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Editorial

JANUARY 2, 1959 will ever be regarded as one of the most memorable dates in history. On this day was launched the space-ship which hurtling across the sky at

a pace never attained by any man-made object, overcame the gravitational pull of the earth, swept round the moon and entered the solar system.

A new planet has made its appearance, a planet made by the hands of man. Appropriately named Mecha—dream—it marks the realisation of one of the oldest dreams of man, the conquest of space. It opens up new vistas before our epoch, the epoch of man's final triumph over nature.

Enormously extending the bounds of human knowledge through the messages already received, this majestic achievement of Soviet science holds out prospects which few could imagine only a decade ago. "The time is approaching," confidently proclaim the Soviet scientists, "when man will be able to set foot on the surface of the moon and other planets." Issues debated in scientific circles for many years, such as whether life exists in planets other than ours, will be settled: Man will wrest from nature her most closely guarded secrets.

That it is the first country of victorious Socialism which has been the pioneer in achieving the latest triumph is no accident. With prophetic vision, Frederick Engels declared in his celebrated work, Socialism: Scientific and Utopian that with the establishment of Socialism alone, man, "for the first time, becomes the real conscious master of nature." That prophecy is being fulfilled before our own eyes.

Once again, Socialism has proved its superiority over decadent capitalism. Once again, it has been demonstrated that freed from the shackles of capitalism, man can reach heights never attained in any previous era.

In peaceful competition, Socialism will triumph—declared the leaders of the Soviet Union. The new planet, symbol of the rising star of Communism, reinforces that declaration.

To the people of the Soviet Union in this hour of joyous celebrations, to the Soviet scientists, to the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union under whose leadership the once backward country has made spectacular advance, our Party conveys warm fraternal greetings.

While humanity rejoices in the triumph which science has scored, panic has seized the American imperialists. Unable to look at any issue, except from the narrow angle of the cold war, they depict the Soviet advance in the realm of science and technology as a menace to the "free world".

Men and women of goodwill all over the world know better. They know what the USSR stands for and what role it plays. They know that a great victory has been won for the cause which they cherish—the cause of freedom and peace. (January 7)

BACKGROUND TO THE CONGRESS SESSION

REACTION'S OFFENSIVE

★ by B. T. RANADIVE

The Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress meets in a strange background. Emboldened by the Congress policies of compromise and concession, the vested interests are coming out in the open, bringing pressure on the Congress Government to give up some of its declared policies.

THE vested interests in capital and land have launched a concrete propaganda drive against land reform and particularly ceilings, against the public sector and against every declaration to curb capital.

Every measure of State control is being denounced by Big Business as an attack on democracy—advocacy of co-operative farming is denounced as totalitarianism. In recent meetings and Press Con-

ferences, Sri Nehru had to say a few words against these gentlemen of the private sector. His sharp words and repeated warnings only bear witness to the pressure that is being exerted by the private sector from within and without the Government.

It is well known that despite tall declarations from Nehru, successive State Governments have sabotaged land reforms, especially ceilings and distribution of

land to the tiller and obstructed the development of our food resources. This was not accidental either. The pull of landed interests inside State Congress organisations has been terrific. They have been doing their sabotaging work silently, hampering food production, forcing the country to import millions of tons of foodgrains, and exposing it to bankruptcy and starvation.

But now when after repeated warnings from the planners the question of ceilings and land reform has to be practically tackled, they are forced to come out in the open.

The Hyderabad Session of the AICC appointed a Sub-Committee to consider all aspects of agricultural production including aspects of land reform. This was not an innocuous committee because it was suggested by C. Subramaniam, likely President of the Congress after this session, who is opposed to ceilings and included on it many like Hare Krishna Mahatab, Ajit Prasad Jain and others who held similar views.

The opponents of ceilings put up a strong fight in the Sub-Committee. They suddenly became champions of equality and demanded that if ceilings were to be imposed on land, then in justice, there should be a ceiling on urban incomes also.

The landed interests coming forward as the champions of social justice in urban areas! It only reminded one of the crude game played by the Muslim League of Uttar Pradesh in 1937 when the National Congress had formed its first Ministry. The Congress Party moved a resolution in the Assembly demanding abolition of landlordism. The Muslim League landlords dared not oppose it openly. They, therefore, came forward with another resolution demanding abolition of capitalism hoping thereby to embarrass the Congress.

The landed interests inside the Congress are today in the same position. They dare not openly oppose ceilings without resorting to some kind of subterfuge. Their idea is to get ceilings postponed in the name of initiating social justice in

ALL ABOUT THE P. M.'s P. A. AND THE TRUST FOR HIS MOTHER

NEW DELHI, January 3

A question is very often heard being asked now-a-days in the Capital: Does the Prime Minister really know all that is going on under the aegis of his Government? Honest but despairing Congressmen prefer to console themselves with the answer that obviously the Prime Minister does not.

But a question that has been coming up very rapidly in the last few months—and which promises to burst into a first-class sensation any day, whether in the Press or in Parliament—concerns the doings, or rather the misdoings, of a prominent member of his own staff. Although many outside New Delhi may not even have heard his name, Sri M. O. Mathai, the P. M.'s Special Assistant, has, in the last few years, built himself up as a key man in high politics.

Sri Mathai has an extraordinary background. Before the last war, he was drawing a paltry wage being engaged as a typist by Sri C. P. Mathen, former M. P. Then came a

period when Mathai was employed in one of the American Government outfits functioning in this country during the war. His friendship with American circles has continued since those days, sometimes becoming far too conspicuous.

During the crucial negotiations preceding the transfer of power in 1947, Sri Mathai got into Pandit Nehru's staff as a steno-typist. Gradually he rose to become the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister drawing a monthly salary of about Rs. 1,800 a month.

About four years ago, he decided to set up a Trust in memory of his mother, called the Chechemma Memorial Trust. It started with a capital of about Rs. three lakhs—by itself rather a considerable sum for Mathai to collect—and besides himself, he selected two other trustees, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Smt. Padmaja Naidu, both of whom hardly take any interest in the matter beyond lending their good names.

Mathai himself, of course, is the managing trustee. And he has never made any bones about his hold on the Trust. Its office is at 2, Wilingdon Crescent, the resi-

dence of the Rajkumari. This is the one and only family trust that a Government servant has been permitted to set up. Mathai, a Government employée, has managed to get the permission from the Home Ministry to open this Trust and collect money for it.

A surprising feature is that Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, when she was a Union Cabinet Minister, was permitted to become one of the trustees, while at about the same time, in the year 1954, two other Ministers, Sri Jagjivan Ram and Sri Satyanarain Sinha, were asked by the Prime Minister to resign from the trusteeship of the Dalmia's Bharguraj and Yogiraj Trust.

What is more amazing about it is the fact that this Trust today has assets totalling nearly Rs. 24 lakhs. Among the donors are the Birlas, Shanti Prasad Jain and several Bombay businessmen. The account of the Trust is kept in the Birlas' United Commercial Bank, but it is a closed account.

It may be by some mysterious influence that over Rs. 20 lakhs can be collected in memory of a completely

unknown lady when one collects that in spite of the Prime Minister's appeal, not more than Rs. nine-and-a-half lakhs could be collected for the Kidwai Memorial Fund.

A prominent Congressman told me: "I won't be surprised if Mundhra also has donated to this Trust." There are grounds for such talks. Because, it is reported that the first meeting between TTK and Mundhra in the summer of 1957 had taken place at Mathai's initiative. So far as I know, even the Vivian Bose Committee could not probe into this secret. Throughout his career as Minister, TTK is said to have kept the closest contact with Mathai.

Mathai's association with the Birlas had, it seems, started even before the Trust was set up. Some years ago, Mathai bought an orchard in the Kulu Valley. Later he sold it to the Birlas at about one-and-a-half lakh rupees, though, according to many, the property itself can hardly be valued at even half the amount.

Again, just six months ago, the Birlas made a gift of one

*SEE PAGE 13

*SEE PAGE 4

Cane-Growers Demand A Fair Deal

The three districts of Western U. P.—Meerut, Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur—were the scene of a big action by the peasantry during the recent seven days' strike of the cane-growers which began on December 15 last.

LIKE a torrent the peasantry rose in revolt and all directives to Congressmen to break the strike did not succeed in bringing even one cart of sugar-cane to any of the weighing centres. This was the biggest reply that the peasantry of Sri A. P. Jain's own home area could give to the Food Minister's blunt refusal to accept their just demand for increase of sugar-cane price from Rs. 1.44 per maund at the mill gate and Rs. 1.31 at the outcates to Rs. 1.75 per maund at both places.

This demand of the cane-growers is today for U. P. and Bihar not only the demand of a section of the peasantry as Sri Jain tried to show recently in the Lok Sabha. It has become the united demand of the people including Congressmen and even the Legislative Assemblies of both these States have passed non-official resolutions recommending to the Centre that this demand of the peasantry be accepted.

So wide is the support behind the demand that it became necessary for Pandit Nehru to intervene in the Lok Sabha debate to prop up Sri Jain.

Both Sri Jain and Pandit Nehru in the Lok Sabha and the U. P. Chief Minister, Dr. Sampurnanand, in the U. P. Legislative Council, while opposing the popular demand, took recourse to certain arguments which though answered again and again are being repeated in season and out of season.

It was argued that with the increase in sugar-cane prices, sugar would become costlier both for the consumer and for the international market thus imposing not only an additional burden on the people but also drying up a newly-created source of earning much-needed foreign exchange.

FROM
P. K. TANDON
General Secretary
U. P. KISAN SABHA

It is also said that if sugar-cane cultivation becomes more profitable, the cultivators will shift their land now under food crops to sugar-cane thereby aggravating the food crisis.

It is further argued that any increase in sugar-cane price would disturb the parity between the prices of sugar-cane and other agricultural commodities, whose prices have recently shown a welcome decline.

Price Of Sugar

What are these arguments really worth?

Sri Jain has said that after deducting Rs. 13 to Rs. 14 for

side to be very high. He asks the cane-growers to wait till the Tariff Board gives its report.

But the Tariff Board had given a report in 1950 according to which the average cost of manufacturing a maund of sugar by small factories producing two to three lakh maunds of sugar per year was only Rs. five per maund and reasonable profit Re. one. For bigger factories producing five lakh maunds per year and more the cost of manufacturing was calculated to be as low as Rs. three per maund of sugar.

The present price of sugar gives a profit of Rs. three to four per maund to small and Rs. five to six per maund to the big millowners—evidently a very high rate of profit. Even if it is argued that in this period, cost of manufacture has risen by about 20 to 25 per cent, this rate of profit is nearly 200 to 300 per cent of the profit rate proposed by the Tariff Board even for the least profitable and smallest unit. It may, however, be added that the Tariff Board based itself on figures supplied by millowners themselves for the

nearly Rs. two crores per year and be satisfied with the rate of profit considered reasonable by the Tariff Board in 1950.

As regards the price of sugar, it may be pertinently mentioned that for every seer of sugar, the consumer has to pay about 33 naye Paise as Government taxes which is nearly 1/3 of the retail price of sugar. Within the last ten years taxes on sugar and sugar-cane have risen by nearly 150 per cent. Hence if at all the Government is anxious to make sugar cheaper for the consumer it should stop giving sermons to the growers and reduce the exorbitant taxes.

No Threat To Food Acreage

It is true that acreage under sugar-cane has risen from 19.13 lakhs in 1953-54 to 30.5 lakh in 1956-57. Sri Jain has chosen the year 1953-54 for the simple reason that it was a year of the lowest sugar and sugar-cane production in the last one decade. Had he chosen 1951-52 when sugar-cane acreage in U. P. was 29.6

It is clear from all this that the cane-grower's demand does not go against the interest of the consumer or the nation but only against the profit greed of the sugar mill-owners and their supporters in the Government. It is hardly necessary to add that their demand is fully in consonance with our declared aim of establishing a Socialist society.

The U. P. Cane Union's Federation which is a semi-official body presided over by the Cane Commissioner and packed with Congressmen passed a resolution on December 23 to start the general strike from January 14. But such was the pressure from the Government and the Congress leaders that the Executive of the Federation withdrew the strike decision only six days later on December 29.

The U. P. Kisan Sabha has declared that the decision taken at the Sultanpur Conference to organise the cane-growers' general strike from January 14 stands unchanged. It has appealed to the Opposition parties to stand by the growers.

The Government has called a tripartite conference on January 12, to which only the Federation representatives have been invited on behalf of the growers. The U. P. Kisan Sabha protesting against this discriminatory attitude has demanded that all the Opposition parties and the Kisan organisations should be called so that the viewpoint of an overwhelming majority of the cane-growers may be heard at the conference. Unless its representatives are invited to the conference, the UPKS has declared it will not be bound by its decisions.

The units of the Kisan Sabha are vigorously preparing for the struggle of the cane-growers but it is a pity that the leading Left parties of the State, the PSP and S.P., which had declared their intention to join the strike from January 14 seem to be quietly backing out of the struggle. Their leaders have chosen to keep diplomatically quiet. This shall be no less a betrayal than that performed by the leaders of the Cane Federation of a movement which if conducted unitedly can become another big challenge to Congress misrule in U. P. after the recent food movement.

The truth is that sugar-cane acreage declines and rises in cycles of nearly four years although there is general tendency towards rise. But then sugar-cane acreage alone is not rising—the total acreage under cultivation as well as acreage under food crops is also rising.

Within the period of 14 years between 1943-44 and 1956-57, the total acreage under cultivation in U. P. has gone up by about ten per cent whereas the acreage under paddy and wheat has risen respectively by 32 and 28 per cent. Thus there is no question of acreage under any other crop rising at the cost of food crops.

The Second Five-Year Plan had fixed a target of production of 22.5 lakh tons of sugar in 1962. In 1957-58, India produced only 20 lakh tons. Our per capita consumption of gur and sugar is ridiculously low as compared to advanced countries and our internal requirement is also estimated to rise to 22.5 lakh tons by 1962.

Hence if we adopt a one-sided attitude towards food production contrary to what is laid down by the authors of our Second Plan and try to solve our food crisis at the cost of sugar production, we will not be able to produce in 1962 enough sugar to meet even our internal requirements. The result would be that not only will we have no sugar to export but we will have to import it—as happened in 1953-54 at the value of Rs. 70 crores. Thus our foreign exchange situation would only worsen instead of improving.

THE peculiarities of economic development, especially of an underdeveloped country, necessitate a systematised and detailed pre-study of their various aspects. For, unlike their counterparts in more developed countries of the West, whose problems are generally akin, their number in the former is legion.

This does not mean, however, that there is no common denominator between the national objectives of underdeveloped countries also. On the contrary, in their historical background, which, invariably bespeaks of their colonial exploitation, as well as in the main tasks which their economies have to face, they do exhibit quite a few similarities. Still, while formulating a concrete programme it is prudent that the country's specific characteristics are not overlooked.

It is, therefore, only proper that the objectives and the shape of the Third Plan have begun to be widely discussed in various plan forums and economists' conferences. The results of these discussions also have, on the whole, been highly significant, inasmuch as they have indicated a high degree of appreciation on the part of our academic dignitaries of the need to accelerate the pace of the country's development.

EXCELLENT BEGINNING, BUT...

Undeterred by the private sector's propaganda that the country has had enough of emphasis on industrialisation in the first two Plans, and should therefore cry a halt to it in the subsequent ones, they have unequivocally expressed themselves in favour of more, and not less, industrialisation. While doing so, they have also warned against setting up of spurious industries in its name whose dependence on foreign components—ranging sometimes up to seventy per cent—only goes to feed foreign interests. They have also stressed the necessity to "exercise vigilance to scotch the dangerous possibilities of foreign aid" which as Professor Anjaria said always "tended to exercise a gentle pressure in certain directions."

What this direction generally is he also clarified by adding that "it could mean a greater investment in the private sector."

Thus, while economists' meetings as well as the plan forums have made an excellent beginning, it will be a pity if their discussions are not made a part of people's consciousness, so that, while formulating the final plan their views can be obtained at the broadest possible level.

In obtaining these views, however, it will be less than honest on the part of the Government as well as various political and social organisations, which alone can be their vehicle, not to squarely acknowledge the failures which the first two Plans had met in some of their most important aspects. As it is these failures are well known, especially to the readers of New Age. But not all parties and

INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

THE THIRD PLAN

DISCUSSION IS ON

academic thinkers hold the same views in respect of the factors behind them. And to the extent they differ in their evaluation in this regard, their approach to the Third Plan too will be necessarily different.

WHAT HAS TO BE DISCUSSED

Primarily, however, it is this approach which has to be most widely discussed at the present stage. Broadly no doubt all the democratic sections and also the Government, whose policies have been primarily responsible for the difficulties of the Plan hitherto, agree as to what this approach should be. But the days when the people could be fed on mere rhetorical generalities are past. No longer can the worker be asked to sweat merely for filling the coffers of the capitalist, nor can the peasant be persuaded to put in his best into his soil, if its fruit remains to him as elusive as ever. It has, therefore, become imperative that the parties of Socialism concretely put before the people their ideas apropos what they seek to achieve through the next Plan.

What is the position, however? The Congress has betrayed a chronic aversion to any honest evaluation of the factors behind the Second Plan's undoing. In industry it has ascribed the shortfall in the Plan's achievements to lack of resources, knowing full well that its own policies have been leaving a fair amount of wealth completely untaxed year after year.

