Kalmykov and other Japanese hirelings using Manchuria as base, invaded the Soviet territory, harried and pillaged and retired back to their lair whenever danger threatened them.

Because of its geographical situation, Manchuria always attracted deep interest of the Japanese in their schemes of armed aggression against the neighbouring countries. The Japanese imperialists persistently strove to seize Manchuria. Having occupied this country in 1931-1932 and set up the Manchukuo puppet state, their first concern was to turn it into a military base for eventual attack on the Soviet Union. They worked at feverish speed drawing widely upon the human and material resources of the captured country. The results were evident within a few years. New strategical communications driven by the Japanese to the Soviet frontier, numerous hastily built aerodromes, a network of telephone lines, solid fortifications and military settlements, the war industry created in the interior regions and a big Japanese army concentrated in Manchuria—all these spoke eloquently of the aspirations of the Japanese imperialists. On the contrary, they made their appetites loudly known in the Press and even in official statements. The role which they assigned to Manchuria in their plans for attack on the Soviet Union was very clearly revealed in the Japanese secret documents which, in one way or another, became publicly known. In particular, General Tanaka, one of the moving spirits of Japanese intervention in the Soviet Far East, outlined in a secret memorial to the Emperor in 1927 a detailed plan for the purpose of creating the "basis of attack on Siberia." He wrote "When these railroads are completed we shall pour our forces into north

Manchuria as far as we can....That is our opportunity for open conflict."

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It was absolutely clear that the Soviet Union must take appropriate measures against the threat of Japanese attack from the Manchurian base. Such measures were taken. And when the Japanese aggressors began to probe the Soviet frontiers they in-

variably found themselves up against strong barriers and met with a vigorous rebuff. Their provocative attacks, made on a large scale at Lake Hassan in 1938 and on the river Halhenho in 1939, ended deplorably for them.

Particularly serious was the attempt at Halhenho to cross from Manchuria into the Mongolian People's Republic with which the Soviet Union is bound by a treaty of mutual assistance. The hostilities begun by the Japanese in the middle of May lasted until the middle of September, 1939. Tanks and aircraft were engaged on both the sides. Under extremely unfavourable conditions (remoteness of the bases and railways, difficulties of supply etc.) Soviet troops, as well as troops of the Mongolian People's Republic, displayed splendid valour and high military proficiency. The operations also revealed that Soviet tanks and aircraft were definitely superior to the Japanese. In four months of the hostilities the Japanese lost 660 aircraft, 150 guns and many tanks and motor vehicles. Tens of thousands of the Japanese were killed. The aggressor was hurled back from the borders of the Mongolian People's Republic. This armed conflict, which they had themselves provoked, was a severe lesson to the command of the Kwantung Army and to the Japanese militarists in general.

But it did not bring them to their senses and Japan's preparations for war on the Soviet Union did not cease. She continued to perfect her armed base in Manchuria and accumulate resources for attack on the Soviet Union. At the same time, the Japanese converted Manchuria into an industrial and food base for war against China, America and Britain.

By widescale construction of communication facilities the Japanese army created a number of well-equipped operational sectors for action against the Soviet Union stretching from the centre of Manchuria to the Soviet frontier. These sectors were equipped with railways and motor roads, with a network of air bases and airfields, with telephoné and telegraph lines, army stores, repair-shops and fortified areas, as well as strong points to serve as initial positions of the attack. In a number of places the Japanese even erected special strongpoints in the shape of agricultural settlements of the military-trained Japanese colonists or of large estates manned by militarily-trained Japanese youths.

Before the Japanese occupation there was only one railway in Manchuria that touched the Soviet border in two places. This was the Chinese Eastern Railway which traverses North Manchu-

ria. It was under joint Soviet and Chinese administration at the time and could, therefore, not be utilised for attack on the Soviet Union.

When the Chinese Eastern Railway passed into the hands of the Japanese, they changed its gauge to make it uniform with that of other Japanese railways in Manchuria. They then laid the second track, thereby increasing its carrying capacity to fifty-six pairs of trains per day. The Japanese adapted this railway in everyway for attack on the Soviet Union. In addition, they laid a number of new strategical railways and roads leading to the Soviet frontier. They also built lateral railways and roads, especially along the southern border of the Ussuri region.

Let us enumerate the principal operational sectors which the Japanese intended to use for the invasion of the Soviet Union: firstly, Changchung (and Mukden)—Taoan-Halugeae-Halung-Arshang-Handagai (border of the Mongolian People's Republic); secondly, Harbin-Tsitsihar-Hailar (Manchuria station and old Zurchutai); thirdly Tsitsihar-Sahalian (and Harbin and Sahalian); fourthly, Harbin-Tunchiang-Fuyuan; fifthly, Harbin-Pogranichnaya station; sixthly, Kirin-(and Seishin)—Posieta and the Amur banks; seventhly, Changchung (or Harbin as well as Seishin)—Mudankiang-Hulin. In addition, a number of auxiliary sectors also abutting on the Soviet border at various places were created.

Road construction was of particular importance in Manchuria as, owing to the rough and impassable nature of territory in the extensive parts of the country, big troop formations could move only in certain sectors. As a result of the strategical construction undertaken during the thirteen years of Japanese occupation, the total length of railways in Manchuria increased from 6,500 to 13,000 kilometres. In this period, too, 50,000 kilometres of arterial and local roads were built, most of them of military value. The laying of a motor road from Dairen to Harbin was begun; seaports were enlarged and the capacity of the main sea-lines connecting Manchuria and Japan increased. The construction of new ports was undertaken and the number of steamship lines between the Asiatic continent and Japanese Archipelago enlarged. Airways were considerably developed; at least ten of them terminate at the Soviet border while others run along the border itself.

The Japanese agricultural settlements and big estates are chiefly located in North Manchuria, most of them in the vicinity of the Soviet frontier. The number of Japanese colonists, includ-

ing employees on the estates, reached a total of 200,000 while that of Japanese generally in Manchuria and the Kwantung province totals about one and a half million. Only one-sixth of this number—260,000 persons in all—lived in Manchuria before the occupation.

The Japanese also endeavoured to utilise the Koreans as a weapon and support in Manchuria and took systematic measures to resettle them at definite points. As a result, the number of Koreans in Manchuria rose from 900,000 before the occupation to 1,500,000 in 1945.

While building their broadly ramified system of strongpoints for operation against the Soviet Union in the more important strategical sectors, the Japanese Generals erected very solid fortifications of a permanent type. A network of such fortifications was built, for instance, in the vicinity of the Pogranichnaya station, at Lake Hanka, in the lower reaches of Sungari, around Sahalian, opposite Blagoveshchensk and in the Manchuria station area.

The Japanese imperialists took energetic measures to utilise the natural and human resources of their Manchurian base for furtherance of their military aims. Power resources were greatly developed, coal-mining expanded and exploitation of forests undertaken. Heavy industry sprang up, iron and steel, non-ferrous and light metals, chemicals, including extraction of liquid fuel from shale and coal. Aircraft and automobile factories were erected and metal-working plants, arsenals, small arms factories etc. were enlarged or re-equipped.

The output of coal in Manchuria is estimated at 25,000,000 tons per annum compared with 10,000,000 tons before the occupation. The iron output, to judge by the available data, is as high as 3,000,000 tons—a sevenfold increase compared with the pre-occupation years.

The Japanese converted the Mukden arsenal, which existed before the occupation, into a vast agglomeration of armament works employing over 50,000 workers. It produced guns, mortars, machine-guns, explosives etc. There are gun-powder factories in Antung, Liaoyang and Fusin. In the 1940's a big expansion of explosives manufacture was undertaken in Manchuria.

Manchuria's light industries were adapted for supply of the Japanese army and new factories were built. They provided the Japanese troops with uniforms, food, accoutrements and footwear.

Presumably, one-third of Japan's total industrial output in recent years was derived from Manchuria.

It need scarcely be said that the Japanese military inaugurated stringent control over the country's industry and its economy generally. Strict supervision extends to every factory, to every artisan workshop and to every farm. The Japanese military authorities have at their disposal the whole output, order what is to be produced and in what quantity, fix prices, determine wages, etc.

When the Manchurian peasant gathers his harvest he has to surrender not only his grain but even his vegetables. The Japanese keep a strict account of every sheep and hen, of every head of cabbage growing in vegetable patches. While living himself on starvation ration and dying of inanition and disease, the Chinese peasant in Manchuria has had for years to reconcile himself to the fact that the fruits of his labour have been enjoyed by the Japanese robbers. In this way the Japanese not only fed their large army in Manchuria but also shipped to Japan millions of tons of agricultural produce annually.

The laws and decrees issued by the Japanese Command directly or through the Manchukuo "government" invested the authorities with power of compulsorily recruiting workers for industry, agriculture or for strategical construction. The subjects of the Puppet Emperor Pu Yi may not change their place or residence or leave their place of employment of their own accord. The entire working population of Manchuria have been turned into slaves of the Japanese imperialists. Their status is that of feudal serfs and they are subject to the most brutal and exacting forms of exploitation. Just as the German fascists did in European countries, they were seized by Japanese fascists in Manchuria, who introduced slave labour in factories and feudal conditions in villages. "The German fascists are feudal reactionaries," Stalin said of the Hitlerites. The Japanese invaders are similar feudal reactionaries who have reduced tens of millions of workers and peasants in Manchuria and other subjected countries to slavery.

Not content with this, the Japanese imperialists, with a view to completely utilising human resources of the country, in furtherance of their aims of conquest, introduced conscription in Manchuria. They were unable, however, to complete the necessary measures for building a large army recruited from their Manchurian slaves. The country has a population of over

45,000,000 ; yet, at the beginning of this year, the army of the Manchurian puppet government did not exceed 250,000 men. Naturally, it was trained in a spirit of hatred of the Soviet Union as well as of Britain and America. This army, as well as the local police numbering over 100,000, was regarded by the Japanese as an auxiliary force of aggression against the Soviet Union and of action against the liberated partisan regions of China. But, as the chief weapon of their war policy, the Japanese imperialists concentrated in Manchuria large forces of their own army and air force.

Before the occupation the effectives of the Kwantung Army, which was then stationed on the Kwantung peninsula and in south Manchurian railway belt, amounted to 10,500 men. At the beginning of 1933 the strength of the Kwantung Army, according to official Japanese data, was 65,000 but, by the end of that year, nearly 130,000 Japanese troops were already stationed in Manchuria. After that the Japanese continued steadily to enlarge their Manchurian army. In the early half of 1941 it numbered over 400,000. In the latter half of that year and the time when Hitler's hordes were advancing into the heart of the Soviet Union, Japan transferred large contingents of armed force to Manchuria. By the end of 1941 nearly 1,000,000 men, about 1,000 tanks and 1,500 aircraft were concentrated there. As much as one-half of all Japan's artillery, nearly two-thirds of all her tanks and three-quarters of all her cavalry were stationed on or in vicinity of the borders of the Soviet Union. Only in the latter half of 1943 and in 1944, when it became perfectly evident to the Japanese militarists that the plans of the Nazi Command had failed, did the Japanese General Staff begin somewhat to reduce the number of troops concentrated for attack on the Soviet Union. After the collapse of Hitler Germany, the Japanese adopted the policy of concentrating forces in their so-called "Inner zone" which includes Japan proper, South Sakhalin, Korea, Manchuria, North China and a part of Central China. Accordingly, the Japanese aggressors began once again to increase their forces in Manchuria, Korea and North China—thus creating a new threat to the Soviet Union as well.

The Soviet Union has come to the aid of its Allies for the purpose of speeding the establishment of peace and security and shortening the sufferings of the war-exhausted nations. Our chief purpose is to eliminate the threat of attack which has hung for

so many years over peoples of the Soviet Union as a result of the conversion of Manchuria into a Japanese military base.

An end must be put, once and for all, to the Japanese plans of aggression against our country which form an integral part of the imperialist schemes of Japanese world domination. An end must be put, once and for all, to the situation in which Manchuria may serve as a base and centre of machinations against vitally important regions of our country.

Activities of The People's Militia Behind The Enemy Lines

*Issued by the Propaganda Department of the General
Political Department ("Emancipation Daily,"
Yenan, July 8, 1944.)*

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR OF RESISTANCE THE ENEMY MADE furious frontal attacks. The National Army continuously retreated. Each retreat was for a distance of several hundred li. Old Government officials fled unexpectedly and hurriedly, together with their properties and family belongings. They left behind the general masses in the depth of the conflagration, without any thought. The activities of enemy spies and traitors reached a peak; they did as they pleased. Puppet activities of surrendering to the enemy were seen everywhere. The general masses sank into deep pessimism. Our Eighth Route and New Fourth armies penetrated deeply behind the enemy's lines, waged victorious war against the enemy, recaptured territories, roused the masses behind the enemy lines, and heightened the tide of the anti-Japanese struggle.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party the masses were inspired to set up mass organisations—peasants', workers' and women's etc., to re-organise the old government so that the masses should participate in the administration to realise the reduction of rent and interest and to improve the livelihood of the masses. On the basis of such democratic politics and mass

movement, the masses were armed. Anti-Japanese defence corps of armed people were rapidly set up everywhere. Men from 20 to 50 years old brought their locally-made rifles and guns, big swords and spears to join the self-defence corps. Headquarters are located as follows: of the companies in the villages; of the battalions in the *chus*; of the regiments in the *hsiens*; of the detachments in the sub-region seats. Such large-scale armed organisations have never before been known in Chinese history. Their task on the one hand was to fulfil war service in the rear, such as message-transmitting, transporting, guiding, stretcher-carrying etc. On the other hand, it was to consolidate the rear: being on sentry-duty, scouting and checking on passers-by, suppressing traitors' activities, so that there would be no way for enemy spies and traitors who had been very active at the time to sneak in.

After the fall of Wuhan, resistance behind the enemy lines became the main battlefield of the China war theatre. Persistent mopping-up campaigns followed. The struggle between us and the enemy rapidly became acute. The changed situation made it necessary to modify the people's defence corps. The Youths' Anti-Japanese Vanguard or Elite Self-Defence Corps or Partisan Nuclei were voluntarily organised by those resolute, gallant and adventurous youths. They took up the responsibility of the war-tasks. Practical experience has proved that the people felt impelled to engage themselves in the struggle, for the sake of defending their villages as well as their own safety. This experience was popularly acclaimed. Some made contributions to buy rifles and others used temple equipment to exchange for ammunition. Widespread people's guards units were established, and they became the *elite* of armed people.

The Communist Party regards the establishment of people's guards as an important part of the policy of setting up bases, and regards it as an important part of the plan of army construction. Many concrete measures were drawn up to help in the development of the people's guards. First of all, the Party, Government and Army, all realised the significance of the people's guards and the necessity for making them popular. They applied various means to promote their political status, as for instance to treat the killed and wounded people's guards exactly like members of the regular army. At large meetings the front seats are reserved for members of the people's guards, and they are elected members of the presidium, etc. They take part in all activities. Because of this the masses consider it an honour to

join the ranks of the people's guards. Any fear on the side of the people was allayed when the Government announced that members of the people's guards would not be enlisted in the regular army. The regular army is not permitted to absorb the people's guards. On the contrary they were ordered to turn over some rifles to the people's guards, and to encourage the people to produce their own arms and ammunition, and to help them to solve the problems of their livelihood.

For example, the 8th sub-region of Northwestern Shansi accepted the 6-point programme of concrete measures suggested by the gentry of Nyitung : (1) if members of the people's guards are engaged in fighting during the busiest farming season their land will be cultivated by the people and it will be guaranteed that their crops will be as good as the rest ; (2) if there are funerals or weddings among the members of the people's guards the people of the whole village will help them ; (3) if the family of a member of the people's guards is unable to support itself the landlords should try their best to lend them grain and seeds to improve their production ; (4) if a guard has to go to protect his village against the advance of the enemy, his family will be cared for by the whole village and his belongings will be moved to safe places ; (5) if the family is opposed to one of its members joining the ranks of the people's guards, the landlords should explain the situation to them ; (6) everybody should try to prevent any conscious or unconscious damage to the people's corps by individual destructive talk or actions. Other regions have also adopted similar concrete measures to relieve them of worry about their own and their families' livelihood so that they can devote themselves with all their energy to the struggle against the invader.

The regular army has adopted the methods of "master teaches the apprentice" to help the people's militia and has taught them the methods of fighting and sent cadres to instruct them. Members of the people's guards get their share in the war booty when they have co-operated in engagements. Party cells consider the people's militia as an important task and always inspect and promote their activities and ask Party members to join their ranks. Enlistment is on a purely voluntary basis. The whole population participates in the election of the "hero of the militia," and the Government contributes material and spiritual rewards. So the masses elect their own leader and

the achievements of these leaders can be set as an example for all the members of the people's militia.

TWO MILLION PEOPLE'S MILITIA

The guerilla movement has now become a mass movement. There are now two million members of the people's militia behind the enemy lines. There are 1,580,000 in North China bases: Chin-Cha-Chi, 630,000; Chin-Chi-Yu, 320,000; Chin-Lu-Yu, 80,000; Shantung, 500,000; Chin-Sui, 50,000. There are 550,000 in Central China bases: Su-chung, 130,000; Hwainan, 55,000; Su-pei, 85,000; Hwai-pei, 70,000; O-Yu-Wan, 150,000; Su-nan, 25,000; Wan-chung, 25,000; Che-tung, 10,000. This makes a total of 2,130,000.

The people's armed self-defence corps is the most popular mass organisation in the bases behind the enemy lines. Nearly all the young men belong to it, women and children have their own organisations. All of them are not separated from production, but utilise their free time to carry out military and political education. Their tasks include sentry-duty, scouting, carrying of messages and general war services. Their members are much more numerous than the people's militia. It is estimated that in all bases their number amounts to no less than 40 million.

The establishment of the people's militia is based on the foundation of the people's self-defence corps, the political consciousness of the masses and the principle of voluntary enlistment. It is an armed mass organisation with defence as its central task. The youths are in the Anti-Japanese Youth Vanguard, the men in the Model Self-defence Corps or *Elite* Self-defence Corps. They are the most active elements of the masses. Although they too are not separated from production and have to feed themselves, they have more military training than the self-defence corps. Partisan cells are formed by picking out the best 3 to 5 members of the Youth Vanguard and the *Elite* Self-defence Corps to form secret armed organisations. Their main task is to sneak in disguise into Japanese-held places to carry out espionage and anti-traitor activities.

In the democratic system of the armed masses the election of the commanders of the various detachments and the committees of the armed people is an important task. Under the leadership of those committees the people's militia as a whole becomes a unified fighting organ.

The people's militia and the people's self-defence corps are the armed organisations of the whole population. The greatness of the strength of the former is due to its being linked closely with the latter. Many activities are carried out in common. As a rule the people's militia have better fighting strength. They are armed mostly with captured weapons, they have rifles, pistols, light machine-guns and make their own cartridges and explosives. The people's militia hero Hsu Li-chang of the Chin-Sui war district himself made a mine-thrower, and people's militia heroes Lu Ching-yun, Shah Kwang-ching made hand-grenades, and people's militia hero Yung Tung-hsiu refilled cartridges. Mines, a very important weapon, are produced in factories established by the people's militia in various districts. In addition they received some ammunition from the regular army. Nearly every member of the people's militia has one kind of weapon—rifles or old locally-made rifles or hand-grenades. Of course, this is still far from enough. They are short of everything and the firing strength of local rifles is too weak. The Eighth Route and New Fourth armies do their best to assist the people's militia with arms from their own limited equipment. So their most urgent problem is the problem of arms. If in future every militia-man has his own rifle and hand-grenades we shall be able to deal even heavier blows to the enemy.

DEFEND YOUR HOMES AND VILLAGES, KILL THE ENEMY !

The fundamental task of the people's militia is to protect the interests of the masses and to defend their own villages. Against the "triple-destruction" policy of the Japanese robbers they lead the villages in carrying out the "empty-house and stripped-fields" tactics. Supplies of grain, firewood, straw and other things are hidden. If one enters a house in a village behind the enemy lines he sees only four bare walls. All that remains in the house is a pair of baskets. One contains a light bundle of bedding and clothing, the other cooking utensils and some food. When the enemy approaches the baskets are picked up and carried to a safer place. Some of the people's militia engage the enemy in the vicinity of the village, while others inspect the houses to see that they are empty, and all the people evacuated. Thus the enemy sacrifices lives for an empty village. The enemy tries especially during the spring sowing and autumn harvest to rob the people, but then the militia make sudden attacks on him

to protect the people against these attempts. Their slogans are "the enemy must not be able to take away a single cow or grain." Thanks to their bravery and fighting skill the Japanese have to take back their trucks and donkeys, which they planned to load with grain, loaded with their own dead and wounded as cargo.

The people's militia also engages the enemy in political warfare, and in a campaign against spies, secret agents and puppets. Militia leader Chang Tsu-yuan of the guerilla region of Ning-wu conducts anti-traitor work in different ways: by persuasion, by secret watching and by open punishment to suppress the activities of enemy spies and to liquidate the ideology of capitulating or compromising with the enemy. One of the most important tasks of the militia is to transfer the population to safer places if the enemy forces are too strong to prevent their advance.

'Communication-warfare' behind the enemy lines depends chiefly on the militia. In the autumn of 1940, during the Hundred Regiment Campaign the militia in the Chi-tung region organised 350,000 people to participate in road destruction work. In 1942 the militia in the Chin-she-pei region captured more than 10,000 *catties* of enemy telephone wire, destroyed 40 encircling walls and set fire to some twenty bridges. In January 1943, in Pinghaichu, Shantung, 10,000 men carried out a great deal of destruction for four days long along the Ling-Yen highway, during the anti-mopping-up campaign in Yi-Meng-chu. In the north they started at Chuchiutien and went as far south as Chunghsing and in the west they started at Sa-tuen eastward to Kuo-chia-wen. Under the protection of the militia the destruction was carried out by men and women, old and young, using hoes, spades, shears etc. to tear up the road; they set fire to bridges, destroyed observation towers, razed walls, cut telephone wires until the area resembled a place swept clean of fallen leaves by the autumn wind, and all blockhouses and communication lines were destroyed. The most difficult part of the work was the building of ditches, forts, tunnels, etc. to make the terrain more favourable for carrying on guerilla warfare. Nearly all the roads were turned into ditches, 8 yards wide and more than 10 yards deep to prevent any rapid advance of the enemy, at the same time these ditches facilitated the movement of our mobile troops. The people call them "anti-Japanese ditches."

In Chi-nan last year the surface of the land was so changed that even the people who were familiar with the region could

not recognize the places after they had been turned into village fortresses. In Yen-chow-fu in the Su-pei region, villages in the plains were all connected by ditches and these ditches in turn were inter-connected. Enemy steamers could not use the waterways because of the series of rings encircling the waterways. In Che-tung, tunnel fighting was developed by digging tunnels 8 yards wide and 4 yards high, connecting villages, *hsiangs* and even *hsiens*, extending over several hundreds of *li* so that this underground communication network makes it possible to move freely without appearing at the surface. There are many hidden entrances to these tunnels, and there are ventilators and simple poison-gas protection equipment. Inside the entrances are traps, and outside, to the left and right, are mines, to facilitate our advance and retreat. This is really a miraculous work which makes guerilla warfare possible in the plains. But in the mountainous region of Taihan the militia also instructed the masses to dig interconnecting tunnels. For such kind of work the labour of 100,000 or even more is needed.

The militia chiefly relies on the combined use of rapid-firing guns and mines. The militia-men are scattered widely. In groups of 3 to 5 they scatter all over the hills and fields and wherever they meet the enemy they attack by falling on them like sparrows on grain. They enter a place when it is unguarded and "peck" at something; they disperse in various directions and hide when the enemy forces are too strong, to wait for another chance. This kind of warfare is called 'sparrow warfare.' Rapid-firing guns are used to drive the enemy to such places where mines are laid. Therefore the enemy feels that to enter our bases is like coming into a world of flying bullets and exploding mines, and that danger lurks at every step.

The method of organising the army in the anti-Japanese bases in the enemy rear includes the co-ordination of three kinds of armed forces: the regular army, local partisan detachments and the people's militia. This relationship can be compared to a hand: the regular army is the bone, the local partisans the muscles and the militia the blood and flesh. During fighting the militia-men give much help to the regular army which relies on them as to information about the enemy's activities and general terrain conditions; with the militia acting as ears, eyes and feet and hands it is easier for the regular army to concentrate all its strength to annihilate the enemy. The consolidation of the strength of the militia enables them to co-ordinate in the struggle

and to fight independently in certain engagements along with the regular army. Sometimes the militia is strong enough to participate in actual fighting and to break through a ring of enemy troops encircling the regular army. For example, when last May one company of our regular army was besieged at Yang-hui-kan in the China-Cha-Chi region, the militia in the vicinity of Ping-san and Ning-so attacked from different sides and finally the encircled company made a break-through and was saved.

This close co-operation between the regular army, the partisans and the militia makes our armed forces incomparably strong. Thus they can harass the enemy, destroy his fortified points and enlarge our bases. During 1943, the militia participated in encircling the following fortified points: Tse-nan, Chia-ko, etc. in the 8th sub-region of the Chin-Sui war district; Sin-yuan, Yen-tsai in the Chin-Chi-Yu war district; Pei-san in the Lu-nan war district; Kweichuan in the Lu-chung war district; Si-nan-pi in the Pei-yu district; Yifeng, Yi-yutsu in south-east and Hsuchow in the Hwaipei district.

The people's militia in Shantung participated in 8,852 engagements last year, wounding, killing or capturing 6,809 puppets and enemies. One sub-region, Pei-yu-chu, in the Chin-Cha-Chi Region had 369 engagements in 1943 in which puppets and enemies suffered 380 casualties; among them was a Japanese captain who was killed. Tai-hang-chu in the Chin-Cha-Chi Region had as many as 15,349 engagements in 1943 with 1,132 enemy casualties. In Chin-shi-pei the militia fought 1,208 engagements during April to September 1943 with 665 enemy casualties. From other regions no figures have been received. It is generally estimated that the enemy suffered not less than 50,000 casualties from the hands of the people's militia behind the enemy lines during 1943. Since they are continuously developing, even better achievements can be expected in the future.

VICTORY IS CERTAIN

The people's militia has been operating in North China for a long time, so the enemy calls them 'local 8th Routes', 'plain-clothes 8th Routes', '8th Route planets', '8th Route resources', etc. During 'mopping-up' campaigns and 'clearing-up the villages' operations the militia is one of the main objectives of the enemy's attacks.

There are at present 1,580,000 members in the people's mili-

tia in North China, or 3 per cent of the total population of the bases. There are 55,000 militia-men in Central China bases, or 1.75 percent. By improving the organisation of the militia their number is going to increase greatly. In Chi-tung the militia at one time constituted 8 per cent of the total population and became the model for the organisation of the militia in the bases behind the enemy lines. Thus in general, the militia is as yet not sufficient. It must become larger and stronger in order to maintain the war bases and also to take part in the coming counter-offensive. A militia several millions strong, and sufficiently armed, will help the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies effectively to drive out the Japanese invaders in North, Central and South China.

Culture In North-West China

By OUR CHUNGKING CORRESPONDENT

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF ART, WHETHER IN NORTHERN CHINA, AND in the liberated areas of China, in Central China or in Southern China should be that the full energy and creative effort of the artist, whether he is a writer, playwright, actor or musician, should go at the present time to serve the Chinese people's fight against the Japanese and should advance the understanding and meaning of that fight, they should tell the Chinese people how the fight should be carried on. They should inspire the people for the fight and, of course, for all these things, it is absolutely necessary that all their artistic talents—literary, musical, cultural or any other kind—should be expressed in terms which the people understand.

Now, the most important forms of such art in China are different from those abroad. In Europe and America, since the majority of the people are literate, the greatest audience for any artist is through the printed word. In China that is not so. Since the majority of the people are illiterate, the greatest medium of reaching the people are songs, drama and pictures. Therefore, you find in China, that the drama occupies an exceptional place.

In order to understand the present form of the drama in China we must begin with the conditions in China. Old Chinese drama was a highly formalised traditional form. It had the opera which generally dealt with the lives of emperors, generals, famous court ladies and so forth, very seldom with the activities of ordinary people. The drama was not staged in the spoken language and so was not well understood by the people. The costumes were very gorgeous and glamorous. The equipment was very expensive, technical training was very long because they had to learn not only to sing in the traditional style, but also to dance in the old traditional style. However, this drama was a great spectacle, not in the sense that it contributed to the ordinary lives of the people, but because there was more colour and glamour about it. For this reason the people enjoyed seeing it. They did not enjoy seeing it because it had references to their own lives and their own experiences but because it had more colour etc.

The modern drama in China rose with the general modern movement in Chinese literature and in Chinese art. The great dividing line between the old culture and the new culture in China is the year 1919. That year was the beginning of the student movement as a factor of real importance in China. The middle class in China since the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in 1911 had begun to send their children to schools, universities and also universities abroad. Through their education, the students came into contact with culture and knowledge, not as the property of a small group but as the property of the nation as a whole, which, of course, had been achieved in most countries of the West and they saw that this kind of mass literacy and mass culture was the only foundation for a modern state. That was seen by all groups of the Chinese middle class at the time—not only by those who espoused modern revolutionary theories but also by those who wanted to build up a Chinese State on the model of the capitalist democracies of Europe and America.

The first problem that arose in connection with the broadening of knowledge was the problem of Chinese written language. You know of course that in China there is no phonetic alphabet, there is an ideographic script. This means that every character represents an idea or an object. This system therefore, requires great multiplicity. In order to read even a newspaper in China one has to know at least 3 to 4 thousand characters and to read old classical works one has to know 10 thousand characters.

This of course means that even a newspaper cannot reach the vast majority of the Chinese population who do not know how to read and write. As a result of this the ideographic script—which was the written language—and the spoken language became further separated in their turn. But writers kept on writing in the language used several hundred years before and even that language was formalised and stilted and considerably different from the actual living language. The position was rather similar to the position in medieval Europe where the scientists, philosophers and poets wrote in Latin, not in the spoken language of their land.

