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# CPI BACKS DESHMUKH'S PROPOSAL

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India, which has been meeting since March 11, 1960, in New Delhi, adopted the following resolutions on March 15:

THE Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India notes with regret and disappointment that the demand for the appointment of an independent tribunal by Mr. C. D. Deshmukh to probe into certain charges of corruption, abuse of authority and the like against persons in high places should have been decreed and rejected by the Prime Minister.

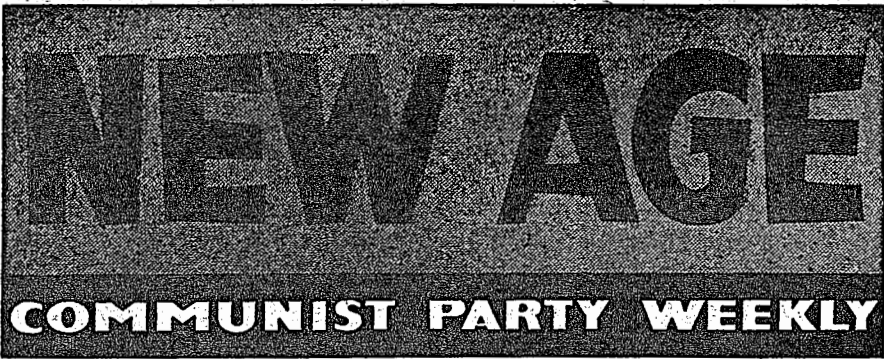
Mr. Deshmukh has publicly expressed his readiness to place all materials and information in his possession in this connection before such a tribunal and it is also known to involve at least some persons in high places. Mr. Deshmukh is reputed to be a man of unassailable personal integrity and he has held many high offices, including that of the Governorship of the Reserve Bank and the Union Minister of Finance. Even today he happens to be the Chairman of the University Grants Commission.

When such a knowledgeable and disinterested person publicly declares that he is in possession of complaints and information regarding corruption, abuse of authority, etc., against persons in high places and wants a probe into them, it ill-behoves a responsible

Government to turn down the proposal by harping on procedural niceties. Mr. Deshmukh's demand had already received wide support.

There is already a strong feeling in the country that men in high places can get away with all their corruption, malpractices, abuse of authority and improprieties. The Government's refusal to accept the very reasonable and legitimate proposal of Mr. C. D. Deshmukh has gone only to add to this feeling as it has also given rise to deep apprehensions in the public mind. It can never be in the interest of the public or of the administration to allow the above-mentioned complaints and information in Mr. Deshmukh's possession to remain a secret without any probe by a competent authority in which the people have full confidence.

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India extends its full support to Mr. C. D. Deshmukh's proposal and urges upon the Government to immediately appoint an independent tribunal to probe into the charges Mr. Deshmukh may place before it in order to ascertain their validity or otherwise.



VOL. VIII, NO. 12 SUNDAY MARCH 20, 1960 25 pF.

# For A National Oil Policy

- ★ LIBERATE DISTRIBUTION FROM MONOPOLY GRIP
- ★ INTENSIFY EXPLORATION ★ TRAIN PERSONNEL

● by RAZA ALI

The oil industry has a vital role in the development of the country's national economy. From a peasant's hut to the atomic research institute oil and oil products are used in some form or the other. Yet, their imports and even their distribution are almost entirely controlled by foreign monopolists, even after two Five-Year Plans in our country.

Time and again our Party through Communist M. P.s in Parliament and through our Press has exposed the Government's lethargy in breaking the foreign monopoly hold over this key sector of our economy and in taking bold measures to develop India's own oil industry corresponding to the country's requirements.

NOW the Third Plan is increasingly being referred to in the Press as the "Oil Plan" and an official statement made before Parliament on November 24, 1959, concerning the association of foreign interests with the quest for oil, has declared that

"...the search for and production of oil within the country will be given the topmost priority in the Third Plan as, for instance, steel was given in the Second Plan." Hence, with the discussion on the Third Five-Year Plan on the agenda, it is necessary to have in view the present situation prevailing in this branch of our national economy and the promises which the Third Plan makes to meet this situation.

