

Pant Ministry Declares War On Cawnpore Workers

CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS AND POLICE TOGETHER LATHI CHARGE STRIKERS

"We want a peaceful strike, in fact, we want settlement on honourable terms. But if the employers, the police and the Congress leaders attempt to disrupt the strike, the Mazdoor Sabha will fight back with all its resources and give a battle that will live through the annals of working class history of our country."—S. S. YUSUF, Cawnpore workers' leader, September 15.

Cawnpore is writing a new page in the history of our national struggle, a page glorious as any heroic working-class action can make it glorious, against police terror, mass arrests, etc. And yet, dark also, as any persistent disruption by Congress leaders and volunteers can make it dark, what with beating, blacklegging, lies, etc.

Over 30,000 workers from its textile mills and its tanneries are on strike. The bosses—White and Black—are refusing to grant them a better wage, adequate D.A., bonus, etc. With the bosses is shamelessly lined up the entire Congress leadership of Cawnpore.

Over 100 workers and Trade Unionists have so far been arrested, and as Dr. Jawaharlal, Congress MLA, put it, "What has happened upto now is just nothing. You just wait and see!"

IT started with the J. K. Mills. On August 22, these workers came on strike for the third time in four months. Twice previously they were betrayed by their Congress leaders. They were fighting against the speed-up in machinery and change in working hours.

On August 26, night-shift workers of the Muir Mills came out. The White bosses would offer the id' pay only to the Muslims and not to all as was the workers' demand. Then there was the enforced idleness due to lack of bobbins, waiting for hours in queue in sun or rain to receive wages, etc.

The bosses relied on Congress leaders to do their job, and demanded unconditional withdrawal of the strike. The workers replied by demanding unconditional acceptance of their just demands. And the whole mill came out.

The Congress leaders now moved. At the workers' back and over their heads, Shri Ganga Sahay Chaube approached the Labour Commissioner. Later, he announced that a 'settlement' had been arrived at and that the mill would reopen on September 2.

He thought he had the inherent right to lead the men. But the workers thought otherwise.

Red Guards Organised

On September 1, 10,000 of them met at the Parade Grounds and decided to continue the strike. Should the police start arresting, lathi-charge, etc., they would reply with a general strike.

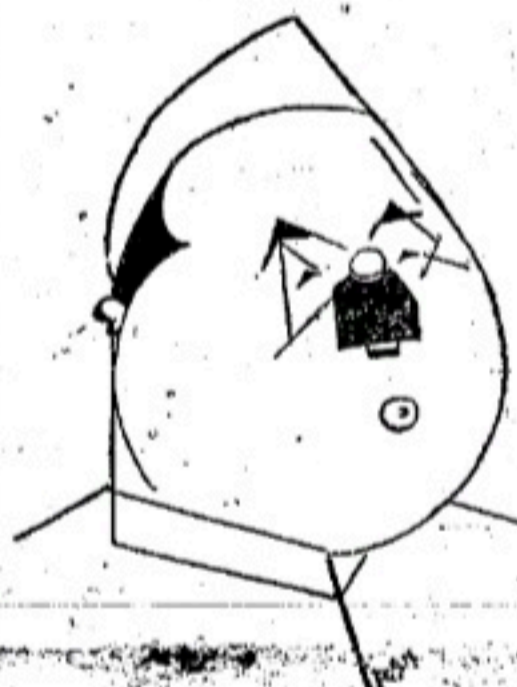
As an earnest of their determination, hundreds of them enrolled themselves in the Red Guards and kept an all-night vigil on the roads leading to the mill. Next morning not a soul went in to work.

In vain did the White boss wait at the gate for the Congress leaders to help him "start" his mill. He fretted and fumed, even abused the 'Sala Congress-walla' who had given him, the owner, a false promise. But the Congresswala did not come. The mill would not start.

But Chaube and Rajaram Shastri (Congress Socialist) were not men to accept defeats thus! On September 6, they again announced that the owners had accepted the demands and that the mill would be opened on September 9. A 'mass meeting' also was announced for September 8 at Phool Baug.

But Phool Baug on the 8th saw no worker coming to attend the 'mass meeting.' So Rajaram Shastri hurriedly organised another meeting at Gwaltoll.

For him no stick was apparently bad enough to beat the underdog. He took the help of an owner's stooge. But even then only 25 people came. And



Home Minister Ruff Ahmed Kidwai

worse still, even these 25 refused to withdraw the strike!

At the other end, on the Parade ground, 10,000 workers gathered under the Red Flag, once again to declare their resolve to continue the strike. Again that night, hundreds of Red Guards kept vigil on the approaches to the mill. Again next morning the mill gates remained open, but none stepped in, though this time enough terror effect was sought to be created by the police practically laying siege to the mill.

Despite all efforts of the Press to blackout this struggle, despite all efforts of the Congress leaders to crush it, the strike wave spread. On September 13, 10,000 workers of the Swadeshi Mill came out. They demanded immediate settlement of the Muir and J. K. Mills' strikes, demanded wage increase and increase in D.A. for themselves, demanded withdrawal of Katju's (Labour Minister) Black Bill.

To Mill Boss's Aid

No sooner did the Congress leaders hear of this, than they rushed to the mill boss, the notorious blackmarketeer Rai Bahadur Rameshwar Prasad Bagla. Rumours are thick in Cawnpore that promises of some 'help' were made by Bagla Seth if the Congress leaders would 'help' him out.

On the 14th, the Swadeshi Mill gate presented a sight that Cawnpore workers will never forget. 1,000 Congress 'volunteers' were already at the gates since 4 a.m. There also stood along with them, in common cause, 1,000 policemen and 200 armed police.

This force was led by the Joint High Command of eminent Congress leaders like Shri Ganga Sahay Chaube, R. D. Trivedi, Jog. Dr. Jawaharlal, Yadunath Sinha, Pyarelal Agarwal, and last but not the

least, the DSP. At the head were the leaders and the police boss in police cars; the rear was taken up by the volunteers, wearing tri-colour badges, also in police lorries.

Mind you, there was Section 144 in Cawnpore. And yet all the 'volunteers' carried lathis. At the gates, the workers, however, were being forcibly deprived of their flag-poles.

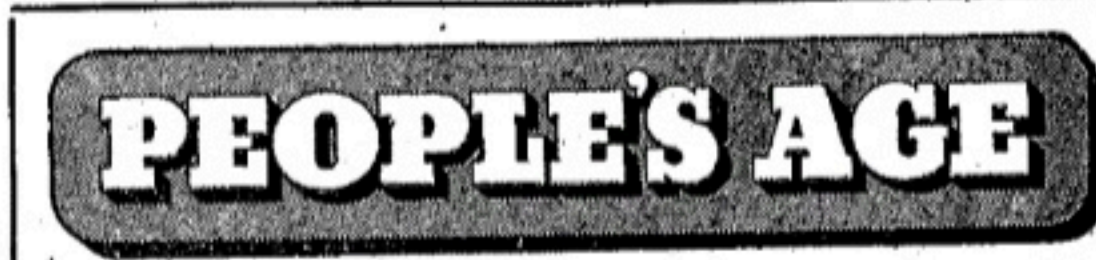
Immediately they came on the scene, the 'volunteers' shouted, "Go back to work! Else there will be dire consequences. Your heads will be smashed! You will rot in jails, your children, outside."

But the workers refused to be terrorised. Not one would go in.

Joint Lathi Charge

That was too much! The leaders conferred and at once the policemen and Congress volunteers jointly charged! The Red Guards were singled out for attack. Harish, a student leader, was caught hold of by two sepoys, and Congress volunteers then had a go at him. Avadh Behari was first beaten up by the 'volunteers', then arrested and handed over to the police!

And yet the workers did not flinch. Rather they defended themselves and beat back the assault so well that the police and the volunteers had to take



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Premier Pant

shelter inside the mill compound till night-fall.

The Congress leaders too, with the armed police, kept at a respectable distance inside the mill compound and indulged in filthy abuses. Yusuf, the most popular leader of Cawnpore, challenged them to come out and face the workers. But, of course, they would not condescend to accept his challenge.

Bagla now saw the failure of his friends and expressed himself for settlement. But with their ear close to the boss, the Congress leaders got the scent of

it. "Give us one more chance", they pleaded. "If you settle with the Mazdoor Sabha, that will be an end of our labour work", they argued and the boss saw the point.

On Sunday the 15th, another meeting was called. Meanwhile to be better able to concentrate on the Swadeshi Mill, a settlement was forced on the J. K. Mill workers. But only 50 workers attended the Congress leaders' meeting and it was over in seven minutes, Chaube not wanting to do anything unless at least 700 workers came!

Workers Undaunted

At the other end, in the Parade Grounds, 25,000 workers gathered under the Red Flag. With clenched fists, they declared their resolve to fight unto victory, no matter what terror was let loose on them. Try repression and we shall reply with a general strike, they thundered. Next day, under heavy police protection, the Congress Labour leaders rushed in about 100 blacklegs to the Swadeshi and Muir Mills. The workers replied by further strikes in the Cawnpore Cotton, Victoria and Lal Imlil mills. On the 17th 15,000 tannery workers of Cooper and Allen came out. So did the workers of tanneries in Jajmu.

It was a smashing reply and it sent the District Magistrate and the City Police into panic. They entered on a mad campaign of arrests. Till that noon in all 129 worker and student leaders were arrested. The Press gave out only the District Magistrate's version that the arrested men were 'inciting the workers to mob violence'.

Curtain Of Censorship

A curtain of censorship today hangs over Cawnpore. No news of police repression is allowed to leak out. It is reported that some of the most trusted leaders of the workers like Sone Lal, Chacha Jan Mahomed, the Grand Old Man of Cawnpore's working-class movement, Anand Madho and others of the Mazdoor Sabha, Shiv Sharma, leader of the tannery workers and others are arrested. So are student leaders like Sultan Niazi, Sadri, and Khetan.

Chaturvedi, People's Age correspondent, has been arrested too. Santosh Kapoor was arrested from his sick bed. Warrants are pending against Yusuf, President, Mazdoor Sabha; Kali Shanker, Secretary, District Party Committee, Vijay Bahadur, leather workers' leader, Ram Asrey, General Secretary, Provincial Students' Federation. The office of the District Committee of the Communist Party was raided and 12 people there found inside were put under arrest, including some kisans from the Unao District.

Section 144 is being vigorously enforced. Cawnpore since Tuesday is not safe for any Communist to step in, though the Party is formally legal here, where two members of the Congress Working Committee are among the Ministers.

And yet the strike is being fought out as firmly as before, against all the terror that a popular Ministry could let loose against men who returned them to office and in the service of the White and Swadeshi bosses, whose blackmarket record can put to shame any of their colleagues elsewhere.

'KIDWAIS AND PRAKASANS THROWING DUST INTO EYES OF PEOPLE'

Communist Party Being Made Illegal In Practice

P. C. Joshi's Statement

Bezwada, Sept. 22, 1946

P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, has issued the following statement:

Mr. Ruff Ahmed Kidwai, Home Minister of the U.P., has denied the report that the U.P. Ministry, has represented to the Interim Government that the Communist Party should be declared illegal. We, however, reliably understand otherwise, and the practice of the Congress Ministries itself discloses their policy.

The illegalisation of our Party is held up because of its serious international and national consequences.

It is not easy for the Congress leadership to ban the Communist Party and claim to be progressive in the modern world, before other independent democratic countries.

Similarly, it is not easy for the Congress leadership, as the political leadership of the premier-patriotic organisation of our great country, to ban the third and most consistent anti-imperialist party, our Party, and face our patriotic people, especially at a time when the destiny of India is on the anvil, and the majority of our freedom-loving people realise that freedom has yet to be won and that the final battle would need the united efforts of us all.

