

# NEW AGE

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OCTOBER 2 : GANDHI JAYANTI  
DISARMAMENT DAY

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## Patton's Removal Helps Congress but does not solve the problem

\*FROM OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI, WHO IS NOT ONLY THE HOME MINISTER BUT ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL BOSSES OF THE CONGRESS ORGANISATION, HAS SAVED HIS PARTY FROM TWO EMBARRASSING SITUATIONS BY ONE MASTERLY STROKE HE HAS DEALT IN TRIVANDRUM, LAST WEEK.

Kept as a closely guarded secret till it was simultaneously announced in Trivandrum and Delhi on the evening of September 25, he had persuaded Patton Thanu Pillai, till now the Chief Minister, to accept the post of the Governor of Punjab. Newsmen were told about this decision only in the afternoon of the 25th. The same night, Thanu Pillai tendered his resignation to the Governor who asked Deputy Chief Minister R. Shankar to take over as the new Chief Minister.

**T**HIS sudden development in Kerala politics has helped the Congress Party to overcome two difficulties which it was facing.

The first was a relatively minor difficulty: K. C. Reddy had been officially announced as the incumbent of the post of the Punjab Governor. If he accepts it, he will have to vacate his seat in Parliament. This will make it necessary to conduct a by-election in the Kolar Parliamentary constituency.

Apprehension had been felt in Congress circles that the result in that constituency may not be very different from those of Tiruchengode and Chittoor where the Congress was defeated by the DMK and the

Swatantra Party respectively. This danger has now been averted.

This, however, is a minor gain compared to the much more important gain secured by political changes in Kerala. The relations between the Congress and the PSP in that State have for some time, been so strained that the Congress was faced with a difficult choice:

● Continue the coalition with Patton as Chief Minister. In this case, the Congress Ministers and members of the Congress Legislature Party will have to face extremely difficult and humiliating situation; or

● End the coalition and send the PSP into the opposition with all the consequences that may follow when the Communist Party, the PSP and the Muslim League will all be ranged against the Congress government.

The latter would have been a particularly embarrassing prospect had Pat-

ton remained in the State and functioned as the leader of one of the opposition groups.

The Congress in Kerala has now been spared the difficulty of choosing between these two equally difficult prospects. With Patton removed from the scene, the Congress can take over the administration without much difficulty.

The statement made by Shankar that the coalition will continue unless the PSP wants to end it, is significant. It shows that the Congress does not think that any other Praja Socialist of Kerala except Patton can become a problem even if he is in the Ministry. It also shows that the Congress feels strong enough to face opposition from the PSP if the latter decides to play that role.

The first reactions of Asoka Mehta and N. G. Goray show the plight which the PSP finds itself in. Having secured its help for winning a majority in the Legislature, the Congress has unceremoniously thrown it away. The all-India leaders of the PSP cut very sorry figures indeed.

The Congress may feel that it has won the game. It has defeated its adversaries one by one. Together with all the rest against the Communist Party, together with the PSP



### ★ AJOY GHOSH ★ Memorial Fund

Every Party member must make it a point to approach personal friends—and devote some time daily for this purpose. On holidays they must make it a point to meet friends for this purpose. And I am sure people will help liberally once you approach them.

**T**HERE are others who knew Ajoy personally and who will be very willing to help in the erection of a memorial building in his name which will house the offices of the Communist Party of India and its library.

Members must chalk out plans in advance whom to approach and when, etc. It will not be difficult once you decide about it.

Remember that the first of every month is a day when you can approach friends and sym-

pathisers and they will surely pay.

Then there is the other point—each Party member must make his personal contribution. This should be a must.

This week from the Punjab two Comrades have sent Rs. 100 each. One of these is Comrade Kishorilal, a colleague of Ajoy and a co-accused in the Lahore Conspiracy case; and the other is Comrade Desh Raj.

Thank you, Comrades Kishorilal and Desh Raj. I hope your example

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against the Muslim League; ultimately against the PSP as well—these have been the successive phases through which the Congress has been able to climb back to power.

But those who know the internal situation in the Con-

gress itself, as well as the pushes and pulls of the various caste and communal forces on the Congress Party in Kerala, know that the formation of a purely Congress ministry is only the beginning of new troubles to come.

The leaders of our trade and industry, who assembled in the capital last week under the aegis of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) to deliberate on the twin problems of power and transport, saw many things upside down.

They have known for the past five years and more the objectives guiding our plan. They know too that these objectives assign the first place to the development of agriculture and industry, for building up a self-reliant and self-sustaining economy, and view power and transport only as essential ingredients in facilitating this process.

Yet, they rushed into declaring that these two were the "core" of the plan, and had to be tackled as such. Happily they were put in their place by the Planning Minister Nanda, who told them in clear terms that their mistaken emphasis would give a "misleading focus" to our entire plan process.

The FICCI has for long been lamenting the shortfalls in power and transport, but in doing so it is not actuated by any altruistic motives. If that were so, it would make common cause with the Government to explore ways and means to improve the position. What it clamours for instead is a larger share for private sector in the two lines.

Even at last week's conference the President of the FICCI, Jain, asked for permission for private industrialists to set up power stations, a demand which goes contrary to the Industrial Policy Resolution. The crudely selfish nature of this demand was made evident by Jain when he loaded it with a further de-

## ECONOMIC NOTES

mand for what he called "a reasonable and fair return on investment".

Rightly has the National Herald, September 22, ridiculed this demand by comparing it with a suggestion, which too the FICCI might some day make, that the return on investment in water works or other municipal services should be raised "if private enterprise is to be induced to enter these spheres".

The FICCI has combined the demand for private sector's sizeable entry into power generation with another for abolition of levies on electricity by state governments. The Planning Minister rejected this demand as well, with the assertion that such levies are a legitimate

means for mobilising resources for the Plan.

The bulk of these levies are charged from the bulk consumers of electricity, that is the industry. Thus, in clamouring for more power the FICCI also asks for cheaper electricity. And yet, for the private sector to enter this field it asks for a better return on capital.

The FICCI's plea in this sphere was not confined to power generation. It extended to manufacture of power equipment as well. The Planning Minister politely rejected this plea too with the assertion that the capacities of the three public sector heavy electrical plants have been planned "on the basis of meeting the entire demand for complete power generating units".

As with power, so with transport, the difficulties created by the current bottleneck have been exploited by the FICCI to put forward its parochial demands. Its President suggested that the "user should be always free to choose the mode or modes of transport most convenient and economic from his point of view".

Apparently a very legitimate plea, made on a high plane of individual liberty, it is, in fact, a subtle device to secure for the private sector a larger share in transport as well. For, what will freedom to choose in this context mean? It will mean, as the National Herald has pointed out, that "road transport will get away with all the most paying traffic (and) gradually the railways will become less and less remunerative and finally grind to a halt".

What will happen next? Again, to quote the Herald, "at that stage, road transport will not help the industry by transporting coal or other raw materials, because the haulage of this bulk traffic is not sufficiently paying".

Thus, in their quest for quick immediate profits the leaders of private sector, which holds a near monopoly in road transport, have given a go by to nation's interests. Fortunately, their game did not succeed with Nanda who told them that "in planning the deployment (of means of transport) the total interest of the community has to be prime consideration".

The FICCI has thus found in the twin problems a handy stick to browbeat the authorities into allowing the private sector a large-scale entry into what has hitherto been largely a state monopoly. And yet, in pinpointing attention on them it is only being wise after the event.

As Nanda pointed out, the FICCI had put even less store by these sectors than the planners had done. In its tentative outline for the Third Plan it had proposed a total investment of Rs. 1,100 crores only for transport and communications as compared to Rs. 4,000 crores for industries and mining. As against this proportion between transport and industry of 1:4, the Third

Plan actually provided for investment in the ratio of 2:3.

To sum up, the FICCI has certainly not enhanced its reputation for objectivity or patriotism by the type of fare it presented at the convention. And yet, how near success in its game it was if the Planning Minister had not been quick to explode its pretensions.

THIS year's meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will be remembered for the emphasis which many of the participating delegates, specially from the less developed and developing countries, placed on the development of trade as a necessary part of aid.

Our own Finance Minister was emphatic in deprecating what he called the "reluctance of industrialised countries to facilitate imports of manufactured goods from developing countries". "How can countries which are being so generously helped with credits... expect to repay what they borrow except through larger exports of things produced by their factories?" he asked.

In spite of this and similar pleas, however, it is clear that matters stand very much where they were before the Fund-Bank had met.

For what can these Brettenwoods twins—or quarduplets (with International Finance Corporation and International Development Association thrown in) can do in this particular respect? Their work is to dole out funds at commercial rates for projects, which are sanctioned by their executives, or powers who own their stocks, and found credit-worthy.

The latter is merely an euphemism for fulfilling the test of being not contrary to the interests of the donor country. This being the basic character of these bodies it is futile to expect of them to suggest any basic change in the trade policies of the developed countries.

The World Bank and the IMF and their affiliates, although international in name, are, in fact, subservient to the US monopolists. To make them really an instrument of financing development in underdeveloped countries, and of disciplining national currencies, it is necessary to make them an integral part of the UN.

Further, some basic reorganisation of their set-up and policies will be necessary to make their operations really independent of Washington, London, or Bonn for that matter. Till then, their meetings are only a ritual which, leaves things very much where they are.

—ESSEN

September 25.

SEPTEMBER 30, 1962

## TRADE UNION ROUND-UP

Struggle for bonus in various forms during this part of the year has become an inevitable phenomenon in the industrial relations of the country.