In agriculture, the natural calamities—whose absence earlier had helped to achieve relatively better results—seem to provide it a plausible alibi, while its own committees have repeatedly pointed out the inadequacies of its land reform measures.

In trade, the reason behind the continued accumulation of deficits consists for it only in a general downturn in the world's economic activity, while it knows full well that about a third of that very world has always been willing to absorb a substantial part of its export commodities.

Thus, with the Congress it has all through been a case of running away from the stark reality that what it had so far been presenting to the people as a pattern in Socialism was only its mockery. With such a background it is not surprising that it has again begun to talk tall about achieving an El Dorado through the Third Plan without meaning anything. Its Working Committee, in

a resolution, issued last month, detailed a number of measures which in its view could lead to Socialism. Even these, however, are likely to be toned down at Nagpur in favour of private capitalists. And if such liberties can be taken in respect of an official document, the fate of the "principles" which the "Socialist Forum" has bravely put to guide the formulation of the Third Plan can be very well imagined.

The PSP, which, too, professes belief in Socialism, has not yet thought fit to even attempt a comprehensive critical evaluation of the failures of the Second Plan. Occasionally, no doubt, its spokesmen, in Parliament and elsewhere, have put their finger correctly on some right spots, but generally its principal economic wizard has been too busy cataloguing the latest works of foreign economists in the columns of a foreign-owned newspaper to spare any thought for the consideration of the future shape of his own country's plans.

IMPORTANT TASK

As for our Party—the Communist Party—our spokesmen have been tirelessly stressing that the crisis of the Plan is in reality the crisis of the Congress Government's pro-capitalist policies. To achieve the targets of the Plan it is these policies which need be altered. In future, too, if the status quo in respect of these policies is maintained, not to say of launching a bigger Plan, even the gains of the present one will be put in jeopardy. For us, therefore, the most important task at present is that of re-examination of the bases of what has been presented to the country as "Socialism" so far, so that the people might not again be led into believing that Socialism could mean anything less than harnessing of the entire resources for the country's development.

Thus, while the efforts to put the country firmly on the road to Socialism have so far betrayed a lack of cohesion—with the loyalty of some of its most vociferous advocates proving only skin deep—the detractors of Socialism have lost no time in launching their campaign for reversing the gear during the Third Plan. The first salvoes they have fired at the very basis of the Plan—which, according to them being "physical" had to be abandoned during the Second Plan itself. For the Third Plan, in their view, it will be totally unrealistic to even think in terms of its adoption. In support of their stand they have been

PSP AGAIN AT GAME OF DISRUPTION

FROM J. B. MOTTRA

RECENT events in West Bengal have clearly shown that the leadership of the State PSP is again pursuing a policy which to say the least is suicidal. It is out to disrupt Left unity in the by-election to the West Bengal Assembly from the Bagnan constituency in Howrah District.

This important by-election to be held on January 25, has been caused by the resignation of Sri Anil Ganguly, who was elected in the general election as a Communist Party candidate. About six months ago he was expelled from the Party for anti-Party activities. And since the Party was of the opinion that Sri Ganguly had forfeited the confidence of the electorate by advocating a policy which was totally opposed to what it had voted for, it asked him to give up his seat to afford an opportunity to the electorate to reiterate its faith in the policy of the Party. Sri Ganguly resigned.

The Communist Party has set up Comrade Bibhuti Ghose as its candidate in the by-election.

The Forward Bloc is also contesting the seat and the West Bengal PSP leadership has come out in support of the F. B. candidate.

On the eve of the last general elections, the five main Left parties in this State, the CPI, PSP, F.B., RSP and Marxist F. B. had formed the Leftist Alliance on the basis of a common programme to replace the Congress Government by a Government of Democratic Unity. Seats were distributed among these parties, and they jointly campaigned for each other's candidates.

After the general election, a bye-election had taken place in Talkata as a result of the unseating of

the PSP member by the Election Tribunal. The Communist Party did not contest the seat, first, because it would have meant disruption of the democratic front against the Congress and, secondly, because the seat was held by the PSP.

But the PSP does not seem to have any such respect for agreements. At its meeting on December 21, the Executive Committee of the West Bengal PSP adopted a resolution, declaring that "the Communist Party has no right to set up its candidate in this (Bagnan) by-election; it has forfeited its claim to support from the Left parties."

According to the PSP leaders, the Communist Party has no right to set up its candidate in a seat that legitimately belongs to it; but the PSP leadership has every right to divide the Left forces and betray the great trust imposed on it by the electorate which voted in the general election for a Leftist Alliance!

Shift To Right

The PSP leaders forget that it is because they joined the Leftist Alliance that the party's gains in the elections were far greater than what it could have achieved single-handed.

In the post-election period, the PSP leadership participated in several united movements. One reason was its fear of isolation from the people if the party kept away from these struggles.

But, it became evident about six months ago that the PSP leadership's policy had been undergoing a shift to the Right.

Asoka Mehta came down to Calcutta to address a PSP workers' convention. He said that an ideological fight was going on in Calcutta and Bombay. If the intelligentsia went over to the Communists or if the Communists came out victorious in the struggle, it would be the "deathknell to democracy in India." His advice was "not to have any truck with the Communists" and that the PSP in West Bengal should "consolidate and build its own base!"

Shortly after this meeting, the PSP leadership committed the first act of betrayal in September last, when it broke away from the united food movement even before a single demand had been conceded by the Government. Not only that, it attempted to start a separate food movement, which ended in total fiasco.

Now, three months later, the PSP leadership has gone a step further in Bagnan. Only the Congress camp is happy over its role in the bye-election—they now consider that they have "bright chances" of victory and that Left unity will soon crack up.

—ESSEN

January 6, 1959

GOVT. RESORTS TO FALSEHOOD TO DENY PRICE-RISE

taxes from the present controlled ex-factory price of sugar, which is Rs. 36 per maund, only Rs. 22 to Rs. 23 per maund is left to the millowner and this has to cover the price of sugar-cane, sugar manufacturing charges and profit. Taking Rs. 1.44 per maund as the price of sugar-cane and assuming that for every maund of sugar ten maunds of cane is required, this means that for manufacturing cost and profit the millowner gets Rs. eight to nine which Sri Jain does not con-

year 1948-49 since when the production of sugar has doubled, with only two new mills starting in this period which means that production per unit has almost doubled bringing the overhead costs considerably down.

Huge Profits

The 1950 Report of the Tariff Board had recommended that the prices of sugar-cane and sugar should be respectively fixed at Rs. 17 and Rs. 24 1/2 per maund. If on this basis the Central Government fixes sugar-cane price at Rs. 1 1/2 per maund, the price of sugar would have to be raised to Rs. 27 1/4. At the time of the Tariff Board Report, Central and State taxes added together to a total of Rs. five per maund of sugar. So according to the prices recommended by the Board, the millowner would get Rs. 22 1/4 per maund of sugar for his profits, manufacturing charges and price of sugar-cane. This is exactly the amount the millowner gets today although he pays to cane-growers only Rs. 17 at the mill gate and Rs. 15 at the outcates.

The millowners in U. P. alone, on a rough estimate, earned an extra profit of at least Rs. 100 crores since 1952 when the price of sugar-cane was reduced from Rs. 1 1/2 per maund by the simple means of selling sugar at the same price (and even more) and by paying less to the grower.

The demand of the grower is not that price should be raised and he should get more money at the cost of the consumer. He only asks that the millowner should forego the extra profit of

lakhs he would not have been able to startle his listeners in the Lok Sabha.

The truth is that sugar-cane acreage declines and rises in cycles of nearly four years although there is general tendency towards rise. But then sugar-cane acreage alone is not rising—the total acreage under cultivation as well as acreage under food crops is also rising.

Within the period of 14 years between 1943-44 and 1956-57, the total acreage under cultivation in U. P. has gone up by about ten per cent whereas the acreage under paddy and wheat has risen respectively by 32 and 28 per cent. Thus there is no question of acreage under any other crop rising at the cost of food crops.

The Second Five-Year Plan had fixed a target of production of 22.5 lakh tons of sugar in 1962. In 1957-58, India produced only 20 lakh tons. Our per capita consumption of gur and sugar is ridiculously low as compared to advanced countries and our internal requirement is also estimated to rise to 22.5 lakh tons by 1962.

Hence if we adopt a one-sided attitude towards food production contrary to what is laid down by the authors of our Second Plan and try to solve our food crisis at the cost of sugar production, we will not be able to produce in 1962 enough sugar to meet even our internal requirements. The result would be that not only will we have no sugar to export but we will have to import it—as happened in 1953-54 at the value of Rs. 70 crores. Thus our foreign exchange situation would only worsen instead of improving.

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urban areas; or failing that, to incite the better-off peasants against ceiling by making them feel that there was discrimination in favour of the city population.

Though the AICC Sub-Committee did not succumb to their blandishment, still the latter brought sufficient pressure on the Sub-Committee to have the following incorporated in its report:

"The Sub-Committee felt that the question of social justice is indivisible and must guide our actions in all spheres of the country's life and economy without distinction of urban and rural areas. The Committee, therefore, felt that this question of social justice will have to be considered in respect of urban incomes also."

Exploiting Weaknesses

No doubt the opponents of land reform are cleverly utilizing the Congress weakness for trading and moneyed interests. Notwithstanding all talk of Socialism, little has been done to attack the big incomes of the moneyed magnates.

Steps against wide disparity of incomes in urban areas, including control of profits, must not doubt be taken even now. But it is thoroughly irrelevant to mention them in connection with the urgent demand for ceilings and distribution of land.

The latter are directed against land monopoly which hampers food production and imposes hunger and famine on the people. It is the most urgent, immediate and legitimate step that must be taken even in a mixed economy which can dispense with feudal land relations and the consequences following from them. It cannot be made dependent on the former in the name of equality of treatment.

It is not simply a matter of social justice but of releasing the forces of production from antiquated property relations and enabling the masses to hurl their full productive power on land. To argue that ceilings on land should be made dependent

on ceilings on urban incomes is just to sidetrack the question.

The mid-December meeting of the Working Committee endorsed the Sub-Committee's recommendations for immediate ceiling and cooperative farming on land released through enforcement of ceilings. But the reactionaries were not resting. Already they had started canvassing for their viewpoint and they succeeded in roping in more than a hundred M. P.s. A memorandum signed by one hundred and eight members of Parliament was submitted to Sri Nehru demanding postponement of ceilings. Prominent persons like Prof. Ranga and Dasappa are among its signatories.

They plead that as a matter of social justice, the proposal for ceilings should not be limited to landed property as it amounts to discrimination against our peasant proprietors. Ceilings, the memorandum says, should not be unilaterally imposed on the agricultural sector but it should be enforced simultaneously with the imposition of similar ceilings at least on Government employees or professional employees or any other urban class of people. The landed interests direct special attention to the salary-earning upper middle class perhaps with a view to frightening them.

They glibly talk of "discriminating against our peasant proprietors." What type of peasant proprietor have they in mind? There are millions of poor peasant proprietors who have hardly any land because the bigger proprietors have monopolised a substantial part of it. Not to impose ceilings is to discriminate against the mass of peasantry—but they do not mind that. They care only for the interests of the big landlords and they are opposed even to the high ceiling limit proposed by the Planning Commission.

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Strength Inside Congress

But the fact that this opposition to ceilings and these hypocritical arguments should be echoed by not

less than a hundred members of Parliament with the Congress Party bears witness to the strength of landed interests inside the Congress. Many more would have liked to associate with these hundred but perhaps they have kept away only out of a sense of caution. These elements have powerful support inside and outside the Congress. Even Sri Dhebar seems to be placating them.

When Sri Dhebar summarises the recommendations of the AICC Sub-Committee in his Presidential Address, he refrains from making any mention of ceilings, though the committee had categorically recommended ceilings on existing holdings. When he does mention ceilings, he has the following prevaricating statement to make:

"The question of application of ceilings and cooperative joint-farming are problems which require to be explained to the masses. These steps cannot be taken in isolation from ideological considerations. They can only be a part of a process. That process, in the context in which we are thinking, cannot be restricted to an area or to a sector or to a section of the people. The efforts and sacrifice, both have to be universal if the aim of Indian society is not a sectional but integrated development of the whole community. They must set a pattern for the country's economy in other fields as well."

Rally Of Powerful Forces

This hardly constitutes a support to the demand for ceilings. If this verbose statement means anything, it is a vague acceptance of the plea that there should be simultaneous ceilings on urban incomes and land i.e., it postpones ceilings to the day when the country can impose ceilings on urban incomes.

Powerful forces from outside the Congress are rallying themselves to the side of landed reaction. The voice of Big Business, Hindustan Times, writes in its editorial of January 6: "Currently, the Congress is also being urged to prove its Socialism by pushing through land reforms. The interesting part of this observation was that Mr. Nehru admitted that a rigid limitation of incomes would kill incentives and development. The sensible thing will be to give up the ceilings notion altogether, not to hark back to the grosser fallacy of the discredited and discarded acreage formula." Then the paper pays a tribute to Nehru for "his reasoned rejection of the plea for the limitation of all incomes."

And now listen to the voice of British capital. "The most objectionable of the recommendations is that for fixing ceilings on existing land holdings. To place a limit on efficient farming in this way is to abandon for good the policy of self-sufficiency in food production. It will also inevitably lead to ceilings on urban incomes which will mean the end in this country of economic development by democratic means. In every sense of the term, it is a retrogressive concept and would prove a disastrous step to take." (Capital, December 18, 1958)

The landed interests have

Editorial
RECOGNISE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

THE VISIT TO INDIA OF PRIME MINISTER OTTO Grotewohl of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) will be welcomed by all who stand for peace and improvement of relations between countries. While there has been a considerable development of trade and cultural exchanges, it is unfortunate that diplomatic relations have not yet been established between our country and the German Democratic Republic.

The recognition of the German Democratic Republic has become an urgent step for world peace. It is a step which is long overdue, which is just and in accordance with international law.

The coming discussions between Government leaders of India and the German Democratic Republic must help towards putting off the flames which are being fanned by the Western Powers round the Berlin issue and towards ensuring a peaceful solution of the German question.

The first step towards this end should be the diplomatic recognition by India of the German Democratic Republic. It is regrettable that Prime Minister Nehru at his last Press Conference in New Delhi should have again stated that he had no intention of recognising the GDR.

By recognising the GDR, our country would be giving a lead which would be of immense value for the cause of world peace. In view of the fact that we already recognise the German Federal Republic, such a recognition of the German Democratic Republic would be in conformity with our policy of peaceful coexistence and would put an end to a serious blindspot in this policy.

Exchange of diplomatic representatives would undoubtedly also help in the development of trade relations and technical cooperation which can be of considerable assistance to our country in the development of its economy.

The question of Germany has become of prime concern for the peace of the world. India can and must make a decisive contribution to its solution.

made a correct psychological approach. They have demanded a ceiling on urban incomes; and Indian and foreign capitalists have run to their rescue fearing that their turn will come next. Thus against the ceilings are today ranged not only the richer landed interests, but Big Business and British interests as well.

It is this powerful combination aided by more than a hundred members of Parliament that is ranged against redistribution of land, against releasing our agriculture from the evil of land concentration. This combination, supported by certain top leaders of the Congress, will definitely put up a fight in the Nagpur session and attempt to delay the passage of any resolution on land reform and ceilings. It may not succeed for the time being. But the point is how far Nehru can hope to enact legislation for land reform with all this gentry remaining in the Congress.

The Working Committee session at Nagpur has re-endorsed the AICC Sub-Committee resolution. Nehru has again reiterated that they had decided on imposing ceilings on land and ceilings on urban income should not be confused. But the doughty hundred have given notice of a non-official resolution to torpedo the land policy resolution.

Big Business Offensive

Big Business has also stepped up its propaganda offensive or the Congress in view of the impending decision regarding the Third Five-Year Plan. The growing strength of the public sector is disliked by the topmost sections of the big bourgeoisie. In particular, some of them dislike the attempt to build steel and oil industry with the help of the USSR and other Socialist countries. The tremendous advance registered by China seems to have made them panicky. The announcement of State trading in foodgrains has produced violent reactions in their ranks. But above all they are emboldened by the economic difficulties of the country and by the large support that private enterprise secures in foreign financial circles to make arrogant claims on the Government and people and behave as if they own the country.

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Indo-Soviet Friendship Growing Rapidly

Nearly three million is the attendance record at Soviet films shown to Indian audiences by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society during the last two years. A carefully kept record of the attendance at each of the 3,690 shows of 16 mm films shown in 1957 and 1958 totals up to 20,25,900. And an additional 7,47,000 attended the 740 shows of 35 mm films.

THESE figures are indicative of the widespread activity to promote cultural understanding between our people and our great neighbours across the Himalayas, which is today being carried out by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society.

Nearly sixty branches spread over almost every State in the country, are carrying out a variety of activities: showing of exhibitions on Soviet life (among the larger exhibitions were those on "Forty Years of the Soviet Cinema", "Higher Education", "Consumers' Cooperatives" and "The Interest of Soviet People in Indian Culture"); publishing and distributing an excellent quarterly journal; running a pen-friendship section (there are already 1,350 Indian members and half as many Soviet); exchanging delegations; arranging symposia on topics of interest and celebrating the anniversaries of great men of culture of the two countries; organising Russian language classes and study groups.