Saner elements inside the Congress realise that ceaseless harping on the Communist bogey does not redound to the credit of the Congress itself. Hence the Right-wing is changing its tone and raising the "violence" bogey instead, to screen ruthless repression of the working-class movement, and arrests of mass worker-leaders.

The Congress Ministries have been using the language of sun-dried bureaucrats, when they refer to worker-leaders as "agitators fomenting labour trouble", and instead of pressing that profiteers meet the demands of the workers, they are sanctioning such repression against them which even the Advisers' regime never dared to employ.

For example, Section 144 is being used more and more freely, and when that does not work, the entire leadership of trade unions is being arrested. The latest is the arrest of a hundred worker-leaders in Cawnpore as our correspondent's story shows.

In the South Indian Railway, 1,500 workers' leaders were arrested to break the strike of 40,000 workers.

That is not all. After removing the leaders, terror has been let loose by the police in working-class localities, women are insulted.

Can this be allowed to go on? The common people everywhere, and Congressmen above all, have to ask themselves whether these acts are hefting popular Ministries or those who are aiding profiteers to keep the real producers—the workers—down.

Workers, of course, will not take it lying down and will do their utmost by telling the true facts to the people. Police bans, Press black-outs, lying propaganda, never work, and will not work against a fighting section of our long-suffering people.

That all this is being attempted, means in plain words that the Communist Party is being made illegal in practice.

The working-class struggle is suppressed, profiteers are directly aided.

The Kidwais and Prakasams are only throwing dust into the eyes of the common people by raising the "violence" bogey and confusing real issues.

DANGE CONDEMNS GOONDA ACT

"It Hits At Civil Liberties, Continues Hateful Provisions Of DOI Rules, And Cannot Stop Communal Strife"

(We print below extracts from S. A. DANGE's (Labour MLA) speech in the Bombay Legislative Assembly, on September 12-13.

With the unprecedented horrors of Calcutta still fresh in our minds, and the goonda dagger in Bombay and Ahmedabad still hanging over our heads, the dangers inherent in this 'emergency' measures are being over-looked. Indeed, the Nationalist Press is heaving a sigh of relief, even when it is known that the Act perpetuates certain provisions of the hated Defence of India Rules!

It is pertinent here to remember that after the 1929 riots in Bombay also a 'Goonda Act' was passed and its powers to extern 'goondas' were first used on a leader of the Red flag!

In the Assembly, only Dange fought for the civil liberties of the common man and against the continuation of the D.I. Rules. Of course, he was steam-rollered, but as the Correspondent of Lokmanya, leading pro-Congress and anti-Communist Marathi daily of Bombay, put it on September 19, "None from the Government benches, at least so far, has been able effectively to reply to Dange's arguments.... Dr. Antrolikar, Moropant Joshi and others opened up a barrage of questions at him in an effort to beat him down, but in vain."—Editor).

I AM opposing this Bill, Sir, on certain fundamental considerations.

The Hon'ble Minister who moved the Bill gave the first ground thus: "Defence of India Rules will shortly expire, and, therefore, we should re-enact them in a new form." That, by itself, I think should be a sufficient condemnation of the Bill.

The Defence of India Rules were denounced as the violation of every vestige of democracy by every party in this country, except the British Government. How do these Rules become the foundations of democracy a few months after?

Popular Ministry Doesn't Require Undemocratic Law

(Interruption: "Does the Hon. Member know that rationing and control of foodgrains are carried on under the Defence of India Rules?")

Sir, we are concerned with the police arresting people, detaining them—and expelling them out of the Province or a district, and not with rationing or food control.

The Defence of India Rules were enacted by the British in order to continue in power a system of Government which had no support of the people.

The Congress Ministry claims very justifiably that it is an elected Government, and, therefore, rests upon the support of the people. It should not find it necessary to re-enact a law which was opposed to the people, and when such a Government finds it necessary to re-enact that system of law, it means that something is going wrong with it. (Interruption: "Going wrong with you?")

"The Hon. Minister said that he proceeded on certain 'fundamentals'. He said that all Governments must observe peace and must maintain law and order.

But order is not an abstraction. It is exercised by a certain system of Government against a certain force which tries to overthrow it.

The last Government tried to exercise and maintain order on the basis of the Defence of India Rules, with the help of the military force, against the people who wanted to overthrow it.

If the re-enactment of these rules is taken up, am I to draw the conclusion that 'law and order' is going to be maintained against those very people against whom it was maintained by the previous Government? I think I should not be entitled to draw that conclusion.

Now I take my standpoint on this, that we are entitled to create disorder in society if the

Government is maintained against the interest of society. Therefore, I do not agree with the general proposition that we are not entitled to create disorder in society; in fact, it is the very fundamental basis on which every National movement in every country is conducted.

Our own National movement was conducted on the very fundamental basis that the system of Government which was there was against the people, and the people had an inherent right to create disorder to overthrow it. But since there is no political party in this country which now

goes by the principle that the present system of Government is one which is totally against the interests of the people as a whole and hence deserves to be overthrown, there is no need for the re-enactment of the Defence of India Rules.

The re-enactment of the Defence of India Rules may be claimed on other grounds. For example, with the change of Government, perhaps new forces of disorder have arisen.

Were Recent Disturbances Unjustified?

The Statement of Objects and Reasons says:

"Disturbances of recent years have shown the desirability of increasing the powers of District Magistrates and Sub-Divisional Magistrates to deal with public disorders."

Now, take one or two disturbances that have taken place in recent years—the I.N.A. disturbances and hartals of the people, or the mutiny of R.I.N. ratings. Do these make out a case for the re-enactment of the Defence of India Rules? (The Hon'ble Minister-for Home Department—"Yes!") If they

do, then you deserve to be overthrown.

Their object—Overthrow Of Despotism

I say that these disturbances were sacred disturbances, and, as such, they were justified in terms of every political principle and by every political party in this country.

Again, take the disturbances of 1942. I would oppose any power being given to any District Magistrate to suppress disturbances of this kind, because such disturbances are disturbances to overthrow despotism.

Dr. K. B. Antrolikar (Sholapur): On a point of information; Sir, May I ask the Hon. Member whether he was one of those who raised his voice in 1942 against the Defence of India Rules?

Dange: I was in the Yeravada Jail next door to him; if the Hon. Member does not remember it, his memory is very short.

Today, the position is this: We have not got possession over the Army; we have not

"ON FUNDAMENTAL GROUNDS"

On the very admission of the Hon. Minister, this is a re-enactment of the Defence of India Rules. It is, therefore, likely to militate against the action of the people in their own interests and against democratic rights. If he wants to suppress the type of riots called communal riots, it can be stopped in other ways.

My fear is that this legislation may be utilised against the majority of the people fighting for their rights against vested interests which are still in power in spite of the fact that a Congress Government exists. Therefore, on fundamental grounds I am opposing the giving of powers to the police and magistracy as is done in the Bill.

NO COAL FOR RAILWAY BOARD FROM SEPTEMBER 24

17,000 Giridih Miners Give Strike - Notice

Giridih is on the war-path, Giridih with its 17,000 coal-miners. On and from September 24, the Railway Board which manages these mines will have no delivery of Giridih's black diamond.

WITH nothing but victory to their record, a hundred per cent membership on their rolls, the Red flag to lead them, these 17,000 workers led by the Colliery Workers' Union (CWU) have been demanding the same service conditions from the Railway Board as they offer to their other employees.

They want Rs. 14 as Dearness Allowance, with retrospective effect from Dec. 1944, which so far their contractors have been pocketing. They want jobs for their women-folk who have now been thrown out of work in mines; equal pay for equal work; abolition of the corrupt system of contract labour; facilities for railway travel; sick leave, Provident Fund, etc.—all of which their co-workers on the railways get, but not they.

In June last, the CWU had asked for adjudication. But the bosses refused to worry. After all there was no reason why they should. The glorious war record of these workers, who actually increase their output when production everywhere was falling down, was certainly a matter for consideration for them, now that the war was over.

One-Day Strike

On August 13, therefore, the CWU gave a notice of strike. The bosses got a foretaste of the things to come when these workers staged a one-day strike that day to back up their demands. Desperately did the management try to rush in goondas, and dig up Hindu-Muslim differences. But to no purpose.

As early as July 22, Colliery Superintendent H. J. B. Reynolds, in his confidential letter (No. 3635) to the

Average Daily Earning (1936)

Miner	Rs.	As.	P.
Soviet Union	12	15	7
Great Britain	7	2	10
India	9	8	10

The Coal Mining Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1936 recorded that during the preceding ten years, "wages have fallen by 45 per cent".

Since 1929 the Giridih miner gets per tub Rs. 8 instead of the previous wage of Rs. 16.

The Govt. of India keep no Cost of Living indices for the mining areas. Yet on their own showing the miner has suffered a fall in wages of at least 25 per cent even after the increases on 1944 and was living on 2 his 1939 standard for four years of the war.

The Royal Commission on Labour and the Bihar Labour Inquiry Committee pleaded for abolition of the contract system in mines. Yet no less than 70 per cent of the labour is recruited through the contractors and even this is being increased.

Dearness allowance and 50 per cent rise in wages of 1944 included, the Giridih miner today gets between Rs. 20 and Rs. 22 p.m. The coalminer on Bokaro State Colliery gets only Rs. 15 p.m.

D.S.P. at Giridih, had demanded the arrest of the CWU leaders, Bar'n De Jagannath Sarkar and Chapal Ehat-tacharya.

On August 13, this D.S.P. and the Sub-Divisional Officer held consultations in the office of the Manager of the Serampur Colliery. The entire area was surrounded by armed police and military personnel.

But far from terrorising, this display only steeled the men. From

early morning to afternoon, thousands of workers carrying Red flags and posters and shouting defiant slogans paraded the entire colliery area. And not they but the police seemed terrorised.

That evening, 12,000 workers, who had gathered to express their resolve for a strike, once again told their bosses that their army and their police would be of no avail to them if that was the only weapon they thought of using against 17,000 of them.

March Of The Miners

And if that warning was not enough, on August 26, they actually showed how they would wring out their demands from their reluctant clutches. It all happened like this:

Five months ago the Railway Board had announced that they would pay up the deferred D.A. for the period from July to December 1944. But the colliery authorities seemed ignorant of this.

By August only about 700 to 800 workers had received this 'Baki Mahagal' (deferred D.A.), while over 15,000 others, coal-cutters, trollymen, etc., working under the contractors, just did not get a pie. As the Id approached, the need was felt the most by the Muslim workers. Other workers too backed the demand.

On the morning of August 24, the workers of the night shift of the Joktiabad and Jubilee Pits got ready for a march for their demands. Naturally their colleagues in the day shift too struck work and joined forces. Soon workers from Kolimaran pits came out and joined. A big force now surrounded the office of the contractor and demanded their Baki Mahagal.

Hurriedly the sahibs got together. The first job was to ward off the danger. "You will get it at 10 a.m. on the 26th," they announced.

(Continued on page 4.)

got possession over the Navy; we have not got power over the States. If repression there is followed by some sort of demonstration, say, in the city of Bombay, and if the Ministry are going to utilise this legislation in order to suppress this demonstration, then, I say, that they will be acting against the people, and therefore, I am opposed to it.

Now, the point may be made—in fact, it has already been made by the Hon. the Premier when he referred to Calcutta—that the aim of this Bill is to suppress communal riots. Probably, many people are going to support this legislation with that mentality. Now, if this legislation is meant to suppress communal riots, I maintain, that this legislation is incapable of stopping any communal riot. (Hear, Hear).

Communal rioting in this country is taking the form of civil war and civil war is not going to be stopped by the deportation of a few people. For that, certain other drastic measures will be required. They may be political measures. But we are not going into that now.

Now, an argument may be advanced that since this Government itself is based upon a democratic vote, there is no necessity for the people to demonstrate. That is perhaps the standpoint taken by the Government. Let it not be supposed that we have totally destroyed the old system either in our economy or in politics. For example, the old bureaucracy has not been destroyed; nor the old economy.