THERE is hardly any employer who forks out workers' share in the prosperity without some form of action by the workers. In some places, the struggle is unleashed not merely for the bonus payable for the accounted for year but also for the unpaid bonus outstanding for years together.

Just last week, the Bombay textile workers were all set for going on strike for realising their bonus pending payment since three years. September 24 was the date fixed for this purpose by the Action Committee of the textile workers.

The Bombay Chief Minister, Y. Chavan and Union Labour Minister, Gulzari Lal Nanda appealed to the workers not to resort to strike since there were possibilities for a settlement. The employers have already offered Rs. 7½ crores as bonus.

Agreeing to the proposal of mediation in the form of

### Bombay

arbitration into the dispute by the Bombay Chief Minister, the President of the Action Committee, S. A. Dange, on September 23 in a mammoth meeting of the workers, announced the postponement of the proposed strike. This indicated the first round of success of the workers' movement because at long last under the threat of strike, the employers indicated a specific sum as bonus.

The workers demand centered around a sum of Rs. 13½ crores, equivalent to 12 months' wages. Another aspect of the demand was the question of payment of equal bonus in all the mills.

The Girni Kamgar Union, which has initiated the movement, has demanded that the verdict of the Chief Minister on 1) the quantum of bonus should be given by October 1, (ii) on distribution of bonus by October 15 and (iii) the payment of equal bonus by all mills by October 20 to celebrate Dewali. Failing these, the strike which has been postponed would be resorted to on October 24.

The role of the INTUC union, Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh, which is the representative union in the industry under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and holds the right of negotiation with the employers under the Act, also became clearer to the workers in terms of their attitude to the bonus issue. They had tried to keep the workers under illusion in the name of negotiatory talks with the management and helped the employers to deprive the workers of bonus for the last three years.

Only when the workers decided to strike, they felt panic and sought to take wind out of their sail by taking initiative for a settlement. This in effect yielded results contrary to their expectations and exposed them further.

THE Kerala cashew workers have also scored a significant victory in their struggle for bonus. The 28-day old strike of 75,000 workers which was being led jointly by AITUC, INTUC and UTUC unions

### Kerala

was called off on September 1, following an agreement arrived at in presence of the State Chief Minister.

Earlier, on Onam day—the traditional festival day in Kerala, the workers resorted to a mass hunger strike.

According to the agreement, the workers will now receive 4½ per cent of their total earnings of the calendar year and the staff, one month's wages, as bonus for the year 1962. It has also been agreed that the wages for the Onam day will be paid ex gratia.

Be it recalled that the workers had to embark upon the path of struggle following a blunt refusal of the employers to pay any bonus or advance to the workers this year on the plea of loss in trade. But this payment of bonus was a traditional one and since last 16 years its payment was uninterrupted.

When the strike did materialise and the employers failed to break unity of the workers, they threatened them with prosecution for damage said to have occurred to the cashew kernels by non-processing.

### Marmagao Workers' Demonstration Of Unity

MORE than 5,000 workers attended the mass rally organised by the Marmagao Port, Dock and Transport Workers' Union on September 16. This represented the unshakable confidence the workers have in their union.

The meeting had become necessary because of the anti-union activities of one Shivaji Sawant and Ramesh Desai who were former workers of this union. They had organised a meeting of the workers on the same day in the name of so-called "Demands Day" and invited top-ranking leaders of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, viz., Bagaram Tulpule, Peter Alvares, Makhan Chatterjee, S. R. Kulkarni etc.

Although the meeting was called in the name of "Demands Day", the real motive of the organisers was to wean away workers from the Marmagao Port, Dock and Transport Workers' Union. But the attempt failed miserably since only a few workers responded to their call. It is interesting to note



Braithwaite Company workers' demonstrate for bonus in Calcutta.

## Struggle For Bonus Is On

that these PSP leaders before leaving Bombay had issued a statement to the press to the effect that they were going to Goa in a delegation on behalf of the All-India Port and Dock Workers Federation, "to study the problems of dock workers at Marmagao harbour".

Though this was ostensibly shown as the reason of their visit, Shivaji Sawant and his colleagues had already plastered the town with huge posters (printed in Bombay and obviously with the concurrence of the PSP leaders) which in glittering letters announced that these leaders were arriving to address a meeting organised by "Transport and Dock Workers' Union (Goa Branch)".

The most hilarious part of this episode was that in course of his speech at the rally under the auspices of this yet-to-be formed union, S. R. Kulkarni announced that he had come to Goa for sight-seeing and visiting temples!

### DTU Workers' Courtesy Week

"SERVE With a Smile", "Serve With Safety" and "Create Good Relations With The Public Of Delhi" were the slogans which enthused the workers of Delhi Transport Undertaking to observe a "Safety-cum-Courtesy Week" from September 17 to 23. The call was given by the D.T.U. Workers' Union and the workers of DTU successfully implemented it.

For some time past, interested elements and a section of the press had been carrying on a campaign against the DTU workers, particularly

the conductors, about their deliberate misbehaviour with the public and alleged unconcern about the safety of the passengers.

The observance of the week emphasised the goodwill of the DTU workers towards the public and their sincere desire to serve them better. But, they also, obviously, have a claim on the public to be treated well. In the past there were sev-

eral such weeks organised by the DTU officials and lack of enthusiasm and bureaucracy failed to evoke enough enthusiasm to lead the campaign to any success. This time at the instance of the union, the campaign yielded inspiring results and the initiators hope to keep up the tempo.

It goes to the credit of the union and to the interest evinced by the volunteers and the general staff members that the comparative revenue of the Undertaking has registered an increase of Rs. 10,496 during the week, as against the same period during the last month. 1,75,317 additional passengers were carried during the week and the number of complaints came down to a bare minimum of 7 or 8 as against dozens which used to be there earlier. There has been no major accident during the week and the number of minor accidents also was reduced to almost nil.

## Working Journalist's Wrongful Dismissal

WORKING journalists and press workers joined hands to stage a united demonstration on September 22 in front of the office of Agence France Presse, a foreign news agency, against the arbitrary dismissal of a journalist.

B. R. Bahl, who has his credit 16 years of service with the Agency's New Delhi office, has been dismissed from service on flimsy grounds.

What has generated sharp reaction among the workers in the newspaper industry is the arrogant and insulting attitude of the Agency's boss, Felix Naggar, when his arbitrary action was questioned.

He retorted, when the representatives of Delhi Union of Journalists suggested arbitration to settle the dispute that if Prime Minister Nehru would not accept arbitration over Kashmir, he also could not agree to such a proposal!

Naggar went to the extent of describing India's Prime Minister as "intransigent". The demonstration on September 22, *inter alia*, demanded that Naggar by his behaviour had forfeited any claim to this country's hospitality and therefore he must be sent back.

The efforts at settlement through arbitration or conciliation having failed, the Delhi Union of Journalists has now demanded adjudication on this dispute.

The case for reinstatement of Bahl is very strong. He joined the organisation when it had been just established in India and when it earned no revenue. Since then its revenue side showed substantial earnings and its requirements of staff have expanded.

The excuse offered by Naggar that since its recent tie-up with the Press Trust of India resulted in loss to the Agency and hence this dismissal, is therefore untenable on the face of it.

## INTO THE DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

### Editorial

GANDHI JAYANTI this year is invested with a new significance. On that day, people owing allegiance to various political parties and following various philosophical and religious faiths will come together and launch a campaign against the use of nuclear power for war purposes and for complete and general disarmament.

The campaign is so organised and run that, for the first time since the organised peace movement came into existence, various streams through which the Indian people's urge for peace finds expression are commingling and flowing as a mighty river. The Indian Committee for Peace and Disarmament with its headquarters in Delhi is far wider than any organisation working for peace and disarmament that has ever been established in our country.

Those who took the initiative in forming the All-India Peace Council more than a decade ago will find satisfaction at the fulfilment of their cherished aim of bringing all partisans of peace, regardless of political or other differences, on one agreed platform. No more is the movement confined to small circles of peace partisans who are suspected of being the "tools of Moscow". It has reached the ranks of those sections of the people who had, at one time, thought it useless to collect signatures for the Stockholm Peace Appeal and made fun of those who worked for the success of that campaign.

The leaders and members of the ruling party will be happy to note that the appeal, on the basis of which the campaign is now being run, offers support to the disarmament proposals advanced by the neutral nations in the 17-nation Disarmament Committee, including India. The campaign will thus be in support of the policy of neutrality and non-alignment pursued by their own leaders in the Government of the country.

The Sarvodaya workers know the important role played by the Gandhi Peace Foundation in sponsoring and organising this campaign. Here is therefore a great opportunity for them to work with various sections of the people for a cause dear to Gandhiji. Making this campaign successful will thus be the most appropriate way to observe Gandhi Jayanti this year.

Whichever way different sections in the movement for peace and disarmament

look at it, the fact remains that the combined force that will be generated by their united activity will bring together a far greater and more effective force for peace than ever before. This will show the peoples and Governments of other countries that there is no difference on this issue between the Government and the people, and between various sections of the people, in our country. The signatures being collected during the campaign will rally hundreds of thousands of the Indian people behind the world-wide struggle for peace and disarmament and thus further strengthen that struggle.

No student of present-day world affairs will have any illusion that this struggle is easy, or that it will lead to complete success in a short time. The forces of war, though confined to narrow circles in a few countries, are nevertheless extremely powerful. They happen to be the ruling circles in those very countries which have at their disposal huge material resources and a big say in international politics.

Every participant in the campaign now being undertaken will, therefore realise that the Disarmament Week being observed now is only a beginning. The struggle has to be carried forward and made to gather more and more strength.