But all this was changed with the great advance made in 1919 when new writers began to write in the spoken language. Thus the first obstacle was overcome.

The second obstacle to be overcome was the contempt in which scholars and writers held the short story, the novel etc. China has very rich literature of old history, mystical works, comic writings and so forth. It was considered by the scholars and writers to be below one's dignity to write a simple story. There were two Chinese novels in existence before 1919. One of them is about the struggle of the people during the Sung dynasty which Pearl Buck has translated. Most of such writing was done between 12th and 17th centuries. But people said that it was disgraceful to read such books and kept them on the back shelves of their library.

After 1919 the spoken language was written. Artists and scholars upto then had been confined to the old classical forms but now modern plays began to be written. 1919 marked the beginning of really large-scale translations of foreign literature into the Chinese language. The spoken dramas were performed on the Chinese stage and modern spoken dramas were also performed. They had a very great success because they dealt with social problems in China.

By 1925-27 when the second revolutionary wave rose in China modern plays were written. They had middle class and upper class audiences. In the revolution of 1925-27 which was carried on by the Kuomintang and the Communist Party in co-operation (and which ended in the great split and the great massacres of 1927) the movement depended on the Chinese peasantry. In China 80 to 90 per cent of the population are peasants. So it is correct to say that the movement depended on the peasantry as well as the working class, which is very small,—i.e. on the great mass of the Chinese people. The problem of

mobilising the peasantry, of explaining to the peasants, that this fight is the fight of the people, for their salvation, demanded a language that peasants could understand and here the short-one-act drama came into its own. For the first time the approach through the drama was utilised for mobilising the people.

After the great split of 1927 the cultural tradition in China was also split into two distinct movements. Some writers accepted the framework of the counter-revolution and where they had ability and talent they developed elaborate technical forms as we know them in the West. The writers who still believed that the only way left to China was through the movement of the people and for the people, formed their organisations such as the Left Writers' League, the Progressive Writers' League etc. They always changed the name in order to escape suppression and they began to strive for mass literacy. Some of them went to the Chinese Red Army which after 1929 had a base of its own. Others continued to work in Shanghai and other cities. Many of the most talented writers of this period were thrown into jail and even executed for their crime of writing progressive literature.

In 1937 the United Front was reconstituted and the two groups of writers, artists, playwrights and so forth came once more into contact.

Now we had these two groups which had 10 years of differing history. Among the playwrights from Kuomintang China for instance was a most famous playwright. He is probably equal to any modern playwright writing anywhere within the framework of ordinary middle class social theme. For instance he will write an extremely good play for a Hollywood film. He will write a 3.4 act play extremely well. This is one form of drama that developed. The plot will be interesting, the characters will speak well, there will be some good jokes—but in general the plays will deal mainly with middle-class life, its difficulties etc.—very little with the lives of China's people—the peasantry.

Speaking of the whole dramatic movement one can say that many of the writers who remained in Kuomintang China and managed to escape going to jail or execution developed this form.

On the other hand among the revolutionary writers there had been a search for meaningful content. These writers had found a road to the people, to the majority of the people, though their form was rather primitive. This was chiefly the result of the conditions in which they worked, for instance, people who wrote

plays, who were with the Red Army, had to perform on the march, during an hour's stop or so. They did not bother about the stage. This movement had a great success. It had a great development, entering into the deeper questions that really effected the whole Chinese people.

The same thing can be said about art and music. In art and music in Kuomintang China they had people who were trained in Western methods. They spent their time in studying Western schools of music and in this way had considerable mastery over this medium. They knew how to wield the brush, instruments and orchestra and so on but on the other side of the barricade people lived under quite different conditions. There was nobody there who could spend time on formal painting. There was nobody there who could spend time in learning how to compose a symphony, and so on. The chief medium was graphic art and the wood-cut.

This was done for two reasons: (1) The wood-cut has a long tradition in China. People knew to carve characters and work in wood. Besides, illustrations were carved on it. Technically the wood-cut was highly developed in China and any craftsman could do it. (2) In the Red Army areas, there were no modern printing presses. So the wood-cut was the only form.

In the Kuomintang areas there were large illegal presses—revolutionary presses producing left literature. There also the wood-cut was to be used if you didn't want to give yourself away.

So the wood-cut was a highly developed form.

In music, the song was the chief form among these people. Songs could be easily learnt, easily understood, easily used for propaganda and education.

In 1937 these two groups once more were able to meet each other to exchange ideas, to think of how to put mutual energy to the task of making people aware of the fight against the Japs. The United Front existed in full form from 1937-39. After 1939 it again relapsed into conditions of suspended civil war though the two Armies did not fight each other except for relatively minor clashes. A military stalemate had set in. The Communist-led areas and their people were blockaded.

Once again you have a situation in which two parts of China developed differently.

However, during this 1937-39 period some very important things happened in the world of art. Many of the writers and

artists from Shanghai and other cities who had developed very highly, came into contact with the other people who had found their content among their own people. These writers who had been on the Kuomintang side of the lines, had not used their talents actively, for the cause of the people, because of the dictatorship. They had not used their talent actively for patriotic and people's cause. They had used it for abstract activity. In 1937 for the first time they were allowed to take up these questions, for the cause of organised war against Japan.

When the United Front began to split once more many of the artists came over to Yen-an and the liberated areas. So today you have a majority of Chinese artists, playwrights, composers not in Chungking but in Yen-an and this majority consists both of the old revolutionary writers and of the old non-revolutionary writers. There are very few left behind in the other area because when the United Front began to break, they went over to the liberated area. The Chinese Government began to say to the people: We can win the war ourselves. You need not fight the war. It began to say to the students: Go to schools to study, we need you no more. It said to the workers and peasants: We asked you to arm yourself in 1937. Now we need you no more. It said to the writers and artists: We don't need you scribblers. We don't need your help.

These people who were turned away from the Kuomintang had to find place and work. So most of them went to Yen-an, to North China.

So today you have two Chinas, culturally as well as politically.

In the Kuomintang China you are allowed to write only abstract patriotic plays, i.e., you can write plays about the Chinese army watching the Japanese and beating the Japanese army, etc. But all in the abstract.

But it is very difficult to write a play dealing with reality, about profiteering, corruption, about the fact that the Chinese Army is not fighting well because it is largely under-fed etc.

As a result the writers, playwrights, artists of Kuomintang China have to undergo a severe censorship.

One example of the censorship is this: There was a good play written about the Army Medical Service in Kuomintang China. It exposed some of the things happening in the army medical service, about the negligence in treating soldiers etc.

The Generalissimo happened to hear that it is a pretty good play. One day when the Chinese Minister of Information came

to see the Generalissimo, he asked him if he had seen the play. The Minister said no. The Generalissimo said: "What kind of Information Minister are you? I hear that it is a good play. Yet you have not gone and seen it." The Minister was afraid of the Generalissimo's displeasure. So the Minister went to see this play and after the play went to the stage and congratulated the playwright, for he had already heard from the Generalissimo that it was a good play and that was enough for him.

A few days later, the Generalissimo heard that the play is about the struggle of the patriots to create a proper military hospital, about the struggle against corrupt officers, profiteers and so forth.

So when the Minister of Information again went to see the Generalissimo, the Generalissimo said: "I hear that you have gone up the stage and congratulated the playwright. But I am also told that it is a play written against us. How is it that you congratulated the author? I simply asked you to go and see it." The result of all this was that the play was banned!

All this shows the rigorous censorship in Kuomintang China. Any play or anything should go through strict censorship before it is passed.

The playwrights and artists on the whole are honest people. The chief form of play in Kuomintang China is the historical play. You can stage plays about events that happened two thousand years ago. Censors do not check this so rigorously.

What happened to the other group, however, was very different. The writers came from Kuomintang China to the liberated areas. They came with the desire to advance the war against Japan. They came with the desire to really record what is happening in this great period of Chinese history. But their whole record previously was one of dealing with middle class situations, social themes and so forth. When they came to this area they found that they could not go on writing thus because what they wrote previously is no longer important.

They had to write about real people, peasants, soldiers, workers and so forth: how their way of life is to be changed, the effect of Jap invasion, the people's fight against the invasion etc. This was their task, but it was difficult; they had just come from the other side of the lines. They had not actually participated in the struggle. And meanwhile from among the people, from among the soldiers, among the workers, new writers and poets arose;

they knew what really interested them, what is the best way of depicting a peasant, what is the best form and content, etc.

On the basis of this a great literary controversy developed. There was great discussion as regards what should be the content and form of the new literature, what is the best way of depicting a peasant and so on.

In 1942 as a result of great discussion, the Writers' Association, and the other cultural associations decided that the most important thing for the writers to do was to get into actual contact with the people and the army. They also decided that the main theme of writing for the time being should be *Reportage*, reporting on actual events and incidents in the life of the people. The Lo Hsun Academy members went into the army and villages and took up work there. In this way they began to acquire real knowledge of their people, not in the sense of abstract 'masses' but actually seeing how common people looked at their problems and how they are trying to solve them. When this was done they began to understand the people and the people began to understand them.

As there are other forms like drama and graphic arts, the problem of form came up for discussion. There were playwrights who had come to Yen-an after spending years in polishing their style but without participation in the struggle. But the problem was how to put the play in a manner so that the people understand it. There were two forms: the old highly formalised dramas dealing with the lives of the ruling class; but the people liked it because there were songs, dances, gorgeous dresses etc., and the new form imported from the West which the middle-class appreciated but which meant nothing to the peasant—there was no dancing, singing etc.

So they decided to utilise this form but change the content. They used it to expose the corrupt officials and rulers etc. but the form was old, the dresses, songs, dancing remained the vehicles of expression.

The second form was the folk theme. Artists went into the villages, made a great deal of investigation, and collected folk songs. The Lu Hsun Academy has a collection of 3,000 folk songs. They also found that folk-dances were prevalent in North China. They found that folk-dances have been accompanied by singing and in the last 3-4 years playwrights in the liberated areas have developed into two types of playwrights: (1) Dance,

(2) Dance and Song. All these dealt with the real problems of people's lives.

This had a very great success. They began to stage 4-5 act plays and get thousands of peasants, soldiers, workers coming to see these plays because they were in terms they understood.

In the old days Yen-an had translations of foreign plays. It used to stage several foreign plays, one or two American ones, several good Soviet ones. But now it is quite different, ninety per cent are about the Chinese people.

There are also some good stories about censorship of foreign plays by the Kuomintang. Here is one about a Soviet play *The Front*. The play deals with the problem of an old commander, tremendously devoted, really anxious to defeat the enemy, but who had not adjusted himself to the new situation and who wanted to fight with the old methods of the 1920 civil war when he fought against the Whites. In spite of this devotion he had to be replaced by a more modern commander. Of course in the liberated areas the question of using a tank etc. does not arise at the present time. But the liberated areas are moving forward, guerilla warfare is giving place to regular type of warfare and new tactics, modern military tactics of mobile warfare.

The interesting thing is how this play got to Yen-an. The Chinese Military Attache in Moscow saw this play, was very much impressed and sent the translation to Chungking, saying that it is very good. The Generalissimo saw it and said it is pretty good, and deals with the problem which each commander would do well to think about. He gave order to despatch translations of this play to all officers from the rank of Divisional Commander upwards. This play was despatched as a secret document strictly not to be performed but to be read only by Divisional Commanders and nobody else, since it exposed the weakness of Commanders. One copy of this play was sent to the 8th Route Army (the 8th Route Army was technically a part of the Central Army).

The 8th Route Army received this play. As soon as they received this they multiplied it into thousands of copies and sent it to all dramatic clubs and also to all mobile dramatic clubs, all 8th Route Army Commanders from the rank of Company Commander with instructions that it be performed, read by the troops and discussed and criticised by the troops as to how it affected them.

This is the difference between the liberated areas and Kuo-

mintang China. In the liberated areas in the last two years this play has been performed two or three thousand times.

When playwrights want to write about a problem, they write about it only after they have read everything possible on the problem. If they want to write about a battle that took place, they go to the soldiers who fought in the battle, gather their experiences, men write it, perform it in front of the troops, get their criticisms. Only then the play is staged in the other sectors. The same is the procedure with plays about peasant life.

So these plays are always submitted first to the criticism of the people depicted in the play. If anything is written dealing with the Japs, (there is a Japanese People's Emancipation League in Yen-an which consists of revolutionary Japanese, and prisoners who have been re-educated), the Japanese are also invited to see the play.

So nothing is done in the abstract. The playwrights go among the people about whom they write, perform before them, get their criticisms and then only they stage the play.

How is the play performed? In Yen-an and larger cities in the liberated areas there are very good stage facilities. The Government in the liberated areas helps in providing this. Since the Government is democratic it always helps in this. Every garrison regiment of the 8th Route Army has its own auditorium which can accommodate the whole regiment. The auditorium is built by the soldiers themselves for their own use.

The second type which is also very important is the out-door open performances in the village. They sometimes use what is called the natural stage. For example, if the soldiers are marching in that direction, they ask the soldiers to take part. If a peasant is shown ploughing in the play, for that part they actually ask a peasant to take the part. This method has become extremely effective.

Writers in the front lines write plays about the front. If there has been a fight on one sector of the front, the group goes there, learns from the soldiers how the battle was fought, whether any new methods of warfare were used etc. They learn about this and perform this on other sectors of the front. Or they perform plays about how a village defended itself against the Japanese, how the evacuation took place etc.

It is in this way that today in North China the theatre has been closely linked with the actual active struggle of the people for their freedom and prosperity.

The people like the old traditional forms of drama, because they are more colourful but they cannot understand it as it does not tell them about their own lives. So the problem has been solved by putting a new content into the old forms. But at the same time it is also necessary to enthuse the people to appreciate the other form also.

For instance, one of the popular forms of folk art in China is as follows. The peasant will put two figures of gods on either side of the door. If he wants to be rich he will put the god of wealth. If he wants to drive away the robbers, he will put the god of robbers. Now the artists in Yenan used the same form to depict a new hero, the hero of the present day is the hero who is fighting the Japanese, the guerillas of the People's Militia, the Labour Hero, the Village Teacher. These are the people who are carrying on the active struggle against the Japs. These people are highly respected. So they pick up heroes from among them and make them their gods. That is one of the forms that is used.

Then the wood-cut is used to depict the new life of the Village Government. It depicts the difference between the old landlords and the new Government and how it affected the lives of the people.

In music again, folk song is the best. At the same time the mixed theme of Western and Chinese is also used. Chorus music is very popular. "The Yellow River Cantata" was produced there, and is one of the most popular pieces of music in North China.

The new art has been expressed in this way: National in form but with the new democracy and people's struggle for liberation as its content.

Technically the idea has been to advance and reform the traditional technique in the sense of putting new content into them.

One thing that should be mentioned here is this. Actually in the drama and song etc. the work is being done not by individuals, not even by small groups. It is done by tens of thousands of people. Every village has a drama troupe of the village people themselves, and in the village festival it is an accepted thing that there will be entertainments by them. The peasants themselves erect stages. Because it is their own, it affects their lives and deals with their problems.

In the army also the work is being done by the soldiers

themselves, soldiers on the march, soldiers behind the lines etc. Once I was marching with the 8th Route Army behind the lines for several days. I heard soldiers shouting at each other and talking strange things to each other. I asked them what they were talking. They said: We are not talking, but we are rehearsing the play.

In the same way you have the newspaper. Thousands of newspapers are being produced. As there are not many printing presses, there are many mimeographed newspapers. In the villages they have black-boards. On these they put the news, national, international etc. They even draw cartoons there.

The army has its Wall Newspaper. Each unit has its own, and the soldiers of the unit write about their regiment and criticise each other. They write the story of some action, and draw cartoons etc.

In music again, there are tens of thousands of people who know the new songs. Almost every company and every village knows them.

So during these seven years two things have happened: (1) The artist has learnt to go to the people, (2) The people have begun to throw up their own artists.

This then is the general picture of culture in North China today—a culture of the people and for the people, growing richer, more profound, more widespread every day, giving the artist a new pride in himself, a new consciousness of creative useful labour in the service of his people.

Who is to Plan Britain's Post-War Industries ?

BY MARGOT HEINMANN

(From the "Labour Monthly," of April 1945.)

THE PLANS OF THE CITY FOR THE FUTURE OF BRITISH INDUSTRY ARE gradually being unfolded. On January 23, Sir John Anderson told the House of Commons of his joy in being "informed" by the Governor of the Bank of England and that "discussions... have been taking place amongst the banking and financial communities on the financial needs of industry in the post-war period." As a result, two new finance corporations are to be set up. The larger, the Finance Corporation for Industry, Ltd., is intended to have a capital of £25 millions and borrowing powers of £100 millions; the share capital is to be subscribed in about equal quantities by consortiums of the insurance companies and investment trusts on the one hand and the Bank of England on the other; and the loan capital by the "big five" and the other clearing banks and the Scottish banks. The purpose of this company will be to provide finance for industrial businesses "with a view to their quick rehabilitation and development in the national interest." The company's prime purpose will be to provide finance and not itself to reorganise industry; but it will have control over the way the money is used. The smaller company, the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation, Ltd., with a capital of £15 millions and borrowing powers of £30 millions (both subscribed by the banks) has as its purpose to provide medium and long-term capital for small and medium-sized business (say sums of £5,000 to £200,000) whose needs would not be large enough to justify a public issue. Both will be commercial corporations without any responsibility to the Government or to Parliament.

The counterpart to this from the industrial end is the plan for the mining industry put forward by Mr. Foot, the new (ex-Gas Light and Coke) chairman of the Mining Association. Coal, of all industries, is the one where radical overhaul and modernisation is most urgently needed, and where very wide sections of opinion hold that State ownership and finance will be required to carry the job through. Even the *Colliery Guardian* has expressed the view that State funds will be required and therefore

presumably some State control must be accepted. Mr. Foot now puts forward, as an alternative, the reorganisation of the mining industry under a Central Coal Board, composed of mine-owning and management interests, with powers to stiffen existing price and output regulation on the one hand, and to plan modernisation and wiping out of inefficient pits on the other. All colliery companies should voluntarily bind themselves to accept the Board's decision. Without committing himself to any exact figure of the new investment needed, he quotes estimates of £150—£300 millions; and he assumes that money on this scale can be raised, if not by the individual undertakings, then by the Coal Board raising loans and capital on the credit of the industry as a whole! It appears that, rightly or wrongly, Mr. Foot believed his scheme to be the kind of thing the F.C.I. or existing City institutions will be prepared to finance.

There can be no doubt that Britain can, and must, afford to re-equip industry on a grand scale. The one thing we cannot afford is to go back to an era of idle men and machines and to accept a low level of technical efficiency which must keep down the national standard of life.

The amount of capital re-equipment and modernisation needed in the transition to a peace economy of full employment has been estimated (at 1938 prices) at £950 millions "piled up demand" (deferred replacements of plants, etc.) and £1,100 millions additional investment needed for modernisation and extra equipment to achieve full employment—total of over £2,000 millions at 1938 prices, or £2,800 million at likely post-war prices (M. Kalecki, *Oxford Bulletin of Statistics*, December 4, 1944) to be provided within six years or so of the war ending. And these figures certainly do not err on the high side.

The mining industry alone has been reckoned by a mine-owner, Col. C. G. Lancaster, to require £150—£300 millions worth of capital re-equipment immediately (*The Times*, October 5, 1944). The steel industry, according to the President of their own highly restrictive trade association, will need £150 millions (*The Times*, October 2, 1944). The Central Electricity Board must spend £90 millions on extensions to grid only to meet the estimated demand for current up to the end of 1948. The huge needs of the cotton industry have been strikingly brought home by the revelations of inefficiency in the recent Platt Mission Report: it is certain that the £70 millions worth of new machinery which the firms had already made plans to install over five years

will be a drop in the ocean of obsolescence. The railways are, by the companies' own statement, committed to a big programme of new and better rolling stock, of improved tracks and re-planning of stations: they had accumulated £92 millions for deferred renewals up to 1944 with which to start the job. A real forward technical policy here, however, would cost far more. It is worth noting that the Weir Committee in 1930 estimated the capital cost of complete railway electrification at £260 millions. Finally, it may be noted that a leading farming expert, Mr. R. McG. Carslaw, estimates the additional capital requirements of an efficient agriculture alone at £1,000 millions. And these examples cover only a few of the major productive industries.

The task is a big one, but there is no need for dismay. The productive resources and the reserves of skilled and adaptable workers are fully large enough to enable the job to be tackled—provided they are fully and efficiently employed.

It is reliably estimated that the unemployed manpower resources of Britain in 1938, if fully employed, would have added another £500 million a year to the national income.* The economist, N. Kaldor, has shown that even by 1948, given full employment, if it were desired to invest heavily in industry, in a great housing programme and in reconstruction of Europe, civilian consumption could be raised 6 per cent above pre-war, while doubling the pre-war rate of (gross) investment.

The problem is not whether the productive resources exist to tackle the job, but whether they will be planned and mobilised to do it. And this depends on how reconstruction is financed and by whom it is controlled.

The war has put a stopper on most plant replacement and new investment, while at the same time profits have soared (to 84 per cent above pre-war, before tax); and this has left capitalist companies and individual capitalists with very large accumulations of profit to invest (mainly held in the form of Government debt). The increase in undistributed company profits over the war period has been of the order of £200 million a year, and the increase in all private savings totals some £7,000 million, which (allowing for some £1,500 millions of "small" savings) is large even in relation to the figures of equipment needs. The trouble is that the large liquid reserves are not necessarily in the indus-

*A figure of "over £1,000 million" for immediate modernisation has recently been quoted by both *The Times* and the *Financial News*.

tries which most painfully need radical re-equipment or expansion. Breweries, food processing companies, tobacco companies and so on have more to spend than industries like coal or textiles, and these last, just because of their technical obsolescence, are specially unattractive to unattached capital seeking a profitable home.

Hence, any scheme for securing serious large-scale re-equipment of basic industry must do two things. It must provide cheap finance where required for the industries whose modernisation is urgent in the national interest, with suitable control over its spending to ensure that the industry really does use the money to the best advantage. Further, it must establish a system of broad priorities over the whole field of investment, so that the urgent schemes—whether for modernisation of coal or cotton, or the provision of transport and electricity for a former distressed area—do not have to compete for scarce equipment and materials with get-rich-quick developments financed by the wealthier combines out of their reserves. Otherwise the key developments will at best be only partially carried through. There will be an unorganised scramble for capital goods to meet pent-up demand, and after a year or two a crash in the heavy industries which would be disastrous to the whole economy. The experience of 1921 is not to be forgotten.

How far does the proposed F.C.I. meet the need? In so far as it means directing *some* part of the banks' free assets to large-scale modernisation schemes, it is better than nothing—but not very much better. In the first place, the sums involved are relatively small (£170 million in all, as against over £1,000 million which the "big five" banks alone seek to invest) in comparison with the task and the total capital available.

Secondly, the project means that reconstruction finance will be unnecessarily expensive. The *Financial News* (January 24, 1945) suggests that the F.C.I. will be able, "given its high credit standing," to lend at rates in the neighbourhood of 4 per cent.* But the Government, with its even higher credit standing, has

*The finance for this purpose will, of course, be lent them by the banks at a lower rate. As the *Financial News* says:

"The new institution should be able to cover its expenses and a modest dividend by charging only a small "turn" on the resources borrowed from the banks. With borrowing powers of forty times its paid-up capital, a turn of only 1 per cent. would provide the equivalent of 40 per cent. on the equity."

been able to finance the entire war by borrowing at an average interest rate of 2.3 per cent. and much of it at 2 per cent. or under. The difference between the two rates, on an investment of £300 million for the mines alone, would be £6 millions a year—half the present ascertained profit from mining proper and over six times the present expenditure on miners' welfare.

But by far the most serious objection is that the plan leaves reconstruction (or a substantial part of it) to the control of the financial and rentier interests, without the Government or the nation having any control at all over plans and priorities. True, the F.C.I. is to have an industrial *advisory* panel, with representatives from the management and the labour side of industry. But the directors, the men who decide where the money is to go and what security is to be given, will be business men (with a scientist added for good measure) responsible solely to the financiers. Sir John Anderson has made it quite clear that, though he is "glad to be informed" of the developments, the Government has no official standing at all in relation to these bodies.

Before betting on the likely policy of such institutions, it is worth examining the form shown by the banks in the past as reorganisers of industry. The Bankers' Industrial Development Company and the Securities Management Trust, formed in 1930 under the leadership of the Bank of England with capital subscribed by the main banks, set out to finance approved schemes of reorganisation in industry. The results are well remembered in Motherwell, Bolton and Jarrow.

The schemes of reorganisation sponsored by these bodies all added up to one recipe—scrapping or productive capacity considered "redundant", a drive to fix higher prices, restoration of profit at the expense of the worker and the consumer. For example, in shipbuilding, National Shipbuilders' Securities was formed to close down shipyards so as to restore profits to the remainder; one-third of British ship-building capacity had been so closed by 1939, and many of the skilled workers had been lost with it: there had been no appreciable modernisation of the remaining yards. In steel, the banks' big intervention after 1930 was followed by the formation of a tight and restrictive monopoly under an independent ex-Bank of England chairman (Sir Andrew Duncan), and the boosting of British steel prices (sheltered behind a tariff after 1932) to the highest levels in the world. Even the inefficient plants made good profits, but all-round technical reorganisation (promised as the price of the tariff) was not

forthcoming. The Lancashire Cotton Corporation, financed through the Bank of England, had bought up and scrapped over 5 million spindles by 1939; but after more than 10 years of its activities, there had been little re-equipment with the latest machinery and the U.S. spinner in the corresponding section of the industry produced, because of better machinery, well over half as much again per hour as the Lancashire worker.

The banks and insurance companies by their very nature are the guardians of the rentier's pound of flesh. They are the last people who can be expected of their own accord to cut the "dead wood" out of an industry—except at a prohibitive price in compensation for obsolete capital.

The Foot coal plan is right up the rentiers' street. No state control. Much talk of reorganisation, of "wiping out inefficient pits," and so on; but no compulsory amalgamations except in dire emergency; and, as a prime objective, a fair return on all the capital, old and new, in this neglected and wastefully-capitalised industry. To achieve this, the old device of high-price fixing (through a strengthened cartel) and levies on production. To deal with any opposition by the miners, the restoration of "full discipline" (the right to sack, now withheld under the E.W.O.) to colliery managers.

Indeed, so plainly is all this written on the face of the Foot plan that the more far-sighted business and industrial circles are expressing very grave doubts about it*

".....It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Mr. Foot's scheme would result in almost precisely the present state of affairs. There would be no effective movement towards closer integration—for at this time of day it is simply impossible to believe that voluntary methods plus an appeal to the Coal Commission will achieve anything. There would be no drastic re-equipment—because the capital does not exist within the industry and cannot be raised on market terms. There would be no improvement in the labour position because the men would regard the scheme as reactionary. All that would exist would be a certain amount of subsidising poor pits, the subsidy to be derived in part from the good pits, but mainly from the consumer by means of a monopolistic selling organisation. This would differ from

*See also the comments of *The Times* (23-1-44) and *Financial News* (23-1-44).

the present state of affairs only by the fact that it would be operated entirely by the mine-owners without any Government control.”
(*The Economist*, January 27, 1945.)

The Crimea Conference gives a new prospect that national planning can and must be seriously begun in the capitalist democracies. If there will be section and rentier interests of all kinds who will oppose, there will also be many—both among the smaller business men and the larger industrialists—who will see their interests better served by such a policy than by a repetition of 1921 and the ensuing years.

The essential thing for the reconstruction of industry is planned and orderly control of *all* major investment, which is closely related to plans for increasing living standards. The 1944 Trades Union Congress, in its Interim Report on Industrial Reconstruction, has made a number of practical suggestions for a scheme of investment control. In principle the same idea is acceptable to the Labour Party, the Communist Party and (with variants) the Liberals. From these the following points would arise :—

(1) National planning of investment, beginning with a report on the most urgent production targets and the capital expenditure and projects of private firms and public authorities. On this basis a rough “man-power” budget can be constructed, as a guide to the total volume of investment and consumption and the priorities that will be needed.

(2) Control of investment in accordance with this plan. During the “transition period,” at least, this can be effected largely by licences on raw materials and machinery. A barrier on large transfers of Government debt, except for approved purposes, might also be a useful technique for controlling use of company reserves.

(3) Schemes which have high-priority in the national interest, and which cannot be financed by the industry itself, should be financed at the cheap rates which the Government itself (or the National Investment Board as its agent) could command. Bank lending policy should be directed accordingly. Government control of these scheme should go along with Government financial assistance.

(4) Any special corporations (such as the new F.C.I.) should operate under the supervision and control of the State body controlling investment.

(5) Control of the rate of interest at a low level by Government action.

Albania--the New Upsurge

BY R. KARMEN

(*Special "Tass" Correspondent*)

THE FIRST RAY OF SUNLIGHT SHONE ON US AS OUR PLANE WAS climbing steadily, preparatory to the crossing of the pass that marks the Albanian frontier. Under its silvery wing, grey crags, wreathed in the white mist, gradually became visible. The plane was heading for Tirana, the Albanian capital. We had been flying well over an hour when the broad mountain valley spread beneath us. It was dotted with white cottages and villas, set in the frame of the dark green velvet colour of cypresses and poplars. We were in Tirana at last! Wheels crunched on the gravel runaway of a big aerodrome. We had made a long flight from Moscow to this distant capital of the country on the coast of the Adriatic, the mountainous western part of the Balkan peninsula.

The officer who came out to welcome us when we landed telephoned to someone after the preliminary greetings were over, and, in fifteen minutes, we were driving in the car of the Soviet Military Mission through the streets to the broad Imaf boulevard. It was decorated with the National Flags, a black two-headed eagle on a red ground and banners with slogans. We had arrived just half an hour before the big national *fete* was to begin.

July 10 marks the anniversary of the founding of the people's regular army that liberated the country from the German invaders. That day was organised by the General Staff of the Albanian army. Small guerilla detachments that had raised the revolt in the mountain villages were the spark that became the flame of the people's war throughout the country and had soon liberated the towns and prefectures of Valona, Korcha, Argyrokastro and Tirana. Then young and old women, and even children,

joined the mountain troops for the movement awakened response in the heart of every freedom-loving Albanian.