After two years of hectic activity, which had drawn into the actual membership of the branches well over ten thousand people, the Society held its fourth National Conference at Bangalore on December 25 and 26. The seventy-four delegates who attended—many of them "veterans" of the Society, its active workers since its birth in 1942—were unanimous that this was the most successful of the national conferences held so far.

This success was apparent not only in the number of delegates covering branches in several States or in the packed audiences which attended the open sessions of the Conference on both days, but above all in the carefully conducted discussions on the present and future work of the Society—which brought the most valuable results.

The Conference started with a handicap under which another conference might well have collapsed completely. The Conference President Dr. A. V. Baliga (who, in every way, is the life and soul of the Society) and the chief guests of the Conference, a fraternal delegation from the Soviet Union—were held up in Moscow due to bad weather and could arrive in Bangalore only after the Conference was over.

The disappointment was acute but the Conference had to proceed without them. Thanks to the splendid work of the Bangalore Branch and the Reception Committee and also the painstaking labours of the workers of the Central Office, the Conference went ahead according to its planned schedule.

The City Town Hall, tastefully decorated with flowers and the Indian and Soviet flags, was the venue of the Conference. The crowded inaugural and closing open sessions were addressed among others by the Mayor of Bangalore who welcomed the delegates; Minister-Counsellor Tajibaev and First Secretary V. S. Moskalev of the Soviet Embassy; Sri M. A. H. Siddiqui

ter-Counsellor Tajibaev give detailed facts about the new Soviet Seven-Year Plan was only one more proof of this interest in the life of our Soviet brothers.

One delegate rose in the middle of the discussion on the reports and said he wanted all the material available on "Soviet astronomy". And the Conference Secretary was quick to inform the delegates that the interest was mutual—the ISCUS office was receiving all sorts of questions in letters from Soviet citizens, including requests for correspondence course in Yoga!

The discussion revealed that there was a particularly great demand for information on Indo-Soviet technical and economic cooperation (steel, oil, machine-building, drugs, etc.) and also increasing interest in the miraculous scientific achievements of the Soviet Union and, of course, in Indo-Soviet cooperation in the international arena generally on urgent issues of peace and independence.

The National Council report correctly stated that "the iron curtain" of ignorance and misinformation about the USSR has collapsed finally and completely." The lifting of this "iron curtain" has led to an insatiable thirst for the study of the life and activities, the culture of the Soviet people, the meaning of Indo-Soviet collaboration for our own people. And the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society must move rapidly, working harder than ever, to satisfy this thirst to the best of its capacities.

Delegates were not at all self-satisfied with their achievements. And they took decisions to expand the work of the society in every possible way, to increase its membership both in the existing branches and through the formation of new branches in a planned and systematic manner; to make the executive bodies of the branches and the State and National organisations more representative by the inclusion of leading personalities in all fields of life, particularly in the cultural field; to increase the circulation of the Society's journal, Iscus Quarterly; to make a special effort to supply more and more materials about India to the Soviet-Indian Cultural Relations Society in Moscow.

There was a general feeling among the delegates of the necessity to expand the activities of the Branches in the direction of educational work, giving information through symposia and seminars, on the various fields of Soviet development; and of Indo-Soviet cooperation.

A special resolution welcomed Indo-Soviet cooperation in the economic, technical, cultural and other fields and called for the development of this cooperation, which "plays an important role in the technical and economic development of our country and because it strengthens peaceful relations between States."

Another resolution appealed to those Universities which have not yet done so to make provision for the teaching of the Russian language.

A new National Council of

FOURTH ISCUS NATIONAL CONFERENCE LOOKS AHEAD

nearly a hundred members and the office-bearers for the next two years headed once again by Dr. A. V. Baliga as President, were elected at the end of the Conference.

As they began to leave for their homes, delegates discussed among themselves plans for the work which they had undertaken at the Conference—new, intensified work, taking into account, as one delegate

the society in every possible way, to increase its membership both in the existing branches and through the formation of new branches in a planned and systematic manner; to make the executive bodies of the branches and the State and National organisations more representative by the inclusion of leading personalities in all fields of life, particularly in the cultural field; to increase the circulation of the Society's journal, Iscus Quarterly; to make a special effort to supply more and more materials about India to the Soviet-Indian Cultural Relations Society in Moscow.

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A new National Council of

NEW OFFICE-BEARERS
President: Dr. A. V. Baliga
Vice-Presidents: Smt. Rameshwari Nehru, Maj-Gen. S. S. Sokhey, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Dr. T. K. Dayalu and Sri Rajni Patel;
General Secretary: Sri P.R. Tongaonkar
Secretaries: Sri A. M. Shirali and Sri Jaswant Singh
Treasurer: Sri U. G. Puthli

PEACE COUNCIL DENIES A REPORT

PANDIT Sundaral, President of the All-India Peace Council and member of the Bureau of the World Peace Council, has issued the following statement to the Press:

"An item of news has been published under the caption 'All-India Peace Council to be wound up' in a certain section of the Hindustan Times of January 1, 1959, on the front page.

"We wish to make it clear that the entire news-item is a fabrication and absolutely without any foundation or justification. The All-India Peace Council has been trying to serve the cause of peace in its own humble way for the last eight years, and has absolutely no intention of winding itself up. Its membership is open to all people of all political parties irrespective of their politi-

cal, economic or other ideologies, provided they believe in the avoidance of war and the establishment of peace between nations. Far from winding up, the Council is intensifying its activities particularly in regard to the banning of nuclear weapons, ending of nuclear tests and general disarmament in the interest of peace.

"In the news-item above referred to, something has been said also about the intentions and doings of the Communist Party of India. Sri Romesh Chandra, who is General Secretary of the All-India Peace Council and is also a member of the Central Executive Committee of the CPI, has informed the Council authoritatively that the news-item so far as it concerns the Communist Party of India is absolutely false and scandalous and has not an iota of truth in it."

CHINA'S LEAP ROUSING GREAT INTEREST HERE —ICFA Executive Plans For 1959

THE achievements of the People's Republic of China are unprecedented. They are not miracles, they are facts. And we have a great deal to learn from them." Nearly every speaker stressed this at the symposium on "The Leap Forward in China's Agriculture and Small-scale Industries" held at Vijayawada on December 29.

The symposium was held in connection with the meeting of the National Executive of the India-China Friendship Association. Sri M. Govinda Reddy, M.P., presided and the speakers included Sri K. G. Wodayar, M.P., Sri N. Prasada Rao (General Secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha), Sri Krishna Rao (Bhoodan leader of Andhra) and Sri Sesadri Sastri of Vijayawada. The key paper was a brilliant analysis prepared and sent by the noted economist, Dr. Gyan Chand.

The intense interest shown in the speeches was only another proof of the facts recorded in at the reports from State Branches: the 'Leap Forward' has interested India's millions in China as nothing else ever did. The demands on the Association to provide educational materials on de-

velopment in various fields in China are far beyond the present capacity of the organisation.

The same interest in China was shown by the peasants of two villages some sixteen to twenty miles away from Vijayawada, where the Panchayat Boards held magnificent receptions for the members of the National Executive, where men and women listened in their hundreds attentively and anxiously to every speech made.

We heard story after story of peasants writing to newspaper offices—hundreds—demanding details for a memorial library for Dr. Kotnis and Dr. Atal.

And above all, to organise all over the country, educational exhibitions and seminars giving the people the information they want about Chinese developments.

The Executive adopted a special resolution reaffirming its faith that the seating of the People's Republic of China in its rightful place in the U. N. will very largely contribute to the resolving of international

tension, which stands in the way of establishing peace." Expressing its deep disappointment that "some of the big Powers should have obstinately opposed" the Indian resolution for the seating of People's China in the U. N., the Executive reiterated the demand.

The Executive called for the complete withdrawal of all U. S. forces from the Taiwan waters and areas, putting an end to their unwarranted interference in violation of the U.N. Charter, "in the matter of Taiwan and the off-shore island being restored to the People's Republic of China."

A well-attended public meeting on December 30 rounded off the Executive meeting. Sri Dwijendra Nandi, General Secretary of the National Committee, and Sri P. V. Raghavaiah, General Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Branch of the ICFA, gave a report of the Committee's decisions and the audience was entertained to an excellent programme of dance, Burra Katha, Kolattam and other items of Andhra's culture.

THAT an event of profound historical importance has taken place in China is clear from the violent outburst of hostile comment and the stunned silence of those who should have evaluated these new happenings. The Chinese themselves are too busy with the exhilarating work of a second revolutionary advance within ten years; the powerful swimmer engaged in breasting the flood need not pause to chart the river for others. So, let us analyse the situation for ourselves.

1. THE BASIC FACTS: These are unquestioned. The Commune consists of a merger of many individual cooperatives. The area crosses several former county (hsien) boundaries, according to the nature of the terrain. Twenty thousand or more people might be members of a single Commune. The production is not specialised, but on the contrary covers cereal-producing fields, cotton plantations, orchards, whole mountain-sides for pasturage. Even beyond this purely agrarian variety, the Commune may (and does) engage in direct industrial activity such as producing iron and steel, building their own hydro stations, manufacture of ceramics, cloth, etc.

Children's creches, hospitals, schools, even new types of work-and-learn colleges, are managed by the Communes themselves. Food is served in communal canteens as both husband and wife work. The meals are free or at a nominal cost, and far better in quantity and quality than ever before. The Commune may vote to supply labour for short periods to construction projects, industries, or mines outside their area, quite apart from workers specially deputised for such training. Overall employment is so short that there is now a shortage of personnel. The people concerned are supplied by the Commune and their earnings added to the Commune's funds. The Communes are highly solvent.

Staggering Achievements

The sudden leap ahead in production is not to be denied. Even those newspapermen abroad who live by discounting such statistics are flummoxed. That this is a permanent gain, not due just to a chance year of good weather and suitable rainfall is also clear. Thus, the economic foundations and the productive advantages of the Commune are proved beyond any doubt. The Chinese themselves have found their own achievements staggering. None less than Chen Yi, Foreign Minister and Vice-Premier, had to go and see the results with his own eyes in an area where he had himself cultivated a plot or two as a striping, to appreciate the fact that there is no overstatement.

Far more significant than the productive achievements are those in the administrative field. The local administration was simply abolished, and the personnel absorbed within the Commune—not necessarily as administrators. This covers police, revenue officials, courts and judges, etc. The Commune

takes over such of their functions as are still necessary, and deals directly with the higher State organs.

That is, certain small but nevertheless important parts of the State machinery have vanished altogether. To that extent, the State mechanism has begun to wither away. Control over people has been replaced by the peoples' control over things.

Though predicted by Marx and Engels, this is the first known example of the kind in actual practice. Neither in the other People's Democracies, nor in bourgeois democracies, nor in the countries that have recently achieved their independence has the State machinery ever been reduced to an extent that counts. On the contrary, the mechanism of administration and of violence

peasant cooperatives themselves, and were initially opposed by local and provincial Communist Party secretaries.

The reasons for such opposition lie presumably in the 1956 events in Hungary and Poland, where the collectivisation drive had to be moderated at least for the present. For that matter, even so competent an organiser as Khrushchov had to abandon the earlier agro-gorod schemes in the USSR, as they proved unproductive. The Chinese, who have a much more powerful peasantry with long-ingrained habits of thought naturally took heed, and wanted to encourage more individual production, larger private plots, more privately-owned livestock, and such incentives.

It was the peasantry that protested, insisting that the

The Significance Of China's Communes

is in general steadily increasing, both as to cost and weight.

It might be argued that this is due to the hostile environment, the eternal threat of war. For China, the environment is not less hostile than for any other country, with fully equipped enemy bases in Japan, Korea and Taiwan, not to speak of the trade embargo and economic blockade. Yet the Chinese people have been the first to take this great step towards the real beginning of human history.

2. THE INITIATIVE: The change was not planned from above, nor directed from the top. This is proved by the fact that, even now, there is no fixed model for a Commune, no iron-clad rules or constitution. The most economic size and organisation for a Commune yet remains to be determined. In fact, the most reliable reports go further. The first move came from the

correct answer was more and larger-scale cooperation, not less. Then the cattle could be pastured on the hillside land, all bottom-land rotated between cereals. Cash crops and long-term investments such as orchards and timber would be possible only when the unit was geographically large, and the immediate food problem solvable for the entire unit.

Communist Leadership

The dispute went to the high command and then the Communist Party showed real leadership. The cooperatives that wanted to form Communes were told to go ahead, given such loans and technical advice as they felt necessary. Communist Party cadres joined in the work—not to give directives from above but to learn the new methods of production and reorganisation

In this article, Prof. D. D. Kosambi evaluates the People's Communes in China and expresses incidentally his views on a number of questions.

so as to be able to spread the knowledge to others. This role of activation can be fulfilled only by an alert and sound party; this is the precise meaning of Communist Party leadership here. But all details had to be worked out by the first Communes for themselves.

It might be noted that this development would make nonsense of the usual bureaucratic planning from above, which was the only known planning hitherto and which seems necessary even now for large-scale industrial enterprises. The national income would be computed from sta-

nological field. This is the only way of bringing science and technology to life.

3. REGIMENTATION: We now consider the most serious reproach, that the Chinese achievements imply an unprecedented coercive military organisation, strengthening of dictatorship and use of force over the citizens. The whole world is in some unspecified danger from China. The U.S. State Department and Press are quite naturally upset, for all calculations about the time it would take to industrialise China have been well and truly washed out. But President Tito has also joined in the outcry, and this has to be examined even though he himself enjoys the rank and trappings of a marshal, with the powers of a dictator.

The Yugoslavs feel certain that they too are well on the way to Socialism, but that they would avoid certain errors of the USSR in their progress. They may well claim to have avoided (for whatever reasons and by whatever methods) the upheavals of Hungary and Poland. As nearly as I understand the situation, their land has been redivided. Landlords are not a problem. The dominant land-ownership is by middle peasants. No collectivisation will be introduced till the Party judges that the time is ripe for it. We need not discuss the reproach that this means surrender to the kulaks; that Yugoslavia survives only by taking aid from all and sundry; and that U.S. handouts would not have been forthcoming if the State Department believed that Yugoslavia were really headed for socialism. The Yugoslavs have every right to go their own way, to choose both goal and means.

Here, the masses are planning much more efficiently than could any experts. As a result of the Hundred Flowers Policy, they have begun to question everything in the books on an experimental basis. When it was "scientifically proved" that a certain crop had such and such a maximum yield, the peasants tried to better it, and generally succeeded, in some cases doubling the "maximum" with ease. This, after all, is the real unity of theory and practice, in the political as well as tech-

The Real Difference

The real difference lies in their attitude that collective production in agriculture will be introduced if and when necessary. The Chinese peasants have developed to such an extent that they did not wait for any one to "introduce" any new forms. After land reform and redivision, they formed mutual aid teams, then came the first cooperatives, with bitter struggle against poverty and lack of resources, but without fear of landlords or officials. The next step was apportioning profit by work-days. And by 1957, even before the Communes, many cooperatives had gone to the extent of pooling all earnings, from every source. Each family would be allotted a fair amount for its needs, by common consent. The rest went into the cooperative's development capital.

No State or Party directive was needed to "introduce" this, nor to introduce the new forms now demanded and worked out by the peasantry. In classical Marxist theory, the peasant is generally regarded as an incurably reactionary member of the petty-bourgeoisie. In China, he has shown himself the equal of the worker in assuming an advanced position. This shows the fundamental correctness of Mao Tse-tung's thesis last

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PRISONER IN PAKISTAN

After suffering ten years of imprisonment, indignities and tortures in Pakistani jails, Siraj-ud-Din has returned to his motherland. It was some time in September-October 1947, that he a Kashmiri youth of 19, had left Bombay for Rawalpindi via Karachi to reach his home in Srinagar. He never reached his destination. After a unique and incredibly heroic struggle, which has turned him prematurely grey and bald, shrivelled up and shrunken, Siraj Din landed back in Bombay on November 18 last. On January 2 he narrated his Pakistan experiences to the Press in New Delhi.

THE Pakistan authorities charged him of being an "enemy agent", an "Indian spy", he asserted he was an Indian national, a Bharati and a Kashmiri who stood for Kashmir's accession to India, considered it the only correct course. Through all torture and suffering he stood firm. To all appeals to religion he turned a deaf ear. Lure of wealth and security failed to buy him.

Born in a middle-class Kashmiri family of handicraftsmen as the youngest of his father's third and last wife, he was orphaned at an early age. He was adopted by a neighbour who had no son and with his adopted father he travelled a number of times through Punjab and the North West Frontier Province. When a son was born to his adopted father, Siraj Din returned to his original family and faced hardships.

Soon he was drawn into the Quit Kashmir movement of 1946. Search of livelihood took him to Bombay where he lived among his compatriots, practising his traditional handicraft. By the time of the R.I.N. Mutiny he had come in contact with progressives.

Independence, partition, communal riots and uncertainty over Kashmir found him impelled to return home to be among his people. Reaching Rawalpindi he found that the tribals' attack on Kashmir had begun. There was looting and disorder in Rawalpindi too, for the tribemen would spare nobody. Moreover, thirty per cent of Pindi's population being Kashmiri the Pakistan police started rounding up National Conference supporters.

Siraj Din finding his passage to Srinagar blocked started his own one-man campaign against the Cunningham-organised attack on his beloved Kashmir. He could speak Pushtu well as a result of his travels in those areas with his adopted father. He went among the tribals, took every possible opportunity of telling them that the raid which they had been incited to undertake was very far from being a holy war.