Popular Demonstrations Necessary Even Today

Therefore, the old social discontent still continues and is bound to continue under such conditions. There are bound to be mass demonstrations, because the order in power, for example, the khots, the landlords, the reactionary employers, etc., are bound to hit at any attempts of the people to gain democratic rights.

In such cases, to ask the people to rely on the good sense of the Ministry would be wrong, because in the transitional stage even a popular Government must rely upon popular demonstrations in order to achieve democratic rights for the people, because the old bureaucracy will otherwise sabotage the new Government in power.

The Ministry, therefore, should not be afraid of demonstrations. They should, in fact, in order to fight against the ramifications of the bureaucracy themselves call for such demonstrations which in official language are always called "disorder".

The wording "gangs and factions" (Section 46-B) is indefinite. For example, a faction in a village may consist of peasants demanding certain rights to canal water and another faction of the landlords might be refusing those rights.

The problem cannot be solved by the Revenue Minister. The drawing of water for the growth of the crops cannot wait the vacillations of the bureaucracy of the Revenue Minister. Water must flow and the peasants must irrigate the field.

In such a case, if the tenants switch on the water, it becomes an offence against property and the Revenue Minister will stand up for 'law and order'. It will be deemed a crime although it is the paramount need of the majority of the people that are served by this action of the peasants.

On the reports of the Police Inspectors of the old bureaucracy, the District Magistrate or the Government will pass an order by which the peasants will be deported and not the landlords.

Therefore, what I would say is this: In such cases, where disorder is sacred and holy, any legislation which would militate against such action would prevent the reconstruction of society on the lines that we are attempting, and, therefore, would be against the very basis on which the present Government has come into power.

Therefore, I am opposing this legislation on fundamental grounds.

MADRAS PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION MAY STAND PARALYSED

1½ Lakh Non-Gazetted Officers Struggle For Living Wage

(By Subramanya Sharma)

Madras Province is on the verge of one of the biggest struggles—unprecedented in character—the struggle of Non-Gazetted Officers (Government employees), numbering one lakh and forty thousand, who run the machinery of the Provincial administration.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Non-Gazetted Officers' Association (Madras Centre) held on September 18, a resolution was passed deploring the action of the Government in issuing notice of disciplinary action on the President and Vice-President of the Central Association and requesting them to drop further action in the matter. The resolution asked the Government to meet the demands of the Association for living wage before it was too late.

The nature of direct action contemplated by the NGO's Association and the date on which it should commence are to be decided at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Association to be held on September 28.

"We have done all we can in the circumstances", observed Premier Prakasam to Pressmen when his attention was drawn to newspaper comments on Government Subordinates' demands for adequate relief. (Hindu—September 19).

Who They Are

These Non-Gazetted Officers can rightly be described as the backbone of the administration.

They include 10,000 officers who draw Rs. 100 per month; 29,000 who draw a salary between Rs. 35 and Rs. 100; and over 70,000 who get below Rs. 35.

They also include inferior Government servants—mistresses, sweepers, watchmen and scavengers, whose wages are paid according to the market rate and who do not come within the scope of Government pension and leave rules.

The most oppressed and militant section of them are clerks and those below them. Their salary is a pittance, and all of them have to borrow for their fourth week's rations.

Miserable Scales Of Pay

The city Secretariat clerks get a grade of Rs. 40—3/2—52—5/2—70, while in other Government offices in the city, their grade is only Rs. 30—3/2—45—2/2—55.

All city clerks in the Presidency get an allowance of Rs. 8—8—0 and D.A. of Rs. 16 for those drawing below Rs. 40 per mensem, and 18 for those getting above Rs. 40.

The lowest paid are the 70,000 peons and their class who get a grade of Rs. 12—1/4—13—1/5—14—1/6—16. A person who has put in over 35 years of service is rewarded with a special increment of a rupee and he gets Rs. 17.

These scales of salaries were arbitrarily fixed by the Government in 1923, '33 and '38 and despite continuous agitation by the Association for the last 25 years, they remain static, while the cost of living has been steadily rising.

The Hindu in an editorial on the Government action in withdrawing recognition of the Association remarked:

"The present salaries were fixed in the early 'thirties during the great depression. They represented drastic reduction on the scales that had been in force previously.

"The cost of living now is 138 per cent over that of pre-war years, and yet as the Premier admitted the other day, emoluments of these low paid employees have not been increased to more than 25 to 30 per cent even after including Dearness Allowance.

"It is true that this class of employees' salary is increased by 30

per cent but when it is recollected that their basic salary ranges from Rs. 30 to Rs. 35, it will be seen how little this increase really is and how utterly inadequate it is to meet the present cost of living.

"In the circumstances, the interim relief offered by the Government of Rs. 3 per month for those drawing Rs. 40 and less and Rs. 4 to those drawing more, will hardly make any difference in their plight."

Salaries' Committee

In 1944 the Advisers' Raj appointed a Salaries' Committee which made a report recommending certain increase.

The report recommended an increase of 33-1/3 per cent for those who get Rs. 15 and below per mensem, 25 per cent for those between Rs. 15 and Rs. 50, and 20 per cent for those between Rs. 50 and Rs. 200. They recommended uniformity in all Provincial services with Rs. 250 as starting salaries.

These recommendations were not implemented at all.

The war and post-war economic conditions have driven this section also to organise, and along with other sections of toiling people, they have voiced forth their demands.

The unprecedented mass awakening in the country, the

struggles of workers for better wage and service conditions, the political awakening spreading among the States peoples and in the army, navy and police, acted as an impetus, and the installation of the Provincial popular Congress Ministry raised great hopes in them.

Their Demands

On August 25, 1,500 delegates representing one and a half lakh of officers out of whom 35,000 have joined the Association met at Guindy (five miles from Madras city) and passed a resolution that they would launch direct action if their demands were not met by September 25.

Their demands were regarding basic wage, retrenchment, Dearness Allowance, leave rules and immediate grant of interim relief.

As interim relief, they demanded cent per cent increase in their scales of pay with the maximum of Rs. 50. This demand is very modest in view of the fact that the bulk of them earn a salary of less than Rs. 35 and the Dearness Allowance they get is not more than Rs. 16.

They presented a Memorandum to the Congress Ministry as soon as it came to power. Through resolutions passed at District Conferences they brought their demands to the notice of the Government and public.

On August 28, they organised an unprecedented rally of 10,000 NGOs in Madras city. Ten thousand officers, clerks, peons—all

together with badges bearing the inscription, "Overworked, Underpaid, Neglected Employees" marched through the city to demonstrate their solidarity behind the demands of the Association.

The Provincial Government failed to take notice of the urgency of their demands. They told the representatives that they were too late and that the Budget had already been prepared. When pressed by public opinion, the Provincial Government appointed a Committee which was to go into the question of interim relief.

Inadequate Increase

The terms of this Committee, whose publication was unnecessarily delayed, only recommended a pittance of Rs. 3 and Rs. 4 per mensem and with retrospective effect for 15 months.

The Reserve Bank of India had got with effect from the first of April, 1945, new grades of salaries raising the Rs. 60—4—100 grade to Rs. 100—7 1/2—175 and the Rs. 50—3—95 grade to Rs. 70—5—100 and 20 per cent of pay as D.A.

The Association had no other course after this except to state their demands and authorise the Central Committee to launch direct action after September 25.

The Association has given over a month's time to the Ministry to reconsider the question of their own interim relief measures and other demands. The Central Committee de-

manded interim relief measures at least on the basis of Central Government recommendations and with retrospective effect from June 1945.

The Ministry has not only turned a deaf ear to these demands, but has launched a war on the Association.

On the floor of the Assembly, Prakasam unashamedly stated that the rule that public servants should not participate in political activity held good and would hold good in the future as well.

The Ministry ordered withdrawal of recognition of the Association characterising the strike notice as a breach of discipline and imputing influence of political parties.

Their latest act is disciplinary action taken against the President and the Vice-President of the Central Association.

All Parties Support

But no longer will the overworked, underpaid, neglected and starving Government employee continue to suffer patiently. He has organised himself—30,000 in 25 districts; he has formulated his just demands and placed them before the people.

Inside the Assembly men of all parties including Congressmen have supported their demands as just.

The nationalist Press has supported the demands of the NGOs and deplored the action of the Government in withdrawing recognition. In a Manifesto addressed to the NGOs the Communist Party has welcomed the upsurge and pledged their support to the Association.

The Prakasam Ministry has once again raised the Communist bogey to turn down the just demands of the NGOs and crush their organisation but the leaders of the organisation have openly refuted this bogey, welcomed the support given to their cause by the Communist Party and the Provincial TUC and declared that they would welcome similar support to their fight from every patriotic quarter.



Auchinleck's Assumption

SARDAR Baldev Singh, the new War Member of the Interim Government, has taken charge of his office at last. And perhaps he will, very soon, present us with an outline of the policy and programme he intends to follow.

But the gentleman who has been "looking forward so much to serving" an Indian War Member—Commander-in-Chief Auchinleck—has already made his plans for the "Future of India's Armed Forces". He made an extremely important speech on this subject last month at the Staff College in Quetta, and it is on the basis of this speech that all military plans are being made today.

The opening paragraph of the speech delivered by the Field Marshal is the key to all the present plans for our Army:

"I am going to talk to you about our plans for the future of the Armed forces of India, assuming that India remains within the British Commonwealth of Nations as a fully autonomous Dominion. It is, I think, necessary to make this assumption a basis of our planning, as if India does not remain a member of the Commonwealth, so many unknown and uncertain factors are brought into the problem as to make any realistic planning practically impossible."

Now here is the crux of present British policy—very bluntly put indeed. I seem to remember a great deal of pious talk by Attlee and the Cabinet Mission of our having the right to get out of the British Empire, should we decide to do so. How utterly meaningless that talk has been is quite clear from this rather over truthful assertion of the Commander-in-Chief!

Of course the Auk puts his whole plan in very dignified terms. But what the paragraph of his speech I have quoted above, really means is simply this:

"We shall weaken the Indian armed

forces to such an extent, that India will be compelled to remain within the British Empire, with British troops permanently in India."

Is Sardar Baldev Singh going to allow Auchinleck and his gang to continue that policy? Are the plans of the Interim Government for the future of India's armed forces to be made on the same "assumption"—or rather the same PURPOSE—of keeping India under the British heel? Or on the 'assumption' that they shall take their part in the battle to free India from its shackles?

Quit India?

The great Auk talks of the British troops remaining in India "if the future Government of India wishes to retain British troops in this country" (and of course, "if the British Government agrees to their being kept—an important proviso"!). The Commander-in-Chief certainly has a sense of humour, or maybe he imagines we are such duds that we still have some doubts about the British imperialists' intentions of continuing to occupy India).

What has Sardar Baldev Singh to say to all this? Are British troops to remain in India, as the Auk plans? Or do we repeat firmly and unequivocally: QUIT INDIA, and set about making them quit?

The Auk talks also of the "large number of divisions and brigades of Indian troops overseas in the Middle East, Iraq, Burma and Malaya". He says that they are all "surplus to India's needs" and should they come back, they will have to be disbanded, and so "the future Government of India, whatever it may be", should agree "to lend them to the British Government for garrison duties in these countries." and of course the British Government will pay them.

The Indian people want their troops back. They do not want them to be used for imperialism's purposes all over Asia. As for their being "disbanded", it is funny how Indian troops are "surplus to India's needs" and at the same time British troops become necessary for

our protection! Will the Interim Government declare categorically: India does not "lend" her men as mercenaries for imperialism. If India lends her men out of India at all, it will be to fight side by side with the people of Burma and Malaya, Indonesia and the Middle East AGAINST British imperialism and its satellites.