The Albanian people dealt very severely with the Germans. The people's avengers made them pay dearly for years of suffering and oppression, for thousands of civilians done to death, for burned villages, for the blood of women and children. Germans were driven out of Albania. In November, 1944, the last German battalion was driven beyond the country's frontier under the pressure of the Albanian people's army.

We passed down the flanks to the troops, lined up for parade along the broad thoroughfare of the Imaf boulevard. Armymen were standing at attention. We wanted to stop and study each manly countenance. Soldiers, handsome, well-built men with sculptured aquiline profiles and glowing eyes, stood like statues holding their rifles before them. They could tell us a great deal about deadly skirmishes in rocky gorges, daring raids on German garrisons and months of trying marches through mountains. It is their holiday, the holiday of victors in the capital of their own country which they had set free.

Thousands of Tirana's people turned out in gala costumes for the occasion. It was a brilliant motley crowd and there were many peasants who had come down from mountains with their families.

"Long live Hodja!" went up from thousands of throats.

Enver Hodja, head of the Albanian Government, War Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Albanian army, accompanied by military men, reviewed the troops. As he passed the throng on the sidewalk he was showered with flowers; it was literally through a rain of oleanders, roses, and nosegays of Alpine flowers that he made his way to troops who stood motionless awaiting a meeting with their beloved leader. Enver Hodja and his men have marched in company along the road of the war that leads to Victory. He knows many of them by sight and by name. A detachment of forty men organised in Peza had grown into an impressive army reviewed at this parade.

Enver Hodja is a well-built dapper man of thirty-six, wearing a light grey uniform and pilot's cap. With the easy stride of an athlete he passed the lines of men and mounted the platform. His speech, which was addressed to the troops and the people of Albania, was interrupted from time to time by bursts of applause and cheers from the crowds. There was a thunderous applause when he mentioned Marshal Tito's name.

From their places on the beautifully decorated platform, members of the Albanian democratic government, the Yugoslav Ambassador, Stojanic, members of the Soviet, British and American military missions could survey the ceremonial march. The right wing of the platform was occupied by representatives of the Orthodox Moslem and Catholic clergy.

The soldiers' bearing and their even lines made a splendid impression and demonstrated the high level of discipline attained, not as a result of barrack yard drilling but in battle, in hard fighting of the war of liberation that is just over. A rain of flowers began again; flowers fell at soldiers' feet. The populace cheered the men who had fought heroically in Yugoslavia. After mountain artillery units, anti-aircraft guns and motor cyclists, came the band. The musicians showed the utmost endurance; they struck up the march at the beginning of the parade and continued playing without interruption, despite the terrible heat, for an hour and a half.

At midday, shops, offices and ministries are closed; streets are deserted and the life of the city comes to a standstill. The heat reflected from the rocks is so intense that neither tents nor sunshades of window-blinds afford any protection from it. The heat is stifling; it seems to melt muscles and the marrow in your bones. There is nothing for it but lie in the darkened room or sit with ice-drinks before you. The silence of the empty streets is broken only by the sound of an occasional car or an ass trotting over stones of the pavement.

Towards five o'clock the city awakens to life once more. Blinds go up with a rattle in shops; restaurants and cafes fill rapidly; streets are animated and thronged. In this capital you may observe the original blending of the oriental with the Balkan Slav Europeanism. Gleaming limousines tread their way through narrow streets between panniered asses, such as one might see in Samarkhand or Andijan. Peasants' picturesque national costumes, piles of fruit vendors, of gay homewoven, rugs and textiles—these are in contrast, but not in a jarring incongruity, with windows of the fashionable shops, passers-by, both men and women, in elegant clothes strolling through the broad streets which are brilliantly lit up towards the evening.

Tirana is becoming the true centre of the liberated country's cultural and political renaissance. Several papers are published; there are fifteen elementary schools, a technical school, a lyceum, a pedagogical institute, a theatre and a music school. There are

six moving picture houses. The mass social organisations of the young people and women are a very great help to the government in measures directed towards increasing the country's cultural and production forces.

On a day like this, when the streets are thronged with gay young people, the joy of the nation in the great revival is very keenly felt. Confident in their own creative powers, they look boldly towards the cloudless horizons of their future. A greater part of Tirana's population, and practically all young people, were in guerilla detachments in mountains. Those who remained in the villages were afraid to go out in streets: they hid in houses. Germans burned and plundered the city blocks in the central commercial quarter. Tirana was a dead city.

There are many dark pages in the history of the Albanian people—the burden of repeated occupation, an endless division of the country into "spheres of influence" of the big powers, bloody schisms instigated from abroad, the hated regime of King Zog, the terrorism of the Black Shirts and the Hitlerites. Now, for the first time in their history, the Albanians have felt that the fate of their nation is in their own hands. The victorious culmination of the war of this small freedom-loving nation has inspired it with faith in its own powers and its ability to hold its hard-won freedom and independence against any encroachments from abroad.

Nevertheless, encroachments may be attempted. Danger threatens from the Greek reactionaries of fascist persuasion on the Albanian frontiers. They are taking advantage of the Greek Radio which proclaims in every key the necessity for annexing whole regions complete with cities of Korcha, Argyrokastro and the port of Valona, as a "traditionally Greek territory." In their campaign of unbridled provocation, the fascist robbers, who have found shelter in Athens, came to an agreement that they should be given Tirana as well. They talk of "outrages committed against the Greek population in northern Epirus"; they organise daily armed provocation on the Albano-Greek frontier and open fire on the Albanian frontier posts. The Greek reactionaries echo the Ankara Radio which talks of the "barbarous activities of the Albanian bands in northern Epirus which have become a huge plague-spot for the whole of the Balkans."

The number of Greeks in the aforementioned southern Albanian districts is very small. But almost all of them have fought side by side with Albanians for the freedom and independence of Albania. They are by no means anxious to separate from the

people with whom they have a bond of blood which was shed in struggle. Korcha and Argyrokastro were the Albanians' cradle of national liberation movement. It was from here that all the people's leaders came; here the first detachments of guerillas were formed and swelled until they became a people's army that has set this country free.

The Albanian people, confident of their strength, follow with coolness and close attention the campaign of provocation launched against them by the last of the fascists abroad. They believe that their army, hardened in battle, is strong and reliable.

When the coolness and freshness of the evening was wafted from the mountains, Tirana was illuminated for holiday. Clink of glasses filled with sharp foaming wine, strains from loud speakers in streets, songs of young men in uniforms strolling with gaily dressed girls through squares—all blended in one continuous, sonorous hum. And so it continued till stars powdered the black velvet dome of the sky over the city outspread in mountain valley and sparkling with lights of joy and gaiety.

Method of Marxist Study

BY MAO TSE-TUNG

THIS IS A SPEECH I MADE IN MAY 1941 AT THE MEETING OF YENAN cadres. I have now set the sketch of the report in order and have had it published so that comrades might discuss it.

I maintain that the method and system of study in the whole Party should be changed, because of the following reasons:

One—The period of twenty years in the life of the Chinese Communist Party is one of a combination between the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution. If we reflect for a moment we shall find how shallow and poor was our knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese Revolution then, at the infancy period of our Party, and how deep and rich is our knowledge now. For a whole century the catastrophe-ridden Chinese people have been groping for the truth

while struggling for national salvation. Many of the best of China's sons have joined the struggle and sacrificed themselves, advancing by moving over the dead bodies of their fallen comrades. This is worthy of commemoration in tears and lyrics.

It was only after the first world war and the October Revolution in Russia that we found Marxism-Leninism, the best weapon for our national liberation. The Chinese Communist Party is the proposer, propagandist and organiser in the use of this weapon. The marriage between the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution has changed the features of the latter. Ever since the outbreak of the war of resistance our Party has advanced a step in the study of present-day China and the world, basing itself on the universal truth propounded by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and the study of China's past has also begun. Such phenomena are good.

Two—But we have our defects. I think if we do not correct these defects, we shall not be able to advance a step further in advancing the merging of the universal truth propounded by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin with the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution. Let us first of all speak about the study of the present conditions. In spite of the fact that ours is such a large political party, yet the data we have collected concerning the political, military, and cultural conditions of our country and other nations of the world are incomplete. Our study is unsystematic, though we have had some results in our study of national and international conditions. Speaking in general, we have not in the past twenty years done anything in the way of collecting materials concerning the above-mentioned problems, and stressing or emphasising on careful study and elaborate systematisation. We have not created the atmosphere for investigation and study of the objective real condition. "Closing one's eyes to catch sparrows," or "blind men trying to grab fish," sadly lacking in details, blowing an empty trumpet, and satisfied with knowing a little and understanding only a half, is our style of work. Such extremely bad style of working which is completely in contrast to the fundamental spirit and method of work of Marxism-Leninism is still followed by many of our comrades. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin taught us to study seriously the existing conditions starting from the real objective circumstances and not from our subjective wishes, but many of our comrades are acting directly in contrast to this guiding truth.

Next, let us talk of the study of history. Although a small number of members and non-member comrades are undertaking this work, yet in general it has not been properly organised. Many Party members are completely ignorant of Chinese history of the last century (yesterday's or of ancient time—day before yesterday's). Many students of Marxism-Leninism can refer to Greek history and recite maxims of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, but I am sorry to say, they have forgotten their forefathers. (They know nothing about China.) The atmosphere for serious study of the existing conditions and history is not present.

Let us now take up the study of international revolutionary experience and the universal truth of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. Many comrades learn them for the sake of Marxism-Leninism and not for the revolutionary practice of China. Thus though they have learned a great deal, yet they cannot digest it, though they can quote from Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, yet they cannot apply their maxims to the concrete study of Chinese history and the present conditions in China, to analyse and solve any problem that arises from the Chinese Revolution. This attitude towards Marxism-Leninism is inordinately harmful, especially for cadres above the middle order and young students.

In the above I have talked of the existing conditions from three aspects: not paying attention to the study of existing conditions, to the study of Chinese history, and to the application of Marxism-Leninism to practical Chinese problems. These are extremely bad styles of work and their spread will be detrimental to many of our comrades.

In reality at present there are many comrades in our ranks influenced by such bad working style. They do not make a systematic and close study and investigation of the concrete circumstances of places both inside and outside of a region, a district, a province or even our country. Instead, basing themselves on their incomplete knowledge and "I-think-it-is-quite-obvious" way they make resolutions and draw conclusions. Is not such a subjective style of working still existing in a great number of our comrades?

Completely ignorant of or merely knowing a little of our own history is to them not a shame but on the contrary an honour. Very few really know the history of the Chinese Communist Party and of China since the Opium War, a period of great importance. No one has really and seriously begun to study the economic, political, military and cultural history of China in the last century. Since they know nothing about their own country

there remain for them only Greek and foreign stories (limited to stories only) which are pitifully enough found among old paper heaps in foreign lands and shipped here in abstract form. During the last decades many returned students committed this mistake. They shipped back, in the raw, after their sojourn in Europe, America and Japan what they learned there, playing the role of the gramophone and forgetting that their duty was to create something out of the imported stuff. The Communist Party was infected by it too.

We are learning the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin but the way many of us learn them is directly in opposition to them. That is to say these people departed from the fundamental principle about which Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have been untiringly warning others: The unity of theory and practice. Accordingly they invented a contrary principle: The separation of theory and practice. Consequently both in schools and in education of cadres while so employed, the teachers of philosophy never ask the students to study the logic of the Chinese Revolution, the teachers of economics never ask students to study the characteristics of Chinese economics, the teachers of military science never ask students to study the characteristics of Chinese military problems, etc. This resulted in the propagation of the incorrect and in misleading the students. What we learn in Yenan is inapplicable in Fuhsien, thirty miles away. Since teachers of economics cannot explain National Currency and the Border Region Currency's drop in relation to the former, so naturally the students cannot either. Little boys and girls of seventeen and eighteen are taught to cram "Capital" and "Anti-Duhring." Thus a perverse feeling or aversion is created among the students, which results in loss of interest for Chinese problems, for the instructions of the Party, and what arrests and absorbs their attention is the stuff they learned from their teachers—dogmas that are called immutable in posterity.

Of course not everybody corresponds to the extremely bad picture I mentioned above, but such things really do exist which is very harmful and should not be considered as unimportant.

Three—In order to make my point clear, I shall compare the two contradictory attitudes. First of all the subjective attitude.

With such an attitude one does not study systematically and minutely the surrounding environments and relying on one's own subjective enthusiasm one has only a fleeting glimpse of the pre-

sent physiognomy of China. Thus history is cut up into parts, knowing Greece but not China and one has no idea of China of recent or ancient times. Thus one studies aimlessly and abstractly the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, never wondering what relation it has with the Chinese Revolution. One studies theory for theory's sake, Marxism-Leninism for the sake of Marxism-Leninism, and not for solving any theoretical or tactical problem that arises from the Chinese Revolution. *The arrow is shot without an aim.* Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin teach us to start out from real facts and matter existing in the objective world and then deduce laws from them to serve as guiding principles for our action. In order to attain this aim we must possess many detailed data and study them scientifically, analytically and comprehensively. On the contrary many of us do not do so. Many who are doing practical work do not pay attention to the study of objective conditions and basing themselves solely on enthusiasm, mistake their feeling for policy.

Both of these two types have lost sight of objective reality and are ideologically subjective. When they make speeches there is a long line of of ABCD points then 1-2-3-4's and when they write articles there is only an agglomeration of meaningless words. They close their eyes to facts, attempt to gain support of the masses by attractive oratory, are decorative but not substantial, brittle and not solid, think themselves infallible and the first under heavens, and act like the inspector-general (of Gogol's play) at large.

Such then is the style of work of some of the comrades in our ranks, such style of working is harmful to himself, if it is regarded as the principle of action, is harmful to others if used to teach others, and is detrimental to the revolution if it is applied as the guiding principle. To sum up, such unscientific and un-Marxist subjective methodology is a great foe of the Communist Party, of the proletariat, of the people, of the nation and is an expression of impurity in one's Party consciousness. It is imperative that we must vanquish this mighty foe menacing us, for only by vanquishing subjectivism can truth see light, can revolution be victorious and Party consciousness be consolidated. Without a scientific or completely scientific attitude, in other words without a Marxist or completely Marxist attitude which regards that theory and practice are unified, one can be said to be without Party consciousness or possessing half, incomplete

consciousness. There are two lines (in Chinese literature) which portray such people :

“Rushes grown on the top of the wall are heavy in head, light in feet, with roots running shallow into the earth ;

“While bamboo shoots grown on the hills are sharp in mouth, thick in skin and empty inside.”

This is a good picture of those who are unscientific in attitude, who only know to recite dogmas, who have degrees but no real knowledge, and who play a practical joke on Marxism-Leninism. If anybody really wants to correct his mistakes I advise him to commit these two lines to memory, or if he is brave enough to write them down and paste them on his wall. Marxism-Leninism is a science and science is a truthful branch of learning, in which nothing untrue and insincere is tolerated, so let us be more sincere.

The second type : The Marxist-Leninist attitude, i.e., the dialectical and historical materialistic attitude.

Under this one investigates and studies the surrounding environment systematically and minutely, relying not on subjective enthusiasm only but combined with revolutionary zest, with realistic spirit. Thus one does not cut up history into different parts, not only know Greece but also China, not only know the revolutionary history of foreign countries but also that of China, and not only know what is happening today but also what happened yesterday, and the day before yesterday.

Thus one studies Marxism-Leninism with a definite aim, connecting it with the actual Chinese revolutionary movement and turns to it to find a solution for the theoretical and practical problems arising from the Chinese Revolution. This is the attitude of shooting the arrow with an aim, “aim” being the Chinese Revolution, and the “arrow” being Marxism-Leninism. We members of the Chinese Communist Party look for this “arrow” only for the purpose of shooting it against the “aim” of the revolution in China and in the East. Otherwise this “arrow” would be merely a plaything and utterly useless. This is called the finding of the truth by facts, “facts” being the existing objective matter and incidents, “truth” being their internal connection, i.e., the law that governs the objective world, and “finding” being our effort to study. Starting out from the actual conditions in places both inside and outside of the country, the province, the district and the region and deriving from it its inherent law but not the law of our own fabrication, we shall find out the internal

connection of the changes in our surroundings and take it as the guide for our action.

In order to do so we must not depend on our subjective conjectures, our enthusiasm and on books, but on objective existing facts and "the possession of detailed materials," deducing a correct conclusion from these facts and materials. Such conclusions will not be the enumeration of phenomena into A B C D or essays that contain words but no meaning, but scientific conclusions. Such an attitude demands the intention of finding truth by facts and not that of trying to gain the support of the masses by attractive oratory. Such is Party consciousness, the style of work based on unity of theory and reality and the attitude that a Communist ought at least to have. With such an attitude one is not "heavy in the head, light in the feet, with roots shallow in the ground," nor "sharp in mouth, thick in skin, and empty inside."

Fourth—Basing myself on the opinion mentioned above, I offer the following suggestions:

1. We must bring before our Party the task of studying minutely and systematically our surrounding environments. We must base ourselves on the historical-materialistic method to study closely the activities in the economic, financial, political, military, cultural and Party work fields, of our enemy, of our friends and of ourselves. Then deduce from our study the necessary conclusions we ought to deduce. To achieve this aim we must direct the attention of our comrades to investigate and study these real matters and incidents. We must make our comrades understand the main task of the Communists in their leading institutions lies in the apprehension of conditions and mastering policy. The former is to know the world, and the latter to transform the world. Make our comrades understand that without making investigations one has no right to voice an opinion and that speaking at random and mere enumeration of phenomena is utterly useless. For example, if we do not understand the condition of propaganda of our enemy, our friends, ourselves, then we are unable to form a correct decision regarding our propaganda policy. No matter in what department of work, we must first understand the circumstances before we can solve any problem satisfactorily. To start the movement for investigation and study in our Party as a policy of the Party is the fundamental factor for changing the style of work of the party.

2. We must get together certain personnel to work on Chinese

history of the last century, working separately but in co-operation, and doing away with the hitherto disorganised way of working. We ought, first of all, to study analytically the economic, political, military, and cultural history of this period before studying it comprehensively.

3. For cadres in offices and schools we ought to take the practical problem of the Chinese Revolution as the centre of our study and start out from it to study Marxism-Leninism. The way to study Marxism-Leninism isolatedly and statistically should be discarded. In studying Marxism-Leninism, the central material ought to be *The History of the C.P.S.U.(B)* assisted by other materials. For it is the highest comprehension and conclusion of the world Communist movement, the symbol of combination of theory with practice and the only perfect symbol found in the world. When we learn how Stalin and others merged the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the revolution in the Soviet Union, we shall know how to perform the same work in China.

We have run into many wrong paths, but mistakes are the fore-runners of the correct. I believe that in such rich and lively environments of Chinese and World Revolution the transformation of the way we study will certainly bear good results.

Organisational Problems of the French Communist Party

BY MAURICE THOREZ

*(Secretary General of the Communist Party of France,
Deputy from the Seine Department, and
Member of the Consultative Assembly)**

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE INCREASINGLY HEAVY, COMMENSURATE with our growth and our increasing role in the life of the country. We are a governmental party, a party which has delegated two of its members to the government of the Republic. Communists

*From the Report presented to the Tenth National Convention of the Communist Party of France, on June 26, 1945.

have been called to high offices in the administration of the State. Others serve in the army; others in production. Our militants administer several thousand Communes, among the largest. They have also been placed at the head of large organizations by the confidence of the masses. We have our representatives in the Consultative Assembly, in the Council of National Resistance, in the departmental and local Committees of Liberation. In all of these we must rise to the level of our responsibilities both to the Party and to the country.

To speak quite plainly, if before the war our militants were excellent propagandists, if during the war they have been the organizers and intrepid leaders of combat groups against the Germans and their Vichyite accomplices, they must now become men of politics, the organizers and guides of wide masses of the people. In the words of Lenin, we must now count in millions, and this obliges us to consider attentively several problems of growth.

PROBLEMS OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL DIRECTION

The first of these problems which arises from the considerable increase of our members, concerns education, the Marxist-Leninist instruction of new members of the Party. We must reinforce and develop our educational work through courses and schools. We must work out new methods of aiding our oldest militants, those who already serve in responsible functions, guiding their special needs, conferences on the most important problems of everyday policy.

The Party instructs the masses and the masses instruct the Party. Marxism-Leninism is a unity of theory and practice, of thought and action. We want no Communists who are merely vain doctrinaires, reasoning in the abstract and apart from the realities of daily life. Neither do we want limited militants who are not interested in more deepened study of political problems, who will fall into a narrow practicalism and lose their perspective.

Theory is a task which always faces responsible leaders, militants of the first rank, who too often permit themselves to become absorbed in, and side-tracked by, their practical tasks. Now, no one can work properly in any branch of militant activity without undertaking to assimilate Marxist-Leninist science, the key to all ideological and political problems. The greatest scholars, like our friend Langevin, declare that they have made real advances

in the knowledge of their particular science only through the enlightenment of dialectical materialism. A Communist, whatever may be his function inside or outside the Party, journalist or director of a cooperative, mayor or secretary of a trade union, professor or regional secretary or administrator of a great nationalized enterprise, has no less need for this great enlightenment to advance his own work in the service of the Party and of the people of France. It is a great task to which the Central Committee must address itself, in the first place in ceaselessly reminding our militants of the lines Marx wrote in 1872 to his French editor: "There is no royal road to science, and only those will have the opportunity of reaching its luminous summits who do not fear wearying themselves by climbing steep paths." The second problem is the indispensable drawing into political discussions in the basic organization of each member of the Party, new or old. The conditions of clandestine work, broken up into groups of three, could not permit wide discussion. Groups of three, relying on the directives of the Central Committee—who merited that reliance—were above all executive organisms. The reconstituted cells must again become political organisms where discussions, the aim of which is to increase effectiveness, take place.

Our Communist Party cannot function without the unity of will and the complete unity of action of all members of the Party; but such a common will and such joint action, with the iron discipline which constitutes our strength, does not exclude but, on the contrary rests upon criticism, discussion, struggles of opinion within the heart of the Party. In 1929, fighting a sectarian group which stifled all political life in the Party and cut us off from the masses, we carried on, as the old comrades remember, a public campaign under the slogan "Let the mouths be opened," "No mannequins in the Party." (*Applause.*) The internal discipline of Communists is not a blind discipline; it is a discipline freely granted, the understanding discipline of each one of us. Once discussion is exhausted, the decision is obligatory for all, for the eventual minority as well as the majority.

What the Party does not permit, what it rejects as incompatible with the unity of the Party, is the organization of trends, groups, factions, which lead to the formation of several direction centres, and consequently to the relaxation of discipline, to the division and disintegration of the Party.

It is also quite evident that the discussion must revolve around the fundamental principles of the Party. Freedom of opinion

in the Party is not the freedom to introduce into the Party opinions which are foreign to it. (*Applause.*) Where would the Party be if, in 1934, we had permitted the traitor Doriot to propagandize among our ranks his opportunist, liquidationist and Hitlerian "opinions"? Would we have been able to organize and successfully conduct the struggle of the French workers against the Hitlerian enemy?

We still have need to exercise vigilance! The Party is not on the moon. Its hundreds of thousands of members are enveloped by the masses of workers and peasants in the varying strata of the people of the country. Any particular stratum may exercise influences contrary to the interests of the working class and of the people. Such influences, foreign and even hostile to our ideas, to our principles, can in one manner or another, even penetrate into the Party.

We must combat the opportunist, liquidationist concepts of certain people who think, without always clearly formulating it, that "We have passed beyond the stage of the class struggle." To a Catholic journalist who questioned me on this subject the day after the session of the Central Committee at Ivry, I made the following reply, already published in *L'Humanite*, which you will forgive me if I repeat: "It is facts which answer this question as well as others.

"If one seriously analyzes the causes of the defeat of 1940 and the dramatic situation in which our country found itself, *and still finds itself* involved, one will discover that the fundamental cause is the egoism of certain privileged circles who have deliberately sacrificed the interests of the nation to the defence of their privileges. That is a fact. The class struggle is a fact. (*Applause.*)

One must add, as my interlocutor moreover observed, that Communists take facts into account. Opportunists concepts always lead to the liquidation of the independent role of the working class, the most active elements in the union of the toiling strata of the nation. Such concepts lead to the liquidation of the Party. Several leaders of the American Communist Party fell into this grave error. We didn't hesitate to offer our advice through an article by our comrade, Duclos, which, we hope, will help the American Communists to rediscover the correct path. (*Applause.*)

We must also combat the "Leftist" concepts of certain sec-

tarians who think, without always formulating it clearly, "Have we perhaps abandoned the revolutionary line?" The sectarians confuse "a revolutionary line" with "gesticulation." It seems to them that everything was much easier when one could mouth the most "revolutionary" slogans without changing one iota of the situation of the workers and of the country. It is true our task is much more difficult, much more complicated than in previous times. It demands much more reflection, explanation, patience, calm, when one knows that on our slogans and on our practical activity depends in an ever-increasing measure the very future of our country.

Sectarians and opportunists of the Right are united in an identical scorn of the masses, an identical fear of mass action. The opportunists have no faith in the masses and want to "save" them in spite of themselves, by combinations from above, parliamentary and other. Sectarians have no faith in the masses, and want to "save" them both despite them and without them, solely through the means of a pseudo-revolutionary phrase-mongering. We must also be vigilant to ferret out and drive from our ranks troublesome elements, provocateurs, enemy agents, Hitlero-trotskyites, who most frequently cover themselves in "Leftist" phraseology.

PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION AND CADRES

After problems of ideological and political direction come those of organization. These are not the least important. Militant Communists must keep in mind Stalin's thought that, "after the correct line is established, the work of organization decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure."

How shall we assure ourselves the best organizational work, how facilitate the day-to-day practical direction of all Party activity in the different echelons of organization, and above all how aid the cells in the application of correct Party policy? Experience shows us that it is first through bringing closer and closer to one another the direction of regional sections and basic organizations. Long before the war we gave up regional organization, to return to departmental organization. At a certain period the Marseilles region of the Party extended over no less than seven departments. How could the regional committee direct, and, most important, aid in a practical way the comrades of Corsica, for

example? We had also abandoned too large sections, at one time called *rayons*, to return more and more to local organizations. In 1925 to 1926 the first *rayon* of the Parisian region extended, in the geometrical form of a sector, from the Halles (markets) of Paris to the limits of the department of Seine-et-Oise.

In the provinces we still have sections that are too large. In Paris some of our *arrondissement* sections have more than four thousand members divided into more than two hundred cells. This is beyond the capacities of the best section committee. The solution is most assuredly in dividing such sections in two in order to render their direction more concrete, more vital.

Such a solution presents the enormous advantage of promoting new militants, both men and women, to positions of leadership. In time past, in order to justify the system of large intermediary organizations, it was claimed that there were insufficient cadres. That was an error. Seven departmental (or federal) committees could have brought many more militants into positions of responsibility than a single regional committee. The same goes for two, three or four section committees in place of a single one. Now, however, complaints about the lack of cadres are a veritable heresy; they must be condemned with the greatest vigour. (*Loud applause.*)

Can we say that we lack cadres when the Party numbers nine hundred thousand members, when the sale of *L'Humanite* every Sunday mobilizes thousands of sellers, when Communists see themselves entrusted with posts in the administration of organizations with millions of members? Indeed, if we lack cadres, that is our fault; it is because we are not yet working well enough. The cadres are there, in that mass of men, women and young men and young women devoted to the Party and passionately eager to devote themselves to useful work for the Party and under the direction of the Party. It is our job to bring forward these cadres, to develop them, to promote them to responsible positions.

The Central Committee and the Regional Committee, the section committees, the leaders of the large cells in industry must learn to recognise these cadres, to discern the qualifications and also the defects of each of our militants and to assign those militants according to their abilities. The editing of a paper should not be entrusted to a militant who is capable of organizing but who writes badly or with difficulty; one should not entrust organizational work to a comrade who is perhaps an excellent propagandist but certainly a deplorable organizer. We know many

comrades who never gave their full measure until they were assigned to posts which finally brought into play their best qualifications.

We must take the utmost pains with our cadres, aid our militants in a practical way, fraternally help them in the correction of their faults, their weaknesses and not leave them to themselves to face difficulties which might rebuff them. We should never fear that we are wasting time in talking to our militants, in patiently listening to them. The task of a true leader is to think first how he can help the work of his comrades.

More boldness is required in promoting the younger cadres, naturally without setting aside the older, and without setting one against the other. The older cadres have experience ; the younger have a sharper sense of the new, a precious qualification for a Communist. We must work to fuse the younger and the older cadres for the greatest good of the Party and the nation.

There are occasionally complaints of limitations in the choice of cadres, there is a lack of confidence in young people, in women, and more or less generally in new members. Our old militants are dear to us ; those who held fast to our colours in the difficult years, particularly in 1939 and 1940 are doubly dear to the Party ; but the Party does not judge men by their past merits, it judges them by their present work. The Party never ceases to advance ; and the militants, on pain of being passed by, must advance with the Party. (*Applause.*) They must not fear to bring forward the young.

What considerations should guide us in the choice of cadres ?

1. The most complete *devotion* to the cause of the workers, to the cause of the people of France, *fidelity* to the Party, a devotion and fidelity tested in combat and in ordeals.
2. The closest bonds with the masses. Not pedantic doctrinaires, but *leaders of the people*, knowing the masses well and known by them.
3. A spirit of *initiative* and *responsibility*, the capacity to orient one's self rapidly and to make one's own decisions in any situations.
4. A spirit of *discipline*, Communist *firmness*, both in the struggle against the enemies of the people and *inflexibility* with regard to any deviations from Marxism-Leninism and the resolute *application* of all decisions made by the regular organizations of the Party.