By his enterprise and daring he managed to reach even the Faqir of Ipi who was the head of the Waziris and whose name was unjustly linked up by Pakistani propaganda with the raid on Kashmir. He told Ipi of the British imperialist game behind the aggression on Kashmir, their game of eliminating by one stroke the independence-loving, fighting tribesmen, of striking at Indian independence, of grabbing Kashmir and eventually destroying Afghanistan's independence, too.

Pakistan he said, was only the old wine of imperialist domination in a new bottle. He found sympathy and understanding for his viewpoint in the Faqir of Ipi. The Faqir subsequently had handbills distributed among the tribes telling them the truth about the "jihad" in Kashmir.

Returning from there, Siraj Din was betrayed by a Pakistani spy who had seen him with the Faqir of Ipi and he was arrested at the Tank railway station on January 16, 1948.

Then started the long nightmare of Pakistani police and their British officers trying to extort confessions out of him. He was kept in police remand up to May 1949 and taken from place to place to be interrogated and identified. For four months in this period, as he says, he was honoured by be-

tried round such questions: What is your rank? What section of intelligence do you belong to? Whom all have you met in Pakistan; who are your contacts and accomplices here? Where and what arms have you hidden here? Where is your transmitter? Which of our informants have you passed on to the Indian Government? Who is your immediate officer from whom you receive your instructions?

They were convinced he was a regular spy sent by the Indian Government. He had nothing to tell them and they got nothing out of him.

For almost 16 months they kept him under remand and only after having failed in their efforts in the Lahore Fort did they send him to Peshawar Central Jail on May 3, 1949 to be detained under Section 3 of the Frontier Safety Act. Initially he was detained for three months, the detention being ex-

ting taken to and kept in the notorious Pakistani torture chamber of Lahore Fort.

He was taken here by deception on January 8, 1949. He had been told that orders had been received for his repatriation to India.

He was kept in an underground cell, absolutely dark, with no opening. No food, no water, no mattress was given for the first twenty-four hours. Then somebody threw in a packet of cigarettes, a match-box and a packet of biscuits. At nightfall a man came, expressed great sympathy over his suffering and said he too was a Kashmiri. He said he would do all to help him. Then Siraj Din was taken out from the cell and pushed into another room, where he found a woman—painted up and giggling. She was a harlot. He threatened to kill her and she shouted for help. Only then was he taken back to his cell.

Torture In Lahore Fort

Then tortures followed. It was winter. Torture with cold water; hung head down for 24 hours; by smoke of dry chillies being burned under his nose; electric torture twice. Beating was common—all sorts and on all spots, on all occasions, sometimes with great fanfare and preparation, sometimes suddenly, without warning. Sometimes they would form a circle and he would be in the middle, then pass him like a football or a volleyball, kicking him and giving him blows.

Worst of all the tortures was not allowing him to sleep, sometimes for 48 hours at a stretch. He found it the most difficult to endure. Even the doctor said he would die if it was not stopped. Interrogation in the Fort con-

tinued later by six months. He was kept in solitary confinement and given 'C' class treatment.

Released, Jailed Again

In October 1949, he moved a writ petition before the Judicial Court at Peshawar and knowing that the petition would succeed, the police released him on the 19th while the final hearing was to be held the next day. On his release, the Deputy Commissioner, Nawabzada Sher Afzal Khan told Siraj Din that orders for his repatriation to India had been received and the police would take him to the border and let him across. Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner asked Siraj Din to stay with him, which he agreed to. When October 20, the date of the final hearing of his writ petition had passed and the petition had been declared infructuous, the prisoner having been released, the police again arrested him right outside the Deputy Commissioner's house.

This time, besides detention under the Frontier Safety Act his arrest was additionally under Section 109 Cr. P.C. too. For the next six years, he continued to be in detention in the various central jails of the NWFP. Several detention laws failed and were declared invalid by the courts. Yet he continued to be detained. After every such failure, his detention would be proved to be illegal and yet his habeas corpus applications continued to be rejected. His applications to the Indian High Commissioner would not be forwarded. He does not know what happened to the several petitions he addressed to the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

All this while he continued to be kept in solitary confinement in 'C' class. Even the rights and allowances as a security pris-

oner were denied to him. He had no course except to stake his life to put sense into the heads of the Pakistani authorities to recognise and respect his rights as an Indian national and to repatriate him and in the meantime to give him a security prisoner's treatment in jail.

In April 1955 he launched on a fast unto death to secure acceptance of his demands. The police served him with

an order to furnish a security of Rs. 5,000, a personal bond of Rs. 5,000 and report to the police station twice a week. He flatly refused to accept the first condition not only because he could furnish no such security but also because he was not a Pakistani and hence the question could not arise. Prosecution was launched against him but he had again to be released as a result of the High Court's intervention.

Appearing before Justice S. M. Rahman, the Pakistan Times of March 4, 1958 reported, "The petitioner submitted... that he had met the Deputy High-Commissioner for India and the latter had refused to grant him a certificate to go to India on the ground that the petitioner was a Muslim. He further submitted that he was not a citizen of Pakistan and being a Muslim not acceptable to India. He submitted that he should be permitted to change his religion and adopt the name of 'Sri Ram' or the Government (of Pakistan) be directed to hang him".

The authorities withdrew the first two conditions but maintained the last one—reporting to the police twice a week. Siraj Din's struggle to get back home, he discovered, had only started. The indifference, inefficiency and red-tape that prevailed in the Indian High Commission took months to penetrate and he could make no headway till he came upon a sympathetic officer there. When military dictatorship was imposed on Pakistan on October 7, Siraj Din found that remaining out of jail, even under constant police surveillance was impossible for him. He decided that the only place in Pakistan territory where he could remain safe from the hands of the Pakistan police was the Acting High Commissioner's residence and he took himself



SIRAJ-UD-DIN

tion for habeas corpus was accepted by the Chief Justice of the West Pakistan High Court and Siraj was released from jail three days later. The first thing he did was to approach on October 13, the Indian Deputy High Commissioner at Lahore with all his papers and with the request that arrangements be made for his immediate repatriation to his own country.

Here the usual red-tape and suspicion came in the way and while he made rounds of the Deputy High Commission, he was again arrested on February 1, 1957. Despite the fact that the Pakistan C.I.D. constantly shadowed him, and made it impossible for anyone to give him shelter even out of sheer human considerations, they would not allow him to remain at liberty. He was too dangerous. The police served him with

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Even The Judges

One of the learned judges hearing a habeas corpus rebuked him for his ingratitude to the Pakistan Government which instead of ordering him to be hanged had allowed him to live though in jail and he was so ungrateful that he continued to pester them with writ petitions! Besides the police officers, among whom were some Britishers too, some of the learned judges also would appeal to him in the name of Islam to transfer his allegiance to Pakistan by accepting Pakistani citizenship. He would pour scorn and contempt over their advances. Finally it was on October 9, 1956, that his twelfth writ pe-

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* SEE PAGE 10



Commune members in Yusha County, Kirin Province, attend a performance presented by Commune's art group in the new club-house.

JAMSHEDPUR: STORY OF A STRIKE

When the great Jamshedpur strike took place in May last, the Tatas called it "the Communist bid for power in Jamshedpur"—a Communist conspiracy to capture the "Ruhr Valley of India" and thus lay the basis for the conquest of the country's economy.

THE Communists and the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union (JMU) agreed there was a conspiracy—but it was a conspiracy of the Tatas to deny the workers their legitimate rights, to impose a discredited minority union on their heads, a conspiracy to smash the union which really represented them and fought for their demands.

The standpoint of the JMU in many essential points was recently upheld by the most unexpected quarters—a foreign "economic historian" interested in 19th and early 20th century economic change, "not preoccupied with current labour relations problems."

Mr. Morris David Morris is no special friend of the Communists or the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union. In fact, his long article in the *Economic Weekly*, Bombay (November 1, 1958) shows that he has plenty of prejudices against the Communists. He takes for granted quite some of the facts as put by the Tatas and the Government, he writes with "gratitude for the Company's hospitality to scholarly endeavour."

With all that, Mr. Morris makes an attempt to look at the Jamshedpur events with a serious approach, not wholly partisan. In his analysis of the malady he somewhat tends to forget his prejudices and draws conclusions—which bear out what the JMU had said.

Mr. Morris was in Jamshedpur a year before the May strike and lying in a hospital there he had occasion to see and hear a few things for himself.

What did he see? What did he hear? What are his conclusions? He sets these out in his *Economic Weekly* article from which we are quoting extensively on these pages.

Beginning Of The Trouble

The Tata booklet, "The Story of a Strike", issued on July 15, 1958, set the 1958 election of Comrade Kedar Das to the Bihar Assembly on the Communist ticket as the beginning of the Jamshedpur trouble. "This isolated success... was the signal for a concerted move to establish dominance over the labour movement."

What is Mr. Morris' finding on this? He writes: "The troubles in Jamshedpur do not begin with the election of Kedar Das to the Bihar Assembly in 1957. If harmony existed prior to that time between Company and Union and inside the Union, one can legitimately ask why Kedar Das defeated the TWU (Tata Workers' Union)—sponsored candidate by a thumping majority and why a second CPI candidate in Jamshedpur was only narrowly defeated by another TWU-sponsored candidate at the same time? While it is possible that CPI strength in Jamshedpur during the General Elections was

associated with the Bengali-Bihari controversy, it is more likely that support for the CPI stemmed from strictly industrial issues." (Emphasis added)

Mr. Morris gives a background picture—which proves that the crisis in Jamshedpur and the strike of May-12 were the result of a long period of discontent, on demands which the Company and the INTUC union had failed to satisfy, demands which in principle were right and just. It is not, as the Tatas say, that the JMU taking advantage of "all the disgruntled elements in the various unions at Jamshedpur," made "a number of unwarranted and unrealistic demands, clearly for the purpose of pitching labour claims substantially higher than those put forward by the INTUC union."

Workers' Discontent

Mr. Morris provides a different background. "There is no doubt that a considerable element of discontent was associated with the Tariff Commission ruling that increase in the pay of TISCO non-works employees, traditionally linked with those granted to production workers, would no longer be considered as costs for purposes of determining the retention price of Tata steel.

"Another source of discontent existed among the substantial number of workers who were employed by TISCO on a casual basis for many years and who sought to be included in the permanent workforce in order to obtain the many benefits involved in that status.

"But the main source of tension on which the Communists have been able to work arises from the Company's remarkable programme of expansion of capacity from one to two million tons.

"One of the main objectives of the expansion programme was to secure a rational deployment of the labour force, which, for historical reasons, was greatly in excess of requirements, as confirmed by independent experts and the Planning Commission (The Story of a Strike, pp 9-10)

"The new steel plants at Rourkela, Durgapur and Bhilai are designed to employ some 7-8,000 production workers in million-ton-plants, while the present TISCO plant, designed during the First World War, employs some 30,000 workers to achieve the same output. This is no reflection against TISCO efficiency. The plant was designed in accord with wage costs and technical necessities of that earlier period.

"Nor were economic conditions favourable for a revamping of the plant before World War II. Not until after Independence could the Company consider a major reorganisation and the enhancement of efficiency. "The current Two-Million-Ton programme not only involves the doubling of steel

output but also the modernisation of existing facilities. The Two-Million-Ton programme will permit the production of a doubled output with substantially fewer workers. (An American technician associated with the Kaiser organisation privately estimated that the Company could achieve this doubled production with perhaps 7,000 fewer workers than are now employed to produce one million tons of steel.)

"While the Company has stated frequently that no workers would lose their jobs, it obviously recognised that the rationalisation of the labour force on the monumental scale required would be accompanied by many difficulties. It was with this in mind that the path-breaking agreement between TISCO and the Tata Workers' Union was signed in 1956.

"Viewed with these elements in mind, the recent difficulties had their origin not in the election of Kedar Das but in the 1956 Agreement. From what evidence there is, it seems clear that the terms of the Agreement did not reflect the urgent issues as seen by the workforce at the time.

"Moreover the contract was not even the result of the Union's initiative, or an effort to get a solution to these problems. As I have

the other at the beginning of 1957. (Neither of these increases, however, were to rank as part of substantive pay for any purposes.)

"The main worker-oriented provision was the Company statement that it was prepared to offer, in recognition of the increased labour productivity and the larger profits resulting from the plant expansion programme, an appreciable upward revision in the wages and emoluments of the Works employees. (1956 Agreement, Clause 24) (Workers who work in the steel mills are the works employees, while those employed for other work in the Steel City are termed by the author as Town workers, since the town is owned by the Tatas.—editor)

Vague Promises

"However, there were basic qualifications in this guarantee. Apart from the fact that non-Works (Town) employees were not included, the proposed increases had to wait on the completion of the Company's plant and... the job evaluation programme, that was to be undertaken. (1956 Agreement, Clause 24)

"In fact, the promise of substantial wage increases

did it come under the serious scrutiny of the workforce. This fact is important because it is evidence that although the Tata Workers Union has presented a public impression of power and vitality, it has never successfully established these basic forms of organisation that give to effective unions in the West the reality of democratic participation no matter how authoritarian the leadership."

"While the Communists made every effort to take over this strike, the Town worker leaders at this time still refused to be seduced by them. The strike remained a purely intra-union issue provoked by a clear and probably correct feeling that if Town wages were no longer to be linked to those of Works employees, they would inevitably be linked to municipal wages around the country. If so, the Town employees would have to wait a long time for the national municipal wage average to catch up with the Jamshedpur average.

Tension Spreads

"While trouble on the Town side developed quickly, tension in the Works took somewhat longer to appear. But from October 1956, as the impact of

one of the underlying causes of resentment against him. "Mr. John has not been identified as possessing a persistent, energetic and driving ambition to defend his workers at every turn. "Perhaps it is because he had dissipated his energies. He is President of thirty (some say sixty) unions. Perhaps he is getting too old to make the fight; or perhaps he has seen the needs of the Company in the broader context of the Five-Year Plans and recognised the workforce will have to make sacrifices.

Portrait Of A Leader

And about the leader, Mr. Michael John himself, Mr. Morris writes:

"The present leader, Mr. John, has a long and honourable record of intimate association with Jamshedpur trade unions going back to the 1929 strike when he was a foreman of the Tinplate Company.

"Despite his years of service to the cause of the Jamshedpur workers, by the beginning of 1957 Mr. John had become widely suspect among the workforce. Although he has refused to take a salary from the Union, he drives a Mercedes-Benz which became the cause of much comment. The desire for a large elegant car is a human instinct in the mo-

But whatever the reason, Michael John is not looked upon as a powerful leader, nor has he been able to build a formal organisation to overcome the limits of his personality. The lower the level of workers one speaks with, the stronger and more pervasive is the feeling that "Michael John is the DALAL of the Company."

"While no top-level company official is willing to admit John's failure, his inability to control the workforce became clear soon after the 1956 Agreement was signed. There were innumerable grievances that were ostensibly settled between John (or his subordinates) and the Company. However, when the workers refused to accept a settlement, Mr. John would in effect shrug his shoulders and tell the

Double Drama

"Since the beginning of 1956, there has been a double drama working itself out. On the surface there were the formal and elegantly satisfactory relations between Union and company; below the surface there was the growing discontent unrecognised by either group.

"The failure of the Town workers' rebellion in May 1957 to force Michael John to recognise that the Agreement was thoroughly disagreeable not only to them but in various ways to almost every group of the workforce set the stage for the Communists. On this widespread and fundamental disaffection the Communists could work with great

IT WAS NO COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY

FOREIGN SCHOLAR'S STUDY BEARS OUT JAMSHEDPUR MAZDOOR UNION'S STAND IN ITS ESSENTIALS, GIVES THE LIE TO TATAS' CHARGE

suggested, one gets the impression that the whole idea of a comprehensive contract originated with the Company as a device to resolve the critical problems associated with the Two-Million-Ton programme."

This is the background picture that Mr. Morris draws. What about the 1956 Agreement itself—an agreement which had been lauded to the skies when it was signed? Did it offer anything to remove the discontent of the workers?

Truth About An Agreement

On the contrary. Mr. Morris writes: "...the Agreement that emerged contained a great many union-oriented provisions but relatively inadequate worker-oriented clauses. This is not to say that workers got nothing. Far from it. But while the union got recognition as sole bargaining agent, the promise of maintenance-of-membership and dues check-off and effective control of the elaborate paraphernalia of the worker-participation-in-industry scheme, the workforce gains were limited and frustrated by vagueness.

"Workers got a modest improvement in gratuity rules, some added housing and hospital facilities, a reiteration of the promise of no retrenchment and two modest ad hoc pay increases for the lower-paid employees, one effective at the beginning of 1956 and

was completely vague as to amount and date of information. They would not come before the new plant had been in operation for some time, certainly not before 1960 and probably not until 1961. In return for the ad hoc wage increases of 1956 and 1957 and the promise of the future wage revision, the Union agreed that there should be no further demands for increases in wages or emoluments (including gratuities); during the intervening three or four years (1956 Agreement, Clause 23). Nor was there any provision in the Agreement for the future wage settlement to be retroactive to any fixed date."

This is the truth about the "path-breaking" agreement. And far from the JMU raising irresponsible demands, it was the workers' discontent that began to burst out against the Agreement and the Tata Workers' Union miserably failed to stand by the workers.