The Auk has spoken. The Auk is busy carrying out his declarations. When will Sardar Baldev Singh speak? And will he state clearly and categorically that the Interim Government has made a complete break with the policy of continued Indian slavery which is being pursued at break-neck speed by the British army authorities? Or will he merely sign on the dotted line, as the British have planned that he should do?

Paying The Price

THERE has been quite a stir in the Punjab about a certain secret circular sent to all Departments by the Chief Secretary instructing them that "no declared INA personnel—white, grey or black—should be given any Government employment or passport facilities", as they are "blacklisted".

The Punjab Congress Ministers have been put in a very tight corner indeed as this circular is dated May 20, long after they took office. Nothing seems to have been done yet to cancel this circular, though Congressmen throughout the Province have naturally been up in arms against it.

Lala Bhim Sen Sachar, the Congress Finance Minister, excuses himself whenever he is faced with this circular or any other similar outrage (and there are many of them) with the excuse: "This is the price we pay for a Coalition".

Rather a queer argument, this. And a moment's reflection teaches one that in a Coalition, where the Unionists are just job-hunters and careerists and the Congress is the biggest single force, commanding the great majority of votes, it is strange that the 'price' should always have to be paid by the Congress.

Future Of The C.I.D.

But I wonder for what the 'price' is being paid in other Provinces where similar things continue, despite there being a hundred per cent Congress Ministry. The Searchlight, prominent Congress daily of Patna, reports in its issue of September 12 that "it appears that watching of the activities of Congressmen by the police still continues in Bihar". It mentions two specific instances: those of Syt. Mukundhari Singh of Jharia and of Pandit Ram Nandan Mishra, a Congress Socialist leader.

The least Congressmen expected was that C.I.D. harassment would end with their own Ministers in power. Nothing of the sort has happened in most Provinces.

In many cases, Provincial Ministers used to say that it was at the direct orders of the Central Government and its Intelligence Bureau that these humiliating activities continued. Now the Intelligence Bureau is under the command of Sardar Patel. Its nefarious work goes on.

When will Sardar Patel give us a statement of policy, outlining his attitude to the work of this hated body of men, under the new Government?

Bhabha's Friends

LAST week, I was able to give some information about Mr. C. H. Bhabha, the new Commerce Member. Here is some more, the very latest:

Mr. Bhabha's partner, the millionaire Gokulchand Dwarakadas Morarka, whose firm are agents for Mr. Bhabha's Sholapur Spinning and Weaving Mills, was sentenced on September 11, by the Bombay High Court, to one month's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000 on a charge of hoarding cloth.

A week later Mr. Bhabha was talking about a trade policy for the common man.

We don't like Mr. Bhabha's friends and partners.

By the way, there was a small mistake which crept in quite accidentally last week in my report on Mr. Bhabha. He and Mr. Dayabhai Patel are connected NOT with the Mutual Life Insurance Company, but with the Oriental Life Insurance Company. Of course, all the other facts were absolutely correct.

Ramesh Chandra

NEW ROUND OF KASHMIR'S WAR OF LIBERATION

State-Wide Demonstrations And Hartals

"Hartal! Sher-e-Kashmir has been sentenced". The news spread fast through Srinagar, and from Srinagar it went on through the valley all over the State.

THIRTEEN hundred workers of the Karan Singh Woolen Mills came out on the streets as soon as they heard of Sheikh Abdulla's sentence. The whole day they paraded the mill area in a procession, shouting repeatedly the slogan "Quit Kashmir."

The workers of Srinagar's famous Silk Factory—heroes of many a struggle—were inside the factory gates when they heard the news. At once they stopped their work. The Government rushed their military to the spot and surrounded the factory and refused to allow the workers to march out. And so within the factory, the workers sat and demonstrated their will to free Kashmir.

Women To The Fore

The women of Srinagar defied all bans, and singing the rousing Kashmiri national songs they marched through the streets, refusing to disperse despite several lathi charges.

by
Our Correspondent

Young Kashmiri boys and girls were also on the streets in processions. Of course, the Dogra soldiers delighted in lathi-charging them. Four children were severely wounded. But nothing daunted the little fighters, and more and more serious, grim processions of youngsters filled the streets.

Transport Strike

Not one tonga or bus moved that day. There was a complete hartal by the militant Tonga Drivers' and Bus-Drivers' Unions.

The shops were all closed. The Dogra soldiers broke open many of them and looted freely, but not one shop-owner would bow before their terror and open his shop.

Among the shop-keeper heroes who refused to bend before

Dogra torture, are Habibjoo, Lassa Khan and Ahmed Dar of Maisuma, who were dragged out of their shops, beaten to within an inch of their lives, while their shops were completely plundered by the soldiers.

In The Districts

From the districts too, the news keeps coming again and again: Kashmir is in flames once more. A new round of struggles has begun.

Huge protest demonstrations were held in Mirpur and Poonch. Underground leaders appeared at meetings, spoke, and disappeared again, before the military dared to arrest them.

At Baramula, there was the biggest hartal and demonstration that has ever been in this town.

In Anantnag, Badgam, Shopian, everywhere, the people demonstrated, defying all bans, facing lathi-charges, courting arrest.

Huge meetings were held addressed by National Conference workers. Not all the bans and lathis of the Maharaja's army could prevent them.

Kashmir is fighting. Repeat this again and again to the people of India. They must know that the second round has begun. No more are we being fooled by the false assurances of leaders from outside that they will get Sheikh Sahib released. We know what that sort of release will mean—ignoble compromise. Only the release which comes from our strength will be our VICTORY.

SHASHI BAKAYA

SHASHI was only 25 when he died so suddenly last week. But he had already won for himself an abiding place in the national movement as a poet and as a courageous fighter for Indo-Soviet friendship.



found him in the thick of them. He built and led the Bombay Students' Singing Squad, which did so much valuable national work in those days.

But what attracted Shashi more than anything else was the work of telling his people about the great land of the Soviet Union, where people just like our own had built a prosperous life for themselves.

And from its very inception in Bombay in 1941, Shashi worked in the Friends of the Soviet Union. Under the inspiring leadership of Smt. Suhazini Jambhakar, Shashi became more and more an inseparable part of the F.S.U. movement.

Scores of working-class families in the Matunga Labour Camp, a colony of 'Untouchable' workers, in North Bombay, learnt of the Soviet Union and are today thrilled when they hear even a mention of the F.S.U. because of Shashi's untiring work among them during the years 1942-44.

SHASHI'S father, who died in 1943, was a poet and a scholar. Shashi's mother, Smt. Kamala

Bakaya, a well-known teacher, has brought up all her children as fighters for Indian freedom. She herself is the writer of that great song of the national movement: "Azad karenge Hind tuhe"—which is being sung today all over the country.

Shashi learnt and studied deeply. In college in Lahore, he began to write poetry in Hindi, Urdu and English. He was respected by his teachers and his fellow students.

In 1941, Shashi had still not made up his mind about his future. He wanted to throw himself into the national movement, but he was not clear where and in what particular work.

He came to Bombay to study for his M.A. degree, but more to study and work out his future course of action. It was here in Bombay that Shashi grew rapidly to the stature he had reached when he died.

In The Student Movement

He plunged unhesitatingly into the student movement. The anti-Maurice Gwyer demonstrations

Heritage Of Songs

In June 1945, he was elected General Secretary of the Bombay F.S.U.

Apart from his work for the F.S.U., Shashi has left behind a real heritage of inspiring songs in Hindi and Urdu, which are being sung by the working-class, kisan and student movements all over India. His poems in English breathe a warm love for the cause of the oppressed and a burning hatred of all that is unjust and parasitic.

Shashi's death at so early an age has deprived the national movement and our Party of one of its most promising, younger workers.

To Shashi's mother, to his brothers and sisters, all of whom are members or close and active sympathisers of our Party, we extend our warm sympathies.

BHARATPUR'S TWO LAKH MEOS READY FOR STRUGGLE

By Mahadeo Narain Tandon

Two hundred thousand militant Muslim peasants of Bharatpur—the Meos—have decided to throw their entire strength into the movement about to be launched in the State. Last week, *People's Age* reported the historic decision of the three chief political parties of Bharatpur—the Praja Parishad, the Muslim Conference and the Kisan Sabha—to launch a powerful movement to demolish State autocracy and to set up a free, democratic Bharatpur. The decision of the Meos, cements the fighting unity of the people of the State.

ON September 7, seven hundred leaders of the Meos from three hundred and fifty different localities gathered in a Conference at Tilakpuri to pledge their full and active support to the people's struggle.

To mark the beginning of their struggle, this Conference called upon the 13 zaildars (Revenue officials) of the Meos to resign their jobs immediately.

Such is the unity and tempo of the people that once again, on September 9, the extended date for the nominations of the "popular" Ministers—not even one person came forward to offer himself for election! All the attempts of the State Government to split the people and to cajole and coerce them failed.

Even their pet toadies refused to file their nominations.

The entire people are thus poised for the fight, marking time and waiting for the final signal.

But while on one side the people are getting restive to start the struggle—there are hush-hush visits to the Raja of certain leaders of the All-India States Peoples' Conference—Sjts. Jai Narayan Vyas, Hiralal Shastri and Gokulbhai Bhat—and rumours are afloat that these leaders are again trying to cook up some surrender plan behind the backs of the Bharatpur people and their local leaders.

The rumours are causing resentment and the Bharatpur people are not likely to tolerate any 'surrender-compromise' this time.

GIRIDIH MINERS' STRUGGLE

(Continued from Page 4)

On August 26, workers of both the shifts gathered to get their cash. But to their amazement the contractors came out, not with the cash but with a statement that they had the cash ready, but that they would not pay it as they had received no orders from the Colliery Superintendent.

Furious at this crude betrayal, over 5,000 workers from almost all the pits of the Kurharbaree Colliery marched to the office of Marwan, the Colliery Superintendent. They demanded that he come out immediately and order payment. It was an explosive situation.

But the coward inside the office was certainly not desirous of paying this lump sum just on the eve of general strike. At the same time he was terrified at the sight of the angry mass outside. So the police was sent for and the D.S.P. and the D.S.O. rushed with two truck-loads of armed police.

The usual terror tricks were tried.

They threatened to declare it an unlawful assembly (there was a ban on meetings in this area due to communal tension). But the workers insisted on having Marwan out and they would not be cowed down.

Meanwhile, workers from other pits, from the workshop and the power house, rushed in to swell the crowds. The police bosses got panicky and got Marwan to come out.

Marwan, however, expressed his inability to pass orders on the contractors unless he was authorised by the Board to do so. Nevertheless, he explained, if the contractors were willing to advance the cash on their own pending the decision of the Railway Board, he had no objection to it.

The contractors saw no way out of that vast crowd if they did not yield. And they did yield. Half the amount was immediately paid. The victorious workers marched back triumphantly, confident that before long, they would force out the other half too and something more, their other demands.

Ratlam's People Blow Up Farcical Enquiry

MASK OFF K. M. MUNSHI

By Our Correspondent

Mr. K. M. MUNSHI has beaten a hasty retreat from Ratlam. This former Congress Home Minister, who boasts of his patriotism, was literally hounded out of Ratlam by an angry people.

MUNSHI had gone to Ratlam to enquire into the brutal firing on workers and citizens which took place on July 16 and resulted in the death of ten persons and serious injuries to another fifty.

It was supposed to be an impartial enquiry, by an impartial judge. Munshi was no judge but a paid advocate of the Maharaja and of Moulji Seth, the Managing Agent of the Saljan Mills (on whose workers the firing had taken place).

Munshi arrived at Ratlam on September 8. With him came Moulji Seth.

Munshi's Tactics

Ratlam's workers knew Munshi. They were on the station to greet him with black flags. But he slipped off the train earlier at a signal a mile away from the station to be escorted under an armed guard to the Maharaja's Guest House.

Here are a few glaring facts about Munshi's 'enquiry'.