The application of decisions, control over their executive—it is these, along with the choice of personnel, that are essential in the domain of organization. It is only solely a question of

discussing and determining a line, of making decisions. Above all the line must be applied. A close watch must be kept on the execution of all decisions. Less idle chatter, fewer interminable sessions where one talks about everything without deciding anything. Less paper work. The best section secretary is one who writes little and who may be found every evening in a cell, who considers it as his essential task to give practical aid to the secretaries of the cells. The same goes for the regional secretary, who should spend the least possible time in his office and the most in studying, on the spot, with the secretaries and the members of the section committees the problems that have to be solved.

We must also learn not to scatter our efforts, to concentrate the attention of our militants and our organizations on the essential, on the principal tasks, the accomplishment of which will necessarily lead to a greater activity in all areas. For instance, what are our principal tasks at this moment? They are: (1) to speed reconstruction, develop production; (2) to elect a sovereign national assembly which shall give to France her new constitution; (3) to found, with our Socialist brothers, the great French Working-Class Party. All organizations, all members of the Party must concentrate their activities toward the accomplishment of these primary tasks.

Finally, let us remember that self-criticism remains the condition of all good work, of all progress on the part of the Party and the movement of the masses. The great successes of the Party sometimes bring a kind of dizziness to certain of our militants. They lose all modesty, that essential qualification for a Communist. They make mistakes which they find difficult to recognize and correct. "To be able to recognize an error openly, to discover the causes of that error, to analyze the situation which gave rise to it, to examine attentively the means of correcting it," it is that, Lenin taught us, which is the mark of a serious party, a party which like ours, wishes to fulfil its obligations to the working class, to the people, to France. (*Applause.*)

The Famine and Disintegration of Education in Rural Bengal

K. P. CHATTOPADHYAY &
RAMKRISHNA MUKHERJEE

(*With acknowledgments to "SCIENCE AND CULTURE"*)

EDUCATION IN BENGAL HAS SUFFERED A SERIOUS SET-BACK SINCE 1943 on account of the famine and its aftermath, the epidemic. In the following note an attempt has been made to determine the degree of disintegration of general education (primary, middle and high standard) in Rural Bengal as well as its causes. The discussion is based on the material collected in the course of a sample survey carried out along with the Bengal Rehabilitation enquiry conducted by one of the writers (Prof. K. P. Chattopadhyay) in collaboration with the Indian Statistical Institute in the latter part of 1944.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In 1943-44 the intensity of the famine and epidemic differed markedly in different parts of Bengal. Therefore an attempt has been made to group the different areas in a few homogeneous classes based on the intensity of affection in 1943. The basis of grouping followed in the enquiry has been the classification adopted by the Revenue Department, Government of Bengal.¹ In that classification (Appendix 1) 12 subdivisions were placed in class I as most severely affected, 13 in class II(a) as moderately affected, 12 in class II(b) as also moderately affected but less than the preceding class and 6 in class III as slightly affected. The remaining 43 subdivisions (which may be grouped in class IV) were stated to have been very slightly affected or not at all. A list of the subdivisions studied is given in appendix 2. We studied all the 12 subdivisions in class I, 9 in class II(a), all the 12 in class II(b), 4 in class III and 3 in class IV. In each of the

¹ A Scheme for Relief and Rehabilitation in Bengal (Revenue Deptt.) Government of Bengal, 1944.

selected subdivisions a number of villages were taken up at random, and the number of students (boys and girls) in each village in the year 1939-40, and the middle two quarters (July-December) of 1943-44 and 1944-45 was recorded by personal enquiry.

NATURE OF MATERIAL

Table I gives the number of subdivisions, villages, and total number of students studied in each group. It indicates that the samples taken were fairly large and so should give a reliable estimate of the disintegration of education in Rural Bengal.

TABLE I

Total number of subdivisions, villages and population in each class and the number of subdivisions, villages and students in the villages surveyed by class of affection

Classification	Sub-divisions		Villages		Rural population in 1943 (in lakhs)	Number of students in the villages surveyed		
	Total	Surveyed	Total (in lakhs)	Surveyed (actual)		1939	1943	1944
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Class I ..	12	12	0.12	117	117.1	13,419	8,367	7,952
" II (a) ..	13	9	0.18	71	117.7	6,895	4,123	4,349
" II (b) ..	12	12	0.11	92	65.3	5,481	4,150	3,883
" III ..	6	4	0.06	21	40.5	1,787	1,400	1,185
" IV ..	43	3	0.37	9	211.2	421	486	480
Rural Bengal	86	40	0.84	310	551.8	28,003	18,526	17,849

The classification adopted by the Revenue Department has been proved by our analysis to be somewhat arbitrary. Tables 2 and 3 represent the cumulative frequency distribution of the villages surveyed by class of affection under the proportion of students in 1943 and 1944 in percentages of the number in 1939.

It will be noticed from cols. (7)—(11) of table 2, that column (7) which gives the percentage of students in area included under Class I reveals the worst conditions, compared to the other areas. The inclusion of the areas in Class I is therefore justified.

TABLE 2

Cumulative frequency distribution of villages by class of affection under the proportion of students in 1943 to 1939 as percentage

Percentage of students in 1943 to 1939	Cumulative frequency distribution of villages									
	Number surveyed					Percentage of total				
	Class I	Class II (a)	Class II (b)	Class III	Class IV	Class I	Class II (a)	Class II (b)	Class III	Class IV
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Above 200	..	2	6	..	..	..	3	7	..	..
„ 170	1	4	10	..	1	1	6	11	..	11
„ 140	3	12	17	1	1	3	17	19	5	11
„ 110	7	16	28	3	4	6	22	31	14	44
„ 90	15	18	38	6	4	13	25	42	28	44
„ 60	54	42	54	12	7	46	59	59	57	78
„ 30	83	67	73	18	8	71	94	80	86	89
„ 0	106	69	87	21	8	91	97	95	100	89
0 & above	117	71	92	21	9	100	100	100	100	100

But the figures for the remaining four columns (8)—(11) which are for the other four classes, arranged, allegedly in order of decreasing affection, do not show any such gradation. Any estimation of the degree of disintegration of education in each class of area has not therefore been attempted. Only the provincial estimates are given as statistically valid.

TABLE 3

Cumulative frequency distribution of villages by class of affection under the proportion of students in 1944 to 1939 as percentage

Percentage of students in 1944 to 1939	Cumulative frequency distribution of villages									
	Number surveyed					Percentage of total				
	Class I	Class II (a)	Class II (b)	Class III	Class IV	Class I	Class II (a)	Class II (b)	Class III	Class IV
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Above 200	1	4	3	1	..	1	6	3	5	..
" 170	3	10	6	2	1	3	14	7	10	11
" 140	4	14	17	2	2	3	19	18	10	22
" 110	10	18	28	6	4	9	25	30	29	44
" 90	14	21	36	6	4	12	30	39	29	44
" 60	44	30	50	8	6	38	42	54	38	67
" 30	95	57	75	20	8	81	80	82	95	89
" 0	109	68	87	21	8	93	96	95	100	89
0 & above	117	71	92	21	9	100	100	100	100	100

EXTENT OF DISINTEGRATION

Table 4 indicates the extent of disintegration of education in Rural Bengal in 1943 and 1944.

TABLE 4²

Percentage distribution of villages in Rural Bengal in 1943 and 1944 under proportion of students in 1943 and 1944 shown as percentage of numbers in 1939

Percentage of students	Distribution of villages in percentage of total	
	1943	1944
(1)	(2)	(3)
Above 200	2	2
171—200	6	8
141—170	4	7
111—140	18	15
91—110	4	3
61—90	31	19
31—60	21	32
1—30	7	7
0	7	7

It is obvious from cols. (2) and (3) of the table that though the proportion of students in 1943 and 1944 to the numbers in 1939 has a very wide range of distribution the variation is mostly towards deterioration and not towards improvement. We may take for the present the villages in which the number of students varied from 91-110 as "normal", that is, a layer which remained stationary. We shall see later that this concept requires modification. However, at this stage we may say definitely that in Rural Bengal the educational system had suffered severely in 66 and 65 per cent respectively of the villages in 1943 and 1944. In 7 per cent of the villages all education disappeared in 1943, and this condition persisted in 1944.

²Weights used in calculating the provincial estimates of the extent of disintegration of education from the respective proportions in the different groups of affection are the total number of villages in each group according to the Census of 1941.

MEAN PROPORTION OF DISINTEGRATION

Table 5 gives the mean and standard error of the proportion of students in 1943 and 1944 as percentage of 1939 by class of affection and for Rural Bengal as a whole. As noted in a previous paragraph the figures for the different classes will not be separately discussed.

The provincial estimates shown at the bottom of cols. (2) and (3) indicate that 13% of the roll strength in 1939 was lost during 1939-43 and during 1943-44 another 4% followed suit. The further deterioration in 1943-44 as shown here is however not yet statistically significant.

TABLE 5²

Mean and standard error of ratios of students in 1943 and 1944 as percentage of 1939 by class of affection and for Rural Bengal.

Classification	Mean ratio of students in percentage of 1939 with standard error	
	1943 (2)	1944 (3)
Class I	60 \pm 5	57 \pm 3
Class II (a)	77 \pm 7	75 \pm 8
Class II (b)	85 \pm 13	74 \pm 9
Class III	78 \pm 2	72 \pm 7
Class IV	112 \pm 5	109 \pm 4
Rural Bengal	87 \pm 3	83 \pm 3

²Weights used in calculating the provincial estimates from the respective proportions in different groups of affection are the total rural population (calculated by deducting the urban from total population) in each group at the beginning of 1943, derived by interpolation from the Census reports of 1931 and 1941. Number of students, instead of population, should have been a better weight in any estimate of the students but as such figures by subdivision are not

CORRECTED ESTIMATES OF THE PROPORTION OF
DISINTEGRATION

The numerical strength of students in Bengal did not remain the same year after year in normal times, but maintained a steady though slow progress. The annual figures published by the Government of Bengal in their Report on Public Instruction indicate that the rate of progress has also been increasing from year to year. This is in accord with the general impression, that in recent years at least the numerical strength of students has kept pace with and slightly surpassed the increase in number of children of school going age due to growth of population.⁴ Therefore correct estimates of disintegration of education can only be obtained from the expected roll strengths on the basis of this rate of increase and the actual roll strength in 1943 and 1944. A study on the basis of proportions with respect to the numbers in 1939 will be definitely an underestimate. Table 6 gives the expected and the actual number of students in lakhs and the number and proportion of corrected estimates of loss of students in Rural Bengal in 1943 and 1944.

The great extent of disintegration revealed in table 6 is in agreement with the wide range of variations in the percentage of students seen in table 4 and the high standard errors of the mean proportions of students in 1943 and 1944 to the numbers in 1939, noted in table 5. High standard errors indicating a wide range of disintegration are also due to the fact that education in Rural Bengal is mainly restricted to the upper and middle layers of the populations, as three-fourths of the expenses on education have to be borne by the guardians of students and by the local authorities. Disintegration of education naturally depended principally on the socio-economic composition of the population in the villages and their power to fight the consequences of the famine. This varied largely in the different areas.

available in official reports, the population figures have been used as the next best, inasmuch as the increase in number of students will naturally have a positive correlation with the growth in population.

⁴ According to the Reports on Public Instruction, Government of Bengal, the total number of students in high, middle and primary schools of Rural Bengal has increased from 2.11 millions to 3.19 millions, an increment of 51%, during 1930-31 to 1940-41; while during 1931-41, the total rural population has increased by 15% from 46.43 millions to 54.37 millions.

TABLE 6⁵

Estimates of expected and actual number of students in lakhs in Rural Bengal and the number and proportion of (corrected) estimated loss of students in 1943 and 1944

Year	Students (in lakhs) in Rural Bengal			Percentage of col. (4) to col. (2)
	expected	actual	loss	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1943	33.3	27.8	10.5	27
1944	29.6	26.5	3.1	11

Earlier we noted that the gross or uncorrected estimates of the loss in number of students in 1943 and 1944 came out as 13 and 4 per cent respectively, of the number at school in 1939. The corrected estimates reveal a much greater loss, namely 27 and 11 per cent of the expected number on rolls.

CORRECTED ESTIMATES OF THE EXTENT OF DISINTEGRATION

Table 9 has been prepared to show the real extent of disintegration of education in Rural Bengal. Col. (1) of the table indicates the three landmarks to be considered to gauge the real

⁵ The expected number of students (col. 2) for 1943 has been calculated from the latest available official figure of 1940-41 at the rate of increase of 6.3 per cent. per year, the rate during 1931-40 to 1940-41. This rate might be an underestimate, since this is the probable rate for 1941-42, and in 1942-43 it could have been still higher. However, it is possible that, on account of evacuation and panic in 1941-42 due to the threat of invasion (the effect of which in Rural Bengal was probably very little), further progress was not effected and the rate of the previous year can be assumed to have been maintained if famine conditions had not intervened. Expected roll strength for 1944 has been derived from the estimated actual figures for 1943 at the rate of increase of 6.3 per cent. in the year. The old rate has been assumed since, if the disturbing factor had ceased to exist after 1943 and the normal condition had been restored, at least the 1940-41 rate of increment (if not a still higher one) must have come in.

In col. (3) the actual roll strengths in 1943 and 1944 have been estimated from the respective proportions of 1939 (that is, 87 and 83 per cents as shown in table 5). The figure of total number of students in 1939 has been obtained from the Report on Public Instruction, Government of Bengal, 1939-40.

extent of disintegration. The stationary layer in this column is different for 1943 and 1944 for obvious reasons. The roll strength in 1939-40 in Rural Bengal was 29.9 lakhs and the expected figure for 1943 was 38.3 lakhs, an increment of 28.1%. Hence the percentage which fell in the class interval 91-110 in 1939 should have shifted to this extent i.e., to the class interval 121-40 approximately. It is the percentage in this interval found in 1943 which can be compared to that for the stationary layer for 1939. Again compared to the base year 1939 the expected figures for 1944 practically remain the same owing to the drop in 1943. Hence the class interval 91-110 has been considered as the actual stationary level for 1944.

TABLE 7

Number and proportion of villages below, above and within the corrected stationary level of roll strength of students in 1943 (121-140) and 1944 (91-100) in Rural Bengal.

Classification of level	Villages surveyed		Percentage total	
	1943	1944	1943	1944
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Above stationary layer	34	89	12	32
Stationary layer	18	49	71	3
Below stationary layer	258	172	71	65

While the gross estimate noted earlier in para 5 of the extent of disintegration of education in Rural Bengal during the famine year gave the percentage as 66, (30% of villages having improved and 4% having remained in the stationary level) the corrected estimate gives 71% as its value (only 12% having improved and 17% having remained in the stationary level). Col. (5) of the table indicates the extent of further disintegration from 1943-44 to 1944-45. If the educational system had not disintegrated further during 1943-44 to 1944-45 the villages surveyed should have all been represented in or above the stationary layer, the layer being defined as noted in the foregoing paragraph. But column (5) shows that in 65 per cent. of the villages surveyed education has further disintegrated, that only in 32 per cent. of the villages it has improved and that it has remained stationary in 3 per cent. of the areas.

CAUSE OF DISINTEGRATION

The surveyors who collected the statistics were also directed to ascertain from the villages and the school teachers the reasons for the drop in number of students in each case. Owing to the difficulty of collecting detailed and exact data on this point, only the main factors which could be checked were noted.

Table 8 records the main causes of disintegration of education in the villages surveyed.

TABLE 8⁶

Number and Proportion of villages in which there was disintegration of Education during 1943-44 and 1944-45, by the main cause of disintegration.

Cause of disintegration of education during 1943-44 and 1944-45	Villages concerned	Percentage of total
(1)	(2)	(3)
Financial difficulty of students ..	85	37
Epidemic ..	43	19
Scarcity of cloth, kerosene and books	38	17
Students left studies to earn money ..	14	6
Death and emigration of students from famine, flood and epidemic ..	16	7
Abolition of schools ..	23	10
Scarcity of teachers ..	8	3
Any other cause ..	3	1
Total ..	230	100

Col. (2) shows that out of 310 villages surveyed decline in roll strength from 1939 to 1944 was observed in 230 villages. This is 74% of the total. Col. (3) shows that financial difficulty, the first effect of the food crisis in 1943, mainly accounts for the disintegration. Next in order are the epidemic and scarcity of cloth, kerosene, and books. It is noteworthy that in 6% of the villages surveyed students had to leave studies to earn their live-

⁶In many villages disintegration of education was due to more than one factor, such as, financial difficulty of students and epidemic, etc. Such villages have been considered under the primary factor to make the table presentable and not unduly lengthy.

lihood. This is reported mostly from the sub-divisions worst affected by famine and epidemic of 1943-44, like the Sadar sub-division of Chittagong, and the Tangail and Kishoreganj sub-divisions of Mymensingh, indicating the gravity of the situation in 1943-44. Abolition of schools and scarcity of teachers also account for the disintegration of education in a good number of villages. These two causes are practically the same, both being due to the economic crisis in 1943-44. Due to financial difficulties it was not possible to remunerate the teachers adequately and run the schools, and the teachers, also being unable to meet their requirements from their poor pay in those days of high prices, had to leave their profession for some better paid job (probably a war job) elsewhere. On the whole, table 8 proves the obvious fact that disintegration of education in Rural Bengal during 1943-44 and 1944-45 is closely linked up with and should be considered as one of the serious effects of the famine and epidemic during the period which completely upset the normal socio-economic balance of the people.

CONCLUSION

As stated in the Introduction an attempt has been made in this note to gauge the intensity and causes of disintegration of education in Rural Bengal in 1943-44 and 1944-45. It has been shown that not only the steady progress in the spread of education effected from year to year in normal times has been completely wiped out but deterioration has set in to an alarming extent. Table 6 has shown that 27% of the students in Rural Bengal has been lost in 1943. The loss in absolute figure is 10.5 lakhs. The table has also indicated that disintegration of education in 1943 was not a passing phenomenon, and that the situation had deteriorated still more in 1944, there having been a further loss of 3.1 lakhs of students in this period *i.e.*, 11% of the expected roll strength. Table 7, which indicates the extent of disintegration, has also confirmed this conclusion. Proper planning should, therefore be immediately taken up for educational rehabilitation of Bengal. Table 8 which gives the cause of disintegration has shown that it is mainly due to the economic collapse of Bengal in 1943-44. Any serious scheme for educational rehabilitation of Bengal must take this into account and include it along with the general socio-economic planning for rehabilita-

tion in Bengal, of course, with due considerations of its special features.

The seriousness and urgency of the problem will be well realised from table 9 which gives the population of school going age (7-17 years) and number and proportion of students in Rural Bengal in 1930-31 and from 1939-40 to 1944-45.

The age group 7-17 has been selected for reasons stated in the note with table 9. It should be obvious that the relative value of the percentages in column will change only slightly if the age grade 6-16 had been selected. It will be noticed from col. (5) of the table that in 1930-31 only 20.6% of the population of school going age were in the primary, middle or high schools in Rural Bengal. In 1939-40 the proportion was 24.5%. In 1940-41 also (the last normal period in regard to famine and epidemic for which official figures are available) the steady trend of increase was maintained. But in the last two years there has been a considerable set-back and the educational level has receded to that prevailing twelve years earlier.

TABLE 9⁷

Population of school going age (7—17 years) and the number and proportion of students in Rural Bengal in 1930-31 and from 1939-40 to 1944-45

(All figures in lakhs)

Session	Total population	Rural population of school going (7—17 years)	Number of students	Percentage of col. (4) to col. (3)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1930-31	435.1	192.5	21.1	20.6
1939-40	518.4	122.1	29.9	24.5
1940-41	526.4	124.0	31.9	25.7
1943-44	551.8	130.0	27.8	21.4
1944-45	537.5	126.6	26.6	20.9

⁷The population of school going age (high, middle and primary standard) have been considered as under the age group 7 to 16 years. In the report on "Post-war Educational Development in India" the upper limit is taken as 17 years. Hence as education at school starts at a later age in rural than in urban areas 7—17 has been considered as the school going age instead of 6—16. The total rural population under this age group (col. 2) has been calculated from the

Education in Bengal, as in the rest of British ruled India, has been exceedingly backward. We have seen from table 9 that in 1940-41, only 31.9 lakhs of children being less than a third of the population of school going age were at school. This is on a par with the educational conditions in Tsarist Russia, just before the revolution 1917.⁵ The percentage of literacy in 1941 was 18, (excluding the population in the age group 0-5) a figure slightly less than that of Russia in 1917. The cataclysm which has swept over Bengal in 1943, and the after-effects of it, have put back even this slight "advancement" of education by a dozen years. It would be a truism to state here the importance of education for the progress of a people in life. But it seems nevertheless to be overlooked. A reference to the scheme of rehabilitation by the Revenue Department, Government of Bengal, for example, does not contain any mention of a programme of educational rehabilitation. No communique regarding a scheme of educational rehabilitation has also been published by any other department. The small subsidy granted to some teachers and students for a few months cannot be described by this term.

Unless however the State comes forward to co-operate with the general public and local organisations, such rehabilitation will not be possible. In normal times, inspite of the chronic poverty of the people, the major share of educational expenses had been borne in Bengal not by the Government, but by the guardians of the students and the local authorities. Out of a total expenditure of Rs. 255 lakhs on rural as well as urban schools (primary, middle, high) for boys in 1940-41 the Government met only Rs. 59 lakhs. For similar schools for girls the total expenditure for the same period was nearly Rs. 45 lakhs, out of which the Govern-

ratio of this age group to the total population, derived by interpolation from the sample tables of the Census of 1941. The population at the beginning of 1930 (for the session 1930-31), 1939 (for the session 1939-40), 1940 (for the session 1940-41), and 1943 (for the session 1943-44) have been derived by interpolation as noted in (3). Population at the beginning of 1944 (for session 1944-45) has been estimated from that of 1943 taking into consideration the official estimates (Report of the Famine Inquiry Commission, Bengal, 1945) of mortality rate—44.8 per mille, as calculated from total deaths of 2.8 millions and the birth rate—19.8 mille during 1943. This may lead to a slight overestimate as a sample survey all over Bengal gives the total mortality as 3.4 millions for 1943. But as the recording of births is also faulty, the error is probably compensated.

⁵ History of Russian Educational Policy (1701-1917) by Nicholas Hans. London, 1931.

ment paid Rs. 14 lakhs. For rural areas, the figures are for total expenses, Rs. 177 lakhs and Rs. 10.8 lakhs for boys and girls respectively and for Government contribution Rs. 45 lakhs and Rs. 4.5 lakhs. The Government is therefore bearing only a fourth of the expenses for boys and about two-fifths of that for girls. In consequence, education in rural areas is restricted mainly to the (economically classed) middle and upper strata of the population. While the worst sufferers in the famine were people in the lowest level, the Rehabilitation Enquiry has furnished sufficient data to indicate that a fair proportion of people in the middle layer has been pushed into the lower level, while the people in the upper level have not also escaped entirely from the final effects of the devastation.

Any scheme of educational rehabilitation will therefore have to meet the needs of :

- A. Children of people who were in the lowest level in the villages prior to 1943 and who have been reduced to destitution or semi-destitution.
- B. Children of persons now in the condition of people in the lowest level in normal times.
- C. Children of people in the present middle and upper layers.

For those in class A, not only is free education essential, but the children will have to be looked after in other ways. Their parents will need actual relief until they are able to make a living. It should be noted here that the number of such families increased considerably during 1943. Food as well as clothing and books will have to be furnished to the children. For children in class B, free education is the first essential, and also supply of books, as their purchase has always been a difficulty in the way of education of children of this economic level. For children in class C, supply of books and paper etc. at controlled prices is essential.

Sickness among students is largely the result of loss of vitality due to lack of food. The wide spread shortage of milk even in rural areas is a main contributory cause to the delay in recovery. In a short term planning it is difficult to suggest any remedy beyond arrangements for medical aid and supply of milk as sick diet to children actually indisposed and unable to attend school. In any long term planning of economic rehabilitation

provision for adequate supply, not only of other food but of milk for children must take a place of importance.

We have noted earlier in this para that the guardians of local authorities bear nearly three fourths of the expenses, in the shape of fees and contribution. If however education is to be free for the greater number of children of families who had previously been paying fees, the school authorities must make up for this loss of income in other ways. As local authorities also derive their income from taxes on the local people who have been hard hit by the famine, these bodies will not be able to do much. The deficit must therefore be met by grants from the Government. Since Bengal as a whole has suffered, and part at least of the difficulties are due to Bengal having been in the War Zone, contributions from the Central Government can be legitimately demanded.

Since the schools paid the teachers poorly in normal times owing to their low receipts and teachers had to supplement their income in other ways (such as private tuition, or other part time work) which are often no longer available, the grants should be sufficient in amount to cover an increase in salary (or a Dearness Allowance) commensurate with the rise in prices.

APPENDIX I

Sub-divisions classified according to degree of affection in "A Scheme for Relief and Rehabilitation in Bengal"—Revenue Department, Government of Bengal.

CLASS I. (MOST AFFECTED)

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Arambagh | 7. Manikganj |
| 2. Chandpur | 8. Munshiganj |
| 3. Chittagong | 9. Nilphamari |
| 4. Contai | 10. Noakhali |
| 5. Diamond Harbour | 11. Tamuk |
| 6. Madaripur | 12. 24 Parganas. |

CLASS II(a) (MODERATELY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Barisal | 8. Kandi |
| 2. Bhola | 9. Midnapur |
| 3. Calcutta | 10. Narayanganj |
| 4. Coxbazar | 11. Satkhira |
| 5. Dacca | 12. Serajganj |
| 6. Feni | 13. Tangail |
| 7. Goalanda | 14. Tipperah |

CLASS II(b) (MODERATELY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Bankura | 7. Hooghly (s) |
| 2. Bishnupur | 8. Howrah (s) |
| 3. Burdwan (s) | 9. Kalna |
| 4. Faridpur (s) | 10. Kushtia |
| 5. Gaibandha | 11. Pabna (s) |
| 6. Ghatal | 12. Uluberia. |

CLASS III (SLIGHTLY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Bogra | 4. Kishoreganj |
| 2. Brahmanberia | 5. Kurigram |
| 3. Gopalganj | 6. Narail. |

CLASS IV (VERY SLIGHTLY OR NOT AFFECTED)

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Alipur | 23. Kurseong |
| 2. Asansol | 24. Lalbagh |
| 3. Bagherhat | 25. Magura |
| 4. Balurghat | 26. Maldah |
| 5. Bangaram | 27. Meherpur |
| 6. Baraset | 28. Murshidabad (s) |
| 7. Barrackpore | 29. Mymensingh |
| 8. Basirhat | 30. Nadia (s) |
| 9. Birbhum (s) | 31. Naogaon |
| 10. Chittagong Hill Tracts | 32. Natore |
| 11. Chuadanga | 33. Netrokona |
| 12. Darjeeling | 34. Patuakhali |
| 13. Dinajpur (s) | 35. Perojpur |
| 14. Jalpaiguri | 36. Rajshahi (s) |
| 15. Jamalpur | 37. Rangarh |
| 16. Jangipur | 38. Rampurhat |
| 17. Jessore (s) | 39. Ranaghat |
| 18. Jhargram | 40. Rangpur |
| 19. Jhinaidah | 41. Siliguri |
| 20. Kalimpong | 42. Serampore |
| 21. Khulna (s) | 43. Thakurgaon. |
| 22. Katwa | |

APPENDIX II

Sub-divisions surveyed as classified according to degree of affection in "A Scheme for Relief and Rehabilitation in Bengal"
—Revenue Department, Government of Bengal.

CLASS I. (MOST AFFECTED)

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Arambagh | 7. Manikganj |
| 2. Chandpur | 8. Munshiganj |
| 3. Chittagong | 9. Nilphamari |
| 4. Contai | 10. Noakhali |
| 5. Diamond Harbour | 11. Tamruk |
| 6. Madaripur | 12. 24 Parganas |

CLASS II(a) (MODERATELY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| 1. Bhola | 2. Feni |
|----------|---------|

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 3. Kandi | 7. Serajganj |
| 4. Midnapur | 8. Tangail |
| 5. Narayanganj | 9. Tipperah |
| 6. Satkhira | |

CLASS II(b) (MODERATELY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Bankura | 7. Hooghly (s) |
| 2. Bishnupur | 8. Howrah (s) |
| 3. Burdwan (s) | 9. Kalna |
| 4. Faridpur (s) | 10. Kushtia |
| 5. Gaibandha | 11. Pabna (s) |
| 6. Ghatal | 12. Uluberia |

CLASS III (SLIGHTLY AFFECTED)

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Bogra | 3. Kurigram |
| 2. Kishorganj | 4. Narail |

CLASS IV. (VERY SLIGHTLY OR NOT AFFECTED)

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Baraset | 3. Nadia (s) |
| 2. Meherpur | |

The Coal Situation in Behar

BY JNANBIKASH MOITRA

(This review traces the development of the crisis in coal production in Behar from 1942-43 and deals with the period from MAY TO AUGUST 1944 in detail.—Editor.)

SECTION I

PRODUCTION POSITION

RAISINGS & TARGET FIGURES

DR. AMBEDKAR, LABOUR MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MADE the following statement in the Central Assembly on March 20, '43 in reply to a question put by Mr. K. C. Neogy : "The output of coal in the Bengal and Behar coal-fields for 1942 was very considerably above that for 1939. The peak year to date has been 1940. There has been a very slight drop in 1941 on the 1940 figures and a further slight drop in 1942. The total drop on 1940

figures is less than one per cent. As the drop in production is so slight, no detailed enquiry has been held into its cause".

But the actual production figures tell a different story.

	<i>(Output in million tons)</i>	
1937	25
1938	25
1939	24.5
1940	28
1941	27
1942	26
1943	22.5
1944	22.5 (target figure fixed by Government)

These figures up to 1941 are based on the Reports of the Chief Inspector of Mines and the remaining ones are as estimated by responsible economic journals.

They show that the 1942 output was not 'very considerably above that for 1939' but only 1.5 million tons more, i.e., an increase of about 6.5%. Nor was the total drop in output at the beginning of 1943 'less than one per cent' on the 1940 level, but 7% on the 1940 level.