By mid-year the tensions had become so pervasive that my own expectation was that major trouble would engulf the whole operation during the last half of 1957...

Town Workers' Hostility

According to Mr. Morris, "There is no place to resurrect the chronology of disorder. It is sufficient to say that the ten thousand Town workers reacted immediately and with great hostility to the section in Clause 24 that proposed that the larger profits resulting from the increased productivity in the Works should not entitle the Town and other employees outside

the new programme began to be felt, more and more incidents took place in production departments, and by the beginning of 1957 they were common occurrences.

"While long-service temporary workers, seeing the labour-saving character of the programme, recognised that they now had no hope of ever being made permanent and became increasingly disturbed, permanent employees, being shifted into new or renovated labour-saving process, protested. It is interesting that the protests from the permanent workers were not so much directed against the new labour deployment patterns as against the Company's refusal, based on the Agreement to establish new rates until the whole Two-Million-Ton programme was in effect.

Company's "Dalal"

"But John L. Lewis, despite the comfort in which he lives and his reputation for sympathy to the problems of the employers, has by the vigour of his advocacy preserved the reputation that he is fighting for his membership. That reputation is sustained not only in the annual or bi-annual contract negotiations but in the day-to-day struggle to advance the cause of his membership within the terms of the agreement.

"Unfortunately, Michael John did not get an Agreement that was satisfactory, and he has not been able to provide the impression of a day-to-day preoccupation with the needs of his members. In fact, despite the elaborate grievance procedure that has been established under the Agreement of 1956, its inefficient functioning is

Company that it would have to proceed on its own course of negotiations with the aggrieved workers and find a solution acceptable to them.

Company's Behaviour

"Nor apparently did he try to mend his deteriorating position. Witness his inability to recognise that something had to be done to placate the Town workers. Nevertheless, the Company persisted in its determination to make the TWU under Mr. John's leadership a successful union.

Company's "Dalal"

"In its efforts to bolster union leadership the Company frequently violated the basic principles of work discipline, went against its own standing orders and often reversed the decisions of its foremen in disciplinary cases.

"The reasons for the Company's behaviour are unclear. Partly it seemed to arise from the fear that the failure of Mr. John's leadership would mean a less responsible—i.e., a more aggressive—workforce. Partly, perhaps, there was the Company desire to be seen as a progressive employer, and which has a strong union with which it deals."

The reasons are not so unclear, then. The JMU had always said that Mr. John and his leadership had lost the support of the vast majority of the workers, and that the Company was imposing it on the workers as the recognised union be-

effectiveness. "There are always minor grievances arising in any large industrial enterprise. Unfortunately, the grievance procedure tended to be dilatory in many cases. When the Communists appeared on the scene in June 1957 they not only attacked the 1956 Agreement but they also applied the tactic of direct action to various minor grievances. In many cases, the tactic succeeded, and their success produced strength.

"When the (Tata Workers' Union) finally recognised the threat and itself attempted to act more vigorously in grievance matters, the Communists were in a position to claim that they were responsible for the victories. The quick scramble by Company and Union to deal cooperatively with some of the problems merely reinforced the impression of collaboration between these two groups and thus cost additional worker support....

Advice To Tatas

"While discontent and occasional upheavals by the workforce must be expected, there are some steps that can be taken by the Company to eliminate certain sources of tension and the type of violent outburst that took place last May....

"...if the Company feels obligated to deal with a union—or even if it does not—certain facts of life have to be recognised. "One fact is that worker

memories are in some ways exceedingly short and have to be frequently stimulated. "It is not a question of how good the company has been to the workers generally but what the Company has done for them recently.

"A second fact is that workers are fundamentally interested in improvements that enhance the pay packet. Ambitious work-participation schemes and elegant social welfare programmes with similar intent are frills that have little if any meaning to the workforce at this stage of economic development. There are, of course, many other axioms that could be set down, but these two will suffice for my point that, apart from the Town worker issue, the critical weakness of the 1956 Agreement was the long delayed and extremely vague basic wage proposal."

Advice To Tatas

And about the Tata-John plea that job evaluation would ultimately lead to wage-increase, Mr. Morris writes: "The Company should not have bound the Union to the long interval between the ad hoc increases of 1956 and 1957 and the ultimate settlement in 1960 or 1961. While the proposal was completely rational in economic terms and entirely consistent with the long-run interests of the economy, it was not reasonable to expect that the workers would quietly accept the massive readjustments of workloads without expecting to have their pay packets "sweetened". It would have been possible to have applied the new job-evalua-

tion scheme as new units came into operation and modest wage increases could have been introduced at frequent intervals to ease the transition. The total cost would probably have been no greater than that ultimately envisaged by the Company.

"In terms of strengthening the Union, it would have been better not to have bound the Union to that inflexible Agreement. It would have been more satisfactory to have had an annual reopening of the Agreement to negotiate projected wage changes along lines I have suggested. It is possible that there would have been some tension associated with each year's negotiations. But this in itself would have served as a catharsis, satisfying the workers that their leadership was vigorous and would have left less room for successful Communist agitation."

Advice To Tatas

Such are the conclusions that have been drawn from a serious study of the Jamshedpur crisis. As we said earlier, in most of the essentials the standpoint of the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union has been borne out by these conclusions.

Yet leaders and workers of the JMU are standing trial in Jamshedpur today. If the Government has any respect for justice and trade-union democracy, it should withdraw the cases against the JMU leaders and workers, release them and get the Tatas to recognise the JMU, the Government should stop victimising Jamshedpur workers on the basis of what the Tatas say.

What are the conclusions that emerge from this study of the situation in Jamshedpur before the strike of May 1958 by the foreign economic scholar, Mr. Morris David Morris?

ONE, the trouble in Jamshedpur did not begin with the election of Kedar Das to the Bihar Assembly on the Communist ticket.

TWO, there was growing discontent among the workers against the Tata-Michael John agreement of 1956. Tensions had become so pervasive that Mr. Morris was expecting major trouble during the last half of 1957.

THREE, the much-boasted Tata-John agreement would have increased workload, led to retrenchment, while promises of wage-increases etc., were completely vague.

FOUR, the leader of the Tata Workers' Union had become discredited in the eyes of the workers and it was the Tatas who were bolstering up his leadership.

These conclusions bear out in essentials the stand point of the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union. What was this stand point?

The demands of the Jamshedpur steel works, as embodied in their strike notice, included those for revision of wage-structure, interim increase in wages, rise in dearness allowance and linking it with the cost of living index, reinstatement of victimised workers' and recognition of the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union.

Mr. Morris' study proves there was discontent among the workers precisely on these issues. The JMU was, therefore, fully justified in raising these demands. The Tata charge that the JMU was raising irresponsible demands stands exposed.

The JMU said that it enjoyed the support of the majority of the workers, that the workers had not been consulted about, nor had they agreed to the 1956 agreement between the Tatas and the Tata Workers' Union, that the Tatas were refusing to recognise the JMU despite its proved majority among the workers and instead they recognised only the Tata Workers' Union as the sole bargaining agent so as to deny the JMU the right to represent workers' demands and grievances.

This, again, in its essentials is upheld by Mr. Morris' study.

The Tata case that it was the JMU which created trouble and was responsible for sabotage of national steel production thus falls like a house of cards. The guilty are the Tatas and the Bihar Congress Ministers who behaved as Tatas employees and the central Government which refused to intervene despite again and again being informed of the situation.

Guilty are they also for what has happened since—the calling out of the army to parade Jamshedpur streets to terrorise the workers, the police firing that killed two and injured many, the arrests of all the Union leaders and militants, the launching of conspiracy and other cases against them—about a thousand in number and the victimisation that the Tatas have launched in the TISCO.

ITALIAN C. P. AND THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF YUGOSLAVIA

At the Central Committee meeting of the Communist Party of Italy, held from October 15 to 17, 1958, Comrade Luigi Longo, Deputy General Secretary of the Party, reported on the meetings and contacts of the Italian Communists with representatives and leaders of Parties of other countries.

SPEAKING about relations with the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), he said: "In recent times, our relations with the LCY have been rendered difficult owing to the ideological and political positions it took at the Congress of Lybyana..."

"The positions elaborated by our Yugoslav comrades strike at the base, the fundamental reasons for our very policy... Even in previous contacts with the Yugoslav comrades differences between them and ourselves had come to the fore on the following problems: the nature of capitalism, the function of social-democracy at the present moment, and the significance and importance of what has come to be called the Socialist camp."

"It had always seemed to us that on these questions a unity of viewpoint was lacking among the Yugoslav comrades."

"Unfortunately, the League's programme demonstrates that any shift that has been made on these questions has been a shift in the direction opposite to the one we foresaw and hoped for."

Can Yugoslavia Build Socialism?

Coming to the question of the building of Socialism in Yugoslavia, Comrade Longo stated: "Is it possible to build Socialism in a small and backward country like

Yugoslavia without the aid of the other Socialist countries and outside the system of existing Socialist States, which already embraces one-third of humankind?"

"The answer cannot but be a negative one. In the study made of Yugoslav reality in the past years, we acknowledged that it possessed some of the essential elements enabling it to pro-

ceed on the road to socialism; — Social ownership of the basic means of production; — Power in the hands of the working class;

— A party that looks to Marxism-Leninism;

"But these elements must be used in a consistent and intense way for the construction of a Socialist society; otherwise they wear away and their very survival may be sooner or later threatened."

"In the information we have given about Yugoslavia we have never failed to stress that owing also to the international events affecting Yugoslavia in the last ten years its Socialist construction was still very far behind. Behind in the construction of

a Socialist industry; the Socialist forms of organisation of the agricultural economy almost non-existent; and weak in the Socialist structure of the whole economy, owing to the absence of planning and central leadership. In consequence, the technical and economic level is low, and extremely low is the level of the well-being of the toiling masses.

"It is clear that Socialism cannot live as an idea and objective alone. Having created the premises it must be realised in facts. And the facts cannot but be: technical and industrial progress, develop-

capitalist countries needs to be studied, defined and even concretised, in the light of the most recent events.

"I agree with Comrade Amendola that the perspectives of the Communist Parties in the Socialist countries: are clear and precise: the building of Socialism; and that clear and precise also are the immediate perspectives of the Communist Party in the countries liberated from the colonial yoke or struggling towards this liberation: the conquest and consolidation of national independence.

"However, this cannot be said for the perspectives of the

News from brother parties

ment and consolidation of the Socialist structures, and a rise in the living standards of the masses.

"The policy followed by the Yugoslav leaders has certainly not helped to create these facts. Their claim to be outside the Socialist camp cannot but harm the development of a Socialist reality in Yugoslavia. It is an illusion to believe that under these conditions it can build Socialism solely with American economic aid..."

Going on to deal with the question of Communist work in the advanced capitalist countries, Longo stated: "To our mind it is a fact that the Communist line of action in the more advanced

lations were the effective and necessary support for the strengthening of the cause of the Latin American people for national independence, progress and happiness, it said.

The declaration noted that the preservation of peace was closely related to the people's struggle for independence. It expressed support for the actions of the people to refuse providing military bases, concluding regional treaties and making concessions on national resources. It also demanded the banning of atomic weapons, the complete suspension of nuclear weapon tests and an agreement on general disarmament.

The delegates of the Communist Parties condemned the imperialist military provocations in the Middle East and the Far East. They also voiced active support of the people in the Western hemisphere for their struggle for independence and called on the Latin American working people, youth and all patriots to keep vigilance over the provocations and chauvinism instigated by imperialism to cause conflicts among the Latin American countries.

The declaration condemned the rampant attacks by U.S. monopoly capital. It considered that the attacks were aimed at securing rights to exploit new oil

Communist Parties in the more advanced capitalist countries."

Dealing with the attacks on bourgeois democracy and democratic institutions, he said: "What is new in all this is that it comes about not only because of the sway of political forces traditionally of the Right but also because of the shift towards this ground of forces and groups having democratic foundations and traditions."

He went on to state: "It has been indicated to Communist Parties that in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, it was up to them to take firmly into their hands the banner of national sovereignty and independence; the banner of demo-

cratic liberties. In the present phase, the struggle for these liberties can be a revolutionary struggle, if it is linked with the struggle for Socialism. In this way will be found the necessary link between the class struggle and the people's national democratic struggle and the necessary alliances to broaden and press forward the struggle for Socialism."

"In the face of this abandonment of the defence of the bourgeois liberties themselves, not only by the most reactionary bourgeois groups, but also by numerous leaders of democratic orientation and origin, it should be possible to subtract the masses from their leaders and bring them on to the active terrain of resistance and struggle for freedom and democratic institutions."

"Here arise the problems of strategy and tactics, different in each country, according to the form and the degree reached in this development; but to our mind these are the problems that must be studied and faced by the Communist and Workers' movement in Western countries, so as to be able to insert themselves in the very difficulties that beset the ruling groups of the Western capitalist countries, taking advantage of them to enable the democratic and workers' forces to move forward."

"Therefore, what is necessary is a thorough-going study of the various situations and an intense exchange of experiences and lessons, which will make it possible for each Party to see better its own perspectives of struggle at the present moment, its own tasks and the means and forces to carry them out..."

He tried to keep the news of his return secret from his two sisters in Srinagar, to give them a surprise. But the news reached them and they sent frantic and heartrending appeals to him to reach home immediately to enable them to see him. Thus it was that his meeting with the Press had to be delayed. Asserting his faith in Kashmir's accession to India as permanent and eternal, he told the Press that it was a mistake on the part of the Indian Government ever to have accepted the proposal for a plebiscite in Kashmir. The Kashmiris who happen to be living now under Pakistani rule are leading a very unhappy and miserable life. He felt after his few weeks stay in India that while people here had freedom to express their views the people in Pakistan were totally gagged.

The declaration stressed that the Latin American people striving to achieve these lofty aims were inspired by the achievements in the Socialist countries and obtained strength in their fight for peace and independence. The Latin American people welcomed the bold targets set forth by the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and other Socialist countries in carrying out their historical mission of surpassing capitalism in every field of production and guaranteeing peace, the declaration said.

THOSE WHO KEPT THE TORCH BURNING

SWAMI KESHWANAND ABHINANDAN GRANTH (Hindi). Chief Editor: Pt. Banarsidas Chaturvedi. Publisher: Sri Kumbharam Arya, Gramathan Vidya-pith, Sangaria (Rajasthan.) Price: Rs. 15.

COMMEMORATION volumes, if one is allowed to be frank, have become the fashion today and people generally do not take them seriously. But the volume under review, edited by the well-known journalist, Sri Banarsidas Chaturvedi, stands on a different footing.

Outwardly Swami Keshwanand Abhinandan Granth commemorates the 74th birthday of Swami Keshwanandji, who is one of the old guard of the freedom struggle and is at present devoting himself to constructive work. But the book is not so much of a commemoration volume as a piece of history. The major part of the volume, about 400 pages out of 588, is devoted to the history of the freedom struggle and the life stories of our martyrs—those who fell while serving the motherland irrespective of their creed or party affiliations.

Homage to martyrs has become a life mission to Sri Banarsidas Chaturvedi. "Keeping ourselves," he says, "above the discussion of violence and non-violence, and without making any differentiation, we want to pay our homage to all the martyrs." Love knows no caste or creed and Sri Chaturvedi has great love for the martyrs. That is why while paying his homage to the martyrs of the country, he does not want to see if the men concerned were Congress-

men or terrorists, Socialists or Communists and whether they believed in violence or non-violence.

History Or Distortion?

A history of the freedom movement is being compiled, and an effort is being made to enlodge the role of only one set of persons. Instead of attempting an objective history of the glorious struggle of our people, instead of making a real and inspiring record of the numerous sacrifices of young and old who braved death and defied the gallows in the service of the noble cause, there is a conscious effort, not only to minimise the role of the revolutionary movement, but to suppress its achievements altogether. As if none but those who died under the flag of a particular organisation deserve honour. Under these circumstances any effort to collect and put at one place as many facts as possible, even in the form of raw material is rendering a great service. It will be valuable source material for some future historian.

The editor has also reminded the historian of his great responsibility. "Where is the gratefulness and farsightedness," he asks, "in pushing down the ladder with which we have climbed up?" The most powerful and living section of the volume is

BOOK REVIEW

the memory of martyrs will prevent us from committing the mistake of considering every man as selfish."

On the whole, the volume contains about hundred biographical sketches of national heroes from 1857 to 1946, in addition to a short history of the freedom movement (about 90 pages).

In the end we cannot but lend our whole-hearted support to the valuable suggestion made for a martyrs' gallery or a museum at Delhi, in which photographs, statues, biographies, arms, articles and letters, personal belongings, and manifestoes and statements, etc., of our national heroes can be collected and preserved.

In this connection, we would like to point out that some persons in the Punjab under the leadership of the famous Ghadr Party revolutionary Baba Gurmukh Singh have already taken the initiative and formed a Desh Bhagat Yadgar Trust. The Trust has also purchased a big house at Jullundur for the museum. Such memorials can be established in the U.P., Bihar, Bengal and other States also.

Arms, letters, photos, etc., of martyrs are still kept safe in police archives. They should be made public property.

—SHIV VARMA

THE NEW PERIL

IDEAS, PEOPLES AND PEACE by Chester Bowles. Bodley Head, London. Price 12 sh. 6 d.

CCHESTER BOWLES distinguished himself in India as a "new look" American Ambassador. Now it seems he is on a crusade for a "new look" American foreign policy.