Which means, even after allowing for the production of the Indian refineries—Barauni, Gauhati, etc.—a strain of about Rs. 200 crores would be imposed on our foreign exchange resources to meet our increased oil requirements.

The Third Plan, in an overall outlay on the public sector of Rs. 7,000 crores, allocates Rs. 400 crores for oil, coal and minerals, while on the basis of world statistics India would need an investment of at least Rs. 800 to Rs. 900 crores for the possible production of about 14 million tons of oil by 1966.

How is it that the Third Plan has so little to offer to its "topmost priority" sector? It is its heritage of the past, which the Government is, evidently, still so hesitant to discard.

India's present consumption of petroleum products is about six million tons annually. Our present output is only about six lakh tons. So our annual oil import bill is of the order of a hundred crores of rupees. By the end of the Third Plan, the consumption is estimated to go up to 14 million tons. And as not much is being done to step up the production in the country, corresponding to the requirements of the economy, the result would be a heavy imbalance in oil products. Taking a few major items, the picture that emerges is as follows:

At the outset it should be clearly borne in mind that the search for oil is a venture requiring great risks and heavy expenditure. At the same time, it is a venture which, when successful, more

\* SEE PAGE 13

Products	1958		1965-66	
	Consumption	Production	Estimated Demand	Production
	(in thousand tons)			
Kerosene	1,700	700	3,000	1,095
High Speed Diesel Oil	1,000	700	3,000	1,529
Light Diesel Oil	490	420	730	539
Furnace Oil	1,400	1,500	2,100	1,832
Bitumen	350	300	530	429
Gasoline	810	1,100	1,900	1,725

# NANAVATI CASE CENTRAL INTERVENTION —ENCROACHMENT ON JUDICIARY

THE Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India expresses its surprise and astonishment at the peremptory use of his prerogative by the Governor of Bombay to suspend the sentence passed on Commander Nanavati by the State High Court.

The Governor's extraordinary and unprecedented action followed the advice so-called of the Prime Minister of India to the Governor and Chief Minister of Bombay. And this whole thing was done in anticipation of Commander Nanavati's intention to appeal to the Supreme Court.

The intervention of the Central and the State Governments resulted in the High Court's writ and warrants for giving effect to its judgment being return-

ed unserved which has very rightly been taken serious note of by the Bombay High Court. The country will, no doubt, watch with profound interest and anxiety the developments that follow from this episode.

In this connection it should also be mentioned that earlier the Central Government is reported to have advanced a large sum of money to Commander Nanavati for his defence, although the crime of murder with which he was charged did not at all arise out of his official duties. That again was unprecedented and contrary to all rules.

Evidently the Government had thought fit to encroach upon the dignity of the judiciary and interfere with its normal processes on the advice of the high

authorities in the Navy. Is it to be understood then that when big officers of the armed forces are tried and convicted even for such crimes as murder, the normal processes of law are to be thrown overboard and the highest judicial tribunals disregarded and flouted in this manner through the fiat of the Executive?

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India is firmly of the view that these discriminatory actions of the Government in Commander Nanavati's case have not only undermined the dignity of the judiciary but also injured the superiority of civil administration in general and rule of law in particular. The Government's actions would deserve the strongest condemnation by all.







# KERALA: REVERSAL OF POLICIES BEGINS

## Rehabilitation of contractors at expese of cooperatives

The Congress-PSP Government of Kerala has decided not to entrust the manufacture and sale of toddy to the toddy-tappers' cooperative societies under negotiated agreements. These societies, if they so desire, can bid in public auction just as the private contractors.

This is the first major policy decision of the new Government and it not only reverses the policy pursued by the Communist Ministry while it was in office, but it also goes against the declared policies of the Planning Commission and the Government of India itself of helping cooperatives to develop.

MANUFACTURE and sale of toddy in the past used to be entrusted to private contractors through public auction. The Communist Ministry had in 1958 decided to entrust this to cooperatives of the workers engaged in the industry under negotiated contract. According to a phased programme, within two years manufacture and sale of toddy in one-third of the wet areas of the State was brought into the cooperative sector.