● The procedure Munshi announced for the enquiry was weighted in favour of the State. Only the Shanti Sabha was permitted to give evidence on behalf of the people. Other organisations were barred from the Enquiry.

Apart from this handicap, Munshi announced that the State and the Shanti Sabha should give in writing all they

had to say, then produce their witnesses, and then a final chance for reply to the charges would be given to the State.

● He allowed the police to palm off faked and coloured statements, and ruled out all questions put to the police asking them to substantiate these statements.

● On September 17, Munshi announced that he would examine certain persons who feared "the wrath of the public" in camera. This was at the instigation of the Maharaja and the Diwan who threatened certain grain merchants and compelled them to give lying statements in camera.

This procedure was totally against Munshi's own announcement that only the Shanti Sabha would be allowed to give evidence.

Court Room Cleared

● Scared at the growing dissatisfaction of the public at this bogus enquiry, Munshi ordered the police to clear the enquiry room of all visitors.

● On September 18, Munshi declared in the open court: "Agitators against any policy of the Government deliberately get people shot. It is one of the techniques to win people to their side. We had to get some shot in 1930 to increase the tempo of the movement. That is the Indian temperament."

With this he sought to justify the action of the officials in firing on the people.

But this last declaration blew up Munshi's game. The same evening, the Shanti Sabha Executive passed a resolution which said that they were sure that "there is no hope of getting justice at the hands of Sjt. Munshi, who is partial to the authorities and against the public interest." The meeting declared its unwillingness to continue participation in the enquiry unless Munshi was replaced by some other judge.

Munshi packed up his bags and left, the enquiry postponed. In a special interview to the Free Press of India, Mr. Mohammed Umar, President of the Ratlam Praja Mandal and the State Sabha, has challenged Munshi's impartiality.

Shanti Sabha's Petition

The Shanti Sabha in a petition to the Maharaja has outlined the facts given above and accused Munshi of trying to justify the firing. Finally, the petition sharply nails down Munshi's attempt to accuse the Communists of fomenting the disturbances and says that such efforts are meant to side-track the real issue, for, the Mazdoor Sabha and the Shanti Sabha are not Communist organisations, but organisations of the State's people.

The people of Ratlam have unitedly defeated the State's authorities in their attempt to win people to their side. We wash the bloodstains off their guilty hands. They have also taken the patriotic mask off the face of Sjt. Munshi and shown him up for what he is.

★ Delhi AICC—A Rubber-Stamp Session ★ Congress Socialists Toe Compromisers' Line ★ Resolutions of AISPC Standing Committee

The All-India Congress Committee has ratified the decision of the Working Committee to join the Interim Government. No amendments were allowed to be framed. Instead of the focus of collective discussion being this vital question affecting the whole future of the country, the top-leadership diverted the discussion to the issue of whether the members of the Interim Government should remain members of the Working Committee or not.

THE Left-wing, who should have waged a fight against the compromise, failed miserably and actually remained neutral on the question of the Interim Government, while concentrating their fire on the second, less fundamental question.

Right-Wing Apologia

The main spokesmen of the leadership at the Session were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Nehru. They reiterated the myth that "for all practical purposes the Interim Government would function as a free government." (Azad). They assured that independence would be won by working the Interim Government and the Constitution-making Body.

The Right-wing leaders had to admit that real power was not transferred, that British troops could not be removed, that the bombing of Waziristan showed how helpless the Interim Government really was.

But they played up the illusion: British imperialists had changed their attitude. No struggle was now necessary. The partial control of the machine of State, with the bureaucracy and the police, which was now in their hands, could be used to win independence, they said.

But the fact remains that the imperialist State machine is an engine of oppression and moves only in one direction, against the people. Its partial control can only serve the vested interests, the capitalists and landlords, who want to share power with the imperialists in order to crush the strivings of the common people for freedom and democracy.

Socialists At The AICC

None of the Left-wing groups really challenged the compromising move of the leadership by exposing this aspect of its policy. Both the Congress Socialist and Forward Bloc leaders were victims of the same illusion, so assiduously fostered by the Right-wing leadership—namely, that the British imperialists have transferred real power and that the Interim Government can be made into an instrument of getting more power.

Amendments moved by both the groups (which were ruled out by the President) called upon the Interim Government "to create conditions to transform itself into an instrument of sovereign power."

Achyut Patwardhan warned the leaders, that "by their participation in the Interim Government they were treading a slippery ground", and pointed out that communal conflicts cannot be mastered with the help of alien troops. But the leader of the C.S.P., Jaiprakash Narain, refused to oppose the resolution and to vote against it.

The Socialist leaders have failed to take a stand against compromise. They talk of continuing the revolutionary struggle for freedom. But they have refused to line up with the forces and movements through which alone that struggle can be developed. In fact, they are actually lining up with policies which are directed against these forces and movements.

Explaining the stand of the C.S.P. on the Interim Government, Jaiprakash Narain said in

a. Press interview:

"I should judge this Interim Government not by its constructive or administrative effort, but by its success or failure in forcing the British power to quit India."

In other words, the Socialists seem to think that though the participation in the Interim Government may not enable us to strengthen the people's revolutionary force, it would give us a political-strategical vantage point from which to weaken British power and hold. How can this latter result be achieved without the former?

Silence On Repression

In the whole of the AICC debate, there was no reference to

• The Interim Governments to undertake the task of devising suitable machinery by the popularly-elected Constitution-making Bodies for establishing full responsible Governments within the States and for negotiating with neighbouring States and Provinces for the purpose of grouping together or amalgamation as the case may be.

• Proper representation of the States in the All-India Constituent Assembly.

The compromising tendency is implicit in the very formulation of these three key demands of the States' peoples in the present period of their rising popular upsurge.

FIRST, the popular Interim Governments must be WHOLLY composed of popular representatives.

SECONDLY, the popularly elected Constituent Assembly must be elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

THIRDLY, all the representatives from the States to the All-India Constituent Assembly

by G. Adhikari

the shooting of the strikers by the police at Amalner and at Golden Rock. There was no reference to the repression and mass jailing of workers in the Cawnpore and S.I.R. strikes.

Was it not the job of the Socialist and Forward Bloc leaders, who swear by the revolutionary struggle for freedom and claim to fight against compromise, to expose how even the partial control of the State machine was being used not against the hoarders, profiteers and blackmarketeers, but against the workers and the common people?

Have the Prakasam and Pant Ministries increased their prestige as popular Ministries by repressing S.I.R. and Cawnpore workers respectively?

Is this the way to convert the Ministries into instruments of freedom struggle, or is it not the sure way of allowing the vested interests and imperialist reaction to crush and divide the forces of freedom struggle?

The Left-wing leadership in the AICC did not challenge the compromising policy of the Right. They did not take up a stand against these dangerous and disastrous trends and in support of the forces of workers' and peasants' struggle which must form the core of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. By playing the loyal and dutiful opposition, they only contributed to the victory of the compromisers.

Interim Govt. For States?

THE Standing Committee of the All-India States Peoples' Conference (AISPC) concluded its deliberations at New Delhi only four days before the AICC Session began. Here under the guidance of the top Congress leaders the counter-part of the same compromising policy as was sanctioned at the AICC was being worked out for the States.

Taking note of the new situation created by the establishment of an Interim Government of India as well as by the forthcoming session of the Constituent Assembly, the Standing Committee in a general resolution on responsible Government in the States demanded the following steps for its immediate realisation:

• Setting up of popular Interim Government enjoying the confidence of the people concerned.

must be elected by the people, and not by the Princes.

The Standing Committee has blunted the edge of the States peoples' demands just on these three points. The leadership of the AISPC guided by the top Congress leadership does not want to lead and organise the rising tempo of the States peoples' movements into a struggle to end Princely autocracy and to ensure to the States' peoples freedom, democracy and reunion with their brother peoples in the rest of India.

Compromise With Princes

On the contrary, the leadership is seeking compromise with the Princes by toning down the democratic demands of the people, and by sabotaging their struggle.

The pattern of such a compromise is already visible in the case of Cochin as well as of Alwar.

A popular Interim Government has been formed in Cochin, but Finance and Law and Order are excluded from popular control.

There is no provision for the calling of a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage, nor will ALL the representatives to the All-India Constituent Assembly be elected.

The untimely withdrawal of the great struggle of the people of Alwar is leading to an even more ignominious compromise. (See page 12).

The British-bolstered thrones of these autocratic Princelings are shaking before the rising tide of the anger of their people who have suffered too long under their criminal misdeeds.

The industrial working-class, waging its strike battles for living wage, Trade Union and democratic rights, is coming forward as a new leading force to head the struggles for democracy in many States. Peasants are inspired by it to fight against landlord oppression. The common people are roused by it to fight for civil liberties and responsible government.

Instead of joining in the effort to unify these struggles into a joint front battle for democracy with the participation of the Praja Mandals, the top leaders of the AISPC often seek to disrupt and discredit them.

Another resolution of the Standing Committee says,

"Certain irresponsible elements in the States precipitate action and clashes between Praja Mandals and State Governments often in order to discredit States Peoples' organisation."

The same resolution further lays down that:

"When necessity for any direct action arises, reference must be made to the Regional Council and to the General Secretaries of the AISPC."

In short, the top-leadership of the AISPC damns every spontaneous resistance of the States' peoples against autocratic oppression as mischief of irresponsible elements and wants to strangle its development into a general struggle in the

Editorial

COMMUNISTS AND CENSURE MOTION IN BENGAL ASSEMBLY

THE refusal of the members of the Communist Party in the Bengal Assembly to vote for the censure motion against the League Ministry has brought in the usual scandalisation and slander from a section of the Nationalist Press.

Yet any sane and honest person who does not forget the fact that India is still an enslaved country and who is opposed to civil war, could not but adopt the same course in the present circumstances.

The refusal of the Communist representatives to support the censure motion moved by the Congress Opposition Party did not in the least mean that they accepted the lame excuses advanced by Suhrawardy and the other members of the League to screen and cover the incendiary path pursued by them.

The Communist Party, in its Manifesto on Calcutta riots, indicts the League leadership for pursuing a policy which could only end in civil war. It indicts it for playing the game of imperialism.

The Communist Party indicts Suhrawardy for advocating in the past a policy of hostages and reprisals. In connection with the Calcutta riots it indicts responsible leaders like Akram Khan and Nazimuddin for making inciting speeches on August 16—a crime which cannot be expiated by any number of excuses and interpretations.

Why They Remained Neutral

Why, then, did the Party representatives not vote against the Ministry? Simply because the other side which moved a vote of censure was not at all free from the taints of civil war and bloody conflict.

The Congress spokesmen made it a question only of 'law and order' when it was actually a question of the fundamental policies of the two major organisations.

Even the completest breakdown of the machinery of 'law and order' would not have led to the brutalities committed by both sides in the streets of Calcutta—it is necessary to remember that they were committed by both sides—had they not been directly conditioned by the policies of the two parties.

In the past, during the course of national upheavals in several places, the machinery of 'law and order' completely broke down but that did not lead to riots or looting.

It was, thus, not the narrow question of maintenance of 'law and order,' but the big and fundamental question of the policies of the two organisations. Actually one was called upon to vote against the policy of one organisation without rejecting the other's.

Could it be argued by any sane man that on the Congress side, the political policies pursued only contributed to unity, goodwill and peace? Could it be argued that there was no incitement, bitterness and call for communal resistance in the writings and speeches of the other side, during and before the Calcutta riots took place?

Congress Side Not Blameless

The Communist Party could not take such a view. In its Manifesto on Calcutta riots, it indicts the compromising policy pursued by the Congress and its failure to accept unconditionally the right of self-determination for all nationalities—as one of the causes of the growing conflict.

Face to face with the failure to win over the Muslim masses, the Congress leadership merely denounces the Muslim League and its leaders in a manner which only increases communal feelings on both sides. Not a few Congress leaders have talked about civil war in recent days.