"Ideas, Peoples and Peace" is the concentrated expression of his views on the changes in the world situation and the need for revamping America's foreign policy posture. Well-written and skillfully argued, the book deserves our serious attention.

Valuable, in the first place, are his strictures on present American policy. The basic cause for the precipitous decline in American prestige, he outlines as "in situation after situation, we sacrificed economics, politics and ideas to military expediency." (p. 14)

Even sharper are some revealing comments made to-

wards the end of the book: "Each year eighty per cent of our foreign aid programme has gone directly or indirectly for military purposes. We have been spending close to a billion dollars annually, for instance, to maintain the South Korean army. This is about twice the annual cost of our entire global Point For Programme..."

A major share of our non-military assistance, moreover, has been given to three nations—Formosa, South Korea, Viet Nam..." (p. 169)

Illuminating, too, is his view of the anti-Communist obsession of American policy-makers, who equate Americanism with anti-Communism. He shows how this has led to the alienation of the neutralist bloc.

He urges: "We should look for more in our allies and associates than bitter anti-Communism. In our century, no one has hated Communism more than Adolf Hitler." (p. 176)

In place of this policy—rendered dangerously sterile by the amazing Soviet initiatives—Chester Bowles advocates peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union, to be backed up by adequate defence spending; disengagement in Europe; a new approach to colonial territories; an arms embargo, development fund and guarantee to Israel for the Middle East segment; etc.

This is an undoubtedly new configuration and, if realistically pursued, can help to save the world from a nuclear-weapon war. It is equally undoubted that acceptance of this programme would encounter pretty stiff resistance in the United States—we have only to recall the howl against Kennan's Reith lectures last year.

But it would be stupid and even criminal to overlook the continued reactionary aim and objective of Bowles' policy. In page after page he makes it clear that the aim is precisely to help America retain and expand its present position, albeit in a more intelligent and less warlike way.

It is out of this concern to maintain American "leadership," that Bowles makes aid to and friendship with neutralist India the heart of his new course. In this connection he paints a strikingly false and slanderous picture of People's China—falsified within a few months of publication by the great leap forward. He also advocates "two Chinas"

through a U.N. plebiscite in Taiwan.

He flatters India, especially the community development programme, calls for land reforms and for a pattern of society based on "private ownership with reasonable incentives" (p. 136). The Socialist pattern draws cynical amusement while Kerala is played up as a fearful portent. Passionate appeals are made to pour in the dollars to bolster Congress rule.

He castigates military aid to Pakistan, making the revealing admission, "the increases in the Indian national budget which were required to match the arms which we gave gratis to Pakistan were far greater than our assistance to India's Second Five-Year Plan." (p. 145)

The time has come, according to Bowles, to woo India "since India is important to world peace, not only because the future of democracy in Asia and Africa is in all likelihood tied to its success or failure but also because of her potentially decisive geopolitical and military position." (p. 180)

This is the crux of the "new look"—disruption of the friendly ties recently established between Asian nationalism and the Socialist camp as a prelude to the future moves for domination.

What can no longer be defeated by force of arms—the Soviet rocket to the moon means much—is sought to be undermined by stealth.

It is quite likely that while the more positive features of his advocacy will be assigned to limbo, the tactic of disruption might be taken up—and that too by Dulles. Are we not seeing small signs of this in the new approach to Nasser, Dulles praising Nehru's "Basic Approach" in a television interview, and the change in attitude to Sukarno?

The forces of nationalism and democracy in India and Asia, while welcoming the suggestion to give up bellicosity, need also to be on guard against the possible new "Operation Disrupt."

We might certainly accept all the aid that may be given, but not at the cost of our independence or our resolve to consolidate our freedom on the basis of democratic advance or of our fruitful friendship with the resurgent world of Socialism.

—BHIT SEN

PAGE ELEVEN

China's Communes

* FROM PAGE 6

year on "contradictions among the people."

How does the Commune run itself? Certainly not under orders of higher State officials. There is an elected council, and sections for management. Every project is discussed in full by all concerned, but the council is the coordinating body. The people organise themselves into brigades and squads, with leaders elected generally on grounds of experience. Then the work is divided according to the need of the moment and the capacity of the group. The Commune functions as one large family, but the "elders" do not occupy an immutable position by birth. The inequality of personal incomes is negligibly small, even between council members and simple workers.

Uncomprehending foreigners ask: "What about the cheat, the thief, the shirker, the black-marketeer?" Such a question is difficult for the Chinese to understand. Just as it is a matter of course and good public manners in some countries not to spit or to use bad language, so it is now a natural thing in China not to shirk. Everyone puts forward his best effort, no one is ashamed to learn. Certainly, no policeman is needed to drive people; there is no court-martial attached to the workers' brigade in a Commune. So the Chinese people can work without compulsion just as they can live comfortably without alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, tranquillizers, and prostitution.

The Communes do take military training. This is much easier than sending people away for Red Army service, and can be adjusted according to seasonal needs for labour. With the hostile environment

Voluntary Discipline

During the work, orders are given and obeyed, but every part of every project is discussed at each stage, so that these orders have motivation and the obedience a voluntary aspect. This sort of group discussion has been practised by the Chinese since 1950, and is nothing new.

There is no question now of property rights and disputes within the Commune, nor between the cooperatives which were formerly separate. Individuals realise that they have no need which the Commune will not fulfil, and that by strengthening the Commune they assure themselves a better future—not at some vaguely distant period, but from the very present.

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Relaxed, Well-Adjusted

Future regimentation in Tito's sense is not impossible, but there is no reason for the Chinese to adopt it when both food production and the people's morale are so high now. The essential is to maintain both, particularly the new mass-initiative from below in every branch of technique, and to allow it to infuse a wonderful new life into political activity. Compulsion means stress, and stress cannot be hidden from any reasonably intelligent observer. Unbiased foreign visitors generally remark that the Chinese today are the most relaxed, well-adjusted of nations, as a whole.

The Communes do take military training. This is much easier than sending people away for Red Army service, and can be adjusted according to seasonal needs for labour. With the hostile environment

LATIN AMERICAN COMMUNISTS MEET

THE Venezuelan paper *Tribuna Popular* published a joint declaration of Latin American Communist Parties... on December 21, 1958.

The delegates of the Communist Parties of Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela who had gone to Santiago to attend the 11th National Congress of the Chilean Communist Party pointed out with satisfaction in their joint declaration that democracy and legality had been or were being restored in the Latin American countries as a result of the efforts of the working class and the progressive organisations.

The declaration said that the process of democratisation was of great importance to the struggles for national liberation, social progress and universal peace. Precisely because of this, imperialism and its agents had attempted to obstruct this process, used their whole efforts to preserve some Governments which resorted to terrorist actions, placed difficulties on Governments which acted in accordance with their respective constitu-

tions, maintained and deepened the instability of the constitutional Governments, engineered coup d'etats as they had done in Guatemala, and instigated new persecutions against the working class and the most resolute patriots.

Fight Imperialist Plans

The declaration pointed out that in these circumstances, international unity in Latin America and the world was of decisive importance. Therefore, it was all the more necessary than ever before to organise the democratic and progressive forces in all countries to oppose the plans of the imperialists and their agents and to support the struggles of the Latin Americans for democracy, independence and peace.

The Communist Parties warmly welcomed the growth of the conscious aspirations for peace in their respective countries, the declaration said. They warmly welcomed the growth of diplomatic, cultural and trade relations with the Socialist countries. These re-

Maharashtra Sugar Unions'

United Stand

Nine sugar workers' unions in Maharashtra representing the workers of 16 sugar concerns including some cooperatives and seven sugar manufacturing cooperatives that are under construction, have submitted their "Replies" to the Central Sugar Wage Board Questionnaire.

THE significant feature of these "Replies" (published by Sri R. S. Kulkarni, Convener, Committee of all the Trade Unions in Sugar Industry in Maharashtra, 11A Bapu Lodge, Club Back Road, Bombay 8) is that they are the result of the collective efforts of the leadership of these unions belonging to various affiliations—four of these unions are affiliated to the INTUC, three to the AITUC and two to the HMS. The answers are unanimous, but have been submitted by all the unions separately.

It is quite true that they could not agree on a united platform to deal with the Wage Board. Nevertheless the very fact that they have arrived at unanimous conclusions on the demands of the workmen and the pro-

blems of industrial relations in the sugar industry in Maharashtra is a matter of immense significance and imparts great strength to their struggle for better wages.

It is also noteworthy that Sri Gangadhar Ogale who represents workmen on the Central Wage Board is the General Secretary of one of these nine unions, the Shree-rampur Taluka Sakhar Kamgar Sabha representing the workers of four sugar manufacturing concerns in the area.

The total number of workmen employed in the sugar industry in Maharashtra will approximately be 20,000 in the factories and 60,000 on the farms of the factories concerned. The total sugar production of these factories in 1956-57 was 244,000 tons.

LABOUR NOTES

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

The "Replies" and the statistics appended furnish indisputable proof of the staggeringly increasing prosperity of the industry in Maharashtra along with the appalling wage and working conditions of the workmen employed.

The production of sugar in the factories in Maharashtra has continuously gone up from 108,798 tons in 1947-48 to 244,000 tons in 1956-57.

Figures from the Tariff Commission Reports indicate that sugar factories in Maharashtra have always reaped greater profit per maund of sugar than in the rest of India. In 1947-48, profit per maund of sugar was Rs. 10.62 to Rs. 17.51 in certain factories in Maharashtra.

As compared to this, the average annual earnings of factory workers in the sugar

industry in Maharashtra has always been less than those of their brethren in the rest of India. In 1956, for example, the average annual earnings of a sugar factory worker in Maharashtra were Rs. 892 whereas those in Bihar were Rs. 918, in U. P. Rs. 924, in Madras Rs. 977, in West Bengal Rs. 1,330, and in the Punjab Rs. 1,522.

The intensity of exploitation of the Maharashtra sugar worker can be gauged from the fact that the percentage share of workers' earnings in net value of factory output in the year 1953 was 14.71 in Bombay when the all-India average for the sugar industry itself was 28.73. Compare this with the Bombay textile workers' share of 75.41 (all-India 62.42), paper 61.95 (all-India 30.26) and iron and steel 66.33 (all-India 33.64) during the same year.

The Maharashtra sugar industry has other advantages too. The sugar recovery in Maharashtra is the highest in the country. In 1956-57, this stood at 11.60 per cent. In fact it was higher than that in Java (11.49 per cent) and compared well with Cuba's 12.25 per cent and Mauritius 12.03 per cent.

Another distinguishing feature of Maharashtra sugar factories was that they invariably had their own sugarcane farms and did not purchase from the cultivators.

Hence its paying capacity is undoubtedly high and the margin of profit is staggeringly huge.

The memorandum of "Replies" claims a minimum consolidated wage of Rs. 155 at the cost of living index number 350 (Base 1935=100) and then full neutralisation of any further rise by a dearness allowance linked with the cost of living index.

They have adhered to the 15th Indian Labour Conference norms of a need-based minimum wage and calculated the requirements for a family of three—consumption units as under: food—Rs. 108.00; clothing—Rs. 11.00; house-rent Rs. 10.00; miscellaneous—Rs. 25.40; total—Rs. 155.00.

It would be recalled that Comrade Dange had suggested this minimum for Bombay textile workers on the basis of the 15th Indian Labour Conference norms in his evidence before the Textile Wage Board.

From the "Replies" we find that the unions (irrespective of their affiliation) are planning of management's trying to boost up company unions and foster rivalries among the unions.

The unions have pointed out that supervisory staff is used as tools of the employers against the workers and their interests.

However, the younger ones among the technical and the supervisory cadres are seeing through this game and are more and more cooperating with the unions.

The "Replies" deal with the problem of automation and rationalisation and also the claim of the employers to reduce the cost of sugar production by at least Rs. five per ton in order to "compete" in the foreign market.

The "Replies" strictly adhere to the 15th and 16th Tripartite recommendations on the question of rationalisation and point out that the cost of production could be brought down by doing away with the managing agency system and putting a ceiling on profits at three per cent.

As regards the cry of fall in exports, it is nothing but a cover to attack the workers. We are facing this in the textile industry and will be facing it more and more in the sugar industry.

Let the textile and the sugar magnates not raise a hue and cry in order to conceal the real state of affairs and fog our vision.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

be that with the growing public sector all economic power will concentrate in the hands of the State and individual freedom will gradually diminish to the point of disappearance.

Sri Shroff then approvingly quotes Vinoba Bhave against the growing concentration of power in the hands of the State. This will not prevent him and his brother-capitalists from demanding that the State should use its police and military against the strikers as it did in Jamshedpur. That, of course, is maintenance of law and order. All he wants is that the State should not interfere in economic matters—that is an encroachment on individual liberty.

This propaganda has been so insistent and pressing that Sri Nehru had to take notice of it in his Press Conference last week. Sri Nehru stated in New Delhi: "When the private sector tries to run down the public sector, then it puts forward a wrong foot and if somebody treads upon it, it should not object. In fact, I would go a step further that private enterprise may come in the way, and it does come in the way of the functioning of the democratic apparatus. I should have thought that recently, in the last few months especially, there has been a good deal of propaganda to the effect that private enterprise should not be touched. . . they object to our aiming at what we call the socialistic pattern of society."

How the private sector and the venal Press raised a vicious campaign over the decision of the Defence Department to manufacture the trucks required for the army is well known. This campaign was initiated and abetted by some people close to Nehru who act as agents of Big Business. Every effort is made to discredit the public sector which has enough scandals of its own, thanks to bureaucraticism and corruption.

This, of course, is strong language for the foreign vested interests to take. It only shows that they, aided by the indigenous capitalists, feel strong enough to get away with it and soften the Government. They know their friends inside the Congress and even in the Cabinet. One of them at least is Sri Morarji Desai whom they have recently taken to task for not taking a firm line.

"Everyone present got the impression that Mr. Morarji Desai has now relegated himself to a subordinate position in the Government of India in which he merely reflects what is clearly another voice." This is the Eastern Economist's (December 12, 1958) comment on Morarji's speech before the Associated Chambers. And the Capital commented, "Mr. Desai was not in his elements; his previous statements and actions do not necessarily suggest that he is indifferent to businessmen's problems."

Their Game: Keep On Pressure

But the game is to keep on pressure, soften the Government, so that the Third Plan leaves a big field to the private sector working in collaboration with foreign, especially American, capital. Let there be no doubt. The arrogant tone of the private sector has much to do with the encouragement it has got from foreign monopoly financiers who seek modern Mir Jaffers in India.

How exactly the two voices agree can be seen from the following editorial of Capital—the voice of the British vested interests:

"The suggestion for 'control' of profits is scarcely less damaging, although it is not the kind of thing to be maintained indefinitely if the private sector is to survive at all. During the past few months, there has been a noticeable hardening in the Government's attitude towards the private sector. . . In a dozen subtle ways the old ideological approach, which is almost entirely responsible for the difficulties in which the country finds itself, is creeping back. . . It does not seem impossible that another period of slow strangulation in the private sector is on the way. Already it is shouldering the entire burden of foreign exchange shortage. The new

investment policy of the Life Insurance Corporation is a threat to the independent existence of every public company in the country. Now it is proposed that the State Trading Corporation expand its activities not only into marketing, but into the investment field as well. . . Mr. Nehru has definitely reaffirmed in recent speeches that the old disastrous trends are to be renewed now that India's friends have been persuaded to foot the bill for past mistakes. (Emphasis ours. A gentle reminder about foreign loans and duty to foreign financiers.) He has said a good deal more beside on the subject of competition between public and private sector which suggests a determined lack of sympathy and understanding of the problems of free enterprise."

And finally, this mouthpiece of British capital concludes on a democratic strain like Sri A. D. Shroff. "The official reaction so far to the swift disappearance of democratic institutions elsewhere has been to weaken further the base of economic expansion and spread wider the stifling and deadening hand of bureaucracy. Friends of democracy in the country cannot view with pleasure the recent uncompromising trends towards more Socialism and greater interference with the private sector. . . etc." Friends of democracy indeed!

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Against Foreign Policy, Too

It is not only against land reforms and the public sector that pressure is being exerted. There is silent pressure against pursuing an independent foreign policy—there is concerted effort to ignore it where it cannot be opposed and there is great reluctance to reveal the game of imperialist Powers even though it affects Asian freedom and sovereignty.

Dhebar's Presidential Address is remarkable for its casual reference to our foreign policy and for its failure to stand up in defence of Asian freedom against imperialist attacks. How does Sri Dhebar describe the imperialist machinations in Asia—the attack on Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq? "The compromises the democratic countries accepted in Formosa, Indo-China, Thailand and the anti-democratic

LATEST ON THE FOOD FRONT

NO WHEAT FOR PEOPLE OF THE CAPITAL

FROM ZIA-UL HAQ

NEW DELHI, January 7. UNION Home and Food Ministries' and the Delhi administration's short-sighted policies of eschewing popular cooperation and putting trust in hoarders and millers are responsible for throwing the capital's poor and middle-class population into the worst-ever food crisis they have faced since the war days.

Prices which have been rising constantly in the last five years have reached the peak of Rs. 25 to 27 per maund for wheat.