### Contractors' Hand-Maid

Now by reverting to the old policy, within a few days of assuming office, the new Government has shown itself to be interested in protecting the profits of private contractors who right from the beginning had attacked the Communist Government's policy. The new Government, despite all its declarations that it would protect the interests of the working class, has begun to take away even the gains made by the working class when the Communist Government was in office.

The only way to protect the interests of workers in the small and unorganised industries and to ensure them better standards of life is to liberate them from the clutches of profiteering middlemen. Cooperatives of workers and producers in these small industries are precisely for this purpose. And it is this principle that has been accepted by the Planning Commission, the Central Government and the State Governments.

The toddy industry is a monopoly of the Government. And because of that the Government's attitude to the cooperatives in this industry will be an index of its approach to the cooperative movement itself.

The Communist Ministry was guided by these principles when it decided to hand over the manufacture and sale of toddy to the cooperatives.

It is on this same basis that the Adviser's regime had decided to continue this

worker members of the society had increased their monthly earnings from Rs. 68 to Rs. 92 and that the society had set apart an adequate amount for bonus.

Moreover, the society had paid back the Rs. one-lakh loan it had taken from the Cochin Central Cooperative Bank and in addition had made a fixed deposit of Rs. two lakhs with the bank.

This letter which the Reserve Bank Deputy Govern-

nor had written to the Adviser on December 3, 1959, was before the new Government, but the Patton Ministry would only see the contractors who had so generously financed the "liberation struggle" and were now asking for their price.

The Government in its Press-Note has, of course, tried to partially cover up this naked betrayal of the interests of the toddy-tappers and their families.

The Press-Note says that those societies which bid for shops in public auction will get a reduction of five per cent in the kist amount if they pay up in time.

As for the problems of the tappers, the question of permanency of employment has been altogether ignored. In the matter of casual leave, paid holidays, etc., the Ministry has made recommendations which fall far below what exist today—obviously the green signal to the con-

tractors to go ahead and cut down on the benefits which the tappers enjoy at present.

The enormity of the crime against the toddy-tappers will become evident if a few facts and figures are examined about just one district.

Under the contract system, in Alleppey District, tappers tapping ten trees used to get a bonus of Rs. 1/12 per tree—a total of Rs. 11/25. Thus 386 workers used to get a bonus of about Rs. 4,350 from the contractors. Last year the Alleppey society gave 386 workers Rs. 26,697/66 as bonus.

The society paid the workers Rs. 10,710/28 as leave wages—that is for 15 days' paid leave. Under the contract system this was for just five days—about Rs. 3,000.

Including May Day, the society paid double wages

for seven holidays—about Rs. 7,000 as against Rs. 2,400 under the contractors.

Contractors paid minimum wages for a bottle of 26½ ounces while the society calculated at the rate of 24 ounces. Thus a worker received the same wage for 12 bottles from the society as for 13½ from the contractors. Under this item alone, the workers got Rs. 46,800 more from the society.

Thus 386 workers received in all Rs. 82,807 more in 1958-59 from the society than from the contractors.

These are some of the gains which the new Congress-PSP Government wants to take away from the workers and against this Government decision the Kerala State Council of the Communist Party and organisations of toddy-tappers have called for a broad campaign.

## PRECEPT AND PRACTICE

THE Government Press-Note on toddy cooperatives has tried to make out that a number of safeguards had been made to protect the interests of the tappers: It is interesting to compare them with conditions as they existed.

- Workers should be paid minimum wages according to the Minimum Wages notification—says the Government Press-Note.

This is nothing new, this is a benefit enjoyed by workers for the last two years.

- If the toddy is tapped half a mile away from the shop, it will be brought to the shop at the contractor's cost.
- This is something that has existed for the last five years—long before the Communist Ministry assumed office.
- The contractor should pay the tree-tax and

of paid leave days and holidays alone each worker will lose about Rs. 45.

Apart from the fact that these is no guarantee that the contractors will abide by these rules, there is no guarantee that the nearly ten thousand tappers who are presently in the societies will get employment under the contractors.

Secondly, the large number of staff employed in the societies, will lose their jobs.

Thirdly, what happens to the lakhs of rupees invested by the tappers from their earnings in the societies?