The success of the campaign depends above all on the extent to which the industrial workers, peasants and agricultural labourers, artisans and middle class employees, women, youth, students and intellectual workers, are drawn into it. For, it is only then that it will become a real mass movement of the Indian people. It is, therefore, to be hoped that organisations representing these classes and strata of society will realise the importance of this campaign and will educate the masses on the importance of this campaign.

May the hallowed memory of the Father of the Nation and the urgency of the campaign for peace and disarmament inspire us all for a determined effort on this most crucial of international issues!

May the organised strength of every political party and mass organisation be harnessed to this great movement!!

May all sections of our people realise that peace and disarmament are the indispensable conditions for our nation's all-round advance and prosperity!!!

## MAC'S SOMERSAULT : INDIA CAN RELY NO MORE

Hardly had the London Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers been over when British Prime Minister Macmillan made it clear that he had no use for the views given expression to by his Commonwealth colleagues.

Referring to the terms offered by the Common Market Six to the Commonwealth countries (against which there was unanimous criticism at the London Conference), he stated:

"Now for the Asian countries, we have got on the whole very good terms—very good. For the African and Caribbean countries, we have got wonderful terms—just wonderful terms if they choose to take them". On temperate zone foodstuffs, he spoke as if an agreement had already been worked out.

While Macmillan was thus making it clear that his Government would go into the Common Market regardless of its consequences to the Commonwealth countries, the leaders of the Commonwealth countries cannot afford to entertain any hope that negotiations between Britain and the Six would lead to anything favourable to them. The President of the European Economic Community, Herr Hallstein, stated categorically that no modification will be made in the terms provisionally agreed to.

These first reactions to the sharp criticism made at the London Conference have now been followed by a rather forthright statement by the West German Chancellor, Dr. Adenauer, who has expressed his determination to safeguard what he calls "the legitimate interests of his own country."

Writing to the Mayor of Hamburg he is reported to have expressed himself in favour of Britain joining the Common Market. At the same time, he said, the Inner Six had to consider the likely effect on the voting pattern within the Community following Britain's admission into it. He wanted that the economic consequences of Britain's admission to German farmers as well as to the coal and textile industries of Germany should be considered.

It is clear from all this that the further negotiations that Britain will be holding with the Common Market powers cannot be expected to safeguard the interests of India and other underdeveloped countries, nor even those of such developed countries within the Commonwealth as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. These negotiations, on the other hand will be nothing but hard bargaining between the monopolists of Britain, West Germany and France, each of them trying their utmost to secure the maximum possible benefits for the monopolists of their respective countries.

This will undoubtedly create a very serious situation for our country. For, as Finance Minister Morarji Desai has repeatedly explained in his recent discussions abroad on foreign assistance for our development plans, developing countries like ours require expanding trade with, rather than financial aid from, friendly countries.

## NOTES OF THE WEEK

under these circumstances, that influential organs of public opinion in our country, including those who are supposed to be supporters of the Government, should try to create difficulties for the Government. Even as it is, the Government has to play a highly delicate role preparing the background for the talks at the very time when clashes take place every day. This obviously is an extremely difficult job.

It will become still more difficult if the Government has to face opposition to this policy not only from such avowed opponents of its policy of peaceful settlement as the Jan Sangh and the PSP, but also from its own supporters.

taken and floods becoming more frequent and more devastating.

Supposing, after a careful experts' study, it is found that the way in which the developmental works have been carried out has nothing to do with the floods, even then the question will remain as to what then is the reason for this phenomenon? Also, what exactly should be done to save the people from these ever-recurring floods?

They, on the other hand, will incite passions, create tension among the people and release those very forces of disruption and disintegration of which the DMK itself is accused.

The methods adopted by the DMK are themselves full of demagogic incitement of passion. Certain elements of agitation and organisation associated with the fascists have been taken over by them. Added to the separatist content of their agitation, these methods help in dividing the Indian people as between those of the North and the South, those of the South themselves into the supporters and opponents of a separate Dravida Nad.

To these demagogic and disruptive methods adopted by the DMK are now added the equally demagogic and disruptive methods of the new organisation which claims to fight separatism. The result can, therefore, be only a further intensification of bitter struggle between two sections of the people in Tamilnad.

It is, therefore, good that the Congress has officially dissociated itself from the activities of this new organisation. But does this indicate an awareness on the part of the Congress leadership in Madras that the separatist ideology of the DMK has to be fought politically and not otherwise? If so, they should not content themselves with opposing the DMK and dissociating themselves from the activities of the new Defend Freedom Front. They should make a serious examination of the reasons why the separatist ideology preached by the DMK is becoming popular among a section of the people of Tamilnad.

The call for a united struggle against separatism represented by the DMK would, therefore, find a responsive chord among all sections of democratic public opinion.

Any effort to build a united front of forces that are ranged against separatism will, therefore, be welcome.

But the recent efforts made by some Congressmen in Madras to form what is called the Defend Freedom Front will not be appreciated by those who want to build the unity of the nation and fight the forces of separatism. For, what this new organisation attempts to do is not to put up an effective fight against separatism, but to divide the people into warring camps.

The decision to picket the meetings and demonstrations organised by the DMK; the recruitment of volunteers to do the picketing; the vow administered to these volunteers; the demonstrative aff-

E. M. S. Namboodiripad  
September 28.

## DMK'S EMERGENCE : REAL REASONS MUST BE FOUND

THE emergence of the DMK as the major party of opposition in Madras is regretted not only by the ruling Party but by the progressive elements in all parties.

For, separatism preached by DMK prevents the development and strengthening of united struggles for securing their legitimate demands, weakens opposition to the anti-people policies of the Congress Government.

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## WHY RECURRING FLOOD HAVOC ?

A few weeks back, we had reports of serious floods in Assam—also in certain other parts of the country, though these were a little less serious than in Assam. These have now been followed by reports from Punjab where, according to all accounts, the damage now is the most serious since 1955.

Such devastating floods have now become a recurring feature in several parts of the country. Rendering relief to those who have to suffer from these ever-recurring floods has become part of the normal administration of the country. To that extent, it is to be hoped, relief will be provided to the flood-stricken people of Assam, Punjab and other places.

One question, however, arises: Is the frequency and severity of the ever-recurring floods completely unavoidable? Or, are the floods reaching proportions which they need not have done, if there had been careful planning to prevent their occurrence?

The question cannot, of course be answered by laymen. It requires specialised study by experts in the line. But the commonsense and everyday experience of the layman cannot be ignored by the experts.

Common people have a feeling born out of experience that the construction of dams, reservoirs and canals, while good in themselves since they help to irrigate and bring under cultivation otherwise uncultivable lands, may have something to do with the intensity of floods during the rainy season.

Is this true, or is this not? It is for the experts to examine the question carefully. When they do so, it is quite possible that they find this suspicion to be completely baseless. Till that is done, the question should not be lightly dismissed. For it has been raised by people who have had the actual experience of the coincidence of two facts—large-scale irrigation works being under-

## COMMUNIST PARTY PREPARATIONS

IN pursuance of the resolution adopted by the National Council of the Communist Party of India at its Hyderabad session last month, State and district committees of the Party have begun preparations to join hands with other parties and organisations in the campaign for disarmament, starting with Disarmament Week and the signature campaign.

★ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, General Secretary of the Party, during his recent visit to Punjab stressed the importance of the campaign in his report to the State Council last month.

★ The Assam State Council of the Party at its meeting a few days back decided to intensify the work for disarmament.

★ The Delhi State Council of the Party at a meeting on September 23, addressed, among others, by E. M. S. Namboodiripad, resolved to make all efforts to support the disarmament campaign and the preparations for the meeting and procession on October 2.

★ The Central Secretariat of the Party has issued two circulars to all State and district committees to take an active part in the campaign unitedly with other parties and organisations. It has also directed all Party papers to give regular news of the campaign.

Unity is the keynote of the preparations being made by the Delhi Citizens' Committee for Disarmament and Against Nuclear Weapons, for October 2—Disarmament Day.

## Agreed Approach For Disarmament Day

Unity is the keynote of the preparations being made by the Delhi Citizens' Committee for Disarmament and Against Nuclear Weapons, for October 2—Disarmament Day.

At meetings of the Organising Committee and a special drafting committee, held under the chairmanship of U. N. Dhebar, representatives of the local committees of the Congress, Communist and Praja Socialist Parties, of the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the All-India Peace Council, of the AITUC and the INTUC, of the Bharat Sevak Sama and several other organisations, have thrashed out a common agreed approach for Disarmament Day.

An agreed resolution for the mass rally, and agreed slogans for procession are being published. The text of a handbill has also been unanimously accepted. These materials form the basis of the united action on Disarmament Day.

New Age is publishing these, with a view to assisting organisers in all parts of the country in their preparations for the Disarmament Week and the Disarmament Campaign.

The Delhi Disarmament Committee has invited the following leading personalities to contribute articles for a pamphlet on disarmament being published for Disarmament Day: from abroad, Professor J. D. Bernal, Canon Collins, Ilya Ehrenburg, Alexander Kornelchuk, Linus Pauling and Bertrand Russell; and from India—U. N. Dhebar, R. R. Diwakar, Asoka Mehta, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Jai Prakash Narayan, Rameshwari Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari and Pandit Sunderlal.

On September 23, a meeting of representatives of over 30 women's organisations, presided over by Rameshwari

feels that the proposal put forward by the eight non-aligned nations at the Disarmament Committee in Geneva offers a sound basis for conclusion of such an agreement.