In the fortnight ending January 5 they rose by Rs. five per maund in the case of ordinary Dara quality of wheat. Queues at the few shops supposed to sell flour ground from imported wheat are the longest ever seen in Delhi. Five-six hundred people standing for hours at food shops and being turned away at the end—such is the fate of Delhi-dwellers today.

Punjab with which Delhi is clubbed in one food zone and from where Delhi has always received the bulk of its foodgrains has recently witnessed a steep rise in food prices and the Delhi millers to whom Government supplies 5000 bags of wheat per day have been freely exporting to Punjab flour that is meant for Delhi. The Government has put no restriction and exercises no check on these operations.

The authorities who preside over the destinies of Delhi have always been allergic to opening cheap grain shops in Delhi. It was their decision in June last to close down the then existing 50 cheap grain shops which sent up the wheat price from Rs. 14 and 15 7/8 per maund in June to Rs. 17 and 19 per maund in September. Till now there are no such shops in Delhi and in the present crisis when they have only started talking of opening such shops the Delhi

authorities are talking in terms of 100 to 150 for the whole city.

The Delhi Committee of the Communist Party under whose leadership numerous street corner meetings of up to 3,000 people have been held in the last few days and a big demonstration also took place at the Chief Commissioner's office on Wednesday, has in a letter to the latter demanded the seizure of wheat and atta stocks by the Government, the opening of at least one thousand cheap grain shops to sell wheat as well as atta and the formation of an all-parties' Food Committee. It is said in the letter that in view of the urgency of the situa-

tion people cannot be expected to wait for long.

Four of the Party's leaders—Comrades Y. D. Sharma, B. D. Joshi, Prem Sagar Gupta and Dev Dutt Atal are to go on hunger-strike from 5 p. m. on Friday, January 9 at the site of the old clock tower in Chandni Chowk. To discuss the situation the Mayor of Delhi has called an all-parties' meeting today which the Chief Commissioner is also to attend.

A leading Congress M. P. associated with exposure of many scandals in Parliament is reported to have sent a telegram to Food Minister Jain at Nagpur asking him to intervene immediately to relieve the situation.

THE P.M.'s P.A.

*FROM FRONT PAGE

of their New Delhi properties for a song to Mathai.

At Number 9, Tees January Marg, the Birlas—more precisely the Birla Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills, Ltd., Delhi (Managing Agents: Birla Bros. Private Ltd.)—had a house with extensive grounds covering 7,254 square yards, which comes to about one-and-a-half acres. This property is in the neighbourhood of the Birla House, where Gandhiji was assassinated.

Anybody having any knowledge of New Delhi lay-out will readily concede that the market value of this property would be anywhere a round Rs. ten lakhs. The Government itself has recently fixed the price of land in New Delhi at Rs. 100 per square yard. So the land alone can fetch over Rs. seven-and-a-quarter lakhs to say nothing of the building.

But how much did Mathai's Trust have to pay for it? In a letter dated August 22, 1958, the Birla Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd. officially informed the present tenant: "Thus you will find that for acquiring

this house the Trust had to spend approximately Rs. 75,000." No doubt, it was a gift from the Birlas!

Another interesting thing about Mathai is that he has taken out a life insurance policy which will start providing him with about Rs. one thousand per month in another five or six years for the rest of his life-time.

I am told that this policy was taken out by him only a few years ago—which means that he must have been paying a very heavy premium. Persons drawing the same salary as Mathai can hardly go in for policies with such a heavy premium.

With such strong and well-laid-out contacts with Big Money, for a person to continue at a strategic post having access to the highest confidences of the nation is highly dangerous to the interests of the nation.

The Prime Minister has talked of sweeping the private sector with a broom-stick if it comes in the way of the nation's interest. Will it be too much to expect him to cleanse his surroundings? (IPA).

elements they tried to bolster up in Iraq and Lebanon, were not likely to strengthen the faith of the people in democracy."

It was not democracy that accepted compromises in Formosa or Lebanon. It was the imperialist Powers that thrust them on the people. And it was not only democracy that was undermined but also national independence. But Sri Dhebar is too shy to refer to the imperialists. Barring a solitary reference to Fauch Shila, there is hardly any mention of our foreign policy.

This embarrassment before imperialism is, however, not confined to Sri Dhebar. Even in such a vital matter as military aid to Pakistan and the establishment of military dictatorship, there is no exposure of American imperialism at the hands of Sri Nehru. Is it diplomacy or is it credulousness en-

gendered by the various loans? Anyway it lulls the nation into a false sense of security and constitutes a grave dereliction of duty.

Such then is the background of the Nagpur Session. It is almost a foregone conclusion that Sri Nehru will still carry the day so far as declarations of policies are concerned; that the reactionary opposition will not carry matters to the extreme and seek decision by vote; it will temporise, procrastinate, delay. But the fact that it has behind it the support of a hundred members of Parliament; that it has wide support outside and inside the Congress means that whatever resolutions are passed can be sabotaged in practice.

Sri Nehru may declare himself for lofty ideals, noble aims, denounce free enterprise and assert the supremacy of the public sector—the point

is: will he through his organisation be able to deliver the goods? It will be difficult even for an angel to carry so many devils to heaven; and Sri Nehru is not exactly an angel.

So long as these reactionary forces continue to have their grip over the Congress, it will be forced to retreat continuously from its declared objectives and policies and further compromises will be inevitable. So long as they are there, even a decent land reform cannot be enacted, leave aside the establishment of the supremacy of the public sector.

Inside the Congress, it is Sri Nehru who, in the name of Congress unity, often shields these forces against criticism from progressive elements. It is for the progressive elements to see that the offensive of the reactionary elements is defeated at this crucial juncture.

(January 7, 1959).

BANKMEN WILL FIGHT AWARD EXTENSION

ANY attempt to extend the life of the Bank Award which is due to expire on March 31 this year will be resisted by bank employees with all their might. This warning was sounded at a Press Conference in New Delhi on the last day of the closing year by Messrs Prabhat Kar, and H. L. Parwana, leaders of the All-India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA).

Attempts to induce the Government to extend the life of the award, they said, were being made by the bankers. The award, it will be recalled, was made binding for five years in spite of the opposition of the bank employees. Embodied in the Industrial Disputes (Banking Companies) Act, the award given by the Gajendragadkar Commission laid down the terms of pay scales, allowances, and other service conditions in the banking industry.

Bankers Seek Extension

Ordinarily the life of an award is one year. It is only in exceptional circumstances that it is extended—that too at the most up to three years. In this instance the life of the award was fixed at five years. Now when this term itself is coming to an end, the bankers are seeking to get it further extended. The Central Committee of the AIBEA which met in Delhi from December 22 to 26 unanimously concluded that after the expiry of the Award on March 31, 1959, attempts should be made to enter into a bi-partite agreement at the all-India level between the AIBEA and the Indian and Exchange Banks' Association. The Committee decided to approach the Government of

India to use its good offices in this matter. Explaining the employees' viewpoint, Messrs Prabhat Kar and Farwana further told the Press:

During the discussion on the Bill in the Lok Sabha, the Labour Minister had assured that if any provision of the award worked against the employees, the Government would use its good offices to prevail upon the bankers to remove the hardship. In actual practice, however, it has been our experience that the Government did not honour its commitments and later the bankers were encouraged to misinterpret and violate many a provision of the Award in one form or the other. So much so that some banks have not even to this day implemented the award at all.

Govt. Refuses To Act

Although these lapses were brought to the notice of the Government, by the AIBEA on most of the occasions, the Government did not make any positive move to remove the grievances of the employees by forcing the bankers to properly implement the provisions of the award.

It will be recalled that the award of the LAT in the banking industry was interfered with by the Government to the detriment of the employees on the plea of the industry's incapacity to bear the so-called increase in the establishment cost. Later when confronted with the all-India movement of the bank employees, the Government was forced to refer the matter for further enquiry.

The one-man commission presided over by Mr. Justice Gajendragadkar exploded the myth of the bankers' inability to bear the burden; and with minor adjustments here and

there, the Commission recommended implementation of the LAT decision. The concessions granted by the Bank Award Commission for phasing over certain payments were found not necessary by the bankers and they paid the amounts forthwith, proving that the paying capacity of the banks was misjudged even by the commission.

Progress In Industry

During the last five years that this Award has been in operation, the banking industry has made all-round progress, which can be seen from the fact that while in 1954 the deposits in all commercial banks stood at Rs. 960.37 crores, by November 1958 it rose to Rs. 1,515 crores. The gross earning during this period has increased from Rs. 37 crores to Rs. 61.99 crores while the net profit has increased from Rs. 6.15 crores to Rs. 12.50 crores. Besides this there has been increase in advances and investments. The number of branches which was 4,006 in 1953 rose to 4,405 in 1958. The percentage in the establishment expenses to current operating expenses fell from 38.7 to 31.8.

In this background it is quite natural for the bank employees to expect an increase in their emoluments and improvement in other service conditions after the expiry of the present award and to this effect a new charter of demands has been framed by the AIBEA, which has been sent to all its State organisations for their comments and suggestions and the same will be finalised in the coming conference of the AIBEA to be held at Bangalore in the first week of February 1959.

The AIBEA Central Com-

mittee had also discussed the question of the code of discipline. It approved the same with this understanding that the AIBEA shall bind itself by the Code of Discipline, provided, however, the AIBEA and its State units are accorded recognition. The Committee was perturbed to find that the Government of India which has to get the Code of Discipline accepted and honoured both by the employers and the trade unions in all the industrial and commercial establishments throughout the country, was itself guilty of violating the same by encouraging a few individuals with a view to boosting up fake organisations against the national organisation of the bank employees, the AIBEA. The Committee has asked its units to strongly protest against such actions of the Government.

The Committee further decided that it would not accept any understanding on wages, unless other service conditions, etc., are settled with the AIBEA and/or its affiliated units. The Committee also discussed the future of the industry and demanded bank employees' participation in management.

Settlement Possible

The bank employees' leaders stated that they were anxious for an amicable settlement which they felt was possible if the bankers agreed to recognise the AIBEA and sit across the table with its representatives with a view to finding out a solution. The bank employees have suffered all along at the hands of the bankers and we feel that the time has come when it is possible to evolve better relations provided the bankers give up their vindictive and adamant attitude.



OTTO GROTEWOHL



DR. LOTHAR BOLZ

INTRODUCING THE GDR PRIME MINISTER

ARRIVING in India on January 12 is Otto Grotewohl, Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic since its foundation.

Born in Brunswick on March 11th, 1894, Otto Grotewohl learnt printing and in his young years already found his way to the Socialist working youth and to the Social Democratic Party of Germany. He devoted particular interest to political and social questions. He worked in the Social Assurance System and attended the Leibnitz Academy in Hanover and the Academy of Politics in Berlin.

His active participation in the political fight, his special knowledge and his continual care for the welfare of the working people made Otto Grotewohl soon an esteemed and popular functionary of his party. At the age of 27, he took over the office of the Minister of People's Education and of the Home Secretary of Brunswick. Later on he held office as Home Secretary and Minister of Justice of Brunswick and as President of the Country Insurance Company. Since 1925 he also worked as member of the Reichstag and as President of the SPD of Brunswick.

Otto Grotewohl always fought for a genuine workers' policy in his party. With special vigilance he watched fascism preparing to seize power. He fought it with all his power, and so it stands to reason that the Hitler regime began to persecute him, as soon as it came to power. Otto Grotewohl was forced to leave his native place. He went to Berlin and Hamburg to take part actively in the resistance fight. The Gestapo succeeded in capturing him and sentencing him on a charge of high treason. When he came out of jail, he continued his anti-fascist work. He escaped another arrest by going underground. Otto Grotewohl drew the right lessons from this hard period of his life: only through disunity of the working class had it become possible for fascism to begin its bloody terror regime. When the last shot of the war had been fired, he consistently set himself to the great task of uniting the labour movement, faithful to his words: "The highest and most precious thing for the working class is unity. We want to put it into the hands of the following generation in a pure and immaculate state, in order that

they cannot tell us: You have proved small in a great hour."

As President of the newly founded SPD he accomplished the union of SPD and KPD to form the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in cooperation with the President of the KPD, the now State President Wilhelm Pieck. He became a member of the Central Committee and the political bureau of the new party. He was grieved to see the Social Democratic leaders in West Germany continuing on the fatal path of splitting and disunity.

Otto Grotewohl knew that successful construction of the new State was possible only together with all patriotic elements.

When in October 1949, the German Democratic Republic was founded, all parties unanimously entrusted Otto Grotewohl with the responsibility of Prime Ministership of the first German State of workers and peasants. Since then, he has on numerous occasions appealed to the head of the West German State to come together for the creation of a united Germany. Over and over, he has appealed to West German Social Democracy to end the policy of fight within the nation.

Grotewohl has proved to be a consistent enemy of imperialism and militarism, an inflexible champion of Socialism, a friend of democrats and peaceful people in all countries. His great work for Germany has been rewarded with high distinctions; he is holder of the National Distinguished Service Order; he was awarded the Karl Marx Order, the Order of the State Banner of the Korean People's Democracy and the title "Hero of Labour".

Among those accompanying the East German Prime Minister are:

DR. LOTHAR BOLZ, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs;

SEPP SCHWAB, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs;

GERHARD WEISS, Deputy Minister of Foreign and Inland Trade;

MANFRED VON ARDENNE, member of the Research Council of the GDR and Professor at the Technical Academy of Dresden.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

A Factor For Peace In The Heart Of Europe

A delegation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) led by its Premier Otto Grotewohl is visiting our country. The visit arouses particular interest in the Indian people.

WITH Germany is associated not only years of turmoil and bloodshed in the chequered history of Europe, but two world-wide conflagrations, whose scars exist in a number of Indian families, as well.

With Germany is associated a principal focus of the present day cold-war tension, which might ignite a third and an incomparably much more disastrous worldwide conflagration and from which none can escape unscathed. But the present delegation of a German Government is different. It holds the hope for the future. The formation of the German Democratic Republic, covering an area of 107,862 square kilometres and inhabited by about 18 million people, has been, indeed, a big historical gain in favour of the preservation of world peace.

THE CONTRAST

The revival of German militarism in West Germany under the auspices of the imperialist Powers, and its role in the aggressive plans of the U. S. imperialist circles, in striking contrast to the peaceful trends of development in East Germany, are clear enough indications as to what would have been the picture in the heart of Europe and what would have been its international repercussions if the GDR had not been there.

No wonder then, that GDR has incurred the wrath of the imperialist Powers. Unable to wipe GDR out, the Western Powers have been pursuing one goal in the German problem, viz. the further militarisation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), the rearming of the West German Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons, the encouragement of the revanchist policy in West Germany, and the aggravation of relations between the two parts of Germany by deepening the gap between the two German States—the GDR and the FRG.

And it is precisely the result of this policy of the imperialist Powers, faithfully implemented by the FRG Government, that has led to a situation today when, in the words of the Soviet Foreign Minister, A. A. Gromyko, spoken at the USSR Supreme Soviet Session, "any provocation in West Berlin, any attempt at aggressive actions against the GDR, may start a large war in the crucible of which millions upon millions of people would perish and which would bring

ernment. Yet he is almost certain to resist the idea to the end, and the United States is too deeply committed to force such a change of policy on the grand old man." (Emphasis added)

Unfortunately, however, for the "grand old man" and for those "too deeply committed" to him, the world public opinion is increasingly pronouncing itself in favour of negotiations between the two German States. And a significant step towards a rapprochement between the two States would be the ending of the occupation regime of Berlin, on the lines of the Soviet proposals.

Added weight is thrown in favour of a peaceful solution of the German problem by the increasing development of international relations of GDR.

Internally, GDR has not only effectively implemented the obligations of the Potsdam Agreement, liquidated all tendencies towards a revival of German militarism, but has registered substantial progress in her economic and cultural development.

Today, according to the United Nations' Economic Commission for Europe, GDR ranks fifth among the industrial Powers of Europe. It has registered a bold upswing in the development of the standard of living of its working population. Its production of main food stuffs and consumer goods has permitted it to effect 15 reductions of the retail prices for these items since 1949.

In the per capita consumption of the most important staple food stuffs such as meat, butter, animal fats, sugar, it has already outstripped West Germany and, on the basis of its achievements, will catch up with and overtake West Germany by 1961.

Internationally, GDR pursues a policy for peace, co-existence and sympathies with all nations fighting for peace, national independence and peaceful co-existence. Suffice it to recall that while Iraq was immediately recognised by GDR the West German Federal Republic was still hesitating. GDR supports the national independence movements in Algeria and other colonies.

The growing economy of the GDR and her international relations may be judged from her foreign trade. Today, GDR is trading with almost all countries of the world and with 41 States it has concluded firm agreements. Its trade with India is developing at a rapid pace.

The further development of economic and cultural relations between India and GDR will not only be of mutual economic advantage and help India's industrialisation plan, but politically it will have important bearing as well.

And the best way on this occasion in which Indian people can express their traditional sentiments for the promotion of world peace and the relaxation of international tension would be to demand of our Government to recognise GDR and establish diplomatic relations, with its Government.

**** by *****
RAZA ALI

devastations and losses incomparably heavier than the last World War.

"The flames of war would inevitably reach the American continent since under the conditions of modern warfare the line of demarcation between remote and near seat of threats of war is erased. The correctness of this conclusion cannot be contested by any man who is familiar with the facts of the war and is not blinded by propaganda aimed at misleading the people and lulling their vigilance in respect to the danger of war. Only people in their dotage can discount all this, only such people can call for throwing the world into the abyss of a new war, for the sake of preserving the occupational positions in West Berlin."