Chief Minister Patton declared when he assumed office that his Government would give relief to hungry stomachs and work to unemployed hands. In the eyes of the Congress-PSP Government, only private contractors seem to fit into this category.

# BACK TO DAYS OF LOCK-UP BEATING AND POLICE OPPRESSION

Kerala's Chief Minister Patton Thanu Pillai enunciated his Government's police policy at a Press Conference in Trivandrum on March 10 last. Normally no Government, said the Chief Minister, "was called upon to make a new policy in regard to these matters," but he was forced to do so "as a consequence of inroads made into our Constitution by wrong policies of the previous Ministry."

LEAVE alone the fact that the Communist Ministry would not have been allowed to stay for 28 days in office, let alone 28 months, if it had tried to make any inroads into our Constitution, what had the Communist Government enunciated as its policy?

### Communist Policy

The Communist Government had not laid down anything which stood in the way of the police fulfilling their duties and responsibilities according to the existing laws and the Police Code. But it had certainly prevented the police from taking on powers which they did not have under any of these laws and codes and terrorising and oppressing the people as had been the practice in the British days and had been followed by Congress Governments.

For instance, the Communist Government had laid down that the police could not indulge in torturing people in lock-ups; that firing should be resorted to only as a last expedient and only if it became unavoidable; that unless there was a breach of law or danger to peace the police should not intervene in labour and agrarian dispu-

tes to help employers and landlords. Despite all Sri Patton Thanu Pillai's platitudinous statements, it is all this that will be changed when he enunciated a new police policy saying these are "inroads" into the Constitution.

Says the Chief Minister: "The law did not make any distinction between man and man, and nobody would be allowed to use violence against another person, irrespective of his standing whether he was a capitalist or worker or any other."

### Discretion Of Police

The Chief Minister then gives the following advice to the police: "To officers and men of the police force and magistracy who have been subjected to greatest strain on account of the double-standards evolved by the Communist Party. We believe that they did so under the greatest pressure. We are sure that now that the 'rule of law' is firmly enforced, they will forget their past sins. If they persist in action based on false standards, unacceptable to the people and the Constitution, they will be severely dealt with."

Those who have witnessed the "proper" use of this "discretion" by the police under British rule and Con-

gress rule will have no doubt as to what the future holds for the common people of the State who had had a respite from police oppression during the 28 months of Communist rule.

But the Chief Minister has not finished. He has also a threat to hold out. He continues:

"This is what the people, your masters, expect, this is what the law enjoins. No harm will come to anyone of you for enforcing the law. But we shall not hesitate to take the most stringent action against those who act with a partisan spirit, motivated by considerations extraneous to the provisions of law."

"It is an unhappy fact that a number of officers and men who comprise the police force were so misguided as to fall into the Communist trap and had allowed themselves to be used as tools of the Communist Party. We believe that they did so under the greatest pressure. We are sure that now that the 'rule of law' is firmly enforced, they will forget their past sins. If they persist in action based on false standards, unacceptable to the people and the Constitution, they will be severely dealt with."

### Namboodiripad's Statement

This policy statement has naturally engendered certain misgivings among the people to which E. M. S. Namboodiripad gave expression—the Times of India, of course, finding it difficult to "appreciate the fantastic fulminations of Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the former Communist Chief Minister of Kerala, against the Coalition Government's announcement of the restoration of the rule of law."

Here is what E. M. S. Namboodiripad said:

"It was, therefore, quite natural that, when the Party was able to form a Government in the State in 1957, attention was paid to the problem of how to save the common people from this oppressive rule. The statement of policy which I issued in July, 1957, was the result of serious thinking on the subject by the Party and the Government. It is this that is objected to in Sri Thanu Pillai's statement as 'violation of the Constitution' and the institution of the 'rule of the jungle law'."

"I would not care to argue, at the present moment, as to the constitutionality or otherwise of my policy statement. I would only point out to Sri Thanu Pillai and his colleagues that the Constitution itself provides certain methods through which acts of Governments can be challenged and that they have not taken advantage of these provisions."