Dr. Ambedkar's statement can either be the result of a total ignorance of facts of the coal position or a deliberate attempt to hoodwink the public. It is worthy of note, in this connection, that in February 1943 a Labour Advisor was specially deputed to the coal-fields to report on the coal-mining industry.

RAPID DECLINE OF OUTPUT (MARCH-NOVEMBER 1943)

While the Government shut its eyes to falling coal production, there was a rapid decline in output between March-November 1943—by about 19% on the 1940 level on an All-India basis. In the Behar coal-fields as a whole, which produce about 61.5% of India's total output, production fell by about 20%. Important facts about Behar coal production are given below.

COALFIELDS OF BEHAR

	Jharia	Giridih	Bokaro	Ramgarh	North & South Karanpura	Others	Total
P.C. of All-India Prod.	43.9	3.45	6.34	2.0	2.8	3.01	61.5
Prod. figures in tons :							
1939	1,06,55,500	8,45,250	15,53,300	4,90,000	6,86,000	7,35,000	1,49,65,050
1940	1,23,20,000	9,66,000	17,75,200	5,60,000	7,84,000	8,40,000	1,72,45,200
1943	99,00,000	7,76,250	14,29,500	4,50,000	6,30,000	6,75,000	1,38,60,750
P.C. of fall in 1943 over 1939 level	Over 7 p.c.	Over 8 p.c.	Over 7 p.c.	Over 8 p.c.	Over 8 p.c.	Over 8 p.c.	Over 7.5 p.c.
Total monthly labour normally employed	80,000	10,000	25,000	Not known	Not known	Not known	
Total labour force employed in October 1943	60,000	10,000	12,000	"	"	"	
P.c. of fall in labour employed	20 p.c.	Nil	48 p.c.				

The Government was alarmed and there was a spate of meetings and conferences under Government auspices from October 1943 onwards. One measure after another was introduced to tackle problems of production, distribution, labour shortage etc. In a later section of the present review, we shall discuss in detail those measures introduced since May 1944.

THE TARGET FOR 1944 PRODUCTION

It is necessary to discuss here the target fixed for 1944 production and how far it has been achieved to date (August 1944).

In October 1943, the Government fixed the 1944 target at 25.5 million tons (Speech by A. L. Ojha, President, Indian Colliery Owners' Association March 22, '44). But, before the scheme could be put into operation, the position was again drastically altered on account of a further serious drop in raising of coal. So, during the Dhanbad Tripartite Conference in December 1943, the Government brought down the target figure to 23.5 million tons. When there was a still further decline, Government came down to 22.5 million tons as the target figure. This was fixed as final and on its basis, production quotas and transport facilities for each colliery were allotted.

But this final target figure is extremely inadequate for our needs. This will be clear if we consider the changes in the demand for coal in the war years.

The war increased the demand for coal immensely because of:

- 1) The opening of new centres of war production, 2) the large number of factories working three shifts, 3) rise in coal consumption by railways—from 32% of the total output of coal to 50% now, 4) almost complete stoppage of the average 80,000 tons of annual imports into India in the pre-war years, 5) exports from India to Ceylon and the Middle East (see Amery's statement in the Commons on May 25, '44).

From this it follows that even if we put our minimum present requirements at 28 million tons (which corresponds to the highest production target reached up to date)—there is an absolute gap between our minimum needs and the production target fixed (22.5 million tons) of 5.5 million tons.

WILL THE TARGET BE REACHED ?

But within the frame-work of this extremely low target itself, production has shown no signs of improvement during the last 7 months despite the measures introduced by the Government in rapid succession.

This position was clearly admitted by the Coal Control Board at its meeting in Calcutta on July 1, 1944 ; ' Although as a result of the introduction of the new rationing scheme for colliery labour, attendance of labour in the fields had improved by about 30%, the production has not shown any increase' (*Hindusthan Standard*, July 3, '44).

One representative example taken at random will explain clearly the present position of coal production in the Behar coal-fields. The two State Railway collieries of Giridih, along with their open quarries, normally produced 3.45% of the total output and employed 4.3% of the total labour force in the coal-fields in India during pre-war days. In one of these collieries—the Serampore Colliery—the production and labour position up to June 1944 has been as follows :

Month	Production in tubs (1 tub equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ ton)	Number of miners.
January, 1944	33,589	31,558
February, 1944	43,069	25,206
March, 1944	39,111	38,519
April, 1944	37,551	39,149
May, 1944	40,540	57,930
June, 1944	26,865	41,675
Total	2,20,725 tubs (1,10,362 tons)	234,037

This actual total production of 1,10,362 tons is well below the quota assigned to this colliery according to the 1944 All-India production target of 22.5 million tons. If we take the normal pre-war production and labour figures of the Serampore Colliery (which is the smaller of the two collieries)—to be 1.15% and 1.4% respectively (on the basis of the ratio of 2 : 1) of the All-India figures—Serampore's share in the target figure of 22.5 million tons should have been 1,29,375 tons for the six months ending June 1944. This shows that the actual production has been 15% less than the estimated production, calculated on the basis of an

All-India allocation of the target figure. If this is the picture of a State Railway Colliery, with its highly paid staff and highly developed equipment and with absolutely no question of facing the Excess Profits Tax, the production position in other mines, owned by private concerns and committed to a deliberate policy of production hold-up to escape the EPT, may easily be imagined.

PROBLEMS OF SEASONAL LABOUR

There is an additional complication of a serious nature to be considered, when one tries to estimate the production trend for the rest of 1944.

From September will approach what are called 'lean months' of coal production.

The labour force in the coal-fields, specially in Behar and Bengal, is predominantly seasonal and varies throughout the year. As the Royal Commission on Labour rightly pointed out long ago: 'The number of workers in the mines is at its height about the end of February. Thereafter, there is a steady diminution as the winter crops mature. The exodus is checked in April, when there is little agricultural work available, but begins with renewed strength about the middle of May, and employment is at its lowest point about the middle of July, when sowing or transplanting of monsoon crops is at its height. Thereafter large numbers return to the mines and another peak is reached by the end of September. From this stage, there is again a decline and by the middle of November, when the rice harvest is at its height, the labour force reaches almost as low an ebb as in the middle of July. Thereafter it rapidly rises throughout the winter to the peak about the end of February' (Page 17 of the Report). The exodus from the mines is, however, much greater during the harvesting season (November) than during the sowing season (July). The reasons are obvious. During the sowing season, the agricultural labourers are generally paid a fixed amount of about As. 10 on the average in cash and kind per day. The work of sowing is also much more strenuous than that of harvesting. During the harvesting season, on the other hand, in the midst of plenty the agricultural labourer works almost everywhere on piece-rate basis, i.e., so much of grain for him in return for so much harvesting done by him. This brings him an average daily earning of Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4, in exceptional cases, it may even go up to Rs. 2 per day. This explains why the harvesting season in Behar witnesses mass migration of labour from the coal-fields to

agricultural work. The Table below gives the character of the labouring population in two Behar coal-fields.

Coalfields	% of permanently settled	% of recruited	% of local non-residents
Jharia	.. 15	75	10
Giridih	.. 60	15	25

This Table shows that only 25% of the total labour force in Jharia and 85% in Giridih is connected with coal-mining as a profession.

COMPOSITION OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN JHARIA AND GIRIDIH

Apart from factors which are common to coal-fields, there are special causes for the high percentage of migratory labour in Jharia. In Manbhum district, in which the Jharia coal-fields are located, about 60% of the total area of the district is available for cultivation, rice being the chief crop. The total population is 18½ lacs, of which coal-field workers and their dependents number over 3 lacs. The workers and their dependents, therefore, constitute over one-third of the total population. Naturally, therefore, if we take the internal needs of the district for agricultural labourers into consideration, it becomes quite evident that there is always a heavy demand for them, particularly during the harvesting season. The volume of demand in relation to the available volume of supply largely governs the daily wage-rates in this district, which are about As. 11 to As. 12 in the sowing season and Rs. 1-2 to Rs. 1-4 in the harvesting season respectively. The coal-miner, therefore, with his miserable earnings of As. 6 to As. 8 per day, cannot but take advantage of the higher agricultural wages and migrate during the two seasons, specially during the harvesting season. The extent of these movements of labour can be fairly accurately measured by reference to the monthly raisings of coal. In a normal year, the amount of coal raised in February or March is about 50% above that raised in July, while the September figures exceed the July raising by about 30%.

The reasons for the high percentage of the total labour force being more or less permanently settled in the Giridih mines are :

1) About 60% to 70% of the workers are 'Nokarini' (or service) tenants, i.e., they have been settled in the colliery areas by being provided with colliery lands, free of rent or on a nominal

rent, for cultivation—the period of tenancy lasting as long as they are employed in the colliery.

2) In Hazaribagh district the soil is poor and mostly covered with jungles and barren tracts. The net crop area is about 1,450 sq. miles, but 78% of the people of the district have to depend on agriculture for their living. Hence, the scope for coal miners turning seasonally into agricultural labourers is very limited.

EFFECTS OF COAL SHORTAGE ON OTHER INDUSTRIES

Anyhow, there is a gloomy future in store for coal. The 'lean months' are approaching. Labour shortage persists. Against this background, we shall have to estimate whether there is a chance of even the extremely low target figure ever being reached.

Seven valuable months have been lost in holding conferences and meetings, issuing ordinances and making inspections and surveys without going to the root of the crisis. The inevitable result is, as we have already pointed out, that in the Giridih State Railways Colliery, production is already 15% behind schedule. On an All-India basis, the total output for the last 7 months is at least 18% below the estimated schedule. Now the period of mass migrations is coming, and only two months of normally good coal production in the present year—i.e., September and December—are left over. There is every likelihood of the 1944 output turning out to be 18.5 million tons instead of 22.5 million tons, at a time when our minimum requirements are 28 million tons.

What this will mean for the country's industries can easily be guessed. In Behar, seat of coal production, industrial and domestic coal consumption has already been seriously affected. In no town is domestic coal selling below Rs. 1-4 per maund. In many towns, it is not even available at this price in sufficient quantities.

It is known that owing to the shortage of coal and heavy chemicals, there has been a considerable fall in the output of steel and iron goods produced by Tatas. Its coal stocks are low and there is a danger of some departments closing down.

The production of cement at Japla and Dalmianagar has gone down by at least 20%.

There has been a drop in the output of paper in Dalmianagar by about 15% to 20%.

The Tobacco Factory at Monghyr, producing crores of ciga-

ettes for the army, has been working one hour less every day and has stopped Saturday working altogether.

The 33 Sugar Mills of the province, which are due to commence operations by the end of October, have been given only 45%, 50% and 33% of their total coal, heavy chemicals and wagon requirements respectively.

Except in Patna, almost all the electric power houses all over the province have been directed not to supply power to the public during the day, nor to the cinema houses for two shows.

A coal economy drive in the railway workshop at Jamalpore and the running sheds in the province has been planned under instructions from the Railway Board, and the target for the economy for the present is aimed at 7% below the normal consumption in previous months.

WHY PRODUCTION DOES NOT INCREASE

The Government estimate that there has been a 30% increase in the labour force in the first half of 1944. The number of working mines in the Jharia belt has increased from 384 in December 1943 to 420 in August 1944. Why then is there no improvement in coal production and why is the coal output 18% below schedule instead? The inter-play of the following factors is responsible for the production shortage:

1. Labour shortage.
2. A fall in the level of efficiency of labour.
3. Impediments to production—deliberate and technical.
4. Mismanagement of transport facilities.
5. Shortage of equipment
6. Colliery wastages.

I shall examine each factor in detail.

SHORTAGE OF LABOUR

The following table gives the total labour employed, month by month, in the Jharia coal-fields during 1938-43:

Month	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
January	80,821	81,623	80,367	90,826	77,206	76,075
February	88,733	91,647	91,736	96,003	91,706	67,514
March	84,666	87,871	88,851	92,482	85,695	70,673
April	83,325	92,600	79,656	91,490	87,081	78,691
May	76,541	78,110	77,716	90,190	87,168	85,161
June	74,755	74,604	77,546	82,365	84,583	75,415
July	68,199	71,236	76,042	79,503	78,763	85,955
August	74,901	75,022	77,262	85,949	78,393	80,856
September	85,536	85,006	88,988	87,545	82,892	73,869
October	75,994	79,090	90,467	86,115	83,951	60,000
November	72,951	70,481	83,618	80,595	72,258	Not available
December	81,191	76,349	87,214	75,487	76,568	"

The above table clearly shows that at no time since 1938 has the labour force employed in the mines gone down so low as 73,869—the figure in September 1943—particularly when we remember that in any year one of the highest peaks of attendance in the mines is attained by the end of September. Again, in no year and in no month has the number of workers in mines gone down so low as 60,000 in October 1943. During September-November mass migration of coal workers took place. About 20% of the total labour force left the Jharia coal-fields and nearly 48% left the Bokaro fields. It was a new situation altogether for the coal industry.

This abnormally high percentage of migration cannot be explained by any "Grow More Food" campaign. The sowing and the harvesting seasons in the districts of Manbhum and Hazaribagh were not so intensive or extensive in 1943 as to explain this new phenomenon. The answer is to be found in the level of wages in the centres of military and railway construction within a radius of 60 miles of the coalfields. Here the coal miner obtained from the military contractors a daily wage of Re. 1 to Rs. 1½ plus free ration of 12 chhataks of rice and wheat and 2 chhataks of dal per day. This was heaven-sent windfall for him in comparison to his miserable total monthly earnings of Rs. 14 to Rs. 15 in the mines, including the grain concessions. Hence, more than 80% of the workers who had left the coalfield, straightaway went to these centres and large numbers of them are still working there.

Since last February, however, there has been some definite improvement in the labour position. The Government estimate places it at 30%. Our estimate is, it is 15% to 20%. This comparative improvement is due to three factors :

(a) Return of a small number of the regular miners to the coalfields. But they do not compose more than 5% of the total shortage so far made up.

(b) Increase in the number of women employed underground. In the Giridih collieries alone the total number of women employed under-ground so far is about 3,000. On an all-India basis the total figure may be well over 15,000.

(c) Import of a considerable number of workers from Gorakhpur (U.P.) by the Central Government. In Bermo alone their number is 2,000. On an all-India basis the total number of Gorakhpuri labour imported into the coalfields so far cannot be less than 10,000.

These workers are recruited by Government recruiting agents from the Gorakhpur district. They belong to the Civil Pioneer Force and are organised on semi-military lines. The privileges that have been given to them are :

Basic wage : Re. 1 per day.

Ration : full quantity, free of cost (everything is of good quality and includes a course of meat every week).

Dress : free of cost : head-dress, half-shirts and shorts.

Housing : housed in specially built, well-ventilated, *pucca dhowrahs*.

Import of 1,500 workers from the Kolar Gold Mines—1,000 of Bermo (Behar) and 500 for Talcher (Orissa). They are given the following privileges :

Basic wage : As. 14 per day.

Attendance bonus : As. 3 per day.

Separation allowance : Rs. 15 per month

But in spite of the comparative improvement in labour supply there has been practically no increase in coal production. Why ? The women workers employed underground do not play any

active part in production. Their main job underground is the loading of the coal cut into baskets and then into tubs. Before the ban on the underground employment of women was withdrawn, the work of loading was done by male workers. Both coal cutters and loaders were thus males. They used to share coal-cutting between themselves, so that a pair of them used to cut coal for 4 hours and loaded it in 4 hours a piece. Hence the total production in 8 hours was much more than it is now. At present more than 90% of the loaders are women. So the cutter has to go on cutting coal for 8 hours at a stretch all by himself. This wears him down considerably. Hence, the total output per day per unit, of one cutter and one loader is now about 20% less than previously, when both the cutter and the loader were males.

The attention of the press and the public has not yet been focussed on this specific problem—one of the most *crucial* in coal production today.

It has been conclusively proved that in spite of the much higher incidence of labour cost per ton of coal raised, the *Gorakhpur labour* have been giving only 20% of the normal output given by regular miners, obviously because they do not possess the acquired skill and efficiency of the latter. This is why they are being more and more diverted from coalmines to the work of sappers and miners such as, digging out the overload of earth and stone in quarries, building roads and setting up railway lines in the colliery areas, etc. In Bermo, for example, only 7 to 8 hundred of them are at present employed in the mining of coal, and these also in the open quarries.

Two years of acute food crisis on the one hand, and miserable pittance of wages and grain concessions given to the coal-miner on the other, have forced him to live much below the minimum subsistence level for the last one year and a half. This chronic malnutrition and devitalisation has considerably impaired his efficiency. Coal mining is an extremely strenuous job and decline in efficiency cannot but lead to decline in production. He has been a prey to such diseases as dysentery and malaria. Owing to the very bad quality of rations supplied to him, diarrhoea and dysentery are now prevalent in the Jharia coal-fields in an epidemic form. Malaria also exists on a fairly large scale.

All these have been affecting production very adversely.

It is now evident that as a result of the operation of the above factors, production has shown no signs of improvement even with comparative betterment of the Labour position. *Numerical*

strength alone is a deceptive guide. Unless properly understood, it may cloud our vision as to the concrete and real forces that are operating for and against production.

IMPEDIMENTS IN THE WAY OF PRODUCTION

There are as yet serious impediments in the way of increasing production. These may be, for purposes of simplification, broadly divided into two categories :

1. Deliberate, i.e., those that are the outcome of the obstructive tactics or indifference of the owners.

2. Technical, i.e., those that are the outcome of the general industrial crisis in the country, e.g. shortage of stores, finished and half-finished raw materials, etc.

Deliberate obstruction to production arises out of :

(a) Refusal to improve the conditions of life and work of the miners and attempts at torpedoing the meagre concessions given to them after the Dhanbad Conference. The import of Gorakhpuri labour and the employment of women underground cannot solve the problems of production. Gorakhpuri labour is much more costly than others, and even then it gives only 1/15th of the normal output. Underground woman labour, as we have seen earlier, actually reduces the total output. The real motives of owners, committed to a policy of organised hold-up of production for fighting the EPT, in forcing the Government to permit the employment of women underground, was not aimed at solving the problem of labour shortage, but for reducing the output. No one has seen till now this aspect of the question. Agitation against the underground employment of women has been carried on so far from the moral and social standpoints.

(b) Closing down of pits and mines or their under-working. Frequently they are closed down for two or three days in the week or are under-worked for days together on all sorts of flimsy grounds. For example some of the pits of the Bhowrah colliery (Jharia) one of the big first-class collieries, are not being worked at all. The pits of the Dharijoba mines are not being worked to full capacity. In Gerandi (Bermo), a State Railway colliery, three of the richest pits have remained completely closed for a considerable length of time. Many of its coal surfaces, which give a 100-feet thick seam below an overload of 5-feet thick earth, are left untouched, although they can be very easily worked as quarries. These examples, taken at random, just give an

indication of the actual state of affairs in the Behar coalfields as a whole.

(c) Refusal to widen the "A tan" (elbow room or working space), to timber the roofs of old and damaged mines properly, which seriously obstruct the cutting of coal.

(d) Refusal to make provisions for the quick repair of all available tubs, trollies, etc., which seriously interferes with the mining, loading and haulage of coal.

(e) Refusal to open new pits. The width and the expanse of many collieries are increasing. In the absence of an adequate number of pits the workers waste a lot of time reaching their places of work underground and the coal mined has to be hauled over a longer distance, resulting in unnecessary loss of time and production.

(f) Refusal to make proper adjustment in the available machinery. For example, a 175 H.P. and another 60 H.P. pumps are working in Pits Nos. 1 and 2 respectively. The volume of water-logging in Pit No. 2 may be such that the 60 H.P. cannot cope with it, but the other pump can; and the latter is not immediately required for Pit No. 1. The obvious solution of the difficulty, in the interest of production would be to transfer the 175 H.P. pump to Pit No. 2. But this is not done at present in most of the mines, resulting in an avoidable loss of output.

(g) Refusal to extend the lines. Inside many pits lines are not extended or doubled from pit-mouths to the closest possible proximity of the places of coal cutting on the false pretext of lack of available space with the result that there is unnecessary loss of time and output in the loaders being forced to carry coal in baskets for 500 to 800 yards in order to fill the tubs.

(h) Refusal to use the mechanical picks, wherever they are available, for coal mining. The owners are unwilling to invest even a fraction of their profits in machinery for the quick mining and haulage of coal. At present 30% of the collieries in British India are not worked mechanically.

(i) Malpractices of the Raising Contractor and the Sirdars. The contractors directly hamper production, by various means,—such as, making under-payment of wages and Dearness Allowance to the miners, making them sit idle for some days in the week, making them do all sorts of odd jobs in addition to their own duties, making them pay for the cost of explosives and baskets, etc. The usual trick of the Sirdar is to prevent the coal-

cutters from going to work unless each gang pays him a bribe of As. 2 to As. 4 out of its earnings.

We shall examine the second set of impediments to production—the technical ones—in the following sections.

SHORTAGE OF EQUIPMENT

These are mainly :

(1) Shortage of coal-raising *tubs* : Iron sheets are not available in sufficient quantities for the manufacture of tubs, and even those that are available are distributed in the most unorganised fashion. Wooden tubs are too heavy and do not last long. This problem was discussed at some length in the Dhanbad Conference, but no conclusion was reached. There is at present a surplus of tubs in some of the bigger collieries owing to the decline in production but they are not productively utilised as there is no loading or pooling system in vogue.

(2) Shortage of stores and spare parts to run the existing machinery and plant to full capacity, such as pumps, iron rails and sleepers, wires, fire-bricks, pulley chains, axles, machine tools, etc.

SHORTAGE AND MISMANAGEMENT OF TRANSPORT

On April 14, 1944, the Central Government announced that 2,600 wagons per month had been allocated for the transport of coal from the coalfields of Bengal (see *New Sketch*, April 24, 1944). The extent to which this allocation falls short of actual despatch requirements on the basis of the target figure of coal production is quite evident from the following facts :

(a) The maximum carrying capacity of a wagon is about 23 tons of load. The 2,600 wagons can therefore carry 59,800 tons per month or 7,17,600 tons per year. The annual target figure of Bengal coalfields, which produce 32% of the total Indian output, would be (on the basis of all-India target figure of 22.5 million tons) 72,00,000 tons. Thus on the basis of the allotment of 2,600 wagons per month, only about 10% of the estimated output can be transported.

(b) Cancellation of transport permits to those collieries that have come into existence during the last three years merely on account of the splitting up of old properties.

(c) Collieries that have sidings both on the B.N.R. and the E.I.R. should be allotted wagons on one Railway only.

(d) Supplies of wagons are to be made to the mines producing good quality coal in preference to the mines producing inferior classes of coal (II and III grade coal), although the latter should carry on mining with a view to build up reserves in cases of emergency. The smaller owners, who own most of the latter category of mines, are wholly unwilling to continue producing under such conditions on the following grounds :

1. They have only limited space for stacking, while most of the big collieries have unlimited stacking grounds.

2. From the financial point of view, the big collieries are definitely in a far better position than the smaller ones to continue raising and wait for payment in due course.

3. First class quality coals, produced by the big collieries, are less liable to be quickly weathered and would be more useful after months of exposure than second and third class coals, produced by the smaller collieries. It has been estimated by Government technical experts that the loss in value sustained by the second and third grade coal due to exposure to wind and weather is about 15%.

These arguments given by the small owners have some force. This particular aspect of the transport question is one of the reasons for the obstructive attitude of the smaller owners. It is also one of the factors for the prevailing shortage of domestic coal (soft coke), mainly produced by the small mines.

Apart from the problem of absolute shortage of wagons, there is the scandalous mismanagement of the available transport facilities. It takes the forms of jamming, bottle-necks, delays, etc. Three examples will suffice to illustrate this point :

(i) In many cases a wagon can reach its destination in 4 days instead of 7 days, as at present, if only the loading, unloading and shunting are speeded up and the goods train is not unnecessarily made to stop at intermediary stations.

(ii) It is a common sight to see wagons lying idle in marshalling yards, perhaps waiting to be despatched a fortnight or so after their arrival.

(iii) The B. N. Rly. which serves many of the coalfields of Behar and Bengal has remained in private hands, with all the consequent shortcomings regarding efficient management.

COLLIERY WASTAGES

The wastage of coal in colliery operations, in the loading and despatch of coal, etc., has been estimated at 10% of the total annual output. If we take 22.5 million tons as the total annual output, then the total amount of wastages for all the collieries in India would come to 2,250,000 tons for the year. This is a huge quantity, and there can be no justification for wastages on such a scale. What is the reason behind it? It is nothing other than indifference to the problem of wastage on the part of the colliery management. One example will suffice to illustrate the extent of wastage. In the Giridih Collieries 4 tons of coal are required daily for running each of the 25 boiler engines, but the actual amount supplied is 5 tons per engine. It means that 25 tons per day are given in excess of the actual requirements. Where does all this coal go? A portion is wasted through careless handling and the rest is turned into soft coke and sold off by sections of the higher staff.

It can be safely said that, with proper economy and rationalisation of expenditure, the wastages cannot go beyond 4% of the total output, which will render net saving of 1 to 1.5 million tons per year quite practicable.

SECTION II**CONDITION OF LABOUR**

The coalfields workers of Bihar may be broadly divided into two categories according to the conditions of their life and work :

1. Workers in the State Railway Collieries.
2. Workers in the privately-owned collieries.

STATE RAILWAY COLLIERIES

The State Railway Collieries are : 2 in Giridih (Serampore and Karharbari), 4 in Bokaro (Bermo, Kargali, Gerandi and Swang) and a few in the Jharia belt. The total number of workers in these establishments is now over 40 thousand. Their present condition as revealed by our recent sample surveys in the coal belts, is as follows :

BASIC WAGE

Underground

Miner	..	..	As. 6 to As. 7	per tub.
Loader	..	..	As. 6 to As. 7	per tub.
Stone-cutter	..	..	As. 6	per day
Watering cooly	..	..	As. 6 to As. 8	" "
Trolleyman	..	..	As. 8	per day
Hookman	..	..	As. 9 to As. 12	per day
Sirdar	..	..	Re. 1 to Rs. 2	" "

Surface

Wagon loader	..	..	As. 6 to As. 8	per day
Tandel cooly	..	..	As. 7 to As. 8-6	" "
Haulage Khalasi	..	..	As. 10	per day
Engine Khalasi	..	..	Re. 1 to Rs. 2	per day
Siever	..	..	As. 10	per day
Fireman	..	..	As. 8 to As. 10	per day

Colliery Workshop

Male cooly	..	..	As. 7-6 to As. 8-6	per day
Female cooly	..	..	As. 4 to As. 5	" "
Helper boy	..	..	As. 4	per day
Drillman	..	..	As. 14 to Re. 1	per day
Fitter	..	..	As. 14 to Rs. 1-8	" "
Turner	..	..	Re. 1-4 to Rs. 2	" "

Note :—One miner and one loader in the pits generally form one unit. They together mine and load on the average about one ton of coal per day. Their total daily earning, therefore, comes to As. 12 to As. 14. It is shared between them in the ratio of 1:1. Hence, the basic income of each is As. 6 to As. 7 per day.

Owing to the sub-human conditions of life and work, the miners cannot work for full 6 days in a week. The Royal Commission on Labour estimated "an average of 4 to 4½ days' work per week for the individual miner during the weeks he is at work." The Central Government's present rationing scheme in the collieries also takes a 4 day week as the basis for the scheme. Even if we take a very bold and optimistic view of this question, the maximum number of working days cannot go beyond 5 days in the week or 20 days in the month. In finding out *actual* earn-

ings, therefore, we have to base our calculations on the actual number of days worked per week or month. On this basis the average earning (basic wage) of a miner comes to Rs. 7-8 to Rs. 8-12 per month. It will be wholly wrong to think that the full amount of even this scandalously low earning ever reaches the hands of the miner. Deductions are made by the contractors, munshis, sirdars, etc., by all sorts of means. These deductions, taken together, constitute at least 5% of the miner's monthly earning. So the *actual* basic wage that the miner gets is Rs. 7-2 to Rs. 8-6 per month.

Note : Here we have confined our attention to the miners only, because they constitute the major proportion of coal-field labour and are the most crucial factor in the actual mining operations.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

In March, 1943, the Railway Board sanctioned for the workers of State Railway Collieries a dearness allowance at the flat rate of Rs. 11 for 26 days of actual working per month. It comes to As. 6-9 per day or Rs. 8-7 per month (on the basis of 20 days' working). All the workers, however, do not get the full amount. In Giridih, for example, about 4,000 workers under the contractors are getting only a fraction of the amount or nothing at all. In Bokaro the majority of workers generally get, thanks to the raising contractors, about Rs. 3-8 per month.

RATIONS

The entire family of the worker is covered by the present rationing scheme, two children being taken as equivalent to one adult. The *weekly* amounts of different food grains and consumers' goods given at present are as follows :

Articles	per head of worker	per head of non- working adult dependents	Rates charged
Rice	.. 4 srs.	2½ srs.	6 srs. per rupee
Gram	.. 1 sr.	1 sr.	As. 4 per sr.
Dal	.. 14 ch.	14 ch.	As. 4-6 per sr.
Sugar	.. 1 ch. *	1 ch.	As. 5 per sr.
Gur	.. 3 ch.	3 ch.	As. 4 per sr.
Mustard Oil	8 ch. per card	nil	As. 9 per sr.
Match	.. 6 per card per month	nil	As. 9 per box
Soap	.. 3 per card per month	nil	As. 2 per cake
Salt	.. 3½ ch.	3½ ch.	As. 2 per sr.

Notes :

1. Wheat, *atta* and *maida* can be taken in place of rice at As. 4, As. 4-6 and As. 6 per sr. respectively.
2. Taking of gram is compulsory.

The following table gives the amount of compensation conferred on the miners by the rationing scheme. The family of a miner is taken as consisting of a maximum number of five adults (the worker himself, his wife, two children and two other adult dependents). The extent of compensation has been calculated at black-market rates, because in the coal belts no persons, other than those covered by partial rationing, can get any article at controlled rates.