★ This meeting further appeals to the current session of the General Assembly of the United Nations to review the progress made in the negotiations at the Disarmament Committee in Geneva and to emphasise once again the necessity for early agreement on a treaty for general and complete disarmament, with adequate measures for inspection and control, ensuring the total banning of the manufacture and stockpiling of all kinds of nuclear weapons.

★ This meeting welcomes the efforts of the peoples, organisations and governments to secure immediate cessation of nuclear tests, prohibition of nuclear weapons and for disarmament. This meeting lends its full support in such efforts.

The citizens of Delhi are convinced that Gandhiji's vision can be made a reality. This meeting appeals to the people of all countries to act unitedly in bringing an end to the arms race. World co-operation and harmony can only be built upon the solid foundations of peace, and that is possible only in a world free from the fear of war. General disarmament alone can pave the way for peace, happiness and prosperity for mankind.

★ This meeting welcomes and extends its sincere support to the delegation of the Gandhi Peace Foundation now visiting U.S.A., U.S.S.R., U.K. and France and urges the delegation to convey to the heads of the governments in these countries our anxiety and our wishes in the matter.

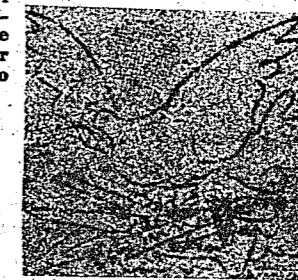
Draft Leaflet

## October 2 Disarmament Day

October 2 is Gandhiji's birthday. Gandhiji lived and died for peace, for the outlawing of war, for the destruction of all war weapons. For us, the children of the Father of the Nation, what can be a greater honour than to observe Mahatma's birthday as a day devoted to furthering his most cherished work, the bringing about of disarmament and the banning of nuclear weapons.

1962 has seen a number of vital international conferences and assemblies dedicated to the same vital aim: the anti-Nuclear Convention in Delhi in June; the Ban the Bomb Assembly in Accra (Ghana) also in June; the World Congress for General Disarmament and Peace in Moscow in July.

These great meetings of representatives of the peoples of all continents have called for united popular action in every country to



compel the Governments to sign a disarmament treaty without delay.

Public opinion can play an effective role. It must do so, for never before in history has there been so much danger to all humanity from armaments. The facts speak for themselves:

In Delhi, several political parties, peace organisations and public and mass bodies of trade unions, women, youth, students, cultural and social workers—have joined hands to form the Delhi Citizens' Committee for Disarmament and Against Nuclear Arms.

★ Fifty crore rupees are spent every hour on armaments—while two out of three human beings on the earth starve (Lord Bertrand Russell).

★ The probable stockpile of nuclear weapons at present corresponds to an average of 600 tons of high explosives for each person living on earth (Dr. Linus Pauling, the U. S. Scientist).

★ A nuclear bomb exploding over a big city today can kill one crore people. The entire region around them for miles would be rendered uninhabitable for years because of radio-activity.

★ Nuclear tests endanger the health and lives of thousands and thousands in this generation and in the generations to come.

The peoples must stop this mad arms race, they must compel the nuclear powers to agree to a disarmament treaty before it is too late. Every day means more deadly arms, more peril for mankind.

All over the world, men and women who want peace, are demonstrating their will for disarmament. Our Government and our Prime Minister are doing their utmost to bring about an agreement for disarmament and the banning of nuclear arms and their tests.

Together, united, we are organising a procession and mass rally on October 2—Disarmament Day. The procession will start at 3.30 p.m. from the Red Fort and culminate in a public meeting in Connaught Circus (in the ground between the Regal Cinema and Scindia House) at 6.30 p.m.

IF YOU STAND FOR DISARMAMENT, PLEASE JOIN US IN THE PROCESSION AND THE MEETING.

DELHI CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FOR DISARMAMENT AND AGAINST NUCLEAR ARMS

## SLOGANS ON DISARMAMENT DAY

- BAN ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS
- BAN A AND H BOMBS
- GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT—INDIA'S GOAL
- END ALL MILITARY PACTS
- DISARM NOW!
- NOT BOMBS—BUT FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY
- NOT BOMBS—BUT HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS
- NOT BOMBS—BUT CLOTHES FOR THE NAKED
- NUCLEAR-FREE ZONES IN ASIA AND AFRICA
- WORLD-PEACE—GANDHIJI'S DEAREST WISH
- GANDHIJI GAVE HIS LIFE FOR PEACE
- LONG LIVE WORLD PEACE
- INDIA SAYS NO TO WAR
- LONG LIVE INDIA'S PEACE POLICY
- STRENGTHEN NEHRU'S PEACE POLICY
- MOTHERS OF THE WORLD APPEAL—GIVE OUR CHILDREN A CHANCE!

# TEN YEARS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

by K. P. Subramanya Menon

"The whole rural reconstruction programme will be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality" (Mahatma Gandhi, HARIJAN, August 18, 1940).

Out of India's population of 438 million, 360 millions, i.e., nearly 82 per cent live in her 5,58,088 villages. Out of these, 308 millions or 70 per cent are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The social and economic emancipation of India's rural population is both the base and the test of national regeneration.

THE Community Development is the method and Rural Extension the agency through which the Five-Year Plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages" (Chapter XV, First Five-Year Plan). The Community projects and the National Extension Service were allotted a place of central importance in those sectors of development which bear most closely upon the welfare of the rural population. The Second Plan emphasised three aspects of the programme:

1. National extension and community projects are intended to be areas of intensive effort in which development agencies of the Government work together as a team "in programmes which are planned and coordinated in advance."

2. To arouse the enthusiasm of the rural population for "building up a new life for themselves" and to "bring about social change" and to mobilise them to participate "with increasing awareness and responsibility in the planning and implementation of projects which are material to their well-being."

3. The movement will bring within its scope the entire rural population, "especially those who are 'under-privileged'." Therefore the National extension and community projects are to be regarded "as the normal pattern of the welfare state in action."

For achieving these aims, the Community Development Programme was launched ten years ago on October 2, 1952. The programme created a new territorial unit of planning and development called a Community Development Block.

A Community Development Block comprises on an average of about 100 villages covering an area of about 250 square miles with a population of nearly 80,000. The country has been delimited into approximately 5,200 Community Development Blocks. By the end of the first Five-Year Plan in 1956, there were 1,075 blocks covering about 21 per cent of the population. By the end of the second Five-Year Plan 3,000 blocks covering nearly 70 per cent of the population were functioning.

Today, ten years after the programme was launched, the programme covers 80 per cent of the population with nearly 4,000 blocks. By October 1963, Community Development Blocks are expected to cover the entire country.

The Block is headed by an administrator known as the Block Development Officer. He is assisted by a paraphernalia of "technical experts" known as Extension Officers in the fields of Agricul-

ture, Animal Husbandry, Health, Rural Engineering, Industries, Co-operation, Panchayats, Social Education (for men and women separately). Below the block, at the level of 10 villages, is a Village Level Worker—a multipurpose worker trained primarily in agriculture."

## Top Heavy Organisation

The total number of extension staff in position as on September 30, 1961 was 68,483:

1. Block Development Officers	3,730
2. Gram Sevaks	13,883
3. Extension Officers (Agriculture)	5,703
4. Social Education Officers (Men)	3,009
5. Social Education Officers (Women)	1,897
6. Extension Officers (Cooperation)	3,118
7. Extension Officers (Animal Husbandry)	3,005
8. Extension Officers (Village Industries)	2,160
9. Extension Officers (Panchayats)	1,694
10. Overseers	2,932
11. Gram Sevikas	3,609
12. Medical Officers	1,385
13. Progress Assistants	2,358

Total 68,483

As will be seen from the above figures, the whole apparatus presents an imposing facade. The tentacles spread out into the far corners of the country are omnipresent and omniscient.

For training such a large number of staff, a number of training institutes have been set up. First, there is the Central Institute for Study and Research in Community Development "to which are brought top level administrators and public workers in a four-week course of seminars and study."

Then there are ten institutes for the training of Block Development Officers, 18 Institutes train Social Education Organisers, of whom ten are for Women only.

There are 96 training centres for Village Level Workers, whose minimum period of training is 2 years. For women village-level workers there are 43 training centres with a period of training for one year.

Lastly, there are specialist Training Institutions for Extension personnel in Health, Industries, Co-operation and other categories. To date, 700 top personnel, 4,236 BDOs, 3,543 Social Education Organisers and over 44,000 Village Level Workers have been trained.

The total expenditure on Community Development Programme

during the last ten years is given below:

Government expenditure under various sectors of the Programme and People's Contribution

ITEM	DURING FIRST PLAN	DURING 2ND PLAN	1961-62 (APRIL-SEPTEMBER)	TOTAL DURING TEN YEARS (RS. IN CRORES)
Block Headquarters (including Transport, Office building, equipment etc.)	10.51	55.40	5.39	71.30
Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	3.55	10.76	.60	14.91
Irrigation & Reclamation	10.83	47.98	2.05	60.86
Health & Rural Sanitation	3.79	16.78	.94	21.51
Education	3.44	12.05	.54	16.03
Social Education	2.00	10.18	.43	12.61
Communications	5.16	12.66	.52	18.34
Village Industries	2.18	7.03	.73	9.94
Housing	1.73	10.62	.50	12.85
Unclassified (including imported equipment)	2.79	3.16	.15	6.10
Central Schemes	.20	2.27	N.A.	2.47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.18</b>	<b>188.89</b>	<b>11.93</b>	<b>247.00</b>
II. People's Contribution	25.13	77.11	3.49	105.73
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>71.31</b>	<b>266.00</b>	<b>15.42</b>	<b>352.73</b>

The outlay on Community Development programme including Panchayats during the Third Plan is Rs. 322.5 crores.