The Communist Party would have readily supported the vote of censure if those who advocated it were free from all partisanship, and if by doing so the faith of the common man—Hindu and Muslim—would have been strengthened in each other—thus barring the way to further riots.

The Communist Party, as the Party of the oppressed of both communities, as the Party of freedom and national unity, could not take any other stand and side with one party in the civil war against the other.

That would have been the greatest betrayal of the interests of the common man, and of the working-class—whose unity is the only guarantee against civil war. It would have been a breach of faith with those Hindu and Muslim workers who returned the Communist M.L.A.s as representatives of the working-class and not of one community against another.

The Communist spokesman was the only spokesman in the Bengal Assembly who did not forget the responsibility of imperialism and had the courage to indict it, while other spokesmen were conveniently ignoring its deeds. He again reminded the members of both parties that India was still an enslaved country and that civil war was the specific imperialist instrument to keep her in subjection.

No Neutrality Towards League Policy Of Civil War

Some Congress paper have started maligning the Communist Party because its spokesman would not join in the partisan communal battle. They shamelessly state that the Communist Party members joined hands with the reactionary members of the European group.

And yet what is the truth. Till a few days ago, representatives of Bengal Congress M.L.A.s were themselves carrying on negotiations with the Europeans to form a Coalition Ministry and the papers were openly pleading with them to support the vote of censure. It is the maligners of the Communist Party who are confabulating with the Europeans who demand suppression of labour as the first condition of any agreement.

The refusal of the Communist Party representatives to vote for the censure motion does not and cannot mean neutrality towards League policy of civil war.

On the contrary, the Communist Party of India is the only party which actively works for the defeat of the policies which lead to civil war, as it did in Calcutta and Bombay, and turn the weight of the masses against the fratricidal conflict. It regards civil war as the biggest danger to the country's freedom and fights it with all its might.

And in that holy task, no matter what price it has to pay, no matter who slanders it for not joining this or that camp of civil war, the Communist Party of India will pursue relentlessly its fight for unity and struggle against those who divide Indian from Indian to the greater glory of British imperialism.

States. This abjectly cringing attitude of the representatives of the States. That Committee does not count the leadership of the States peoples' movement as a single representative of the States peoples' movement.

This compromising and capitulating policy of the top leadership will be defeated by the working-class coming forward as the leader and initiator of the independent struggles of the peoples in the different States and forging a united front with local Praja Mandals and their workers—over the heads of the AISPC leadership.

The Princes' Chamber have already appointed a Negotiating Committee which is to negotiate with the All-India Constituent Assembly the ques-

S.I.R. Workers' Heroic Struggle Ends

Strike Withdrawn On Ry. Member's Assurance

The strike of 40,000 employees of the S.I.R. has been withdrawn. This decision was taken at a meeting of the Joint Strike Committee held at Tanjore on September 22.

THE decision was taken "in deference to the advice given by the Railway Member in the Interim Government and his personal assurance" to S. Guruswamy, General Secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), to say that there would be no victimisation and that all legitimate grievances would be sympathetically considered when presented through proper channels.

For 29 days this great strike was fought under the joint leadership of the S.I.R. Labour Union, India's mightiest railway labour Union and the S.I.R. Station Masters' Association.

And for all those 29 days, it was fought jointly by the popular Ministry with its savage repression and the White Railway administration with its blacklegs. And, of course, the Congress 'Labour' leaders helped.

And yet, the strikers fought on undeterred. The Railway Boss's 'final' orders for resumption of work had everytime to be postponed, for the workers treated them with the contempt they deserved. They could fight so well because they were of the S.I.R. Labour Union, their cause was just and they had the backing of conscious workers at all industrial centres.

They have today withdrawn the strike, not because they were cowed down by Prakasam's police or Reynolds's blacklegs, but because, though belatedly, Asaf Ali has intervened in the dispute with his assurance.

What It Cost

The insolent obstinacy of the White bosses has cost the country, on the bosses' own admission, well over a crore of rupees in business not booked, over Rs. 3 crores as Railway Board's 'special con-

tribution' to crush the strike, untold hardship and starvation to at least two lakh members of the strikers' families, immense hardships to the travelling public and the common consumer.

This loss is just incalculable, to speak nothing about the added burden on the Madras revenue of maintaining 'special police.

Along the entire line, the towns and villages were handed over to the most savage police rule. In every such town the order was by Section 144, the order was of the policeman with his big stick.

Over 1,500 workers' leaders were arrested, a record unprecedented even by British imperialism during strikes in war

days. Over 30 women were arrested and 10 children too—again a record to put the British rulers to shame.

Lathi-charges have been too

Will Mr. Asaf Ali Answer?

The S.I.R. strike has been called off. Nine days after the workers came out the Interim Government walked in. And yet for 29 more days the most savage repression was let loose on them by the Prakasam Ministry. Why?

Here is a story from the mouth of a prominent Congress Legis-

lator:

(1) S.I.R. Labour Union is India's strongest railway worker's Union. The Railway Board (representing British vested interests) was bent on smashing it up, no matter what it cost to the Indian Treasury.

Reynolds, the S.I.R. boss, was, therefore, given Rs. 3 crores by the Board with orders to 'finish off' this Union.

(2) This money was lavishly spent in employing blacklegs, to run the 'skeleton service' of which Reynolds boasted so much, the nationalist Press helping!

In fact, as this Legislator revealed, the number of workers returning to work was never so much as was given in the Press. But the lie had to go in—"to demoralise the strikers". "And the Press has done its job well"—he said.

(3) But Reynolds could never have got his blacklegs had not Premier Prakasam promised him full police help to crush the strike. That assured, Reynolds and the Railway Board went ahead!

What prompted Prakasam to do the White Board's job for them to crush his own people? Why did not the Interim Government inter-

vene?

Pandit Nehru talked of defending the interests of the 'common man'.

Is this how Asaf Ali did it?

many to be counted correctly. Firing has killed four worker leaders (official figures). The police have beaten women, even mothers aged 60.

Such has been their effrontery

up with the police. Everywhere Congress workers actively helped the police to arrest the strikers and the Union leaders.

The worst was Golden Rock, where this was their daily business.

In Mettupalayam, boys of the Netaji Vallbar (Youth) Sangham helped the police and threatened coolies to go back to work. Local Congressmen there have become such a terror that Union leaders cannot move freely in the town, and if they do, the former's rowdies beat them up.

Similar stories come from elsewhere also.

Need one write about the workers' reaction to all these events? "Section 93 men with a popular mask over their face", that is how Dindigul men speak of a Ministry that they themselves returned to power only five months ago.

That is how Prakasam's alliance with Reynolds' against his own men is ending, or may be this is just the beginning!

This strike was led by the Red flag. Just this was enough of an eye-sore to Prakasam to line up with Reynolds. It was worse still with hundreds of lesser lights in the Congress to join

200 INDIAN RATINGS REFUSE TO FIRE ON INDIAN WORKERS

ON a port in the Persian Gulf 200 Indian ratings of HMIS Shamsher have refused to fire on their countrymen and are being shortly brought back to India. It is presumed that they are under arrest and will be accommodated in Castle Barracks in Bombay. The M.T. barracks in this already notorious establishment have been vacated for the purpose.

The incident occurred on the first week of this month. Running short of fuel HMIS Shamsher called at a port in the Persian Gulf. The port-workers, all Indians, were on strike. Lt. Commander MacDonald, the notorious Commanding Officer of the ship, ordered them to refuel her. Naturally they refused. The C.O. now ordered the ship's company to fire on the work-

ers. In a body they refused to shoot at their own countrymen. No action was taken then. Instead, Lt. Commander MacDonald got in touch with the Flag Officer in Bombay. For the next twenty-four hours, frantic code messages flew backwards and forwards.

Finally, 200 Indian ratings were picked up from a depot ship and were ordered to be ready to leave any moment.

On board HMIS Kistna they sailed to the Persian Gulf to replace the Ship's Company of HMIS Shamsher.

The news has spread to other Services establishments in Bombay and has caused great excitement. Everyone is anxiously awaiting developments. HMIS Kistna is expected to return to Bombay by the end of this month with the 200 ratings.

that they treated even Asaf Ali's assurances as just so many empty words and went on resting people en masse, on the very eve of the Strike Committee's meeting.

And, of course, the same is likely to be the fate of Asaf Ali's assurance regarding non-victimisation, if even now Reynolds is going to be allowed to have his way. Reports are that he has already decided upon discharging 700 Golden Rock workers. Many more are being served with notices terminating their services from October 1.

That is how Prakasam's alliance with Reynolds' against his own men is ending, or may be this is just the beginning!

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INDIA'S MUNICIPAL WORKERS ON THE MARCH

The strikes of the municipal workers have followed the all-India strikes of the postal employees, clerks, railwaymen, etc.

PART of the general strike wave, these strikes have a special importance. Municipal workers are among the most backward and down-trodden sections of our people. Their new consciousness and militancy to wield the strike weapon in order to win their demands is a glaring testimony to the general determination of our people to end the present state of affairs and win life and liberty.

At first the battles were fought at big centres, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Bombay. Then a spate of strikes spread over big and small centres all over the country. The biggest of these strikes at Delhi, Madras and the Province-wide strikes in Andhra have been successfully fought under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Basic Demands

The basic demands of these strikers are almost similar. They are wage increase; dearness allowance; house-allowance; uniform; leave with pay; maternity benefit; free medical service; provident fund; and pension.

The municipal workers received a paltry wage of Rs. 6 to Rs. 13 per month (varying at different places) and a dearness allowance of Rs. 6 to Rs. 10. That has been their lot throughout the war.

The mere fact that they have had to strike for these demands shows that they have not secured even the most elementary rights and benefits, though they render efficiently such essential and vital service to our everyday life.

The municipal workers at many centres have shown considerable initiative by demanding 'unclean' allowance, provision for free compulsory education, recognition of trade unions,

Municipal Strike - Wave

During the month of August alone, strikes of Municipal workers took place at:

PUNJAB: Rawalpindi (500 workers).
DELHI: Delhi (3,000 workers on strike for 12 days).
New Delhi (1,500 workers on strike for 2 days).
U. P.: Cawnpore (1,680 workers on strike for 20 days).
Fyzabad
Sultanpur
Meerut
Lucknow
Basti
Etawah
C. P.: Amraoti
BOMBAY: Thana
Andheri-Parle
Sholapur
BIHAR: Gaya (1,000 workers on strike for 6 days).
BENGAL: Serampore.
ANDHRA: 10,000 workers on strike in 28 Municipalities.
TAMILNAD: Madras City (10,000 workers on strike for 23 days).
MALABAR: Calicut.
STATES: Alwar.

representation of workers in the municipalities, etc.

For four months after the advent of popular ministries they waited patiently hoping to get a square deal. In most cases they explored all avenues in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement. After prolonged efforts they were invariably forced to resort to strike. And they did strike. For they were in a mood to 'fight it out', determined to end their present lot—and win their demands.

Almost everywhere there was general public support for them. The Delhi strikers were congratulated both by the Pro-

vincial Congress and the League for remaining peaceful and disciplined.

The popular Ministries did not make any effort to bring about a just settlement. On the contrary, repression was resorted to to suppress the strikers. The Congress Ministries in the U.P. and Madras did not lag behind the Delhi White Sahibs in their efforts to break the strikes by lathi-charges and arrests of union leaders. The Madras Congress Ministry instituted punitive measures to terrorise the workers and break their morale.

Though so many strikes had broken out almost simultaneously they were almost all local battles. There was no co-ordinated activity nor any sort of central guidance even on a regional or Provincial basis.

Biggest Fights In Andhra

The best organised strikes were fought in Andhra. The 10,000 municipal workers of more than 28 places formulated their common demands and elected a Central Strike Committee. All struck on the same day and fought strenuously winning substantial gains despite heavy odds and severest repression by the Prakasam Ministry.