Articles	Total amounts of grains or other articles given to a family of 5 adults per month	Total price charged by the management.	Open market rates (Aug. 1944)	Total prices for the amounts in the open market.
		Rs. as. p.		Rs. as. p.
Rice	.. 56 srs.	9 5 3	2½ srs. per rupee	22 6 3
Gram	.. 20 srs.	5 0 0	As. 4 per sr.	5 0 0
Dal	.. 17 srs.	4 12 6	As. 7 per sr.	7 7 0
Sugar	.. 1 sr. 4 ch.	0 6 3	As. 7 per sr.	0 8 9
Gur	.. 3 srs. 12 ch.	0 15 0	As. 4 per sr.	0 15 0
Mustard Oil	2 srs.	1 2 0	Rs. 1-8 per sr.	3 0 0
Match	.. 6 boxes	0 4 6	As. 1 per match	0 6 0
Soap	.. 3 cakes	0 6 0	As. 4 per soap	0 12 0
Salt	.. 4 srs. 6 ch.	0 8 9	As. 3 per sr.	0 13 9
TOTAL		22 12 3		41 4 9

The above table gives the amount of monthly compensation per family at (Rs. 41-4-9—Rs. 22-12-3) Rs. 18-8-6.

Now we shall examine the total amount of compensation obtained by a miner of the State Railway collieries in relation to the prevailing cost of living.

TOTAL COMPENSATION

The amount of compensation obtained in Giridih in the shape of Dearness Allowance and food and other articles is Rs. 8-7 plus Rs. 18-8-6 or Rs. 26-15-6 per month. In Bokaro it is Rs. 3-8 plus Rs. 18-8-6 or Rs. 22-0-6 per month. This gives an increase of 225% over September 1939 level of earnings for Giridih and 175% for Bokaro. The cost of living index in July, 1944 stood at 250% above the September 1939 level both for Giridih and Bokaro. Thus, the existing gap between the cost of living and the volume of compensation is 25% in Giridih and 75% in Bokaro.

We shall also examine here another aspect of the question. The maximum total *monetary* earnings of a miner per month in terms of basic wage plus dearness allowance come to about Rs. 16-13 in Giridih and Rs. 10-10 in Bokaro. But the total

prices of the grains and other articles offered to him are Rs. 22-12-3 per month. This means that with the existing level of *cash* earnings he can buy back only 60% and 45% of the total articles offered to him in Giridih and Bokaro respectively.

PRIVATELY-OWNED COLLIERIES

The vast majority of the collieries of Behar are private concerns owned both by Europeans and Indians. They are mostly concentrated in the Jharia belt. The European companies own most of the bigger first-class collieries and are responsible for about 80% of the total coal mined. This gives them a decisive weightage in the coal production of Bihar. The condition of the workers in these privately-owned mines, European and Indian, as revealed by our own sample surveys in the coal-fields, may be summed up in the following sections.

CONDITION BEFORE THE DHANBAD CONFERENCE (DECEMBER 1943)

1. Basic Wage

Underground

Miner	..	..	As. 6 to As. 8	per day
Loader	..	..	As. 6 to As. 8	per day
Trolleyman	..	..	As. 8	per day

Surface

Loader	..	..	As. 6 to As. 7	per day
Female cooly	..	..	As. 4 to As. 5	per day
Khalasi	..	..	As. 10	per day

On the basis of 20 days' working period, the earning of vast sections of coal workers came to Rs. 7-8 or Rs. 10 per month. Making a 5% allowance for the deductions made by the Contractors etc., the *actual* monthly basic wage of a miner stood at Rs. 7-2 or Rs. 9-8.

2. Dearness Allowance

Before the Dhanbad Conference Dearness Allowance was given at a flat rate of 22½% increase over the daily basic wage. Calculated on the basis of the prevailing wage-level, it amounted

to As. 1-4 or As. 1-9 per day ; i.e., on the basis of 20 days' work, it came to Rs 1-11 or Rs. 2-3 per month.

3. Rations

The entire family of the worker was not covered by the rationing scheme. Rations were given to a maximum number of 3 adults in a family, consisting of the worker himself, his wife and two children.

The scale was as follows :

<i>Category of workers</i>	<i>Total amount of rice or atta given per week</i>	<i>Rate charged</i>
A. Manual worker without a family	6 srs.	6 srs. per rupee
B. Manual worker with dependent wife	9½ srs.	do
C. Manual worker with dependent wife and two children	13 srs.	do

It should, however, be remembered here that all the colliery-owners were not issuing rations at a uniform scale. The above table gives the most favourable scale of rations.

If we assume that the worker drew the maximum quantity of 13 srs. per week or 52 srs. per month, it would cost him Rs. 8-10-9 per month. If he had gone to the black-market for this quantity, his expenditure would have been Rs. 20-13 (on the basis of the prevailing black-market rate of 2½ srs. of rice per rupee). So the extent of monthly compensation that he enjoyed in the shape of cheap grain supply was (Rs. 20-13—Rs. 8-10-9) Rs. 12-2-3.

4. Total Compensation

The maximum total compensation obtained by the miner in the shape of D.A. and food-grains came to Rs. 2-3 plus Rs. 12-2-3 or Rs. 14-5-3 per month. This gave him a total increase of 175% over the September 1939 level of earnings. The cost of living index at Jharia in September 1943 stood at 317% above the Sept. 1939 level. Thus, the absolute gap that existed then between the cost of living and the volume of compensation was 142%.

Again, the maximum total *monetary* earning of the miner in the shape of basic wage and D.A. was Rs. 9-8 plus Rs. 2-3

or Rs. 11-11 per month. The total price of the maximum amount of rice was Rs. 8-10-9. So he could buy all the quantity offered to him and had a surplus of Rs. 3-0-3 left over.

CONDITION NOW, AFTER THE DHANBAD CONFERENCE

1. Basic Wage

There has been no change whatever in the rates of basic wages for any category of workers.

2. Dearness Allowance

At the Dhanbad Conference the D.A. was increased by another 27½%. So the D.A. is now given at a flat rate of 50% increase over the daily basic wage. This amounts to As. 3 to As. 4 per day or Rs. 3-12 to Rs. 5 per month.

3. Rations

Rations are at present given to a maximum number of 3 adults in a family. A "Unit" for this purpose has been defined by the Government, as the worker himself, his dependent wife and two children between 2 and 12 years of age. The prevailing scale is as follows:

Category of workers.	Basic standard ration per week		Rates		
	Rice, Atta, Wheat, etc.	Dal	Rice, Atta, Wheat, etc.	Dal	Exce ration for each day of attendance
A. Manual Worker without a family	4 srs.	1 sr.	Control rate at 2 srs. 12 ch. per rupee	6 srs. per rupee	1 sr.
B. Manual worker with dependent wife	8 srs.	2 srs.	Do.	Do.	Do.
C. Manual worker with dependent wife, and two children	12 srs.	3 srs.	Do.	Do.	Do.

Notes : 1. Out of the 4 srs. of basic ration per adult, not more than 2 srs. can be taken in rice. The rest has to be taken in wheat, *atta*, maize or gram.

2. The free ration may be drawn in whole or in part in rice and other food grains. It is dependent on each day of work actually put in by the miner.

3. The basic ration of 4 srs. per adult is meant for the whole week (7 days), provided that the miner works for at least 4 days in the week. If he works one day less—say, 3 days—he can get ration for 3 days only. In case of sickness or absenteeism for valid reasons, he is entitled to the full amount of the basic ration.

4. A dependent has been defined as “non-working dependent” of a worker resident in the mine premises or in a place recognised for the purpose by the District Magistrate, and includes his wife and children.

5. The control rates for rice, wheat, *atta* in August 1944 were : As. 5-9, As. 6 and As. 6-6 per sr. respectively.

If we assume that the miner draws the maximum quantity of 12 srs. rice, wheat, etc. and 3 srs. of dal per week or 48 srs. of rice, wheat and 12 srs. of dal per month the price paid by him is (Rs. 17-10 plus Rs. 2) Rs. 19-10 per month. If he goes to the black-market for these quantities of food grains, they would cost him (Rs. 18-10 plus Rs. 5-4) Rs. 23-14 per month (on the basis of the prevailing black-market rates of 2½ srs. of rice per rupee, As. 6 per sr. of wheat and As. 7 per sr. of dal). This brings his monthly compensation in the shape of cheap grains to (Rs. 23-14—Rs. 19-10) Rs. 4-4.

Half a seer of food-grains is given free to every manual worker for each day he attends work. Assuming that the maximum number of days he works is 20 days per month, the total amount of free ration he can draw is 10 srs. per month. If we take that he prefers to draw the whole of this amount in rice, it would have cost him in the black-market Rs. 4 per month.

4. *Cash Bonus*

In order to cover a part of the cost of the basic ration the owners have been asked to make the following cash payments to each worker (manual or non-manual) for *each day* he attends his work.

As. 2 if he has no dependents

As. 3 if he has one adult dependent *or* children.

As. 5 if he has one adult dependent *and* children.

If we assume that the worker draws the maximum of As. 5 per day then his total earning on this score comes to (As. 5 x 20) Rs. 6-4 per month.

5. Consumers' Goods

The Central Government promised to make arrangements for the supply of consumers' goods (salt, kerosene oil, matches, gur, standard cloth, etc.) to the workers at cost or at cheap prices. But as yet the scheme has not come into operation. Standard cloth and some other articles are given in this or that colliery. There is, however, no uniformity or regularity in the matter of supply. Even the boldest estimate cannot place the volume of compensation on this score at beyond Re. 1 per month.

6. Total Compensation

The maximum total compensation *envisaged* per month under the present Government scheme is as follows :

1. Dearness allowance	..	..	5	0	0
2. Basic ration	..	..	4	4	0
3. Free ration	..	..	4	0	0
4. Cash bonus	..	..	6	4	0
5. Consumers' goods	..	..	1	0	0
			<hr/>		
		TOTAL	20	8	0

In *actual reality*, however, the worker does not get in any month the *full* amount of the compensation envisaged. We shall examine later on why this is so. Here we shall confine our attention to the *actual* volume of compensation enjoyed by him per month :

1. Dearness allowance	..	..	3	12	0
2. Basic ration (less underweight @ 2 ch. per sr.)	..	..	2	0	0
3. Free ration (for 16 days actually given)	..	..	3	4	0
4. Cash bonus (@ As. 2 per day for 20 days actually given)	..	..	2	8	0
5. Consumers' goods	..	..	0	8	0
			<hr/>		
		TOTAL	12	0	0

This real compensation of Rs. 12 per month gives the worker a total increase of 150% over his September 1939 level of earning. The cost of living index at Jharia in July 1944 stood at 250% above the September 1939 level. Thus, the absolute gap between the cost of living and the extent of compensation at present is 100%.

Again, the *maximum* monetary earnings of a miner in the shape of basic wage and D.A. stand at (Rs. 9.8 plus Rs. 4.4) Rs. 13.12 per month. The total price of the food-grains offered to him is Rs. 17.10 per month. This means that he can buy only 75% of the maximum quantity of food-grains offered to him.

HOW THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME IS BEING SABOTAGED

We shall examine this question item by item on the basis of our own investigations, which were held only a short while ago.

1. Dearness Allowance

The workers and other employees whose average earnings come to over Rs. 25 p.m. are in many collieries being given only 27½% increase in their wages on the ground that the 50% increase sanctioned by the Dhanbad Conference is meant only for workers with an income of less than Rs. 25 p.m.

In a large number of collieries the Wage Register has been so manipulated as to show a lower level of wages for 1939 than what was actually given to the miner. And the 50% increase has been calculated on this basis. This means that the *real* increase given to him is not 50% but about 30% to 40%.

Previously there were no regular Wage Registers in the Collieries. It is only after the circular issued by Mr. Bunn, A.D.C., Dhanbad, that such registers are being maintained. This explains the difficulty of detecting this malpractice of the owners.

2. Basic Ration

In some Collieries (Bhowrah, for example), the basic ration is not given for the dependents on the plea that the worker concerned has no family of his own.

In some (Dhariagola, for example) ration is given only to the worker if he happens to live outside the 'dhowrahs' in adjacent bustees on the ground that his dependents do not fall in

the category of "dependent" as defined by the Government although there may be no accommodation in the dhowrahs.

In some smaller collieries (i.e., East Busseriya, owned by K. D. Worah) only 2 srs. of food-grains out of 4 srs. are given to the workers.

In no case does the worker get the full amount of weekly ration if he works less than 4 days, although it may be due to illness or absenteeism for valid reasons.

The quality of the food-grains is so bad that dysentery and diarrhoea are raging in an epidemic form in the entire coal belt.

Underweighting of food-grains is a universal phenomenon. It comes to about 2 ch. per seer on the average.

3. *Free Ration*

In some collieries certain categories of manual workers are made to work all the 7 days in the week but are given the free ration for 6 days only.

In some the workers are not given any free ration at all unless they work for at least 5 days in the week, although they are entitled to $\frac{1}{2}$ sr. per head for each day of attendance.

In some (e.g., Bhowrah) the $\frac{1}{2}$ sr. of free ration is given per tub of coal mined. This means that if the miner gets less than the scheduled number of tubs or no tubs at all, he loses a part or the whole of his free ration.

In a large number of collieries the free ration is given only to the *underground* workers on the plea that it is meant only for them.

The quality of the food-stuff is extremely bad.

Underweighting is a regular feature.

4. *Cash Bonus*

The owners are making the most queer interpretations of the clearly explained clauses of the Government circular and are thus cheating the workers of their legitimate dues in the following ways :

1. The cash bonus for dependents, i.e., As. 3 and As. 5, is not paid anywhere. Even those collieries that had been paying it have now stopped payment. The owners contend that according to the Government circular the payment of As. 2 is obligatory, while the payment of As. 3 and As. 5 is optional. When the local T.U. representatives approached the Central Government officials (Labour Welfare Officer and Coal Inspector) for a

clarification of Government standpoint, they clearly said that the interpretation given by the owners was right.

2. In some (e.g., Dhariajoba and I. N. Chand) no cash bonus is paid if the worker works less than 4 days in the week, although he is entitled to receive at least As. 2 per day for each day of attendance.

3. In some even As. 2 is not paid if the worker happens to live outside the 'dhowrah' for lack of accommodation.

DISEASES

The Mining Settlements have become hot-beds of diseases as a result of two years of chronic food crisis and the devitalisations following in its wake coupled with the unhealthy conditions of living in the 'dhowrahs'.

Last year malaria assumed an alarming shape in Jharia. The Central Government deputed Lt.-Col. Covell, Director of the All-India Malaria Institute, and Major Fletcher, Deputy Director of Malariology, Eastern Command, for organising a drive against malaria in the Jharia coalfields. This year also the disease is now raging on a fairly wide scale. The reason is the accumulation of stagnant water in innumerable hollows as a result of the pumping out of water from pits as well as the monsoon rains. Almost every colliery gets its quota of Quinine powder from the Government but the major portion of it goes off to the black-market.

In Giridih also malaria and remittent fever are fairly widespread. During the last summer months the incidence of sickness among open-quarry workers shot up by almost 50% owing to extremely unhealthy working conditions.

Dysentery and diarrhoea have broken out in an epidemic form in the Jharia belt owing to the very bad quality of food-grains supplied to the workers. It is estimated by local Trade Union officials that the incidence of sickness on this account has increased by at least 100% over last year's level. The seriousness of the prevailing situation was taken note of at a meeting of the leaders of different parties of Dhanbad sub-division which was held at Jharia on the 28th August last. One of the resolutions passed at this meeting ran as follows: "This meeting views with great alarm the widespread incidence of diarrhoea and dysentery all over the coalfield and the outbreak of cholera, malaria and typhoid in some places and is of opinion that the insanitary

condition of the Bazar and 'dhowrah' areas, bad water, bad rice and other food-stuffs such as rotten vegetables, rotten fish and rotten fruits and adulterated *atta*, ghee and mustard oil, etc., are mainly responsible for these diseases...." This view is reinforced by the fact that some months ago dysentery appeared in an epidemic form in Giridih when very bad quality rice and gram were being supplied to the workers. With the improvement in the quality of foodstuffs, however, dysentery no longer remains a problem.

Sub-human conditions of living have driven the coalfields labour to a fatalistic callousness towards all the cherished ideals of morality and social life. Venereal diseases are the result. The Government figure for the number of cases reported in Jharia in 1938 was 400. But, it was admitted "Not much reliance can be placed on these figures, as concealing of venereal diseases is as bad here as anywhere else in India" (Report of Jharia Mines Board of Health for 1939-40). Owing to the rapid pauperisation of workers under war-time conditions the actual number of cases has increased considerably. Our recent survey, carried out in the 'dhowrah' belonging to five collieries, reveals that as much as 20% of the 'dhowrah' population is affected by the one or the other of the venereal diseases. In Bermo about 500 Gorakhpuri labour left the coalfield after having worked there for 4 months. When they came they were quite healthy. But their good earnings on the one hand and easy morals in the coalfield gave them the most serious type of venereal diseases. Dr. Seth is right when he says, "Womanhood is being dishonoured, widowhood is being exploited and girlhood is being nipped in the bud in the coalfields of India."

LIQUOR CONSUMPTION

Consumption of liquor, both by male and female workers, is a widespread and chronic evil in the coalfields. Its extent can be very well judged by reference to the excise revenues of the Behar Government. Before the introduction of prohibition by the Congress Ministry the revenues from the colliery areas of Jharia alone amounted to about 14 lakhs of rupees per year. Prohibition has now been withdrawn and the total receipts under the head of Excise from all the coalfields of Behar taken together now amount to about Rs. 30 lakhs out of the total of Rs. 75 lakhs for the entire province.

This huge consumption of liquor forms the main plank of the contention of the owners that if any increase in wages is given to the worker, he will squander it in drink, thus adversely affecting coal production. So don't give him any wage-increases ! The real reason, however, lies elsewhere. The physical strain is so hard and his living conditions so abnormally low that he finds in liquor the only means of escape from horrible physical and mental worries. The problem of the eradication of the drink evil is, therefore, the problem of uplifting and rehabilitating this sub-human strata of humanity. The Government, however, views the question from its own angle, and the millions in the coalfields are expected to be grateful to the present Governor of Behar for his reference to them in his recent speech at Ranchi : "I see no reason why the working man should be denied the solace of an occasional drink, while his more fortunate fellows can get all they want if they so desire."

INDEBTEDNESS

A close enquiry into the extent of indebtedness among the workers in the collieries of Giridih reveals that at present at least 70% to 80% of them, most of whom are lower-paid employees, are in debt. In the pre-war days the *Permanent* debts of these workers constituted about 40% of their total monthly earnings. These have now increased by about 100% over the pre-war level. The rate of interest charged is on the average As. 2 per rupee per week. In exceptional cases it goes up to As. 4.

If this is the condition of Giridih workers, who are economically better off than Jharia workers, the extent of indebtedness in the coalfields of Jharia can well be imagined.

SECTION III

GOVERNMENT MEASURES

The measures the Central Government have adopted during the last 4 months as part of their all-India Coal Plan, for the purpose of organising effective production and distribution of coal may be summed up under the following heads :

MEASURES FOR GIVING INCENTIVE TO THE OWNERS

In addition to the production bonus already granted to the owners free of EPT on all output above the scheduled target figure for each colliery, the following concessions have been recently given to the owners (reported in the *Capital* of July 27, '44) :

1. The price paid to them for the different varieties of coal will be substantially increased over the existing level.

2. In calculating the income-tax and super-tax paid by the owners a margin of 50% per cent more over the present level will be given on account of the losses, depreciation and damages to colliery properties.

3. New machinery will be imported from abroad and supplied to the owners on the basis of hire by payment of interest and depreciation charges or on the basis of purchase with interest-free Government loans.

MEASURES FOR GUARANTEEING AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF LABOUR

Apart from the grant of D.A., ration and cash bonus with a view to prevent the migration of labour from the coalfields, the Government have taken the following steps to improve the labour position :

1. Import of large numbers of Gorakhpuri labour. It is planned to flood the coalfields with about 40,000 imported labour by the end of December 1944.

2. Import of 1,500 labour from the Kolar Gold mines. It is planned to bring all the Gold mines workers who have been thrown out of work due to the recent accident in these mines.

3. The formation of a Labour Corps from the convict population of the various jails of Behar is under consideration of the Government of Behar, as revealed in the letter written by their Judicial Secretary to the All-India Trade Union Congress.

MEASURES TO CONTROL THE PRICE DISTRIBUTION AND RATIONING OF COAL

By a notification dated June 1, 1944, the Central Government fixed the following maximum prices at which coal may be sold by colliery owners on or after that date :

1. Bengal and Behar coals	Rs. 10 to Rs. 13	per ton.
2. C. P. and Berar coals	Rs. 11	per ton.
3. Baluchistan coals	Rs. 29-12	per ton.
4. Punjab coals	Rs. 22	per ton.
5. Assam coals	Rs. 33-8	per ton.
6. Orissa coals	Rs. 11	per ton.

If we take one specific case, the price-increase of Bengal and Behar coals has been over 100% above the 1939 level.

The Government have taken over the entire distribution of coal through the Coal Commissioner.

An Ordinance promulgated by the Central Government on August 25 last has enforced the levy of a cess not exceeding Rs. 1-4 per ton on all coal produced in British India or imported from abroad or Indian States. The proceeds of the cess will constitute the Coal Production Fund to finance activities for the improvement of production, marketing and distribution of coal.

MEASURES FOR SUPPLY OF WAGONS

These have been already dealt with under "Shortage and mismanagement of transport" above.

MEASURES FOR FUEL ECONOMY

The Railway Board's plan of 7% fuel economy has been already discussed in Section I above.

MEASURES FOR STRENGTHENING THE COAL CONTROL MACHINERY

Details are now available of the organisation which has been set up under the Supply Department, Government of India, to deal with questions pertaining to the production and distribution of coal. Under the new administrative scheme the Coal Commissioner's organisation has been expanded with the appointment of two Deputy Coal Commissioners, one dealing with production and the other with distribution, and six Regional Coal Controllers, who will be the chief executive officers of the Coal Commissioner's organisation in the coal-mining areas of Bengal, Behar, the Punjab, Baluchistan, Assam, C.P. and Talcher. Their duties include ascertaining from the collieries within their areas their essential requirements of colliery stores, bringing to the notice of the

Coal Commissioner problems such as shortages of labour and transportation difficulties, and suggesting measures likely to improve production.

A news item under the caption "Europeanising coal organisation" appeared in the *Searchlight* of August 1, 1944 from its New Delhi Special Correspondent to the effect: "It is gathered that the new Coal Commissioner, Mr. P. C. Young, who has been brought out from England, has already made seven top appointments in his organisation, of which six have been given to Europeans. The only appointment of an Indian and that too 'for the time being' is that of the Deputy Coal Commissioner, Distribution. Khan Bahadur Faruque, a former Coal Commissioner had perhaps to be retained for some time because of his experience and because he enjoyed the confidence of Indian commercial opinion. The staff has a substantial proportion of Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Whether India's coal shortage is removed or not, Mr. Young has, it appears, been given a free hand to appoint officers of his own choice."

SECTION IV

THE WAY OUT

The measures that have to be adopted immediately for solving the coal crisis are :

I. OVERHAUL THE COAL CONTROL SCHEME

The Coal Control Board must be reorganised on the basis of an adequate representation of labour and consumers.

Step up the production of colliery equipment and plants and arrange for their proper distribution in co-operation with labour.

Eliminate the bottle-necks and delays in the movement of transport with the active co-operation of railwaymen.

Plan an all-India fuel economy drive with the fullest joint co-operation of employers, workers and public.

Re-impose the ban on the employment of women underground.

Rationalise the handling of tubs through the following measures : (1) Standardisation of weights (2) Quick repairs (3) Pooling and adjustment (4) Stepping up production, and arranging proper distribution of iron sheets.

II. IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF WORKERS

Raise colliery labour from the sub-human conditions of life and work by the immediate adoption of the following measures :

- (1) Implement all the decisions of the Dhanbad Conference.
- (2) Introduce total family rationing.
- (3) Raise the minimum basic wage to As. 8 per attendance plus Re. 1 per ton.
- (4) Pay As. 4 per attendance to all underground workers as Underground Allowance.
- (5) Supply all essential commodities at cost price.
- (6) Abolish "Raising Contractors" system.
- (7) Enforce the Payment of Wages Act.
- (8) Establish a Labour Exchange.
- (9) Start immediately welfare measures regarding proper medical aid, housing and education. Reorganise the Welfare Advisory Committee by the inclusion of an adequate number of labour representatives.
- (10) Establish Joint Production Committees, in co-operation with labour.
- (11) Withdraw restrictions upon civil liberties, recognise the Coal Trade Unions and enlist their fullest co-operation.

Labour Housing in Cawnpore

BY A RESEARCH STUDENT

THE WAR HAS DEMONSTRATED AS NEVER BEFORE THE GRAVE DEFICIENCY of the housing accommodation at Cawnpore. Even before the War the housing standard of that city, the industrial capital of the United Provinces, was among the lowest in India, which meant that it was among the lowest in the world. It was stated in the year 1908 by the then Collector of Cawnpore that the 'city of Cawnpore is the most congested in the Province,' that almost the whole population lived within an area of about one square mile. And with the opening of the present century far-reaching changes

have taken place in our social and economic life. The period between the two World Wars has witnessed the romantic rise of Cawnpore. From being a group of rural villages prior to 1878, Cawnpore has gradually reached the pinnacle of industrial progress and to-day is the industrial workshop of Northern India. An important feature of this development has been the deepening and extension of the process of urbanisation in Cawnpore which has raised acute social problems of congestion and maldistribution of population. No real attention has ever been paid to the problem of town-planning and housing with the result that the whole of Cawnpore can be described 'as one large slum with overcrowded, haphazardly built houses and buildings, and like an unsightly octopus its tentacles are growing and spreading with an alarming fecundity.' The Viceroy, declaring open the Hallett Hospital in Cawnpore, the other day, referred to the problem of industrialisation and gave a stern warning about the great danger of slums in terms of infant mortality, disease and misery. We are also told that a committee appointed by the U.P. Government have drafted a report on the housing conditions in Cawnpore.

For the city of Cawnpore, ill-conceived and misbegotten as it was, the war has brought about unforeseen and undreamt of changes in the labour population. By giving a fillip to the growth and expansion of industries it has resulted in a large movement of fluid masses of labour from the field to the factory as will be evident, from the figures given below :

Year	Average number of daily workers	
1931 34,430
1933 37,808
1935 46,680
1937 56,359
1939 56,280
1941 1,52,000
1944 2,00,000 (estimated)

This huge influx of population has resulted in the additional disadvantages of unsightly residential areas, soar-house-rents, scarcity of drinking water, paucity of foodstuffs and lack of conveyances. Anybody who has had first-hand acquaintance with the city will bear out the statement that the landlords are taking

advantage of the situation inspite of the Defence of India Rules.

Enquiries were recently made from 32 leading factories of Cawnpore about the number of workmen employed and the extent of housing accommodation provided for them. The figures collected show that about 66,000 workmen were employed in these factories in normal times. The number employed at present due to expansion on account of war supply work is about 120,000. Out of this only 6,465 workmen are housed in mill settlements, and 4,000 quarters for the workmen employed in the Government Ordnance Factories are under construction. According to a pre-war estimate only 7 per cent. of the entire labour force in Cawnpore could be accommodated in the mill settlements. But, today, with the establishment of new industrial undertakings and the expansion of labour population, the percentage of labour force housed in mill settlements must be very much smaller. 'It is to be regretted', according to the Cawnpore Improvement Trust's Report, 'that excepting a few mills no other concerns have yet taken effective steps to provide sanitary dwellings for their workmen.'

Most of these workers, therefore, (roughly about 41,000 families or about 1,42,000 persons), have to live in slums better known as *ahatas* and *bustees* numbering about 200 and comprising practically three-fourths of the area of Cawnpore. To these may also be added a large number of temporary huts recently set up by private individuals. There are many street-dwellers who are found crowding in cellars, godowns, public buildings and even under bridges and culverts. It has been estimated that there is shortage of accommodation for more than 1½ lakh of persons in Cawnpore. The extent of labour housing in private *bustees* and *ahatas* has gone up from 85 per cent. (pre-war estimate) to about 95 per cent. in these days.

Labour *bustees* in Cawnpore consist of small dingy rooms and jerry-built houses. Because of spatial limitation for the working class near about the factory premises, housing condition is perhaps the worst. The average floor space and number of rooms per family among the great majority of the workers is definitely below the minimum requirements of sanitation and healthy family life. "The space within each tenement where the worker with his family lives, often numbering 8 to 10 persons," observe the Cawnpore Labour Enquiry Committee, "is smaller than the space we usually have in our bath-rooms. An animal, specially if it be a horse or a cow, is given more room than the poor worker." The model dimensions of the rooms are 11' x 9' x 11'; or about 100 sq.

ft. in area and about 1,000 cubic ft. in space. Majority of these rooms have only one door each. In two-room tenements, generally, the only door is a common door, while ventilation arrangement in workmen's quarters does not exist. Seventy-five per cent. of these rooms have *kachcha* floors but 76 per cent. have *pucca* walls. In some cases the height inside the quarters is so low that the workers have to lower the ground floor by three to four feet in order to enable them to stand erect inside the quarter. According to a pre-war estimate the roof was *pucca* in 40 per cent. dwellings and tiled or tinned in 32 per cent. quarters. A recent investigation of 100 dwellings has shown the following results :

	Dwellings	
<i>Kachcha</i> 29
<i>Kachcha-pucca</i> 41
<i>Pucca</i> 30
		100
Total 100

Thus, it will be seen that workmen's quarters are largely *kachcha-pucca*. In many cases courtyards and verandahs are not to be found and where they occur the model size of verandah is 11 ft. by 7 ft. or about 80 sq. ft. in area and the area of courtyards about 142 sq. ft. A pre-war survey of housing conditions in Cawnpore, according to accommodation available, shows the following percentage distribution of families : (See table on P. 113).