According to the new concept of rural development, the Community Development block constitutes the primary unit for planning and execution of the development programmes.

The technical experts work under the guidance and coordination of the BDO. At the district level, similar coordination is provided by the Collector. To advise the Collector, there is a District Development Council. At the State level, there is the Development Commissioner who advises the State Cabinet.

According to a brochure on Community Development issued by the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Cooperation, "there is both vertical and horizontal consultation and coordination which is a new feature in the field of democratic public administration in India. This system has now been working for 10 years and on the whole is proving itself. Chief characteristics of the programme are area development with a multipurpose approach and an integrated and co-ordinated working at all levels."

It will thus be seen that the Community Development programme has grown into a gigantic organisation. Impressive statistics are provided by the Ministry of Community Development about the achievements of the Programme.

For example, during 1960-61, 72,58,000 maunds of improved seeds were distributed, 2 crore maunds of chemical fertilisers, 3,39,900 maunds of chemical pesticides, and 3,86,000 improved implements were supplied. During the same year 10,19,000 agricultural demonstrations were held, 28,63,200 compost pits were dug.

18,864 improved animals, 3,42,670 improved birds were supplied and 48,20,300 animals were castrated. 16,483 Mahila Samitis with a membership of 2,63,800 were started.

However, while these totals seem quite big, in relation to the separate blocks, they are not much of a thing. For example, the ave-

rage per block during 1960-61 of some of the items are: Improved seeds—2,445 maunds; chemical fertilisers—6,388 maunds; pesticides—142 maunds; improved implements—142 numbers; agricultural demonstrations held—370; compost pits—1,612; improved animals—67; improved birds—115 and mahila samitis—58.

## Results

The Community Development programme has to be seen in the light of its own aims. It may perhaps be claimed that as compared to what was there before the programme was started, the results are impressive.

The petty jealousies between different Government departments and the Community Development staff are common. The people have to approach even now a multiplicity of authorities, and even grease the palms of a number of them, for getting taccavi loans, housing loans, fertilisers etc.

The petty jealousies between different Government departments and the Community Development staff are common. The people have to approach even now a multiplicity of authorities, and even grease the palms of a number of them, for getting taccavi loans, housing loans, fertilisers etc.

## Poor Knowledge

There is another aspect of the question. The Extension Officers are graduates. And naturally large majority of them are city-bred middle-class people. They neither have the aptitude nor knowledge of village life and its complexities and problems. They therefore fail to evoke a sympathetic and responsive, emotional upsurge from the peasants.

Perhaps, this is the most vital aspect of the Community Development, which was supposed to delineate it from other Government efforts. And in this respect, most reviewing authorities and public figures are agreed that the movement has utterly failed in this task.

According to a report appearing in Tribune, Amal, in February, 1960, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who has been touring incessantly in the villages, "criticised the Community Development projects and said that crores of rupees had been wasted on these projects without anything having been achieved through them. It was so because those in power had failed to inspire the people with confidence and as a result necessary cooperation to make projects a success could not be mustered."

The Estimates Committee of the Mysore Legislative Assembly in its report says that "except for a few buildings here and there, the impact of the movement has not been felt by the people." After nearly an year's exhaustive study of Community Development projects in UP, a Committee appointed by the UP Government has come to a rather disappointing conclusion.

"Viewed from the point of view of the objectives enunciated by the Planning Commission, it must be said that very little progress has been made in bringing about a social and economic transformation and change in the mental attitude of the people towards progressive thinking and social cohesion."

The Seventh Evaluation Report says about the social and cultural organisations "organised" by the Community Development Blocks: "Nearly 60 per cent of the social education institutions organised up to December 1959 by the older blocks have become either inactive or defunct. This high rate of mortality is found uniformly among the three types of social education institutions and is a matter of serious concern."

Again "the community centres seem to have failed in many blocks to strike roots. In one block all women's organisations are inactive in 7 others 14 per cent to 70 per cent of them are almost defunct. In many blocks, appreciable proportions of youth clubs are reportedly inactive. Those youth clubs which are working usually confine their activities to sports and recreations."

In many cases, the people's participation claimed by the Projects

\* ON PAGE ELEVEN

A Government organised trip to Ladakh by M.P.s representing the Congress as well as opposition parties was in the air ever since the first week of August, when leaders of the various Parliamentary groups had been invited by the Prime Minister, for an informal discussion regarding the state of India's border defence in this area.

At this meeting, members of the Jan Sangh, PSP, and Swatantra groups had been particularly insistent on being allowed to actually visit some of our military check-posts. These posts, as we have been told more than once, are situated at heights varying between 14,000 and 18,000 feet above sea level.

Most of them are virtually inaccessible by land owing to the absence of roads through the mountainous terrain and can only be supplied by air. In view of these difficulties, the Prime Minister and Defence Minister had made it clear at the time that no check post in the forward areas could be visited, but a trip to Leh—the administrative centre of Ladakh—could be arranged.

It was obvious from the outset that the trip could have only the limited purpose of acquiring some first-hand knowledge of the terrain in Ladakh and of the problem of transporting supplies to the area.

The party was eventually composed of 10 M.P.s drawn from both Houses of Parliament—six of them from the Congress party, and one each from the Opposition groups—Communist, PSP, Jan Sangh and Swatantra.

We were accompanied from Delhi by the Director of the China Division in the External Affairs Ministry, the Director of Information Services of the Defence Ministry and a former Development Commissioner of Ladakh.

Before leaving Delhi we were given cyclostyled programmes of the trip. These showed that we were to spend only 5 to 6 hours in Leh and that, too, visiting places described as a "model farm," a monastery, the bazaar, etc. Judging from Press statements made after our return, it seems that some members of the group imagined these terms to be only camouflage names for military check posts!

We flew from Delhi to Srinagar on September 10 in an Indian Air Force transport plane—incidentally a Soviet-made Ilyushin 14.

We spent the night at Srinagar as we were to leave for Leh early next morning. A preparatory "briefing" of the party was done by the External Affairs official who is supposed to be an expert on the China question.

## Same Old Stuff

He explicated with the aid of maps the nature of the boundary dispute, the general position of the armed forces of both sides, the geographical features of the terrain, and so on. It was, however, old stuff with which we were already well acquainted. Nothing new was learnt by us.

But now that we were on the door step of Ladakh, as it were, the sheer physical inaccessibility of the forward check-posts was brought home to us more vividly than before. We were told that the area comprising such familiar place-names as the Chip-Chap river, the Galwan Valley, or Daulat Beg Oldi was between 250 to 300 miles distant from Leh.

The only communication is by air-dropping after flying across several very high ranges of mountains. Even the nearest Indian check-post to Leh is between 80 to 90 miles away. To reach it physically even our army has to march for four days across mountain tracks, a feat requiring the necessary physical fitness and endurance.

As a matter of fact our stamina was put to the test the very next morning when we boarded another IAF transport plane—the old-fashioned "flying box-car"—for the flight to Leh.

These aircraft are used for carrying supplies, including jeeps, and even trucks, and troops to the forward area. They are not pressurized (though heated internally) and make a deafening sound.

Each one of us was supplied with an oxygen cylinder and asked to inhale every couple of minutes, as we would be ascending to over 20,000 feet altitude. The plane crews are supplied with special clothing which is essential if they are to survive in the event of a forced landing.

The air route to Leh lies above the valley of the River Indus, across mighty snow-covered peaks, and mountain passes like the famous Zojila Pass. The Indian Air Force claims that this flight is one of the most difficult and dangerous in the world. There are no navigational aids, no radio communications, between the plane and Leh airfield and meteorological forecasts are very temporary and unreliable.

Pilots have to depend entirely on their intimate knowledge of the terrain. They guide themselves by the well-known mountain features and if these are hidden by clouds or mists, it becomes a risky job indeed. No wonder we had to sign an indemnity bond before leaving Delhi, foregoing any claims to compensation in the event of death or injury by accident!

## Highest Airfield

The airfield at Leh—10,326 feet above sea level—is claimed to be the highest in the world. The town, 4 miles distant, is 1,000 feet higher up. I think we were all mighty pleased when our journey ended and the plane touched down on the rough surface of the airstrip.

Quite a few of our party had suffered badly on the way from air-sickness, giddiness, and the jolting we got. One can imagine what flying conditions are like further north of Leh, as the mountains get higher and higher in the direction of the Karakoram range.

Our scheduled programme began to be carried out immediately with military-like precision. Everything had been officially worked out from beforehand and we were never consulted. The local Brigadier provided the transport—a fleet of jeeps, almost one for each of us.

Overall conductor of the sight-seeing tour became the present Development Commissioner of Ladakh, a veteran official who has served in NEPA and Tripura. He was disappointed to find I was not Bhupesh Gupta, who, he said, had once addressed a public meeting at Agartala when he was D.C. there and had "abused" him (the D.C.) from beginning to end! I apologised for not being my more famous namesake.

We were taken first to a "model" farm, where experiments are being made to grow certain varieties of vegetables, grains for human and animal consumption, and even winter wheat with the aid of Soviet seeds.

Agricultural conditions in Ladakh are extremely difficult, the soil is dry and barren, water is available only along the banks of the Indus and that, too, remains frozen for 6 to 7 months in the year.

# 24 hours in Ladakh

By Indrajit Gupta, M.P.

The Development Commissioner is very proud of his farm. But it was a pathetically small affair, a sort of miniature laboratory experiment, and nobody could explain exactly how the local population was going to benefit from it.