The best instances of working class solidarity comes from Madras city. The strike of 10,000 workers of the Municipal Corporation was a prolonged one. The Corporation continued to remain adamant and the Congress Ministry used its coercive machinery to the full. By organising a one-day general strike in protest, the Madras working-class successfully intervened in favour of the municipal workers, thereby strengthening working-class solidarity all the more.

(By F. K. Vyas)

An Editorial

All Glory To S.I.R. Workers

ON September 22, the Strike Committee of the South Indian Railway workers decided in its meeting at Tanjore to withdraw the strike and call on the workers to return to work by September 24.

In spite of difficulties of communication and police terror, the meeting was attended by not less than three hundred from all over the line.

The strike was withdrawn in view of the assurances of the Hon. Mr. Asaf Ali, Railway Member, that all legitimate grievances will be attended to.

So the glorious and historic struggle waged by the workers of the S.I.R. is over. Never was any section of the Indian working-class put to more severe test and called to exhibit greater courage and heroism. The S.I.R. workers passed through the fiery ordeal of brutal repression and police terror and kept the Red flag flying.

We offer our tributes to the memory of those whose privilege it was to fall in the common battle and are sure that the S.I.R. workers will raise a fitting monument to honour their working-class heroes.

We offer our congratulations and greetings to the workers who stood police terror, to the members of the Strike Committee who are still in jail, and to all those other workers, men and women, who are in jail, or were victims of police repression. All glory to you, comrades, that you kept the struggle on unswervingly and unwaveringly.

We will watch closely how the Hon. Mr. Asaf Ali redeems his promise of attending to the legitimate grievances and his assurance that there will be no victimisation; how quickly he and Mr. Prakasam release the arrested workers and their leaders.

At the same time, we call upon the entire Trade Union movement to demand the immediate release of all those arrested, withdrawal of warrants and immediate satisfaction of all the demands for which the workers were on strike and collect money for the relief for those who have suffered.

If the news that the Railway Board has now decided to apply the 'Discipline and Appeal Rules' to all railways and that henceforth every railway worker will be entitled to enquiry before dismissal is correct, it will mean the biggest victory for the S.I.R. workers. It is precisely because these Rules were withdrawn that they went on strike.

Before the strike, these Rules were applicable only to two railways, the S.I.R. and the G.I.P.

The privilege was withdrawn from S.I.R. workers and they went on strike.

Now after the strike not only do they get the rights back but all other railway workers who were denied these rights by the autocratic Board will also get them. A greater condemnation of the policy of the Board could not be imagined.

The sufferings of the S.I.R. workers have not been in vain; they have secured a big victory for all the railway workers. The justness of their cause is again proved.

We congratulate the S.I.R. workers on this big victory and ask them to rally round the Union in still larger numbers.

PEOPLE'S UPSURGE AGAINST GOVT. REPRESSION

Rangoon, September 17

The last two months in Burma have seen growing and mighty protests from the people against the repressive policy of the White-dominated Burmese Government.

MOST sensational of all has been the police strike that began on September 6 in Rangoon. Over 3,500 policemen are affected, their main demands being adequate rise in salaries and allowances to meet the increased cost of living and the abolition of discrimination between Burmans and the non-Burmans in promotions.

The Government has, of course, adopted the usual bureaucratic attitude towards the strikers, refusing to deal with them unless they call off the strike. But other sections of workers immediately came to the help of the police.

On September 8, a big meeting of railway, press and ministerial workers expressed their full solidarity with the police strikers and threatened to launch a general strike if the demands of the police were not conceded.

In the districts, too, the strike spread, some armed police constables from Pegu coming to join the strike.

Strike-Wave

On September 11, the Government announced "new rates", revising pay-scales for all Government servants, in a desperate effort to stem the rising wave.

But on September 16, the strike spread to postal and telegraph clerks, and employees of the Government Printing Press also joined.

Lower-grade Government staff are also expected to go on sympathetic strike next week.

This new wave of strikes in Rangoon is paralleled by rising protest actions of the peasantry in rural areas—the news of which only appears in the Press under the head, **DACOTIES**. In fact, numerous clashes have taken place between peasants and oppressive officers and headmen in the last month.

This new wave of workers' and peasants' actions is a part of the people's answer to Government repression, at its height in June and July.

At that time, processions and open air rallies were banned in Rangoon and such major districts as Hanthawaddy, Thana-waddy, Insein and Pyagon. In Insein, even indoor gatherings required the permission of the District Magistrate.

And on this issue, local People's Volunteer Organisation leaders had been prosecuted for holding their PVO Committee meeting without permission.

Attack On The Press

The Nationalist Press had come in for a special attack. In July, the progressive daily, the Guide, had to close down for over a week as the Government refused to grant it paper quota on the plea of shortage.

Journalists had interpreted it as a special pressure against the paper and a warning against their consistent criticism of the present-day administration.

Security had been demanded of the Guide, the Economic Daily and the New Light of Burma, for articles appearing in these papers. And Government refused to grant a licence to New Democracy organ of the Communist group led by Thakin Pe, to transform it into a daily without a security.

Permission was refused to the Railway Workers' Union for a bulletin that they wanted to publish. Anathit, organ of the Communist group led by Thakin Soe, had been suppressed and the editor of New Democracy had three cases pending against him.

There had been extensive

From
Our Correspondent

round-ups of militant political workers. The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) had declared that there were over 500 political workers in prison by the middle of July. Government had taken advantage of the drive against dacoities to round up militant peasant leaders in most districts.

Mass Arrests

In August, there were over 22,000 persons in the jails of Burma rounded up for 'dacoities'. In a few instances they were active members, or office-holders of district, township or village peasant unions, Youth Leagues or PVOs.

Warrants of arrest have been issued against the Vice-President, Secretary and an Executive Committee member of the All-Burma Peasant Union.

Thakin Chit, Assistant Secretary of the AFPFL and a Communist leader, had been arrested for participating in anti-repression protest movements.

Thakin Hla Myaing, another Communist leader and the leader of Syrium oil workers, had been arrested.

The Communist group led by Thakin Soe, and Red Flag Cultivators' Unions were declared unlawful in the last week of July. A reward of Rs. 1,000 had been declared for the arrest of Thakin Soe himself.

Taking advantage of their search warrants against the above organisations police raided the offices of all other political parties too in many districts of Burma. In Nyamglebin, they also searched houses of AFL leaders and took away an AFL flag, saying that they had orders to seize any Red flags.

Repression was specially severe in Hanthawaddy where they arrested 7 prominent leaders for alleged anti-British activities during Jap occupation.

Students' Protest

Last week, the District Secretary and the Propaganda Secretary of the Students' Union were arrested in Hanthawaddy, under the Defence of Burma Rules. Warrants have been issued against the President of the Students' Union and another student leader, but up to date, they have not been apprehended.

This has caused quite a lot of resentment among the students. The All Burma Students' Union had made it an all-Burma issue and asked all Rangoon students to abstain from attending their classes on the 29th August as a protest against these measures and arrests of other student leaders in Myingyan district.

Today it is generally gossiped that the Government is preparing to take action against the Communist group led by Thakin Pe and Than Tun.

For some time past public opinion has been hardening against this regime.

July 28 saw Rangoon holding an 'Anti-Repression Day'. Twenty thousand workers of saw mills, dockyards and city transport downed their tools on the call of the ABTUC and the Communists.

A central rally of 3,000 was held demanding release of all political workers, withdrawal of the ban against the Communist group led by Thakin Soe and for freedom of the Press.

Since then the AFPFL has taken up the leadership of the Anti-Repression movement. It

has called on all patriotic organisations to record their protest against the repressive policy of the Government.

The Burma Press Union led by U Ba Choe, a member of the Executive of the AFPFL, resolved not to attend Government Press Conferences or print Government communiques till the measures curbing freedom of the Press were withdrawn.

Protest demonstrations and rallies were held all over Burma by the joint efforts of AFPFL branches, Peasants' Unions, Youth League, Women's Congress, and the Than Tun-Thin Pe Communist group.

Day long hartals, mass demonstrations and rallies were held among others, in Toengoo, Pegu, Yamethin, Manbin, Pyapon, Myingyan, Pakoku, Sa-gaing and Mandalay districts.

The Communist group led by Thakin Soe (even though illegal) too organised all-Burma protest demonstrations on August 15.

Demonstrations

Reports appearing in the Press show that such demonstrations were held in—Thana-waddy district—Manhla: 400 attended; Nathalin: 2,000 attended; Insein dist.—Takkya, Hanthawaddy dist. Syrium: 2,000 came, but police broke up the rally here and arrested two leaders; Konyangon: 400—one arrested; Manbul dist.—Nyangdon: 300 attended—three arrested; Pyapon dist.—Kyaiklat: 7,000 rallied; Meiktila dist.—Mahlaing.

Such demonstrations were also held in Pakoku and other districts.

To crown the whole campaign the Rangoon Committee of the AFPFL called for a city-wide demonstration and hartals on August 24.

City transport was completely paralysed. The AFPFL had instructed workers in mills and factories to continue their work. In spite of

BURMA GOVERNOR'S NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW COUNCIL

AFPFL Should Not Fall Into Imperialist Trap

— P. C. Joshi's Message To Aung San

P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, has sent the following message to General Aung San, President of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (AFPFL) of Burma.

DEAR Comrade,
The move of the Governor of Burma to initiate negotiations with the leaders of the AFPFL and of other political parties to form "a new Council on a broader basis" has to be viewed in the context of the new upsurge of the Burmese people exemplified in the present strike wave in the cities and the peasant unrest in the countryside.

The imperialist game is to draw the AFPFL leaders into the new Council which will have no real power, its main aim is to use the prestige of Burma's premier political organisation as a cover to launch a vigorous drive of repression against the rising movement of the Burmese people for independence, and to stabilise imperialist hold over Burma.

I have full confidence that the AFPFL will not compromise on the fundamental demand of the Burmese people, viz., recognition of the complete independence of Burma; complete withdrawal of British troops from entire Burmese soil; immediate formation of a free Provisional National Government which will call a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage for framing the constitution of free and independent Burma.

I hope that the AFPFL would not allow itself to be drawn into the imperialist trap but proceed to unite and lead the Burmese people for organising the final struggle for Burma's liberation.

Against the common enemy of our peoples, the British imperialists, and through the fraternal solidarity of our great freedom movement, we shall march together shoulder to shoulder to bring the dawn of freedom in our great lands and contribute to the peace of the world.

My warmest revolutionary greetings to you personally and to the Burmese people.

September 18, 1946.

it many factories were idle, and the Red Flag Cultivators' Rangoon's streets had a deserted, forlorn appearance.

All shops throughout Rangoon soon began to force the Government-including tea shops and restaurants were kept closed for the morning. Indian shopkeepers cooperated actively. Soorty Burra Bazar, the centre of Rangoon's business, was empty.

Rallies and demonstrations were held separately in 11 wards of the city. Everywhere the AFPFL, the Youth League PVOs, Communist Party and Socialist Party participated jointly.

In Bahan, processions of over 3,000 were taken out. In Sanchang-Bagaya area, 4,000 people rallied. In Kemmendine—over 5,000 came out.

Everywhere the rallies and processions demanded immediate release of all political prisoners, withdrawal of the Defence of Burma Rules and cancellation of the ban against Thakin Soe's Communist group

Another order announced the withdrawal of order for security against the Guide and the Economic Daily, permission to bring out the Railway Workers' Bulletin was given and the three cases against the New Democracy withdrawn.

The Burma Press Union, however, declared that the measures were inadequate.

The next great event—a part of this new upsurge—was the police strike, and the other strikes described above.

The Burmese people are on the move today—the flame of revolt is spreading throughout the country.