"There is, however, one other criticism made by Sri Thanu Pillai against our policy statement that I would like to deal with here, i.e., that the consequence of these wrong policies were disastrous to the common man—indeed to all except those who submitted to the Party in power. I would just like to point out to him and his colleagues that it is extraordinary that a Party whose rule proved so disastrous to the common man increased its votes by 50 per cent (from 23 lakhs to 35 lakhs).

### Ten Years' Record

"I am grateful to Sri Patton Thanu Pillai for having been frank enough to state that his Government will do its utmost to restore the state of affairs which obtained in our State before April, 1957.

"It is too late in the day for him to assert that the Congress Governments that ruled our State for nearly ten years before 1957 did not make any distinction between the rich and the poor or between a worker and landowner in regard to fundamental rights. The people of this State know very well that those who headed the Congress Governments wielded their power in such a way that the arms of the law gave full protection to the owning classes as against the working people. It was precisely because the Communist Party championed the interests of the victims of their oppressive rule that the Party steadily grew in the confidence and affection of the common people."

### Terrible Prospect

"On the other hand, the Party that is supposed to have maintained the 'rule of law', whose consequences to the common man were 'beneficial', steadily fell in the affection and confidence of the common people, so that it has now to resort to all sorts of manoeuvres to keep itself in power—including the manoeuvres of installing in the office of Chief Minister, the leader of a much smaller party."

used anti-Communist demagoguery to persecute hundreds of honest democrats who had nothing to do with Communism.

"Tragic, indeed, will be the plight of numerous honest Government employees who are by no means Communists but who refuse to toe the line for the Congress-PSP-League bosses. Any Government employee can now be given the bad name of 'a tool of the Communist Party' and even his personal enemies can wreak vengeance on him. Is this in the spirit of our Constitution, one would like to know, which looks upon a member or sympathiser of all political parties alike?"

It would appear from Sri Thanu Pillai's statement that he and his colleagues are determined to re-establish the kind of police administration which obtained in the pre-1957 years. That, indeed, is a terrible prospect for those whose memory is not so short as to forget the tragic incidents that took place in the police lock-ups in those difficult years. I am sure that decent men and women in our State will raise their voice of protest against that state of affairs returning to our State.

"Another disturbing development hinted at in the Chief Minister's statement is the anti-Communist witch-hunt that is threatened against the personnel of Government services. Hints are made of 'officers and men' who 'allowed themselves to be used as tools of the Communist Party'. They are warned that unless they mend their ways they will be severely dealt with. All this is done in the typical style of the notorious McCarthy of the notorious States, who, it is well-known,

### Threat Of Witch-Hunt

It has already happened in Quilon. The Quilon Additional Sessions Court had convicted a young man, Vijayan, for two months' rigorous imprisonment.

An appeal was filed against this sentence and when efforts were being made to take Vijayan out on bail, he was taken to the Quilon West Police Station and there he was brutally manhandled by an Inspector and some constables.

Hearing his screams, people from the court compound ran to the police station and they saw Vijayan on the ground crying in pain.

### It Has Begun

Does the Times of India editorial writer begin to see how "without spite or hatred to anyone, impartially and strictly according to law" the police are doing their duty?

When Police Minister P. T. Chacko was recently in Ernakulam, a soda vendor complained to him that he had been beaten by the police.

The vendor's story was that he had been stopped by a constable, had been taken to the lock-up and beaten there.

It used to be a custom for many policemen to take some sort of protection money from these petty traders. After the Communist Ministry assumed office, it was a custom which the police could not very much indulge in. But now they have again begun to harass these small traders.

Does the Times of India editorial-writer think this is the "proper" use of the "discretion" vested by the law in the police?









# State Sector Needed In Imports And Distribution Of Oil

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dustry. Just by mopping up the annual excess profits of these foreign monopolies, even according to Government's own reports, almost the entire cost of India's oil imports in the Third Plan can be met.

The Cost Accountant's Report is far from being exhaustive. The relevant figures that are required for finding out the correct values of the costing of the entire oil price structure, from c.i.f. prices to the retail prices, were never available to him. Yet there is enough material in it for the Government to put the foreign monopolies in the dock and to propose necessary legislative measures concerning oil price investigation and controls.