From here we were taken to an afforestation site, where some lakhs of trees have been planted during the last couple of years along the river banks. The mountains of Ladakh are remarkable for their utter barrenness, and lack of vegetation, with the result that when the snows melt the water rushes down the hillsides with terrific force and causes the Indus to overflow.

The small, scattered villages in the valley below are continually threatened with floods. Only the Buddhist monasteries perched on the hill tops all around are safe. But if planned afforestation is to alter this state of affairs, it will require, not lakhs, but crores of trees to be planted.

The next halt was at a "welfare" centre in the town. Here we found a few Ladakhi women being trained in weaving carpets and blankets. These products are sold at fairly high prices. We found the women trainees get Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 per month, but no assurance of permanent employment.

At this stage we were informed that it was getting late, as we must be at the airfield by 1 PM to fly back to Srinagar while weather conditions were favourable. The final engagement was to be a lunch with Kushok Bakula, the Head Lama of the Shankar Gompa (Monastery), who is also the Minister of Ladakhi Affairs in the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

## Greatest Disappointment

The Congress members in our party were particularly eager to meet Bakula in the expectation that we would hear from him at least something of the Ladakhi people's reactions to the various problems of this strategic area.

Here the greatest disappointment of all awaited us. Left to himself, Bakula may have replied to our questions freely. But, as it was, he was hardly given a chance to speak.

The two Development Commissioners—one the present incumbent and the other his predecessor—monopolised the conversation, kept on intervening and interrupting unnecessarily, and insisted on replying even to questions whose answer they obviously did not know!

For example, my simple request to know how many schools have been opened in the district failed to elicit any precise information.

Within a few minutes of being introduced to Kushok Bakula, we were hurried off to our lunch, told to gulp it down quickly and get ready for the return journey! However, these few minutes and the facial expression of the persons involved sufficed to give us the undeniable impression that

Bakula is far from satisfied with the pace of development work. Our fleet of jeeps rushed back to the airstrip along the narrow dusty roads (Leh must be one of the dustiest places in the world), and here the first hitch occurred in the official programme.

The weather gods had intervened, heavy clouds obscured the surrounding mountain peaks, and it was impossible to fly back to Srinagar. In fact, now we were told that we might be held up for several days as often happens in this region. We would in any case have to stay the night and take another chance next morning.

Precious time was wasted in confirming the weather reports, and arguing how best to spend the few remaining hours of daylight which had providentially been bestowed upon us.

Could we meet the jawans stationed at Leh itself, so that they might at least know we had come from Delhi to see their conditions and buck them up? There was no reply to this, neither "yes" nor "no."

Could we meet some ordinary local people and talk to them? After much hesitation and consultation, the officials informed us that a cultural show would be arranged for later in the evening.

Finally, we were taken on a drive along the new road which is under construction from Leh to Chusul and which, when completed, will greatly ease the problem of supplying our forward positions.

Army bulldozers and Tibetan refugees are at work on this road which is being levelled out of the foothills alongside the rushing Indus waters. We drove up to a distance of 35 miles or so, and I at least was glad I do not have to live and work in such an unattractive, barren, inhospitable, almost uninhabited and god-forsaken spot.

Hoarding and black marketing seem to be a part of the blessings that "civilisation" is bringing to the traditionally honest and truthful Ladakhi people.

In the villages, though a formal land ceiling has been imposed, no land has been redistributed and the ownership of land remains concentrated in the hands of the rich monasteries. Even the D.C. admitted this to me.

It was just over 24 hours since our arrival. We bade farewell to our hosts, thanked them for their hospitality, strapped ourselves into the paratroopers seats, plugged our ears with cotton wool, firmly gripped our oxygen cylinder pipes, and in a few moments were out of sight of Leh.

Nothing Of Actual Front

We had seen nothing of the actual "front" where the check-post war is going on. But we had a glimpse of the rear, and that was far from reassuring.

I shall always remember the pathetic inadequacy of the so-called "development" schemes, the seeming gulf between the local bureaucrats and the common people, the blank and indifferent faces of the citizens of Leh (except for the smiling, rosy-cheeked children), and the plaintive appeal of even the hardened D.C. that we should urge upon the India Government to sanction finance for his irrigation schemes without which, he said, the future of Ladakh is bleak.

# TYCOONS AT LARGE

A section of big industrialists and businessmen in Calcutta are deeply worried following the publication in Communist daily Swadhinata on September 15 of a detailed report, showing the direct connection between gold smuggling into India and "under-invoicing" of commodities, especially jute manufactures, exported from the country (report appeared in New Age of September 23).

THESE big guns of the business world have a powerful pull with the highest circles in both Union and State Governments, it is learnt from unimpeachable sources. They are now up and doing and are trying to make use of their contacts to thwart any probe into their anti-national activities or any Government measures to stop them from making fabulous gains at the cost of the interests of the country.

It is reliably reported that when B. R. Bhagat, Union Deputy Finance Minister, was here on September 17 in connection with the Annual Meeting of the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce, one of the leading members of the West Bengal Government discussed with the Union Minister the report published in Swadhinata and requested him not to proceed, for the time-being, with the cases pending against the big exporters in connection with "under-invoicing".

B. R. Bhagat himself admitted at the meeting of the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce that about Rs. 40 crores worth of gold was illegally smuggled into India every year, and the country lost precious foreign exchange to that extent. He further said that "severe measures" would be taken against the gold smugglers.

But, from all indications, it appears that the Union Deputy Finance Minister merely expressed a pious wish.

## No Indication Of Initiative

The customs authorities have not yet shown, obviously under pressure from the highest quarters, such vigilance and initiative as to inspire an iota of confidence in the Union Government's "determination" to plug all the loopholes of gold smuggling and "under-invoicing".

Only one instance, from among scores of similar nature, will suffice to show the real attitude of the Government.

The Calcutta Customs authorities had served a "show cause" notice on Chiranjit Bajoria and others of Meleod Co. Ltd., Calcutta, for having allegedly cheated the Union Government to the tune of several lakhs of rupees through "under-invoicing" of the exports of jute goods.

The last date by which the company was directed to submit its reply to the notice was August 31. Strangely enough the Customs authorities took no action whatsoever when Bajoria and others did not care to send the reply in time.

It is significant to note that the reply was submitted on September 20, after Swadhinata had published the report referred to earlier.

The sordid story, however, does not end here. Even now, no efforts are being spared to prevent a quick decision in the matter in the interest of the country. The influence wielded by top circles connected with Meleod & Co. is very great.

1 A brother-in-law of Manubhai Shah, Union Minister of State for International Trade, is a high official, drawing Rs. 1500 a month, of Vavenport Co. which exports tea and is allied to Meleod & Co.

2 It is further reported that Tarkeshwari Sinha, Union Minister of State for Finance, is on very friendly terms with the owners of Meleod & Co. It is said that on August 31 last, she had lunch with the owners in the flat of the Meleod House at 3 Netaji Subhas Road, Calcutta.

3 It is learnt that Girish Chandra, son of the defeated Union Minister Satish Chandra, draws Rs. 1,000 per mensem as a tea-taster in Vavenport Co. which is an allied concern of Meleod Co.

4 It is reported that a jeep bearing the number WGV 1243 was sent from Vavenport Co.'s tea estate in North Bengal to Satish Chandra's constituency to help in his election campaign. The expenses incurred on this score were duly entered in the Company's accounts register on January 22, 1962.

It is further learnt that Meleod Co. is making serious efforts to purchase the British India Corporation (BIC) which was taken over by the Centre from H. D. Mundhra. At present, about 50 per cent of the shares of the BIC are owned by the LIC and 34 per cent by the Bajoria group. It is interesting to note in this connection that Satish Chandra, the defeated Minister, is now the Chairman of the Management Committee of the BIC.

Initiating the debate on the BIC in Rajya Sabha on September 7, a Member said that there were strong rumours to the effect that the Government was contemplating selling its shares in the BIC to the Bajoria group.

K. C. Reddy, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry categorically stated that the Government was not thinking of transferring the management of the BIC to the private sector.

But it is now learnt, preparations are afoot for putting

the utmost pressure on the Government to transfer the majority of the BIC shares to private ownership at the forthcoming general meeting of the concern on October 10 next.

There should be little cause for surprise if the company which has such wide contacts and wields such influence, gets away unscathed or, at the most, with very light "punishment" in the case of "under-invoicing" pending against it.

Apart from resorting to the malpractice of "under-invoicing" a section of jute mill owners and wholesale traders

## SMUGGLING GALORE

THE special staff of the Calcutta Customs recently seized 822 wrist watches, worth over one lakh of rupees, at Dum Dum airport (New Age September 23). They intercepted a car which was about to start from the neighbourhood of the airport's terminal building, and found in it a suitcase containing watches.

The suitcase was brought by an Air India International Plane, which came from Hong Kong. But enquiries revealed that no passenger in Hong Kong had been found carrying the suitcase. Neither was anyone seen to take it to the car at Dum Dum airport. So how it found its way into the plane and then into the car still remains a mystery.

The car, which was intercepted by the Customs authorities, was engaged as a "private taxi" by a Marwari sharebroker. Another person, a Marwari businessman reported to be associate of the sharebroker managed to escape.

Till now, the police have arrested two persons in connection with the "unauthorised importation and possession" of the aforementioned watches and also with "a further lot of watches earlier valued at about Rs. 12 lakhs, in furtherance of a conspiracy hatched in Calcutta."

The Statesman of September 18 reported: "The Customs further alleged that their investigation tended to disclose a wide range of concerted operations adopted by racketeers in an attempt to defraud the Government of Customs revenue."

One of the arrested men is stated to be a Marwari sharebroker, who is connected with one particular group of big business. The other person is an employee of an air company.