Dwellings with	One-room with		Two-rooms with		Three-rooms with		Four-rooms with		Total with	
	No court-yard	One court-yard	No court-yard	One court-yard	No court-yard	One court-yard	No court-yard	One court-yard	No court-yard	One court-yard
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Room, or rooms alone	23.15	3.80	20.68	4.36	1.14	.28	.38	..	45.35	8.44
Room, or rooms with 1 verandah	26.38	11.10	3.80	2.56	.47	.76	..	..	30.65	14.90
Room, or rooms with 2 verandahs	..	.19	.19	..	..	.09	..	.47	.19	.28
Room, or rooms with 3 verandahs	..	.09	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.09
Room, or rooms with 4 verandahs	..	..	.09	..	..	..	..	..	.09	..
All dwellings	49.53	15.18	24.76	6.92	1.61	1.14	.38	.47	76.28	23.72

As will be seen from the above table 64.71 per cent. of the families lived in one-room tenements, having the least space per person available. But in the last few years, under the war-stress, there has been greater concentration of working class families in the single-room tenements, the percentage rising up to 76.

Apart from these deficiencies in regard to the requirements of modern housing, i.e., bad structural conditions and lack of space and privacy, shortage of latrines, scarcity of water supply, and general insanitary conditions also account for evil effects of housing on the industrial workers of Cawnpore. In the pre-war period latrine arrangements did not exist for 26 per cent. families, while only 19 per cent. had private latrines, the rest used public latrines, each of which had an average pressure of 299 families or 761 persons. Only about 1/4 of these had flush system while only one cleaning was reported per day in 45 per cent. cases. In Ranjitpurwa locality scavengers seldom visit with the result that human excreta and domestic refuse are usually thrown in the *nala*. The worst feature to be noticed during the War is that many latrines have been converted into workmen's quarters to fetch high rent. This has further reduced the number of latrines in Cawnpore. A great difficulty is also experienced by the

workers in regard to water supply. The scarcity of water supply compels them to make use of the ordinary surface tank, pond or stream in Deputy-ka-para or Chamangunj which causes frequent outbreaks of dysentery and other ailments. The drainage system is always in a hopeless condition. Breaches in the main drainage are often reported causing overflow of water.

If such is the condition of labour housing in Cawnpore, it is no wonder that the constant rains during September-October, 1944, have been responsible for the collapse of hundreds of *kachcha* houses. In Darshanpurwa, houses collapsed one midnight and some persons died on the spot. No less than ten persons occupied each such rickety house. Hundreds of tenements thus became unserviceable and hundreds of tenants were wandering homeless. Due to non-availability of building and repairing materials, many employers have put up temporary huts to fetch high rents.

The great bulk of the labour force live in single-room tenements.* The average number of persons per room in one-room quarters is as follows :

In Bombay	4.03
.. Glasgow	3.25
.. Cawnpore	3.2
.. Edinburgh	2.5
.. New York	1.5

Thus in Cawnpore both density and overcrowding had reached appalling figures in the pre-war period. The density of occupation per acre in Cawnpore increased from 485 in 1921 to 512 in 1931, while in London and Liverpool it came down to 58.7 and 34.5 respectively from 59.9 and 37.8 during the same period. In Manchester and Sheffield it came down to as low as 28 and 15. In Cawnpore, to-day, on an average 35 people are living per each house, while in certain houses, generally medium size, more than 83 persons are living per house. In important labour localities as many as 12 to 16 persons are living in a single room which is hardly 9 ft. by 6 ft. This shows not only the increase in overcrowding but also intensity of overcrowding. In the pre-war

*Taking the pre-war figures into account we find that of the total population of Bombay 74 per cent. live in one-room tenements, 66 per cent. in Cawnpore, 50 per cent. in Nagpur, and 53 per cent. in Karachi as against 13 per cent in Glasgow, 9 per cent in Dundee, 6 per cent. in London and 5 per cent. in Edinburgh.

period in Cawnpore 47 per cent. families and 69 per cent occupants lived in overcrowded dwellings. But today as high as 60 per cent. families and 85 per cent. occupants live in overcrowded quarters. As the wartime overcrowding in Cawnpore cannot be compared with peacetime overcrowding in other centres only pre-war figures are being taken into consideration. Even then it will be seen that overcrowding in Cawnpore is quite alarming :

Area	Number of overcrowded families per hundred	
Cawnpore 47
Halifax 5.2
York 2.4
Northampton8

What a painful contrast ! Overcrowding in Cawnpore is unparalleled. It is a blot on civilization that workers in Cawnpore should be doomed to live in dirt, disease and squalor, 'darkening the sunshine of the world's health and prosperity by serving as a reservoir of diseases, plagues and epidemics.' The sad and harsh memory of their grim poverty reflected in extremely overcrowded and unhygienic conditions of living, lack of privacy and ordinary family life will go down to several generations as one of the darkest pages in the history of our modern civilization. Considering the phenomenal expansion of population in Cawnpore, one is not very sure if the recent opening of the Hallett Hospital there would serve the needs of the entire community.

Modern Bengali Poetry

BY DEVIPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAYA

I

ONE MAY FIX A CERTAIN DATE AND CALL EVERYTHING AFTER THAT *modern*. But chronology by itself is deceptive because it is arbitrary. It is, therefore, honest to start with some specific literary movement to which if a poem conforms it has to be acknowledged as modern. This essay reviews such a movement. The poets

discussed are taken as illustrations of that movement. History repeatedly proves that poets and writers do not shine individually : the more significant among them have affiliations, conscious or unconscious, with some specific literary movement. Poets are not queer creatures living in empty space with no before and after and drawing inspiration from nowhere. They are human beings and, as such, members of some specific society. The problems they have to face as human beings are by no means private and exclusive ; these arise out of their space-time context. History presents the significant poets of the same generation in bunches. They may have minor differences ; nevertheless they form a group, each trying to solve the same, or similar, problems in his own way. It is difficult for the poet to remain significant and yet to remain outside the movement that characterises his age.

II

What is then the specific problem the modern poets of Bengal are facing and the facing of which really makes them modern ? Appreciation of this presupposes a preliminary acquaintance with the history of Bengali literature.

Poetry in Bengal has a tradition older than that of prose. Prose proper emerged with the impact of the West, but by this time poetry was already mature and profuse. Beginning with the Buddhistic age in the form of *Dohas* and songs it completed its first phase in Bharatchandra (18th Century A.D.). Besides the verse-versions of the epics it had by this time already accumulated a rich treasure of popular songs and ballads, Vaisnava lyrics and conventional court-poetry based upon the mythology and customs of the country. In spite of the not infrequent love for rhetoric—an influence of the sophisticated Sanskrit tradition too powerful to be ignored—the poets of this period revealed an idyllic simplicity and an ethico-religious romanticism. Eroticism and mysticism bordered on each other, religion and ritual were hardly to be distinguished. The *Upanisads* and *Puranas*, popularised and absorbed by the common people found their way into the poetry of this age. All these, and the peculiar vitality of the more significant poets of this time, are evidence that the culture had a mass basis. Poetry of that time, it may sound strange to us today, enjoyed popularity even among the simple villagers. Not only was it sung and recited in open gatherings (as, in *kathakathas*, *jatras* and the Verbal Duels of the poets) but it also formed an essential item in rituals and

religious ceremonies. The masses reacted to poetry and the very theme of poetry was borrowed from the popular lore ; Chandi, Manasa and similar other deities are deities of the masses. Even Siva, Kali, Narayana etc., the aristocratic deities, when they appeared in poetry, underwent a transformation in which they lost much of their aristocratic (Sanskritic) association. The pre-British Bengali poetry may seem perverted to us now and indeed was at times conventional ; but it had a mass basis.

Then came the impact of the West and with it the birth of a new civilization, a thorough reshuffling of the basic social system. From the decay of feudalism India woke up into a brighter and mightier civilisation. But bourgeois civilisation in India, and therefore in Bengal, had its own peculiarities. These are important, for they explain the change of attitude of the writers of the new generations.

First, it was not a natural growth from within but something imposed from outside. And the land from which it was imported was itself witnessing the decay of its historic mission : for Europe was then already making a transition towards parasitic imperialism. These two characteristics made it complicated, involving actions and reactions of heterogeneous forces. It looked like a consumptive child—thrown into unfamiliar surroundings. However, though morbid, even such a child had its growth. For, when all is said, bourgeois civilization was a tremendous force, causing a revolution in India comparable only to the invasion of the Aryans centuries ago. But this progress was not healthy and normal. It resembled rather the path curved by a delirious neurotic marching forward—neurotic, because full of conflicts and complexes in an unhealthy body.

To enumerate these conflicts in outline : the foreign bourgeoisie was faced with a double demand. They had to bring progress into India, or else they would not find their market, especially for their machine made products. Yet, they could not industrialise India because that meant keener competition with the Indian capitalists themselves. The Indian bourgeoisie, too, had to face a similar conflict : they had to make an alliance with the invading capitalists in order to fight on the one hand the reactionary elements (the feudal lords and the religious monopolists), and on the other hand the progressive forces (peasants and more particularly the growing proletariat). Yet, and that was the paradox, they had to fight the foreign bourgeoisie in order to

get a market for themselves. And, in order to fight foreign capital they had to make an alliance with the people, the peasants and even the proletariat itself. The economic and political consequences are well known. What directly interests us here¹ is the cultural reflexion of these social forces. The mind of the growing middle-class became the scene of a peculiar drama. There was, on the one hand, the glamour of Western civilisation with all that it stood for : romantic optimism, Positivism, Rationalism,¹ Utilitarianism, Rousseau with his conception of freedom as personal emancipation, Hegel and his demonic Absolutism—and the struggle against the relics of feudal ignorance and superstition and the march towards enlightenment. On the other hand, there was a deep nationalist feeling, reverence for the Upanisads and the Geeta, religious sentiment and the sentimental sympathy for the peasants and the poor, glamour of the feudal lords, renaissance of the Sanskrit culture, and so on. Michael Madhusudan Dutta, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Kaliprasanna Sinha, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Tek Chand Thakur, Iswar Chandra Gupta, Dinabandhu Mitra and others, studied properly, reveal all these tendencies, though some of them lean to one side, some to the other.

The logical culmination of all these forces was found in Rabindranath Tagore. But one must be very cautious here against simple generalisation. For, not only was his individual genius too great to lend itself to simple categories, but his career as a poet was unusually long and unusually active. He lived through a variety of literary (and social) movements, initiated many and excelled in most. But in spite of all these, if a simple sketch of the pattern of his mind is at all possible it must be characterised as the mind of the rising bourgeoisie within a colony. This is no criticism but a simple statement of a complex fact. His aesthetical romanticism which sometimes amounted to puritanism, his endeavour after personal emancipation, his bitter fight against superstition, nationalism, Hegelianism, his unusual literary vitality and infinite optimism, are evidence of this. Only, one should remember that such categories cannot exhaust his individual genius. One should further remember his overwhelmingly dynamic personality.

But the case of the group of minor poets that next came onto the scene—if not chronologically, at least logically—was entirely different. They were poets of mediocre calibre with nothing extraordinary to inspire them and little that can be characterised as

strength of personality. Their products were sentimental pseudo-romantic subjects garbed in the appropriate technique of loose and unintelligent versification. Satyendranath Datta and Sukumar Roy, both of whom died young, were perhaps the only two exceptions; but, then, both deviated from the usual track. Datta seemed to play with rhyme and rhythm, Roy with juvenile nonsense. The only poetic ideal the others could formulate was trying to reflect back the genius of Tagore. But if the mirror is not clear enough, the reflexion itself appears distorted and uncouth. To retain individuality by the side of a personality as that of Tagore was by itself a tremendous proposition. But there was something more to be observed. Society at this time seemed to be full of a happy-go-lucky prosperity with nothing to damp one's spirit and nothing again to inspire one to great ideals. The man of mediocre education could become a decent clerk, those of slightly better calibre easily became munsiffs and sub-deputies and for the well educated Indian Civil Service was not too much to expect. There was contentment in society—there was a stale happiness, a colourless prosperity, a sort of middle-class heaven—perhaps the maximum pleasure the middle-class could enjoy under the colonial limitation. But then, under such self-satisfied social conditions, there remained little scope for initiative and enterprise. To follow the footsteps of Tagore demanded no exertion. But the poets did not realise that the values which were real to Tagore—real because deliberately worked out—had become unreal for them.

Practically no protest came from the readers. For, to them, reading poetry was but killing time. They did not want to exercise their intellect. The lullaby of cheap rhythm was perfectly suited to their drowsy temperament.

The indifference of the more honest readers may be explained more sympathetically. The literary atmosphere of Bengal was then saturated with Tagore and even a shallow imitation recalled rich associations. The more honest readers were moved by those associations rather than by the success of the imitation. Only their easygoing minds were not sufficiently discriminating. They characterised the cheap imitations of Tagore as being in the Tagore tradition because they did not pause to think what was really meant by that tradition.

III

Our story begins at this point. For our modern poetry, in spite of its manifold variety, is characterised by one central literary movement, viz. a revolt against this situation. Three poets heralded this revolt—Jatin Sen Gupta, Mohitlal Mazumdar and Nazrul Islam. The methods of each were individual—Sen Gupta was subtle and satirical, Mohitlal somewhat theatrically ran after a Sanskrit rigidity of rhetoric, and Nazrul was loud, direct and openly revolutionary. There is of course no denying that they had much of the Tagorite tradition in them, for Tagore to them was too near and too immense a personality. At the same time there was nothing that could be characterised as shallow imitation of Tagore: they were much too talented for that.

These three are succeeded by a group of young and fresh writers who promised Bengali poetry an absolutely new start. This group was constituted by Premendra Mitra, Achintya Sen Gupta, Buddadeva Bose, Jivanananda Das, etc; their platform was first "Kallol" then "Pragati", which were then the two progressive journals of Bengal.

Of these poets the case of Jivanananda Das was peculiar. He tried to get rid of shallow romanticism not by going against romanticism as his fellow poets (barring Ajit Datta perhaps) did but by going a step further forward in romanticism, i.e. towards what can perhaps be characterised as a loose kind of symbolism. His complicated medley of metaphors, his conscious striving after the musical effect in poetry, his intimately personal allusions—all these are points to be marked. Of course, Sudhindranath Datta and Bishnu Dey, coming after this group, added much polish to this tendency. Apart from him, the enthusiasm of this group was too robust to be restrained within the limits of logic, and they usually indulged in extremism. To denounce the futile and foolish imitations of Tagore, they, at least one of their leaders, denounced Tagore himself. They came to admire the new pathways in poetry opened by Jatin Sen Gupta, Mohitlal Mozumdar and Nazrul Islam. But their praise was as extravagant as their blame. And someone even claimed that Rabindranath had not the fraction of the genius possessed by Jatin Sen Gupta. Nazrul, both in life and in literature, was simply a living idol to them. Mutual admiration of a hyperbolic nature was not infrequent. Mohitlal gradually came to have a few admirers among them for they were practically absorbed in a sentimental revolt against the

current content of poetry and cared comparatively little for the form. Apart from Jatin Sen Gupta and Nazrul Islam, and the earlier Govinda Chandra Das, their source of inspiration was foreign literature : Pre-20th Century Russian authors and Whitman, Lawrence, Huxley, Shaw and so on. To purge poetry of Tagorite puritanism they deliberately insisted on the vulgar and the ugly. The upper middle-class did not interest them ; they meant to explore the lower strata of society. They tried to retain " a realistic attitude." They boasted of disillusionment. All this repelled the readers and the only appreciation they popularly received was the title " The Young Devils."

The fundamental change in the economic, and therefore social, life of Bengal must be taken note of. Otherwise the revolt of the Kallol-Pragati group remains unexplained. This can roughly be traced to the years following the last Great War. The bourgeois civilization in India has yet to achieve " great wonders." But, then, it is a consumptive child, and unless its real disease—the colonial limitations—is cured, it is bound to manifest symptoms of premature decay. These actually came to Bengal after the last Great War, though it was only after the passage of a few more years that the symptoms became actually acute. The economic causes which explain the new attitude in Bengali poetry seem further to explain the following facts (1) the first major political movement of the Indian National Congress and (2) two very remarkable points about Tagore viz, (a) his deliberate acceptance of the prose technique in his poetry and (b) the unrestrained fancy in his paintings. Both these point to the decay of the bourgeois values—unconsciously admitted by the great bourgeois-poet himself. He himself explains his adoption of the prose-technique in poetry as sympathy for the lower-middle-class and peasant ideology—the language of the poor rather than past grandeur, as he himself said in the opening poem of his *Punascha*. In his paintings he seemed to be more desperate. There he demolished the bourgeois values openly and deliberately. He could not perhaps be so bold in his poetry because of his long-drawn love for the romantic. Ceaseless practice for years is likely to form a habit and to go against habit is not a simple proposition. Jamini Roy, from the point of view of content, seems to work out a somewhat similar ideal. He, of course, differs from Tagore in his obvious command over technique. The days of happy-go-lucky prosperity were over : unemployment and economic depression had come to stay. And the poets too, refused to echo

the traditional worship of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. The values uncritically accepted by the previous generation proved hollow and meaningless. There was a distinct crisis in society and its reflexion in literature was acute.

But then, as I have already said, it was not an organised and conscious revolt. Its only strength was its emotion. The real task, therefore, remained unaccomplished. The point was to rectify shallow and soft pseudo-romanticism, the vulgar imitation of Tagore. This could have been achieved only through a thorough revision of content and form, by expressing well-thought-out problems through masculine rigidity. But the poets failed. Their competition in being anti-puritan was pointless, their effort at being realistic was blurred by sentimentality, their internationalism (expressed behind their tendency to gather inspiration from foreign literature) was vague, unconscious and undefined. Yet, when all is said, the fact remains that there was change in social adjustments and the poets, too, refused to be satisfied without anything short of a thorough change. Their very negativism was full of significance.

However, within a strangely short period, the British bourgeoisie recovered from the shell-shock of the last Great War. A patch-up was effected and temporary peace restored. India, since it is unfortunately only a colony, experienced similar things. In Bengal, therefore soon came a sense of security, however hollow and transitory it ultimately proved to be. The cultural reflexion of this is to be found in the poems of Sudhindranath Datta and Bishnu Dey; both possessed rich scholarship, powerful personality and definite poetical power. But, in spite of the sense of security, they could not go back to the old order, for the old order had been mercilessly exposed. They, therefore, assumed the role of reformers: they were as much opposed to the loose sentimentality of the pseudo-romantics as they were to the recklessly emotional revolt of the Pragat-Kallol Group. Poetic emotion must be logical, coherent and compact. They drew upon their vast scholarship—evidently inspired by T. S. Elliot—to lend the lost backbone to Bengali poetry. They used old Sanskritic words and extensive literary psychological allusions. Reading of poetry now became a difficult task; it needed concentration, it needed intellect and it needed scholarship. The popular reaction was not favourable. The poets were usually referred to as “the Obscures.”

Amiya Chakravarty, in a sense, has affiliations with this group.

The connection is of course not historical but temperamental. For, as a matter of fact, he came back to Bengali poetry as a considerable poet at a later period. But, in many important points, his poetry resembled the poetry of Sudhindranath Dutta and Bishnu Dey. Not that he was fond of using difficult and Sanskritic words, not that he frequently indulged in scholarly associations familiar or unfamiliar, but, from the point of view of technique, he had broad resemblances with them. For, the central effort of Bishnu Dey and Sudhindranath Dutta may be characterised as, striving after condensation, the creation of maximum effect within a minimum space. Amiya Chakravarty, too, had this aim. The means he used to achieve this condensation were of course different—whereas the other two poets drew upon their scholarship, Amiya Chakravarty relied more upon very delicate and deep suggestions. Every word, before being used, must be weighed—and where only the half of a phrase will do he is never to use the complete phrase. Again, like Sudhin Dutta and Bishnu Dey he concentrates on producing a musical effect. On the side of the content he is not of course concerned either with scholarly solidity or with logical coherence : he seems rather to be interested in giving a subtle shock to the readers by bringing in points which cannot be anticipated or by mentioning the sublime and the insignificant in the same breath. On the positive side he seems to be interested in a very refined metaphysics, expressed through fragments of imagery, Eastern and Western.

I have discussed Amiya Chakravarty with Bishnu Dey and Sudhindranath Dutta because I think he fits in with this group temperamentally though not chronologically. This group, though it revealed signs of temporary contentment, could not rouse favourable response in the readers, because of the decay of the middle-class civilization. The Radio and the Gramophone and the Cinema, where entertainment could be obtained without exertion, were moreover rivals of poetry, and poetry was outwitted. The natural consequence, as in the West, to borrow Caudwell's very significant words, is "skill fetishism." The poets were gradually withdrawing into their private worlds and absorbed in work too subtle and private to be ordinarily understood. It may be psychologically described as some sort of Narcissism, and therefore a kind of perversion ; but then it has its historical explanation.

The temporary revival of Western Capitalism cracked in the thirties and the entire foundation of the present social system seemed to tremble. The reaction of the crisis in the West in time

came to India. The poets were bound to feel depressed. The older anti-Tagore group wanted to kill boredom in romantic escapism and Sudhindra Nath Dutta and Bishnu Dey formed a very small coterie round *Parichoy*, the cultural quarterly which was their organ, comparable to that of Mallarme and his symbolists, and went on writing self-conscious poetry.

But the prospect in neither direction was encouraging. Escapism in a desert atmosphere had only the mirage to live upon : and esoteric poetry, like Valery's snake trying to feed upon itself, could not live either. Two facts seem to substantiate this remark : Premendra Mitra and Sudhindra Nath Dutta, the two eminent poets of the two groups, ultimately got disgusted and practically gave up writing poetry.

What, then was to be done ? That was the problem of the younger generation. Fortunately, however, something really refreshing, something really inspiring came to them—Marxism.

It came to Bengal, sometime before this no doubt, and even then it was taking shape in the sphere of practice in the form of an infant political party. But the political history of Marxism from 1929 to 1935 was not so encouraging as to rouse inspiration in the poets. For up to 1935 Marxism was a sort of a private cult theoretically discussed in a rather private coterie of a few young enthusiasts ! The practical application of Marx's doctrine to the concrete political context of the country was properly attempted only in about 1935 when these young Marxists raised the slogan of United Front and laid the foundation of the Communist Party of India. Indian Marxism outgrew its infancy and acquired reality. It took a few more years for the poets to absorb this new idea and respond to it emotionally. But things were moving fast. Calcutta witnessed the Progressive Writers Conference in 1938, an event which however insignificant it might have been to established writers, had tremendous emotional significance for the youngest poets. Things were moving fast. Marxist books were smuggled, read and discussed by the new generation. Poems of Auden, Spender, Day Lewis were hailed not so much for their poetic excellence but because of their Marxist possibilities. All these, aided by the historical tendency itself, encouraged a few young poets to experiment in a new line. The names of Samar Sen and Subhas Mukherji are specially to be mentioned here. Both were remarkably fresh and remarkably young, Sen born in 1916 and Subhas in 1920. Samar Sen is essentially an intellectual and Subhas over-enthusiastic, direct and without vacillation. Thus Samar Sen

thought of the pros and cons, of the prospects as well as the difficulties of a new world, appealed to history and dreamt of the new order amidst the delirious vulgarities of his environment. Subhas had a robust imagination, he was straightforward and had little doubt. Both of them were keenly satirical of the present position but Samar Sen neither sings of the proletarian victory nor proposes an immediate May Day march. Doubt and vacillation, the characteristics of middle-class intelligentsia, seemed to obsess him throughout. This does not mean that Subhas was deliberately false. With his vitality, his fresh vigour and his youthfulness, he seemed to be carried away by the prospects of a new world. Vacillation was out of the question. Victory was certain. "History is on our side."

But how about that problem—the problem of demolishing decisively the pseudo-Tagorite type of poetry? New ideas alone cannot achieve it. It must be a total change of outlook, which includes within itself a revolution in form as well. Samar Sen therefore took up writing poems in prose. He is by no means the pioneer of this technique but he has used it in most effective manner. Subhas was rather in favour of revolutionary reorientation of the current form. within the traditionally accepted verse-pattern he worked out such highly interesting variations and daring but successful experiments that even the most reactionary minded critic was bound to acknowledge the gift of this "boy." Of course, it must be remembered, that the technical achievements of Sudhin Dutta and particularly of Bishnu Dey were of immense help to him in this matter.

I have mentioned only two poets here, for they were by far the most important representatives of this tendency. But there were many others who joined them and in modern Bengali poetry a solid leftist bloc was formed.

It is interesting to note that these new poets, generally speaking, first found shelter with Buddhadeva Bose. He not only started a poetry quarterly —KAVITA—as a platform for these new poets, not only was the first to acknowledge their talent, but himself all of a sudden became an extreme leftist. To have an author like Buddhadeva Bose would have proved an immense help to the new generation. But unfortunately it did not endure. He cooled down as rapidly as he was inspired. This is perhaps because of the emotional extravagance which characterises the Pragati-Kallol group. Communism is an objective attitude towards reality and can hardly be emotionally sustained. Buddhadeva

Bose soon quits Karl Marx and raises the slogan "Back to Tagore."

But there was something to compensate, and this is one of the most important literary events in recent Bengal. It is Bishnu Dey's development into Marxism. His growth of conviction took a long time no doubt. But, then, we have reasons to hope it to be stable and strong. An intellectual of his calibre cannot be expected to change overnight. He had too much to discuss with himself; too much to explain to himself. It is fortunate that after so much deliberation he did not, like Sudhindranath Dutta, decide to keep mum. Anyway, when the ends of his literary research were achieved he proved himself to be a great boon to the new generation. They found in him not only a well-read intellectual who could silence the opponent with scholarship and logic but also a powerful poet who could dispel the reactionary doubt concerning the effective transformation of the Marxist content into literature proper.

IV.

Our story does not end here. After a period of feverish leftism Bengali poetry today faces another crisis. The poets themselves realise something is lacking in them. And naturally so. Marxism is a matter of theory and practice. None of them is a worker. They come from middle-class families. On the negative side they can successfully expose the hollowness of the present order. Brilliant and successful satire is not rare. But on the positive, they seem to indulge only in dreams of the prosperous future. Subhas seems to realise this. He leaves poetry for the time being and goes to gather positive political experience. Most of the others are either gradually growing disinterested or saying something which has already been said before.

One is tempted to make a speculative digression here, a speculation concerning the future of Bengali poetry. There are at least three distinct directions of hope. First, if India is freed from her colonial limitation after this total war, something really inspiring may come to the poets. Secondly, if the present poets can be more intimate with the masses, their Marxism would gain in strength. Subhas, if he returns to literature wholeheartedly is likely to bring fresh enthusiasm. Lastly, if any new poet springs up from the proletariat itself he is sure to open new pathways. Considering the corruption of the present educational system, it is perhaps too much to expect this last alternative. But

none of these is impossible. May we not, therefore, expect much from Bengali poetry in the near future ?

Historic Documents

Soviet-Chinese Treaty

As already reported in the Soviet-Chinese communique of July 14 and August 15, in the period between June 30 and July 14 and, after the Berlin Conference, from August 7 to August 14, negotiations were held in Moscow between the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., J. V. Stalin and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., V. M. Molotov on the one hand and the President of the Executive Yuan of the Chinese Republic, T. V. Soong and Foreign Minister Wang Shih-chieh on the other.

Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., Lozovsky, and the U.S.S.R. Ambassador to China, Petrov, took part in the negotiations on the Soviet side, and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hu Shih-tse, Ambassador of the Chinese Republic to the U.S.S.R., Foo Ping-sheung, and M. Chiang Chin-kuo on the Chinese side.

The negotiations terminated in the signing on August 14 of a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Chinese Republic. Simultaneously there were signed :

An Agreement on the Chinese Changchun Railway (Chinese Eastern Railway) and South Manchuria Railway ;

An Agreement on Port Arthur ;

An Agreement on Port Dalny ;

An Agreement on Relations between the Soviet Commander-in-Chief and the Chinese administration after the entry of Soviet troops into the territory of the Three Eastern Provinces of China in connection with the present joint war against Japan.

In addition the Parties exchanged Notes on the independence of the Mongolian People's Republic and on rendering assistance to the Central Government of China,

*On China's sovereignty over Manchuria, and
On events in Sinkiang.*

The Treaty was signed in the Kremlin by authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. by People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V. M. Molotov, and by authorisation of the President of the Chinese Republic by Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Shih-chieh. Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., J. V. Stalin, was present at the signing of the Treaty and Agreements.

On August 24 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and the legislative Yuan of the Chinese Republic ratified the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance and those Agreements signed on August 14 which are subject to ratification.

The texts of the Treaty and the Agreements follow.

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AND THE CHINESE REPUBLIC

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic.

Desiring to strengthen the friendly relations which have always existed between the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic, by means of Alliance and good-neighbourly post-war collaboration :

Filled with the determination to render assistance to each other in the struggle against aggression on the part of the enemies of the United Nations in this World War and to collaborate in the common war against Japan until her unconditional surrender :

Expressing the unflinching desire to co-operate in the cause of the maintenance of peace and security for the good of the peoples of both countries and all peace-loving nations ;

Acting on the basis of the principles enunciated in the Joint Declaration of the United Nations of January 1, 1942, in the Four-Power Declaration signed in Moscow on October 13, 1943, and in the Charter of the International United Nations Organisation ;

Resolved to conclude with this purpose the present Treaty, and appointed as their Plenipotentiaries :

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—Vyacheslav Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R.,

The President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—Wang Shih-chieh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chinese Republic,

Who after exchange of their credentials, found in due form and good order, agreed on the following :

ARTICLE I

The High Contracting Parties undertake jointly with the other United Nations to prosecute the war against Japan until final victory. The High Contracting Parties undertake mutually to render each other all necessary military and other assistance and support in this war.

ARTICLE II

The High Contracting Parties undertake not to enter into separate negotiations with Japan and not to conclude without mutual consent an Armistice or Peace Treaty either with the present Japanese Government or with any other Government or organ of authority set up in Japan which will not clearly renounce all aggressive intentions.

ARTICLE III

The High Contracting Parties undertake after the termination of the war against Japan jointly to take all measures within their power to render impossible the repetition of aggression and violation of the peace by Japan. If one of the High Contracting Parties finds itself involved in hostilities against Japan as a result of the latter's attack on this Contracting Party, the other High Contracting Party will immediately render the Contracting Party involved in hostilities all military and other support and assistance with the means at its disposal. This Article remains in force until the time when at the request of both the High Contracting Parties responsibility for the prevention of further aggression on the part of Japan is placed in the United Nations organisation.