According to this report, any delay in pressing upon the companies to come to a final conclusion based upon its findings will drain from this country another Rs. 25 crores every year.

The report also makes it clear that it is in the distribution system that the foreign monopolies are making huge profits. It shows, for instance, that immediately the Government started examining the accounts, there was 500 per cent increase in the total expenses of service stations while not a single pie has been spent in relation to the total volume of increase in trade.

The cost accountant has also found out that the minor products give more money to the oil companies than the major products. A reference is made to 13 items of specialised oil products which are sold in this country whose pricing formula we have never enquired into.

Drawing attention to this report, T. C. N. Menon demanded in the Lok Sabha, "Government should take measures to direct the cost accountant to have a fresh enquiry and if required... legislation should be brought

before the House for compelling these companies to bring the entire documents before the cost accountant so that the cost accountant will be able to see the company's accounts and arrive at a pricing formula."

Extraordinary indeed is the picture that emerges from these considerations. There is the Government complaining of its inability to find the necessary resources to meet the minimum requirements of a developing economy. There are the Government committees, pointing out the places where these resources can be tapped. Yet no headway, practically, is being made.

## Biggest Profits From India

Giving an analysis of the international profits of the biggest oil companies, the Cost Accountant's Report finds out that the only place where they take so much percentage of profit on net block capital investment in this industry is India. And yet we have Oil Minister Malaviya sermonising: "We do not want to produce more oil to spoil somebody else's market outside; we do not want to sell more oil ourselves to spoil anybody's market inside." (Speech at the first meeting of the Committee constituted by the Government to advise on problems relating to petroleum products.)

Is it not clear that it is just their hold over our market, that has enabled the foreign monopolies to dictate any price they like for the oil products? And how are you to break that hold without yourself entering into your own market?

The audacity of these monopolies dictating their own terms is in fact a measure of the timidity of our own Government in taking firm measures to put a curb on them.

The latest instance of their audacity was brought before Parliament by Bhupesh Gupta last week.

## Story Of A Tender

The Director-General of Supplies and Disposals had called for tenders for petroleum products worth crores of rupees. When the tenders were opened, it was found that some foreign monopolies had submitted identical quotations for a number of oil products. Bhupesh Gupta placed before Parliament two cases—that of the aviation turbine fuel tender opened on February 16, 1960, and another of the tender for kerosene, inferior and superior and motor spirit, opened on February 10, 1960. Burmah Shell, Caltex and Standard Vacuum had given identical prices.

A comparison of these prices with those worked out in the Cost Accountant's Report based on the data given by these very same companies, is very revealing. We cite below only two instances:

KEROSENE SUPERIOR			
	Landed cost in the Cost Accountant's Report on 1-4-1958.		Quotations given in the tenders f.o.r. main installation, Indian port on 10-2-1960.
Bombay	Rs. 6.0676	for 8 I.G.	Rs. 8.15
Cochin	6.1460	for 8 I.G.	8.15
Madras	6.4380		8.49
Calcutta	6.5100		8.64

KEROSENE INFERIOR			
	Rs.		Rs.
Bombay	5.9092		7.88
Calcutta	5.9332		8.52

What other conclusion can be drawn from this instance and this comparison, than the fact that taking full advantage of their monopoly hold over our oil imports, the three foreign monopolies conspired together to raise the prices by about 30 per cent more in about a year's time? And moreover, the increase has been effected while the Government was investigating the old price structure. It only shows what worth the oil sharks attach to the Government's "threat" to force a reduction in oil prices and to the work of the Government's investigation committees.

The Minister of Revenue and Civil Expenditure, Dr. B. Gopala Reddy, was in the course of the discussion in the Rajya Sabha, finding difficulty in understanding our objections, so he got busy in discovering "turking suspicions" in others' minds, instead. This example, let us hope, might help him to realise that the objections are not to aid from particular countries, but to foreign "aid" which plunders our economy and places foreign monopolies in a position to dictate terms to us.

Even in the USA, similar attempts to dictate prices are considered illegal. Recently, as reported in the American Journal Newsweek (February 22, 1960), "one of the biggest anti-trust trials in history" was instituted against 29 oil companies. The charge was "that some oil executives talked prices with their affiliates."