It is now reliably learnt that a number of big Marwari businessmen of Calcutta have been carrying on, without any let or hindrance, the smuggling of wrist watches and other contraband articles for a pretty long time. If the police choose to pursue their

in jute manage to evade taxes on a fairly big scale.

A number of cases of evasion of sales tax and excise duty have already come to the notice of the Calcutta and the West Bengal police authorities (the Calcutta police, is a separate organisation directly under the State Government). Some time ago, the police raided the office of a firm, carrying on wholesale trade in jute goods, and were reported to have seized incriminating papers.

Acting on the information that big jute mill owners had started evading payment of the Union excise duty on jute manufactures, the police recently raided about five jute mills, seized their papers and sealed their godowns.

The Centre imposed the excise duty with effect from April 24, 1962. But hardly had it been introduced when the big owners cooked up their "plan" to defraud the public exchequer. They started sending out of the mills excess quantities of jute goods for

sale along with those bearing the seal of the Excise Department.

But since detection of this conspiracy the dishonest owners have changed their modus operandi by enlisting the co-operation of a section of the wholesale traders in jute manufactures. These wholesale traders are not required to pay the excise duty.

Getting scent of this new plan the police raided the office of a trader in Tulapatti, the centre of wholesale jute trade in Calcutta, and seized several documents.

It is believed in knowledgeable circles here that the papers so far seized by the police may throw a good deal of light on the extensive network of the conspiracy to cheat the Government.

But there are adequate grounds for the apprehension that ultimately nothing will come out of the police investigations. Powerful influences are already at work to prevent any further probe into the conspiracy and to hush it up altogether!

investigations in all earnestness, many a skeleton in the cupboard would come to light.

Another case of smuggling was recently detected. The Calcutta customs confiscated two lakh rupees worth of motor parts which had been imported by one Pritam Singh Bedi, a dealer in motor parts, and two firms carrying on the same business—Messrs Overseas Traders and Associated Commercial Corporation. They were also fined Rs. 600,000.

The trader and the two firms were charged with having infringed the Sea Customs Act and the Export-Import Regulations by importing parts in excess of the quotas allotted to them in the licences issued in their favour.

Several other big concerns are stated to be carrying on this smuggling business. The links of these importers with the West German firm of Shippers, the GMBH in Hamburg do not appear to be just normal trade relations. It is believed that top-ranking businessmen are involved in this sordid business.

Otherwise, who could supply the huge amounts of money needed to purchase such large quantities of motor parts? Who are the people here who share out the ill-gotten gains from the illegally imported parts?

Is it because tremendous pressure is being brought to bear upon them?

## Prisoner Mundhra Goes Outing

THE case of Haridas Mundhra, well-known industrialist now serving a four-year prison sentence at Presidency Jail, Calcutta, is a typical example of what big money can achieve. Even in jail, it is reported, Haridas Mundhra is living in right royal style. But this is not all.

A number of prosecutions are still pending against him. On September 18, he was taken to Calcutta High Court in connection with one of these cases.

The day's work was over by 5 p.m. It takes only 15

Following the apprehen-

Unprecedented rains in parts of the Punjab accompanied by heavy floods are causing tremendous suffering all over. Figures available till Sunday showed that 32 persons had died as a result.

AFTER the districts of Ambala, Jullundur, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Bhatinda and Sangrur, the latest reports show that Amritsar and Patiala are being ravaged by these twin calamities.

In bigger towns alone about 4,000 houses have collapsed. In the flood-affected areas 25 per cent of the kutchha houses are gone. Crops worth crores of rupees have been damaged. Thousands of villages are under water and road transport and railway traffic have both been badly affected.

Reports appearing in the local press about some districts showed the following position on Sunday:

● Amritsar: The Ravi has breached the Dhussi Bund near Sarangev village in Ajnala Tehsil. Five more persons died during last 24 hours in house collapses in the district, bringing the total to 16.

At least 5,000 houses have collapsed in the district. The total number of villages affected by the floods is 150. Road traffic between Amritsar, Jullundur and Pathankot remains suspended.

● Ferozepur: Three towns, Tira, Baghapurana and Nihalsinghpura are inaccessible.

A section of the rail embank-

ment was cut near Golwala station to save Pipli village. Road traffic between Ferozepur and Ludhiana and Ferozepur and Delhi remains suspended.

● Kapurthala: Kapurthala town is threatened by flood waters caused by breaches in a nearby canal.

● Ludhiana: Crops over an area of 1,050 lakh acres have been damaged. The loss is estimated at about Rs. 3 crores.

● Patiala: Road traffic has been paralysed.

● Moga: Crops over 52,000 acres of land valued at Rs. 1 crore have been destroyed. About 2,000 houses in 150 villages are reported to have collapsed. Road transport to Amritsar, Kotkapura, Ludhiana and Barnala has been suspended. The local power station was saved by prompt draining out of rain water.

The State Secretariat of the Communist Party has sent out its leaders and functionaries and detailed reports of the damage caused are expected to be available by the end of the week. Meanwhile, it is felt that the damage could not be less and may be more than caused in the flood that devastated the Punjab following heavy rains in October 1955.

It will be recalled that at that

## Inner Congress Conflict Intensified

THE inner Congress conflict between the Chief Minister on the one hand and the PCC Chief on the other, has now come out in the open as never before.

Darbara Singh, the President of the Pradesh Congress who has also held a portfolio in the Cabinet was expected, like others in similar position, to resign either of the two posts.

Actually with the intervention of the High Command it was decided that he would give up the PCC Presidency. The other issue on which there was a tussle between the two groups was the appointment of the Pradesh Returning Officer (PRO) for Congress elections.

At the last meeting of the Executive of the PCC on September 16, while the PRO was elected unanimously as desired by the High Command, Darbara Singh refused to tender his resignation as PCC Chief.

His plea was that there was not even a Vice-President to take over. (The erstwhile Vice-President, Chowdhury Devi Lal, has since been expelled and now leads the opposition).

Kairon met this argument by moving for fixing the date for electing a Vice-President. This has been duly fixed for September 30.

But Darbara Singh has now left for Trivandrum for State PCC Presidents and Secretaries meeting without issuing a notice for the PCC to convene on the 30th. He has also announced that on that date he will be busy elsewhere.

Meanwhile it has happened in three districts (Gurdaspur, Jullundur and Bhatinda) that the Dist. Congress Committees have met in two separate groups and have elected two different panels for selection of District Returning Officers one from those belonging to the Kairon group and the other

# PUNJAB IN GRIP OF FLOODS

From Our Correspondent

time the Government had to accede to the demand raised by the Communist Party for relief worth Rs. 10 crores. Today, food, fodder and shelter have once again become the most burning problems in the affected areas.

The havoc caused cannot all be ascribed to the vagaries of the forces of nature, beyond human control. House collapses in towns have certainly been due to the heavy rains. For the floods and dislocation of traffic, the neglect and indifference of Government and authorities must be held largely responsible.

Development schemes like canals and roads that have been implemented since independence ignored and defied, the natural

drainage system of the region. Schemes were carried out by various departments without co-ordination with each other and all together having the effect of blocking the natural flow of water and failing to provide proper alternative outlet for it.

Floods and prolonged water-logging are the inevitable result of this haphazard, uncoordinated, unscientific construction. To take a few instances. Earlier there used to be no floods in the Jullundur Tehsil. With the construction of Bisdwab Canal—a lined high canal, not irrigating this particular Tehsil but only taking off from here—water-logging and floods have become a permanent feature.

In Ferozepur's Ajitevala-Moga area water now gathers in low-

lying areas, and there is no outlet left for it causing extensive damage in three districts, Ferozepur, Bhatinda and Sangrur. In the last six-seven years that the problem has come up, Government has failed to provide proper drainage.

For the current tragedy major responsibility must be placed on the Government. Extensive aid in the form of loans, subsidies and outright grant is urgently needed so that the emergent problem of food, fodder and shelter may be expeditiously tackled.

A paltry sum of ten lakhs has been provided so far. This will have to be enlarged manifold. The need of the moment is a united effort of the entire people to secure that and see to its proper utilisation. (Sept. 24)

## Support To Govt. Employees

Shamsher Singh, MLA, Leader of the opposition in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha and S. Ajab Singh Sandhu have issued the following joint statement to the press:

WE are deeply concerned over the vindictive measure of imposing Sec. 144 Cr.P.C. in Chandigarh, transferring certain Employees and issuing warrants of arrest against others who were peacefully and constitutionally demanding restoration of compensatory allowance proposed to be withdrawn by a recent Cabinet decision.

We fail to understand the justification of the above undemocratic steps taken by the Kairon-led Congress ministry against the peaceful and constitutional struggle of the employees for their just demands. This step is bound to create further discontent among the employees and should be forthwith withdrawn.

Moreover by imposing this new cut on the consolidated salaries of employees posted at Chandigarh—Simla and Dharamsala, the Punjab Government has completely backed out of the assurance given to class III and IV employees by Pratap Singh Kairon in the last budget session of Punjab Vidhan Sabha that steps will be taken to remove the disparity between the Dearness Allowance of Central Government Employees posted in Punjab and the Employees of the Punjab Government.

This new cut will further widen the above disparity which means that the Government Employees have been given the proverbial mare to be taken on their back which they clamoured for riding. It will

further dishearten and demoralise them thereby creating inefficiency in the administration.

We fully support the stand of the Government Employees for the restoration of compensatory allowance because the latest decision of the Punjab Cabinet to make it a "Roving Cabinet" by holding its meetings at District headquarters thereby incurring huge amount of the State exchequer takes the wind out of the high sounding claims of effecting economy in the administration.