British Plan To Split And Crush Burmese Popular Movement

From Our Correspondent Rangoon, September 20

The growing popular upsurge against British repression in Burma (described in the article on this page—Editor) has led the British authorities to re-plan their strategy in Burma. I have reliable information that their new aim is to bring pressure on the Liberal (Right-wing) leaders of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) to persuade the League to enter an Executive Council whose name may be changed (as in India) but whose powers will remain as limited as before.

THIS new game of the British began with the appointment of Brigadier General Rance as Governor, in place of Sir Reginald Dorman Smith. Rance was head of the military administration in Burma during the period after liberation and before the civil administration was fully re-established, and in that capacity made many "friends" among the Rightist leaders in Burma.

When he returned to Burma, his first statement was to emphasise that he had "returned not as a soldier wielding a sword or shaking a mailed fist, but as I hope, a true friend of Burma." (September 3).

Real Intentions

But his real intentions came out later in his speech when he emphasised his determination to tackle the "vital question of law and order."

It is a fact, however, that the new Governor is not satisfied with the present situation and does not think purely repressive methods adopted by a Government, which has little or no standing with the people, is going to stem the rising wave of

people's demonstrations and strikes.

He feels that something in the nature of an "Indian" settlement is necessary by which he can bring the AFPFL into the Executive Council without granting it any powers, and thus use its prestige and influence to hit back at the popular movement and re-establish BRITISH authority in Burma.

Governor's Aim

This is why he has dismissed the old Executive Council and is at present negotiating with the AFPFL and other leaders with a view to establishing a new Executive Council, that will include AFPFL representatives.

This aim of the Governor, however, will be difficult to put through.

The AFPFL and the Burmese people are thoroughly disillusioned with British actions ever since they re-entered Burma, now fifteen months ago. The initial "promise" of Dominion Status after three years of autocratic Government made originally by the British was the

first blow to their hopes.

Since then, of course, the steadily mounting people's movement has forced the British to promise free elections in April 1947; but, still the British have not made clear the powers of the Government that will come into being as a result of the elections.

In contrast to these sweet promises to the Right-wing, the Government is taking steps to drastically attack the militant Left. Thakin Soe's Communist group has been banned, and it is an open secret in Government circles that this is only the prelude to further attacks on the Left, which the British hope to smash before the elections.

All this, however, is not possible without getting the AFPFL into the Government. And leading militants of the AFPFL have assured me that this cannot happen; for, they say, the AFPFL stands firmly by the demands made by General Aung San in his presidential speech at the third session of the AFPFL on August 25.

Aung San's Demands

General Aung San made three demands:

(1) Formation of an Interim National Government, vested with full powers of a responsible democratic Government and representing principal political groups in Burma.

(2) Elections on adult franchise.

(3) Such elected representatives to form a Constituent Assembly, free from any foreign control, to frame a constitution for a free independent Burma.

BETRAYAL OF THE ALWAR PEOPLE

Who Sabotaged Popular Struggle?

Smitten from behind, for the time being the curtain has fallen over the glorious struggle of the Alwar people.

FOR ten days, the imbecile Raja and his courtiers were under a virtual siege. The entire machinery of the State was paralysed. All but two of the State Courts were closed. All the mills, factories, mines, college, schools, offices and bazars were on strike.

Over 600 people were arrested, over 325 were sent to jail.

The Army had refused to fire on the rebels. Every lathi-charge by the police drew more people—more jathas of men, women and children into the struggle.

The core of 10,000 State's people organised in 125 units of the Praja Mandal (in which Communists and non-Communists work together) was arranged for the last decisive assault, which no Raja would have been able to resist.

Nehru's Wire

Then came a wire from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru deputed Sjt. Hiralal Shastri to meet the Raja.

Secret confabulations were held between the Raja and Hiralal Shastri.

The movement was hurriedly called off.



Allegiance To Motherland Only

Lord Wavell, in his declaration concerning the status of the armed forces, says: "But the constitutional position of the armed forces is in no way changed. They still owe allegiance, in accordance with their oath, to the King Emperor, to whom and Parliament I am still responsible."

This is the "virtual Dominion Status" that India is getting, with, obviously, no power over her army. It is to remain a tool in the imperialists' hands.

We, of the armed forces, no longer wish to be forced into such a position. We owe our allegiance to our motherland and as such we should be under the new Defence Member.

We earnestly appeal to the Congress to fight against moves on the part of the imperialists who intend to keep power secure in their hands.

If our leaders cannot do so from inside the Government let them resign, come out and lead us to complete independence.

A NAVAL RATING.

Bombay : August 27.

PEOPLES AGE

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Our Correspondent

The Raja reciprocated by staying repression and the prisoners were released.

Vague Rumours

Nobody knows what transpired in the meeting. Nothing has been announced either by Hiralal Shastri or the State authorities. The people who were outside preparing for battle as well as those who had flocked to jail in the hope of smashing the State's corrupt rule once for all, are utterly in the dark. They feel lost and betrayed.

They are hearing only vague rumours—being openly and systematically spread by Shastriji and his men that in some unknown way the Praja Mandal has won: "The prisoners have been released", "The Praja Mandal will be allowed to have its own paper", and a "Constitution-making Committee will be set up"—but when and how

and on what terms is all a closely-guarded secret. His Highness, it is said, will act in such a manner as will make the terms of the "compromise" known to everybody by the time of his Daschra Durbar!

An indication, however, of the true nature of the "victory" that Hiralal Shastri has brought was given by himself in a meeting to celebrate this surrender.

Touchingly he recalled before the bewildered masses that when he reported the cases of atrocities to the Raja, the kind-hearted butcher was "moved with grief" and expressed great sympathy. Then he begged of "His Highness not to penalise any of the Government servants who had joined in strike or sympathised with the people's struggle." This will, he cried with servility, "enhance the prestige of His Highness!"

So this is the "victory" that has come to us!

They Will March Again

But it will not be long before the whole people will have seen through this treachery and muster up again. For, to be sure, we had not fought merely for the release of our prisoners whom we had sent to jail, or for a seat here and there. Our fight was for full untrammelled freedom and that remains even today. We shall rally for it again.

★ THE PRINCES WORLD ★

Mad Race To Arm

AT the bidding of their British masters, the mad race among the Princely puppets to arm, to consolidate their strength, continues unabated.

The so-called Mainad Development Committee of the Mysore Government has given its verdict!

"The development of Bhatkal Harbour," it declares very solemnly, "is absolutely essential in the broader interests of Mysore State."

All these ages, it was not thought so very essential after all!

But when the mass assaults of the people of India have put the British on the run—it has become a matter of life and death for the Maharaja of Mysore and his Dewan—the great Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar—to have a part in the "broader interests of Mysore."

Eyes On Goa

BUT, if for the Maharaja of Mysore one port is 'essential', it is obvious that the Nizam of Hyderabad need at least two. So apart from Masulipatam—for which shady deals are rumoured to be going on—the Nizam is casting his evil eyes on Goa also—Goa, which is still Portuguese, but which may be bought over from Dictator Salazar with the help of the good offices of the British friends!

Salazar is getting it so hot from the Goans that he may gladly sell out and pack up, if he is given a good enough price.

Not So Solid

THE sports-loving youthful Maharaja of Jaipur is organising an All-Rajputana Airways to knit up all the scattered States in that vast territory into one solid phalanx—into one front against India which might, after all, kick out the British!

Very, very fast—the Princes are going. And, of course, they are counting without their host—the Indian people—up-in-arms and determined not to leave a single Ulster for Britain to remain in India.

Verdict On Bhopal

PERHAPS one of the biggest double-crossers stalking the Princely India is the Nawab of Bhopal. One of his feet is in the Congress; the other is planted in the League and his soul he has retrieved



Nawab of Bhopal

ably mortgaged to the British. Nobody can beat him in pompous declarations on "Freedom" and "Democracy".

Even in January 1946, when he was so loudly swearing by these noble words in the Chamber of Princes at Delhi and drawing applause from the National leaders, in his own State, the people were being gagged with bans and Section 144!

Frankly Speaking!

Now here is a criminal-in-arm calling his bluff and also telling us the worth of the declarations of these Princes!

In a speech at Indore on September 3, Sir S. P. Bapna, the Prime Minister of Alwar, angrily asked:

"What has the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, himself done in the own State to implement the now famous declaration made in the Princes' Chamber in January last?"

He then declared: "Such declarations and speeches are only made for diplomatic reasons and carry little value in effect." (Amrita Bazar Patrika, Sept. 5).

Disarmingly frank! I wonder if those who see great hope in every declaration of the great Nawab will learn from this open admission by one of his own lieutenants.

—Our States Commentator.

GARHWALIS READY FOR FINAL ASSAULT ON TEHRIS AUTOCRACY

(By Our Correspondent)
DEHRA DUN, Sept. 22.

FINAL touches are being given to our preparations for a massed attack on Tehri's autocracy.

Today, all the workers of the Tehri Praja Mandal are going to meet in camera to give the word; and by the time these words are in print, the brave Garhwalis will have swung into action.

Our notice to the State expires on the 25th. The same day our first jathas will be launched from all over Garhwal.

Demands On Raja

Our demands on the Raja are simple:

- (1) Abolish the strangulating Registration of Societies Act;
- (2) Release all political prisoners and cancel all warrants against political workers;
- (3) Declare full civil liberties regarding Press, speech and association;
- (4) Abolish Nazrana, begar, etc., all types of feudal oppres-

sion and exploitation;
(5) Abolish Pon-toti (tax) and the hated Potato Syndicate;

(6) Set up an independent Enquiry Committee to go into all acts of bribes and atrocities committed in connection with settlement; and, finally,

(7) Make an immediate announcement regarding the convening of a sovereign Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage for the establishment of full responsible government.

The people will not be satisfied with anything less. At this time not even Jai Narayan Vyases and Gairolas will be asked to protect the Raja.

Printed Appeal

In a final printed appeal for mass distribution Sjt. Premdutt Dhobal has asked the people—Garhwalis and all countrymen—to contribute Rs. 10,000 for funds and to join in this holy crusade against the Tehri grabber.

We are sure our call will be more than answered.

UNDER PRINCES RAJ

A Method In Their Madness

ON September 10, the Bilaspur State Police madly lathi-charged without any warning a peaceful meeting held under the joint auspices of the Praja Mandal and the local INA to congratulate Panditji on the formation of the Interim Government. Several persons were hurt, and four INA men, seriously wounded, had to be removed to hospital.

Earlier, the Council of Action of the Bilaspur Praja Mandal had warned the State that if restrictions on the activities of its workers were not removed and civil liberties restored the Praja Mandal would be forced to launch a struggle from September 22.

The people of the State welcomed this decision. They also felt sure of support of the new Interim Government for their struggle.

The "mad lathi-charge", was meant to be a brutal reminder to the State subjects that Princely autocrats are "Independent Sovereigns," unaffected by the Interim Government, under the Cabinet Mission's Plan.

But the 'danda' failed to frighten the people of Bilaspur. Enraged at the orgy of September 10, the INA

too has pledged all support to the movement.

Avenge The Martyrs

AT long last the Maharawal of Jaisalmer has yielded to public opinion. Mr. Gopal Swaroop Pathak, ex-Judge of the Allahabad High Court, has been appointed specially to enquire into the "mysterious death" of Sagar Mal Gopa while in prison.

For five long years this indomitable fighter struggled hard against inhuman beatings and bestial tortures by the police inside the jail. He failed to subdue him. Then suddenly came the announcement on April 27 "Sagar Mal Gopa burnt himself to death by spilling kerosene on his chest and setting fire to them." The State, it was said, was in possession of Gopaji's dying declaration.

Furious with rage, the people refused to believe the State hoax. Shri Gopaji's own prison diary reveals apprehensions of danger to his life. The people's wrath has compelled the Ruler to launch this enquiry, but it will have some meaning only if the assassins are put in the dock and Gopaji is avenged.

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