ARTICLE IV

Either of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to conclude any Alliance nor to take part in any coalition directed against the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE V

The High Contracting Parties, considering the interests of

the security and economic development of either of them, agree to work jointly in close and friendly collaboration after the coming of peace and to act in accordance with the principles of mutual respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE VI

The High Contracting Parties agree to render each other every possible economic assistance in the post-war period for the purpose of facilitating and accelerating the rehabilitation of both countries and to make their contribution to the cause of world prosperity.

ARTICLE VII

Nothing in the present Treaty should be interpreted in a way that would affect the rights and obligations of the High Contracting Parties as members of the United Nations Organisations.

ARTICLE VIII

The present Treaty is to be ratified within the shortest possible time. Exchange of ratification instruments shall be effected in Chungking as early as possible. The Treaty comes into force immediately upon its ratification and remains in force for thirty years. Unless either of the High Contracting Parties, one year before expiration of the term of the Treaty, gives notice of its desire to denounce it, the Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely and either of the High Contracting Parties can discontinue its operation by giving notice to this effect to the other Contracting Party one year in advance.

In testimony of which Plenipotentiaries signed the present Treaty and affixed their seals to it.

Done in Moscow on August 14, 1945, which corresponds to the 14th day of the month of August of the 34th year of the Chinese Republic, in two copies, each in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts having equal force.

Signed :

By authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.—V. M. MOLOTOV.

By authorisation of the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—WANG SHIH-CHIEH.

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
AND THE CHINESE REPUBLIC ON THE CHINESE
CHANGCHUN RAILWAY

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic, desiring to strengthen the friendly relations and economic ties between the two countries on the basis of full regard for the rights and interests of each of the Parties, agreed on the following :

ARTICLE I

After expulsion of the Japanese armed forces from the Three Eastern Provinces of China, the main trunk lines of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the South Manchurian Railway running from Manchuria Station to Pogranichnaya Station and from Harbin to Dalny and Port Arthur, united into a single Railway under the name of the "Chinese Changchun Railway," will become the common property of the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Republic and will be operated by them jointly. Only those lands and auxiliary railway spurs will be commonly owned and jointly operated which had been built by the Chinese Eastern Railway during Russian and joint Soviet-Chinese administration, also by the South Manchurian Railway in the period of Russian administration, which are destined to serve the direct needs of these railways, also auxiliary enterprises directly serving these railways and built in the above stated periods of time. All other railway spurs, auxiliary enterprises and lands will be fully owned by the Chinese Government. Joint operation of the above railways will be exercised by a single administration under Chinese sovereignty as a purely commercial transport enterprise.

ARTICLE II

The Contracting Parties agree that the right of common ownership of the above Railway belongs to both Parties equally, and should not be transferred either fully or in part.

ARTICLE III

For joint operation of the above Railway the Contracting Parties agree to found the Chinese-Soviet Society of the Chinese Changchun Railway ; a Board of Directors of 10 members to be

set up in the Society, five of whom are to be appointed by the Chinese Government and five by the Soviet Government. The Board of Directors will have its seat in the town of Changchun.

ARTICLE IV

From among the members of the Board of Directors—Chinese citizens—the Chinese Government appoints a President of the Board. The Soviet Government appoints from among the members of the Board of Directors—Soviet citizens—a Vice-President of the Board of Directors and an Assistant to the Vice-President of the Board of Directors. In passing decisions in the Board of Directors, the vote of the President of the Board of Directors is counted as two votes. Seven persons constitute a lawful quorum of the Board of Directors. All important questions on which the Board of Directors cannot reach agreement should be referred for consideration to the Governments of the Contracting Parties for equitable and friendly solution.

ARTICLE V

An Auditing Committee is to be set up with the Society, consisting of six members, whereof three are to be appointed by the Chinese Government and three by the Soviet Government. The Chairman of the Auditing Committee is to be elected from among the members—Soviet citizens, the Vice-Chairman from among the members—Chinese citizens. In passing decisions in the Auditing Committee the Chairman's vote is counted as two votes. Five persons constitute a lawful quorum of the Committee.

ARTICLE VI

For managing current affairs the Board of Directors appoints a Manager of the Chinese Changchun Railway from among citizens of the U.S.S.R. and a Deputy Manager from among citizens of the Chinese Republic.

ARTICLE VII

The Auditing Committee shall appoint a Chief Controller and his Deputy. The Chief Controller shall be appointed from among Chinese citizens, and his Deputy from among Soviet citizens.

ARTICLE VIII

The Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs of services and departments of the Railway, also the station-masters of big stations, shall be

appointed by the Board of Directors. The Manager of the Railway shall have the right to propose candidates to the above posts. Individual members of the Board of Directors also may propose candidates by agreement with the Manager of the Railway. In those cases when the Chief of a service or department is a Chinese citizen the Assistant Chief must be a Soviet citizen. In those cases when the Chief of a service or department is a Soviet citizen, the Assistant Chief must be a Chinese citizen. The Chiefs of services and departments and their assistants, also station-masters, shall be appointed from among Chinese and Soviet citizens on a parity basis.

ARTICLE IX

The Chinese Government bears the responsibility for the guarding of the Railway. For the purpose of guarding railway premises, equipment and other property, also to prevent destruction, loss or theft of transported goods, the Chinese Government shall set up and control railway police. At the same time the railway police must maintain common order on the railway. As to police duties in implementation of this Article, they shall be defined by the Chinese Government upon consultation with the Soviet Government.

ARTICLE X

Only in time of war with Japan may the railway be used for carrying Soviet troops. The Soviet Government is entitled to carry on the railway in transit without customs inspection military supplies in sealed cars which will be guarded by the railway police, and the Soviet Union shall not appoint its own armed escort.

ARTICLE XI

The Chinese Government shall not levy customs duties or any other taxes or dues upon goods carried along the railway in transit from one Soviet station to another, also from Soviet territory to Port Dalny or Port Arthur and back. Upon reaching Chinese territory such cargoes are subject to customs inspections.

ARTICLE XII

The Chinese Government undertakes fully to supply the coal requirements of the railway on the basis of a special Agreement.

ARTICLE XIII

The Chinese Government shall levy taxes on the railway just as on the Chinese State Railways.

ARTICLE XIV

The Contracting Parties agree to provide the Board of Directors of the Chinese Changchun Railway with working capital in a sum defined in the Charter of the Railway. The profits and losses from the operation of the Railway shall be shared by the Parties half and half.

ARTICLE XV

Within one month after the signing of the present Agreement the Contracting Parties shall appoint three representatives from each Party who shall work out in Chungking a Charter for joint operation of the Railway. Elaboration of the Charter should be completed within two months, after which it shall be submitted for approval to both Governments.

ARTICLE XVI

Property coming under common ownership of the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Republic and subject to joint operation in accordance with Article I of the present Agreement must be defined by a committee which is to be composed of three representatives from each Government. The above Committee must be set up in Chungking within one month after the signing of the present Agreement, and within three months after the beginning of the joint operation of the Railway the Committee must complete its work and submit its suggestion for approval to both Governments.

ARTICLE XVII

The present Agreement has been concluded for a term of thirty years. After the expiration of this term the Chinese Changchun Railway with all its property shall pass into the complete ownership of the Chinese Republic without any compensation.

ARTICLE XVIII

The present Agreement comes into force as from the day of its ratification.

Done in Moscow on August 14, 1945, which corresponds to

the 14th day of the month of August of the 34th year of the Chinese Republic, in two copies, each in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts having equal force.

Signed :

By authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.—V. M. MOLOTOV.

By authorisation of the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—WANG SHIH-CHIEH.

AGREEMENT ON PORT ARTHUR

The two Contracting Parties, in conformity with the Soviet-Chinese Treaty of Friendship and Alliance and as an addition to it, agreed on the following :

1. With a view to consolidation of the security of China and the U.S.S.R. and to prevention of a repetition of aggression on the part of Japan, the Government of the Chinese Republic agrees to joint use by both Contracting Parties of Port Arthur as a naval base.

2. The exact boundaries of the area of the naval base mentioned in the preceding Paragraph are defined by a description and map attached hereto.

3. The Contracting Parties have agreed to convert Port Arthur into a purely naval base open for use by warships and merchant vessels of China and the U.S.S.R. only. A Chinese-Soviet Military Commission shall be set up to take charge of problems of the joint use of the above naval base, composed of two Chinese and three Soviet representatives. The Chairman of the Commission shall be appointed by the Soviet side and the Vice-Chairman by the Chinese side.

4. The defence of the above naval base is entrusted by the Government of China to the Government of the U.S.S.R. For defence of the naval base the Government of the U.S.S.R. shall erect the needed installations there, expenses being borne by the Government of the U.S.S.R.

5. The civil administration in this area belongs to China, and in making appointments to the respective leading posts the Chinese Government shall take into account the interests of the U.S.S.R. in the given area. The civil administration in the town of Port Arthur shall be appointed and dismissed by the Chinese Government by arrangement with the Soviet Military Command.

Such suggestions as the Soviet Military Command in this area may make to the Chinese civil administration for the purpose of ensuring security and defence shall be satisfied by the above administration. In disputable cases the question shall be referred for consideration and decision to the Chinese-Soviet Military Commission.

6. The Soviet Government is entitled to maintain in the area stated in Paragraph 2 its military, naval and air forces and determine their disposition.

7. Simultaneously the Soviet Government is charged with the duty of setting up and maintaining lighthouses, a signal system and other equipment necessary for the safety of navigation in this area.

8. After the expiration of the term of the present Agreement all equipment and public property created by the U.S.S.R. in this area are to be transferred to the Chinese Government as the latter's property without any compensation.

9. This Agreement has been concluded for a term of thirty years. The Agreement comes into force on the day of its ratification.

In testimony of the above Plenipotentiaries signed the present Agreement and affixed their seals thereto.

Done in Moscow on August 14, 1945, which corresponds to the 14th day of the month of August of the 34th year of the Chinese Republic, in two copies, each in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts having equal force.

Signed :

By authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.—V. M. MOLOTOV.

By authorisation of the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—WANG SHIH-CHIEH.

AGREEMENT ON PORT DALNY

In view of the fact that a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance has been concluded between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Chinese Republic, also of the fact that the U.S.S.R. has guaranteed respect for China's sovereignty over the Three Eastern Provinces as an inseparable part of China, in order to ensure the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in Dalny as a port for imports and exports of commodities, the Chinese Republic hereby expresses its consent :

1. To proclaim Dalny a Free Port open to the trade and shipping of all countries.

2. The Chinese Government agrees to set aside for leasing to the U.S.S.R. piers and warehouses in the said Free Port on the basis of a separate Agreement.

3. Administration in Dalny will be exercised by China. The Chief of the Port shall be appointed from among Soviet citizens by the Manager of the Chinese Changchun Railway by agreement with the Mayor of the town of Dalny. The Assistant Chief of the port shall be appointed in the above way from among Chinese citizens.

4. In peace-time Dalny shall not be included in the sphere of operation of the regulations on the naval base contained in the Agreement on Port Arthur of August 14, 1945, and shall become subject to the military regime established in this zone only in the event of war with Japan.

5. Goods coming from abroad to this Free Port and transported over the Chinese Changchun Railway directly to U.S.S.R. territory, also goods coming from the U.S.S.R. over the above Railway through the Free Port for exports or materials and equipment for the port installations coming from the U.S.S.R., are exempted from customs duties. The above goods must be transported in sealed cars. Chinese import duties shall be levied on goods entering China through the Free Port. Goods exported from other parts of China to the Free Port are subject to export duties during the period while such continue to be levied in China.

6. The present Agreement has been concluded for a term of thirty years.

7. The present Agreement comes into force as from the day of its ratification.

In testimony of which Plenipotentiaries signed the present Agreement and affixed their seals thereto.

Done in Moscow on August 14, 1945, which corresponds to the 14th day of the month of August of the 34th year of the Chinese Republic, in two copies, each in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts having equal force.

Signed :

By authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.—V. M. MOLOTOV.

By authorisation of the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—WANG SHIH-CHIEH.

AGREEMENT
ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET COMMANDER-
IN-CHIEF AND THE CHINESE ADMINISTRATION
AFTER THE ENTRY OF SOVIET TROOPS INTO
THE TERRITORY OF THE THREE EASTERN
PROVINCES OF CHINA IN CONNEC-
TION WITH THE PRESENT JOINT
WAR AGAINST JAPAN

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic.

Desiring that after the entry of Soviet troops into the territory of the Three Eastern Provinces of China, in connection with the present joint war of the U.S.S.R. and China against Japan, relations between the Soviet Commander-in-Chief and the Chinese Administration should correspond to the spirit of friendship and Allied relations existing between the two countries, agreed on the following :

1. After the entry of Soviet troops as a result of hostilities into the territory of the Three Eastern Provinces of China, supreme authority and responsibility in the zone of hostilities in all questions relating to the prosecution of the war for the period necessary for operations shall rest with the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Armed Forces.

2. A representative of the National Government of the Chinese Republic with personnel shall be appointed for the restored territory who shall :

- (a) Establish and direct in accordance with Chinese laws the administration on territory cleared of the enemy ;
- (b) Render assistance in establishing co-operation in the restored territories between the Chinese armed forces, both regular and irregular, and the Soviet armed forces ;
- (c) Ensure active collaboration between the Chinese Administration and the Soviet Commander-in-Chief, and in particular issue instructions to local organs to this effect, being guided by the requirements and wishes of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief.

3. To ensure contact between the Soviet Commander-in-Chief and the representative of the National Government of the Chinese Republic, a Chinese Military Mission to the Headquarters of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief will be appointed.

4. In zones under the supreme authority of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief, the administration of the National Government of the Chinese Republic for restored territory shall maintain contact with the Soviet Commander-in-Chief through the representative of the National Government of the Chinese Republic.

5. As soon as any part of restored territory ceases to be a zone of direct hostilities, the National Government of the Chinese Republic shall assume full authority as regards civilian affairs and shall render the Soviet Commander-in-Chief every assistance and support through its civil and military organs.

6. All persons belonging to the Soviet armed forces on Chinese territory shall be under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief. All Chinese nationals both civilians and military shall be under Chinese jurisdiction. This jurisdiction shall also extend to the civilian population on Chinese territory even in the event of crimes and offenses against the Soviet armed forces, with the exception of crimes and offences committed in the zone of hostilities which are subject to the jurisdiction of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief. In disputable cases questions shall be decided by agreement between the Soviet Commander-in-Chief and the representative of the National Government of the Chinese Republic.

7. A separate agreement shall be concluded concerning financial questions involved in the entry of Soviet troops into the territory of the Three Eastern Provinces of China.

8. The present Agreement comes into force immediately upon ratification of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the U.S.S.R. and China signed on this date.

Done in Moscow on August 14, 1945, which corresponds to the 14th day of the month of August of the 34th year of the Chinese Republic, in two copies, each in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts having equal force.

Signed :

By authorisation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—V. M. MOLOTOV.

By authorisation of the President of the National Government of the Chinese Republic—WANG SHIH-CHIEH.

ON RENDERING ASSISTANCE TO THE CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT OF CHINA, ON CHINA'S
SOVEREIGNTY OVER MANCHURIA,
AND ON EVENTS IN
SINKIANG

HONOURABLE MR. MINISTER,

In connection with the signing on this date of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between China and the U.S.S.R. I have the honour of placing on record that the following provisions are understood by both Contracting Parties in the following way :

1. In accordance with the spirit of the above Treaty and for implementation of its general idea and purposes the Soviet Government is ready to render China moral support and assistance with military equipment and other material resources, this support and assistance to be given fully to the National Government as the Central Government of China.

2. In the course of the negotiations on the ports of Dalny and Port Arthur, also on the joint operation of the Chinese Chang-chun Railway, the Soviet Government regarded the Three Eastern Provinces as part of China and again confirmed its respect for China's full sovereignty over the Three Eastern Provinces and recognition of their territorial and administrative integrity.

3. As to the latest events in Sinkiang, the Soviet Government confirms that, as stated in Article V of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, it has no intention of interfering in China's internal affairs. In the event that you, Mr. Minister, confirm your Agreement with such understanding of the above points, the present Note and your answer to it shall constitute part of the above Treaty of Friendship and Alliance.

Accept, Mr. Minister, assurance of my very high respect.

Signed : V. M. MOLOTOV

In his Note of reply the Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Shih-chieh, declared his complete agreement with such understanding of the above-stated points.

ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE MONGOLIAN
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

NOTE

FROM CHINESE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WANG SHIH-CHIEH
TO PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
U.S.S.R. MOLOTOV

(Translation from Chinese)

Moscow, August 14, 1945.

Mr. People's Commissar,

In view of the desire for independence repeatedly expressed by the people of Outer Mongolia, the Chinese Government declares that after Japan's defeat, if a plebiscite of the people of Outer Mongolia confirms this desire, the Chinese Government will recognise the independence of Outer Mongolia in her existing boundaries.

The above statement will be binding after ratification of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed by the Chinese Republic and the U.S.S.R. on August 14, 1945.

I beg you, Mr. People's Commissar, to accept assurance of my very high respect.

NOTE

FROM PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE U.S.S.R. MOLOTOV TO MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE CHINESE REPUBLIC
WANG SHIH-CHIEH

Mr. Minister,

Hereby I confirm receipt of your Note in which you state that "in view of the desire for independence repeatedly expressed by the people of Outer Mongolia, the Chinese Government declares that after Japan's defeat, if a plebiscite of the people of Outer Mongolia confirms this desire, the Chinese Government will recognise the independence of Outer Mongolia in her existing boundaries. The above statement will be binding after ratifica-

tion of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed by the Chinese Republic and the U.S.S.R. on August 14, 1945."

The Soviet Government with satisfaction takes note of the above Note of the Government of Chinese Republic and declares on its part that it will respect the State independence and territorial integrity of the Mongolian People's Republic (Outer Mongolia).

I beg you, Mr. Minister, to accept assurances of my very high respect.

SOVIET RATIFICATION DECREE

On August 24 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. issued a Decree on the ratification of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Republic, and of the Agreement concluded between the two countries concerning the Chinese Changchun Railway, Port Arthur and Port Dalny.

The Decree is signed by M. I. Kalinin, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., and A. Gorkin, Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Demands of Burma

A conference of Burma Political Leaders was held on 16th to 18th August, 1945 at the premises of A.F.O., 9, Churchill Road.

Besides the members of the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (Burma Patriotic Front) which is the combination of Burma Patriotic Forces (B.N.A.), Communist Party of Burma, People's Revolutionary Party, Myochit Party, All Burma Youth League, Arakan National Congress, Karen Central Organisation, many prominent national leaders like U Ba Pe, U Thein Mg were present.

Representatives of the Thakin Party, the Sinyetha Party, Burmese Muslim League, the Chinese Association and prominent pressmen were also present.

General Aung San presided and Than Tun acted as Secretary of the Conference.

The following were the matters discussed :

1. International situation,
2. Burma Army,
3. Political future of Burma,
4. National Unity.

On the basis of agreement arrived at this Conference the Supreme Council of A.F.O. was re-organised to include the remaining patriotic elements of the Country.

THAN TUN
General Secretary,
Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

RESOLUTIONS

The resolutions given below were endorsed at the mass meeting held in Rangoon on 19th August 1945.

1. WORLD PEACE AND FREE BURMA

The World War is now over. This war is the People's War, the war fought by the peoples of several countries for their liberation from the Fascist bondage. Freedom-loving peoples have achieved victory in this war of liberation led by the Soviet Union, the United States of America, Britain and China.

The victorious peoples are now in a position to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination. To make the People's Victory a real one, they are setting up national governments, national armies and economic systems after their own heart.

The Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League comes into the war on the side of the United Nations, with the firm conviction that there could be no world peace as long as brutish Fascism dominated the world.

The people of Burma are overjoyed at the victory of the United Nations, for they firmly believe that the victory brings with it the long-awaited opportunity for the peoples of the world to shape their own destinies.

The people of Burma owe a debt of gratitude to the peoples and armies of the Soviet Union, the U.S.A., Britain and China, who led this war of liberation to a successful conclusion.

This League firmly believes that the United Nations would remain as united in peace as in the war to carry on the task of

preventing recurrence of war, nay, removing the causes of war.

This World War began in 1931 with the Japanese imperialist aggression on China, and the untold sacrifices of the people of China all these years would have been in vain if their untiring efforts did not consummate in the establishment of a united, independent, democratic China. This League firmly believes that the United Nations would give full assistance to China to reach her cherished goal.

About the middle of the World War, the militarists of Spain rebelled against the legally constituted Republican Government and, with the aid of the German and Italian Fascists, brought Spain under the Fascist iron heel. The main Fascist Powers have fallen but Fascism is not dead yet in Spain. This League firmly believes that the people of Spain, who have all along organised a resistance movement against Fascist oppressors, would soon be liberated from their yoke and a Peoples' Government restored.

India is not free yet, and this League firmly believes that India will enjoy full independence in the near future. The attainment of political power by the people of India depends on their unity and it is fervently hoped that they would make efforts to achieve unity with a view to winning their national freedom and to reconstructing their own country.

The people of Burma have made their utmost sacrifices, sacrifices of their homes and hearths, limbs and lives, for their freedom. The free democratic world must, therefore, recognise their right to freedom, in accordance with the repeated declarations of the United Nations.

Burma is a badly war-torn country and it is the firm belief of her people that all the countries, which participated in the war of liberation, would assist them to reconstruct their motherland, to set up a People's Government and to take a worthy place in the comity of the free nations.

The people of Burma, having fought with fixed determination and approved courage for their freedom, desire that Burma, as a free country, be invited to take part in the World Peace Conference.

In exercise of their right of self-determination, the people of Burma desire to convene a Constituent Assembly to determine their own constitution.

Pending the framing of the National Constitution by a Constituent Assembly a Provisional Government be formed, representing all the political parties that took part in the Anti-Fascist move-

ment as well as those that are working whole-heartedly for the rehabilitation of Burma.

In order that the people of Burma may be able to exercise their right of self-determination in the speediest time and manner possible they desire :

(a) that, since the military operations have ceased, the military administration be terminated ;

(b) that, the remaining Japanese forces in Burma be forthwith disarmed and then sent away without any delay.

The League looks to the Allied Military Authorities to give every possible assistance in this connection.

In conclusion the League declares that the people of Burma are fully united to make an all-out effort for the emergence of a free Burma in a free world, as united as they have been in their fight against the Fascist Japanese.

2. THE BURMA ARMY

The Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, having discussed the various issues relating to the Burma Army at a meeting held on the 12th August, 1945, is of the considered opinion :

1. That since the old Burma Army established by the British authorities now exists more or less in name only, it is highly illogical and not at all in accordance with justice, equity and sound policy for the British authorities now to form again a Burma Army based on arrangements involving the disbandment of the existing Burmese Patriotic Forces, which have been successfully operating against the enemy in co-operation with the Allied Forces in Burma ; and therefore, all steps now being taken for the formation of the Burma Army on the above basis be put an end to at the earliest possible moment, and a Burma Army—with Burmese Patriotic Forces and the indigenous guerilla units, which already exist not only in name but in concrete form and substance—as its nucleus be formed by the British authorities.

2. Personnel belonging to the indigenous races of Burma who are now serving under the British be incorporated into the Burma Army to be formed as resolved above.

3. In forming the Burma Army, Burmese Battalions and Battalions of the various indigenous races (i.e. Class battalions) be formed, and Burmese and other indigenous Commanders, Officers and N.C.Os be appointed to units and formations.

4. In forming the Burma Army, such matters as those relat-

ing to medical examination, ranks, military education, pay and privileges of personnel, granting of leave to those who have been in operations, and appointment to and allotment in the Burma Army of Officers and N.C.Os from the Burmese Patriotic Forces and the old Burma Army, be dealt with by a Board to be set up, consisting of the representatives of the Burmese Patriotic Forces and those responsible for the formation of the Burma Army.

5. Pending a definite settlement of the above points disbandment of the Burma Patriotic Forces and the guerilla units be suspended ; in the meantime, representatives of the Burmese Patriotic Forces be given opportunity to meet and discuss with the British authorities concerned in order to come to an agreement.

6. This meeting place on record profound gratitude for the Burmese Patriotic Forces and the guerilla units who have whole-heartedly co-operated with the Allied Forces in liberating the whole country and appreciate their fervent ardour to completely annihilate the Fascist Japanese. But this meeting deeply regrets that the Burmese Patriotic Forces and guerilla units have not received adequate assistance and due publicity (in their operations) from the Allied Forces.

This Conference of Leaders completely endorse the views of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

3. TOWARDS THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

For many years the people of Burma have struggled to attain their right of self-determination. Since the outbreak of war in 1939 between Britain and Germany, the struggle for Burma's freedom has become more intensified and extensive in that it has developed an armed mass movement. The people of Burma in co-operation with the United Nations, have driven from Burma the Fascists, the protagonists of the darkest forces of reaction in the world.

Therefore, the free democratic world will have to recognise the right to freedom of the people of Burma, according to the world leaders' declarations, such as the Atlantic Charter, the Teheran Agreement and the Yalta Agreement.

The people of Burma will exercise their right of self-determination and determine their constitution through a Constituent Assembly.

Since it is clear in the course of history that a Provisional Government should follow an armed insurrection before the con-

vention of a Constituent Assembly, the Anti-Fascist fighters and all those who want to take their share in the rehabilitation of their own country should immediately form a Provisional Government.

For this reason, all the political leaders should come to an agreement in policy with a view to forming a Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government should be a National Government sufficiently representative of the democratic section of the public opinion in the country.

Moreover, the Provisional Government should have full powers in matters relating to foreign relations, finance, economy, defence, internal security etc., of the country.

Having the Constituent Assembly in view the Provisional Government should

- (a) make provisions for setting up an electoral machinery,
- (b) draw up a constitution for the future government of a free Burma,
- (c) draft such agreements as will be necessary for conclusion between Burma and Britain,
- (d) make arrangements for sending Burma's representatives to foreign countries, if necessary; and,
- (e) make preparations for sending Burma's representatives to the Peace Conference.

It is incumbent on the Provisional Government to take effective measures for relief, reconstruction and other tasks of immediate nature and importance.

This Conference of Political Leaders firmly believes that, in order that the Provisional Government may be able to accomplish their tasks, the people will co-operate whole-heartedly with the Government, reminding them constantly of their grave responsibilities.

This Conference authorises the Extended Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League to take necessary steps for achievement of the desired ends.

The All Burma Trade Union Congress

1. SHORT HISTORY

The economic depression of 1930 and the consequent labour unrest all over Burma brought forth the beginning of the Trade
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Union Movement in Burma. Though the workers began to feel through practical experience the necessity of some form of organisation, unions so organised in those days were necessarily amorphous and inchoate. Lack of conscious leadership coupled with severe repression by the employers was felt very much.

But the tide began to turn after the Government of Burma Act 1935 came into operation. A Labour Ministry and a Labour Office came into being and about 40 unions were registered under the Indian Trade Union Act of 1926. The first organised demonstration of the strength of the workers was seen in the general political strike of 1938-39 which swept over the whole of Burma.

It was about this period (1940), that the All Burma Trade Union Congress was formally organised for the first time, as a result of the general strike.

Under the Japanese regime for 3 years, the labour movement was at its lowest ebb. Labour organisations were crushed. Thousands of labourers were forcibly recruited and sent to work in the railway, road and aerodrome construction works. Though unions were no longer in existence, thousands of workers who formerly belonged to the ranks of these unions joined the resistance movement. In fact workers have been the vanguard of the guerilla warfare ruthlessly waged against the Japs from 1944 up to the time of Allied entry.

Soon after the fall of Rangoon, efforts were made again to revive and reorganise the Trade Unions, and the All Burma Trade Union Congress was re-established formally on June 1, 1945.

2. FORMATION AND STRUCTURE

The formation and structure of the All Burma Trade Union Congress have been based on principles of democratic centralism. Representatives of all Trade Unions, elected by the General Body Meeting of the Trade Union members, shall meet and elect members of the General Council of the All Burma Trade Union Congress. The General Council shall then elect a Working Committee for carrying on the activities of the All Burma Trade Union Congress. This Working Committee will be directly responsible to the General Council, which in turn will be responsible to the Congress of Representatives of various Trade Unions. Only the Congress of Representatives is vested with full powers and between 2 Congresses the General Council is an all powerful organ. At present, only the provisional General Council and the Working

Committee are functioning and it is intended to convene the first Congress of Trade Unions in the coming winter.

3. IMMEDIATE ACTIVITIES

The immediate activities of the All-Burma Trade Union Congress consist of :—

- (a) Organising the working class into Trade Unions.
- (b) Supply of the labour requirements of the Burma Military Administration and assisting the same in all possible manner.
- (c) Redressing the legitimate grievances of the working people.
- (d) Relieving the war refugees by finding suitable employment for them and by assisting actively in the work of the All-Burma War Refugee Relief Committee.

Dockyard labourers, factory workers, and transport workers, etc., have been organised in the city of Rangoon and to date 14 Trade Unions have been formally affiliated to the All-Burma Trade Union Congress, the total membership being 11,150. These Trade Unions are organised irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion or sex.

Labour organisers have been sent to the oilfield areas, mining areas and other important labour centres, where the workers are being organised on a systematic basis by reviving the old unions and forming new ones. Due to the ravages of the war, many factories and workshops have ceased to function and the re-establishment of Trade Unions is being delayed.

Both skilled and unskilled labourers are being supplied to the military authorities in hundreds daily. All possible assistance is being extended to the authorities concerned.

Collective bargaining with strikes as the weapon was not encouraged as it would amount to sabotaging the military activities. The All-Burma Trade Union Congress had up to now successfully intervened in cases where strikes were imminent and gained legitimate demands of the workers to their satisfaction. Attempts, however, to form joint boards between employers and workers failed due to non-co-operation of the British Military Administration.

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