GDR FOR PEACE

The Government of the GDR has shown itself alive to this danger. The fact is that all along its nine years of existence, GDR has been making repeated proposals to the West German Federal Government for a rapprochement and agreement between the two German States. GDR has submitted as much as 80 different proposals for reunification to FRG since its formation.

The Government of the GDR has once again proved true to its peaceful trend of development by accepting the Soviet proposal on the Berlin question.

In sharp contrast to this desire of the GDR Government for negotiations is the attitude of the West German Government and the imperialist Powers who back it, in rejecting the Soviet proposals.

The latter's fear for negotiations is being pointed out in the imperialist Press itself. Walter Lippman in a recent article attributes this fear to the following motives: "Perhaps the greatest risk which may for the time being be too great a risk, is that it would damage severely Dr. Adenauer's prestige in Germany. He has been ardent in opposition to the idea of a negotiation by the two Germans. But just under the surface the idea has wide support in West Germany, even in his own party, even in his own Gov-

Reactionary Offensive In France

New Year in France opened with a most savage attack by the neo-fascist forces who feel that the decks have been cleared following the assembly elections.

THE devaluation and budget measures amount to a clear declaration by the "man of destiny" and his entourage, that the France of their conception will take pride of place as the vanguard of the capitalist offensive in West Europe.

About the budget Le Monde of December 30, 1958, said: "Had it not been for the various consultations during the year they (the French Government's measures) would have been applied in the summer and the country would have learnt a little earlier that there is no reform without effort and no recovery without sacrifice."

And as if to rub in the lesson, the London Evening Standard of the same day wrote: "This was a budget which only a Government ruling by emergency decrees and independent of Parliament could have brought in."

Robbery Of People

FIRST, take devaluation. The franc is devalued by 17½ per cent with two noughts lopped off as a psychological measure against inflation. France is also to liberalise 90 per cent of her trade.

Devaluation is not supposed to lead to price-increase because expansion is being held in check. But "higher prices are in fact inevitable," says the Left-wing London Tribune of January 2.

In Algeria £2 million per day is just being wasted away as far as productive investment is concerned. Then the "prestige" atom bomb to restore French "grandeur" swallows up another huge amount. SECONDLY, on top of this comes the abolition of subsidies on bread, wine, milk, tobacco, chocolate—all necessary consumer items—which will immediately put a burden of 250 thousand million francs on the lower income groups. And for most workers the sliding scale which enabled wages, even if belatedly, to keep up with the cost of living increase, has been abolished.

THIRDLY, State support for nationalised industries is slashed, which means dearer coal, gas, electricity, railway fares and freight charges, post and telephone rates. L'Humanite of December 31, 1958, calculates that this will mean a ten to 12 per cent rise in expenditure on these items for the common man.

The beauty of this particular measure is that all these nationalised industries sell their services to the big industrialists at less than cost price. Every year, thanks to this subsidy to the big capitalists, the State electricity undertakings lose 100 thousand million francs and State railways 200 thousand million francs. Needless to say de Gaulle has not touched a penny of all this.

Most of the families of France will be hit by cut in health benefits, with the patient paying 40 instead of 20

a state of emergency—the Government can requisition all the goods, services and persons that it thinks fit to.

Justifying this passage to a state of perpetual regimentation, Soustelle, the power-mad ideologue (the description is Muggeridge's in the New Statesman of January 3) says that with the nuclear menace and ideological aggression, the menace is permanent and no dividing line can be drawn between war and peace. Civil authorities, he declared on December 30, 1958, must always look upon defence as the first priority in their daily pre-occupations. Shades of Hitler!

This is the regime which now rules France and is lauded by the American upholders of "freedom" (L'Humanite Dimanche of January 4 has drawn attention to the fact that Time commissioned Bernard Buffet to do a portrait of de Gaulle for its man of the year, full seven months ago, showing remarkable foresight—and desire).

This is the regime which the "democratic" Socialists of France, headed by Guy Mollet, hailed and brought to power as the alternative to the "Front Populaire." This is the face of the transition to a "partyless democracy" which some of our own democratic Socialists are infatuated with.

It is a portent for the whole of Western Europe. Through the Common Market, through the schemes to integrate Little Europe with the colonies of France and Belgium, the poison will be spread. Western Europe has now to serry its ranks. Toghlatti has called for a new upsurge of anti-fascism as in the 1930s. It is the need not only of Europe but of world peace itself, that such a movement be stimulated to vigorous action.

WEST-ASIA

'Operation Disrupt' Continues

COMMENTING on the recent attacks by President Nasser on the Arab Communists, the New Statesman of January 3 slyly stated that Nasser was able "to clamour upon a Middle Eastern anti-Communist platform which has immediately restored him to American favour."

Then came the successful visit of Mr. Rountree from the State Department, indicating that Washington was already nibbling at the bait... last week, therefore, he felt that the time had come to raise the campaign to a Government level... it looks as though the line will produce the pay-off in Washington and even in London.

Mr. Eugene Black of the World Bank is well known to us as an enemy of Indian industrialisation. Some two years ago he submitted such terms for the financing of the Aswan Dam as made Nasser declare that acceptance would mean that Black would be the

President and he (Nasser) his subordinate.

Now the same man has flown to Cairo for negotiations, not only for Washington, it appears, but equally for London. The UAR-UK dispute hinges around the questions of compensation for former British owners of nationalised property; whether doubtful cases should be judged by neutral arbiters or Egyptian courts; and whether compensation is to be paid by Britain for the damage she did at Port Said.

While this is the ostensible reason and one wishes good luck to the negotiators, the real objective is to carry a stage further the imperialist manoeuvre of disrupting first the unity of the Arabs and secondly, the friendship between Arab nationalism and the Socialist camp.

It is not only a question, therefore, of some internal quarrel between the Arabs, an

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

ideological controversy as it prodding the imperialists to offer some sort of economic agreements, as noted by the Egyptian paper Al Maasa.

Surely it would go directly against Arab interests to take any step that would harm in any way this fruitful cooperation between Arab liberation and Socialist resurgence. It is also obvious that when the imperialists talk of the Communist "menace" in West Asia, it is not mainly the Arab Communists they have in mind—it is precisely the Socialist camp and its aid they are attacking. To attack Communists, then, is to fit in with the latest imperialist game.

The Socialist world, which shielded the Arab liberation movement from direct imperialist aggression, has gone right ahead with its economic assistance. A £62 million general credit arrangement for industrial expansion has just been signed between the Soviet Union and the UAR. The second recent agreement sets out the terms of Soviet participation in the first stage of the building of the Aswan Dam. The Soviets are contributing about £36 million repayable over 12 years from 1964 with an interest rate as favourable to the Egyptians as 2½ per cent.

Therefore, there is no question of there being any fear of Soviet economic aid coming to a stop. As a matter of fact, it is precisely this aid

which is to a great extent prodding the imperialists to offer some sort of economic agreements, as noted by the Egyptian paper Al Maasa.

Surely it would go directly against Arab interests to take any step that would harm in any way this fruitful cooperation between Arab liberation and Socialist resurgence. It is also obvious that when the imperialists talk of the Communist "menace" in West Asia, it is not mainly the Arab Communists they have in mind—it is precisely the Socialist camp and its aid they are attacking. To attack Communists, then, is to fit in with the latest imperialist game.

The Socialist world is powerful enough to protect itself from any imperialist attempt. The real victims of this new manoeuvre—if it succeeds—will be exactly the forces of nationalism. Anti-Communism is only the Trojan horse. There is yet time for all the Arab leaders to realise this, to assert their unity, reaffirm their friendship with the Socialist world and to be as wise in defeating intrigue as they were valiant in opposing armed attack.

Cuba : Dictator Overthrown

THE news of the downfall of the Batista regime in Cuba will warm the hearts of all anti-imperialists and democrats. It is one more confirmation of the process of the disintegration of the colonial system which has been so striking a feature of the past decade.

That Batista's regime was dictatorial nobody has cared to deny. The American Press was full of news of the haven that Cuba offered to American tourists, gamblers, gangsters and hardened businessmen. Batista gave numerous assurances that his army and "no nonsense" policies would keep it that way. As a result, a billion American dollars poured in, 800 million of them in the past five years.

What is not so often realised is the substantial British stake—eleven million pounds worth of investment and low-price buying of Cuban sugar, which constitutes 80 per cent of the total exports of Cuba. No wonder fighter planes were readily sold to the dictator by Macmillan.

It was against this state of affairs that on December 2, 1956, the Cuban insurgents took up arms. They started with only 81 men which swelled to 8,000 in the course of just two years. Batista confronted them with 30,000 troops all duly armed and advised by the Americans. And in July 1957 for some months American marines directly intervened.

Fidel Castro led his guerrillas with great skill and was backed fully by the Popular Socialist Party which organised the workers and peasants and repeatedly moved them to action. The latest example was the great and complete

general strike of a few days ago.

Then, in November 1958, Batista conducted so farcical an election that "Cuba became shrouded in an atmosphere of despair. Non-partisans seemed to have nowhere to go except to join the camp of Castro." (Christian Science Monitor, November 8, 1958)

With this alienation of the intermediate strata, Batista was thoroughly isolated. With the true courage of all "freedom"-supporting dictators he fled with his loot, rather than face the people's wrath.

The United States and Britain, however, are not going to take this lying down specially since Cuba forms part of the general Latin American upsurge—the Venezuela oil policy, the very narrow defeat of the Communist-Socialist candidate in the Chilean presidential election; the downfall of over nine dictators, in the past three years, etc.

There is already talk of repeating Guatemala. Moves are afoot to get the American-controlled Organisation of American States to interfere. The docile Dominican Republic authorities are reported to be ready to send in soldiers. Britain may try the more subtle tactic of economic blackmail by using the fact of a glut on the world sugar market.

Danger is ahead. The unity of all forces of Cuban liberation is as essential as the outspoken sympathy of all Pancho Shilla upholders, Governments and peoples throughout the world. A victory for democracy and independence cannot be allowed to be trampled down or throttled.

—MOHIT SEN

(January 6)

dy

WELCOME, Dear Friend

IN a few days we shall see a man, tall, true and black as the good night that comes always to the earth as the benediction of peace and the time for love.

We shall hear the voice of thunder, rich with wrath and yet again gentle with the love of a child; of leaf touching leaf and firm with the unity of all men who toil.

Paul Robeson—and his good wife Eslanda—will come to India as that rare being who is better than his fame and mightier than the symbol he has become.

In Paul Robeson we shall pay homage to all the suffering that men of colour have borne, all the struggles they have fought and all the power that lies in them.

In Paul Robeson we shall find again our deep respect for song, for drama and for knowledge. For is his voice not one that comes in a century and not again?

But, above all, we shall see stride our soil a man unparalleled, who stood firm when all the temptations of Satan—wealth, power, even life itself as at Peekskill—pursued him as they have seldom pursued anybody.

Paul Robeson, when all the gloom of hate and fear descended on America, won us back again our faith in the nobility of man. Truly one can say: Robeson, how proud is the ring of that word!

He was born on April 9, 1898, the son of a plantation

slave, who escaped to the North in 1860 and lived his life in dignity as the pastor of a Church in Princeton, New Jersey.

Robeson recalls with anger how many years later in New York he met one of the family who had held his father in bondage.

The arrogant Southerner told Paul, "Your father used to work for my grandfather." To which came the whiplash of a reply: "Let's put it the way it was: Your grandfather exploited my father as a slave!"

From Princeton Robeson moved to Westfield and later Somerville, where at the school glee club he first began his singing.

In 1915 he won a four-year scholarship to the exclusive Rutgers College. It was there that he graduated with honours in Latin and Greek, Physics and Mathematics as well as History. It was there, too, that he won attention in yet another field—the tough game of American football.

Later at the Columbia Law School he qualified himself for the legal profession.

Having begun his career as a concert singer and actor in the United States, Robeson went to London in 1927 and stayed there till 1939.

It was in London that he "discovered" Africa and "I came to consider that I was an African." He met Nkrumah of Ghana, Azikiwe of Nigeria and Kenyatta of Kenya, becoming an honorary mem-

ber of the West African Students' Union.

He studied deeply African culture, language and history. He grew proud of Africa and naturally enough soon received warnings from the British intelligence.

He recalls how in the early 1930s he argued and discussed till the early dawn with H. G. Wells, Harold Laski and Jawaharlal Nehru.

It was through his interest in Africa that he came to visit and to study what was going on in the Soviet Union.

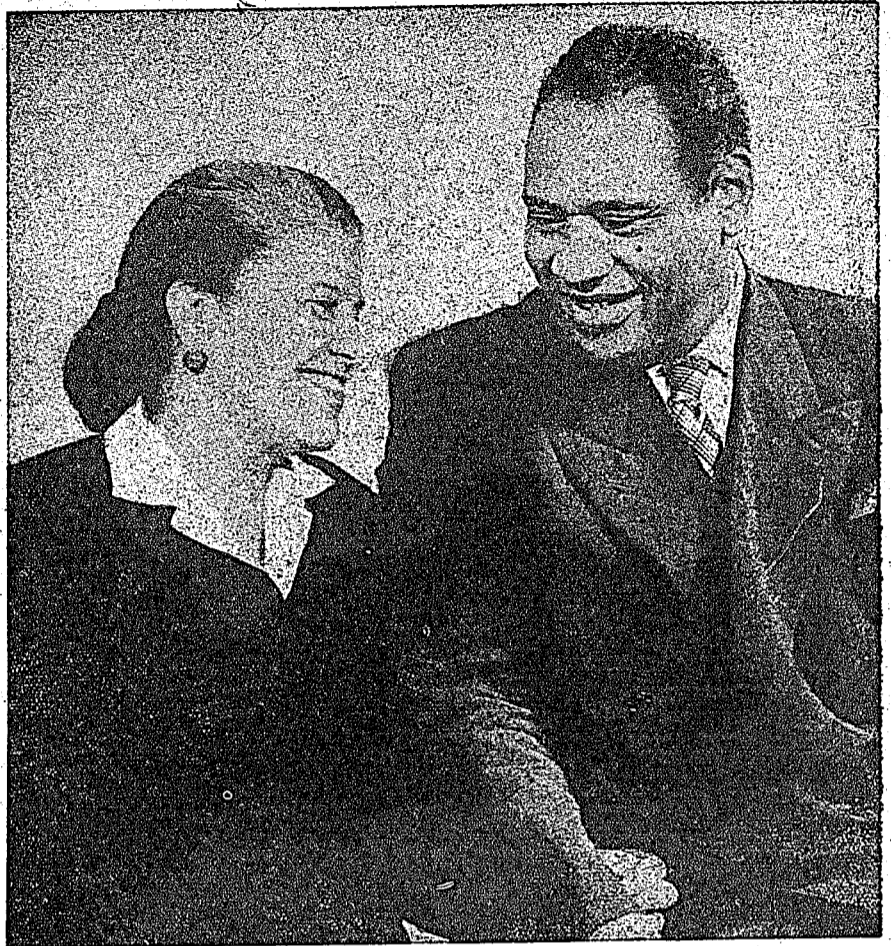
He says of the Socialist pioneer land: "I have told many times how pleased I was to find a place where coloured people walked secure and free as equals.... So I thought it would be a good thing to send my boy to a school in the Soviet Union and he did attend public school there for two years.

"I came to believe that the experience of the many peoples and races in the Soviet Union would be of great value for other peoples of the East in catching up with the modern world..."

"I felt, too, that the rapidly growing power of the Soviet Union in world affairs would become an important factor in aiding the colonial liberation movement."

Robeson went to Spain in 1938 at the height of the tragic Civil War. He saw there the working men and women of Spain joined with fighters of freedom from every part of the globe "fight and die that another Government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Spain persuaded him that his place was back in America. Above all, he felt that he "must be among the Negro people during the great world crisis that was looming, and be part of their struggles for the new world coming that they sought."



ESLANDA AND PAUL

He stayed in America through the years of war and afterwards went abroad to Europe to bring his voice—the voice of the other America—to the great Peace Conference in Paris in 1949.

And then came the hardest part of the ordeal. He was hauled up before the Un-American Committee, his passport was taken away. No gramophone recording company, no film producer, no concert hall owner, would dare to give him a chance to sing.

And yet sing Paul did. On a tape which was flown to London, through the trunk telephone to audiences in Prague, through special broadcasters to Canadian crowds across the border. We in India heard also the grand volume of his voice in April last year, though

we could not then have him among us.

It is such a man—only last year the American authorities gave him a passport—who comes to us in a few days. A man who has endured much for he has loved much. A Negro who fights for the dignity of his people in the United States and yet says with pride "I am an American... I speak as an American Negro whose life is dedicated, first and foremost, to winning full freedom for my people in America."

The Communist Party of India joins all our fellow patriots all lovers of decency and culture in saying "Welcome, Brother Paul! India as one stands more upright, more proud, more joyous for you have come to sing with us and we to sing with you."

An Authoritative Assessment of Stalin

STALIN & HIS WORK

This brief assessment of the life and work of J. V. Stalin has been made from French, which in turn is a translation of the Russian original, appearing in the fiftieth volume of the SOVIET ENCYCLOPAEDIA.

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it does not matter
if we win or lose
so long as
tea is there
to cheer us up!



I am Tea

I serve
those who play
and those who watch



PSY 201