## Privilege Of Monopolies

In our country, when such a case is brought to the notice of Parliament, all that the Oil Minister has to say is: "that is a feature which is the privilege of a monopolistic organisation. But it is a question for consideration."

It must be realised, however, that no substantial development of the oil industry in the Third Plan—or in any number of plans for that matter—can take place, unless the foreign monopoly grip over the imports and distribution of oil and oil products is broken, as it now exists in India.

Another important problem concerning the oil industry, for which the Third Plan has no answer to give, is the problem of training technical personnel to man this industry.

If the Government is serious about developing our oil

industry, then Cambay requires just as much attention as Bhilai and Rourkela. Just as there is a programme for training technical cadres for the steel industry, there should be a programme for training technical personnel for the oil industry also.

There are enthusiastic talented young men in our country, eager to avail themselves of training opportunities in the field of oil. At Jwalamukhi and at Cambay, they are showing their mettle. Free technical training opportunities are offered by the Soviet Union and Rumania; maintenance and travelling expenses are all that the Indian Government has to incur and that too in rupees only.

Why then is the Government so lethargic in building up technical personnel for this industry? Who will run the refineries when they are built? Who will repair them? Who will handle the highly technical equipment used in search of the "liquid gold"? So far, very little has been done.

## Problems Of Third Plan

These are some of the problems the Third Plan has got to solve, if it is to be an "Oil Plan". Liquidation of the foreign monopoly grip over the imports and distribution of petroleum products, a much bolder penetration of the State sector into this vital branch of the oil industry, a much more serious programme for oil exploration and exploitation in the country, and much more serious attention to the building of technical personnel to man this industry, are the imperative needs of an "Oil Plan".

An almost fossilized Oil and Natural Gas Commission whose technical management lacks much that is desired, a national oil distribution company which exists only on paper, and about a dozen rigs all over the country, are to say the least, the poorest testimony to this "topmost priority" sector.

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## "DILUTED DEMOCRACY" FOR KENYA

\* FROM PAGE 15

● Voters have to be over twenty-one years of age and be able to read or write, or hold a post in the national or local Government, or be over forty, or have an annual income of ₹75.

The majority of the white settlers, led by Group Captain Briggs of the United Party, have denounced even this limited compromise by the British Colonial Secretary, Macleod, as "a Mau Mau victory."

They consider the final proposals as "calamitous" and in protest, the Speaker of the Kenya Legislative Council, Sir Ferdinand Cavendish-Bentinck, has resigned. Already plans are afoot by the Europeans to defeat completely the Conference proposals. This attitude on their part eloquently indicates how much of a living anachronism all of them are.

## Criticism Of Leaders

From the African point of view, some of their leaders have been strongly criticised for agreeing to whittle down the country's original demand. Joseph P. Mathenge, General Secretary of the Kenya People's Convention Party, and James Dennis Akumu, Chairman of its Mombasa section, have declared that Macleod's proposals "fall far short of even their minimum demands which the African people agreed to put forward." "A constitution which will deny the majority of Africans a vote," they continue, "and one which will not effecti-

vely transfer power into their hands cannot be expected to win their approval."

The Africans are also genuinely disappointed because their leader, Kenyatta, and other political detainees are still denied the right to participate in Kenya's political life.

Meanwhile, Odinga Odinga, one of the elected members of the Legislative Council, has come out with a statement condemning the attempt on the part of a section of the African leaders to become Ministers under the existing Lennox-Boyd Constitution.

## Issues Unsolved

It is impossible for the people of Kenya to be satisfied with the "diluted democracy" doled out at Lancaster House, in spite of the sophistry of language used to characterise the Conference formula.

No doubt certain concessions were made to African national feelings. The Government, above all, has been forced by the strength of the national movement to acknowledge the rights of the people of the country to govern themselves.

But important issues remain unsolved and the Africans are dissatisfied and angry. The concessions of Lancaster House are only a step forward in the struggle for Kenya's independence.

The vitality and sacrifice of the Kenya Africans and their capacity to learn from the basic experience of the worldwide anti colonial movement is "a guarantee of their future victory."