As public men, it is our duty to warn the Government of the grave consequences if it persists in its anti-people, undemocratic and repressive policies because the people of Punjab will not sit on the fence while the Government goes on crushing the rightful and just struggle of their sons and daughters employed in the service of the State.

## MUNDHRA GOES OUTING

\*FROM FACING PAGE

minutes for a prison van to reach the Presidency Jail gate from the High Court. But it took Mundhra one and a quarter hours to get back to the jail! How could it happen?

Accompanied by a Police Sergeant Mundhra boarded a taxi, instead of a prison van, at 5 p.m. near the High Court premises. There was another gentleman in the taxi. At the crossing of the Mayo Road and the Red Road, the taxi suddenly came to a halt and the Sergeant got out. Then it sped off at about 60 miles an hour. Mundhra came back to the jail gate at 6.15 p.m. in a prison van.

Where was he all this time?

The taxi-driver, who was later traced by the police, was reported to have told them about the place where he had taken Mundhra. It is a certain house in South Calcutta. It is believed that Mundhra had gone there to discuss his business affairs.

The Calcutta police authorities claim that Mundhra had been brought to the High Court and also sent back from there in a

prison van. This only deepens the mystery surrounding the temporary disappearance of the convicted prisoner on the way.

It is further learnt that what happened on September 18 was not an isolated incident. Mundhra was being ille-

gally given this facility, it is reliably reported, for quite a long time.

Calcutta police authorities feel very much embarrassed about the incident. The Police Commissioner has now started investigations into the matter. One Inspector and a Sergeant involved in the incident have been suspended.

## Blackmarketeer Congress Boss Arrested

AFTER months of dilly-dallying, the police arrested Bholanath Chatterjee on September 21 in connection with the misappropriation of skimmed milk, worth several lakhs of rupees, which was the property of the 24-Parganas District Red Cross Society.

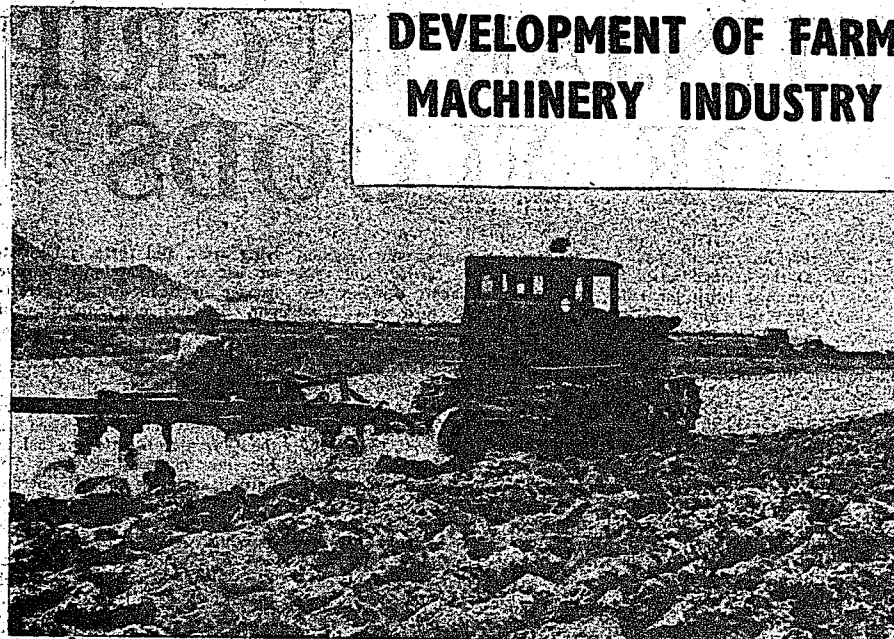
Bholanath Chatterjee, a former Secretary of the Society, is regarded as one of the "pillars" of 24-Parganas District Congress. For a long time, Congress workers in different areas of the district had been blackmarketing huge quantities of Red Cross

Society's skimmed milk valued at about Rs. 20 lakhs which had been handed over to them for free distribution to children, sick and other needy people.

Bholanath Chatterjee is suspected by the police to be one of the ring leaders of this conspiracy.

Arabindo Das, a Congress worker of the district, was reported to have mentioned the name of Bholanath Chatterjee in the letter which he had written to the police before he committed suicide (photostat copy of the letter was published in New Age). The names of the persons mentioned therein were expunged for legal reasons.)

## DEVELOPMENT OF FARM MACHINERY INDUSTRY



A tractor reclaiming new land.

★ By CHUN WEN

The manufacture of farm machinery is a new industry in China. Prior to the liberation in 1949, there was not a single factory exclusively devoted to the production of farm machinery in the whole country.

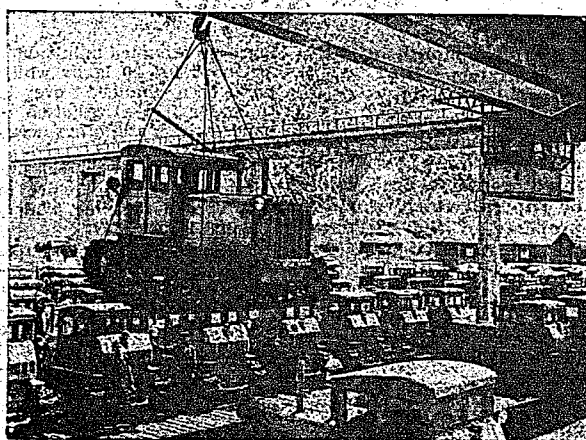
DURING the thirteen years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, however, this industry has grown tremendously practically from scratch. At present a number of "backbone" factories have been set up for the production of either tractors, machine-drawn implements or power pumps. A foundation has been laid for the step-by-step realization of mechanized farming in our country.

Since 1958, quite a number of tractors have been manufactured for the countryside. In the two years of 1960 and 1961 alone, over 40,000 tractors (standard unit, 15 hp. each) were produced.

### Marked Change In Farming

The introduction of tractors to the rural areas has brought about a marked change in China's farming technique. In the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, for instance, whose area is more than twice that of France, there was not a single tractor in the past, but now it boasts of 4,600 tractors (standard unit).

Shantung province, one of China's major agricultural areas whose size is nearly half of that of Italy, was likewise a vacuum as far as tractors were concerned. It now has 17,600 tractors. Taking China as a whole, all



Tungfangtung tractors waiting shipment.

her tractors were imported from abroad before 1958, but now she relies mostly on her own efforts to satisfy the domestic demands.

The "Tungfangtung (East Is Red) Type 54" tractors, turned out at the Loyang No. 1 Tractor Works, besides meeting the needs of China's countryside, are also exported to some countries of Asia and Africa, where they have received quite good comments from the farmer-users.

### More Than 12 Million H. P.

Since 1958, power machines produced by China's farm machinery factories have totalled more than twelve million horse power. Half of them have been used in drainage and irrigation, forestry and fishery. At present, power pumps installed in China's countryside (including those installed before 1958) have reached nearly seven million horse power, which means twelve-fold increase over 1957. All drainage and irrigation in the south-eastern coastal regions has been virtually mechanized, which helps much to boost agricultural production.

In the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), the production of tractor-drawn implements was low. But it has grown rapidly since 1958, especially in the past two years during which period the numbers of tractor-drawn

ploughs and harrows produced, was 9.8 times and 3.4 times res-

## CONSTRUCTION OF WATER CONSERVANCY AND IRRIGATION WORKS

★ By TIEN LIU

China has over 1,600 rivers and numerous lakes in its vast territory. In some regions, there is also abundant underground water, offering favourable conditions for the building of irrigation networks.

HOWEVER, China's diverse topographic and climatic conditions and the uneven distribution of rainfall in different seasons and areas result in frequent floods and droughts. Therefore the building of water conservancy works to overcome the natural disasters is of vital importance to the development of China's agriculture.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the People's Government has paid great attention to the construction of water conservancy and irrigation works. It has appropriated large funds and mobilized immense manpower for the construction of large and medium-sized water conservancy projects. As a result, the building of irrigation works has made rapid strides in the last decade or so.

During the First Five-Year Plan period (1953-1957) water conservancy projects involving 6,300 million cubic metres of earth-work were completed. In the three years beginning 1958, the year of the Big Leap Forward and the formation of rural people's communes, the building of water conservancy works made even greater progress.

More than 100 large reservoirs were built and scores of large irrigated areas were developed. In addition, thousands of medium-sized reservoirs and irrigated areas, and millions of small water conservancy projects were constructed.

By 1960, thanks to the building of these projects, over 20 million hectares of farmland were added to China's effectively irrigated fields. Power pumps for irrigation and drainage increased about eightfold. With the construction of these water conservancy

works, the technical level of the repair workers is being raised rapidly.

In recent years the production of semi-mechanical and improved implements has taken even a faster pace. Tens of millions of rubber-tire barrows and millions of animal-drawn carts, also with rubber tires, have lightened the intensive labour of transport in the rural areas.

Over ten million sprayers have been made and sent to the countryside, strengthening the protection of crops and plants. The trial-production and popularization of the semi-mechanical tools for ploughing, levelling, sowing and harvesting have also achieved considerable success.

An old Chinese saying goes, "One does not realize the level ground before one sees a high mountain." Although there is still a big gap between supply and demand, China has gone a long way in the production of farm machines since her liberation when this branch of industry was practically non-existent.

At present, the workers and staff in the farm machinery industry are continuing their efforts to turn out more efficient, more durable and cheaper products for use in Chinese agriculture.

works, corresponding development of inland navigation, fish breeding, electricity generation and processing with water power also took place.

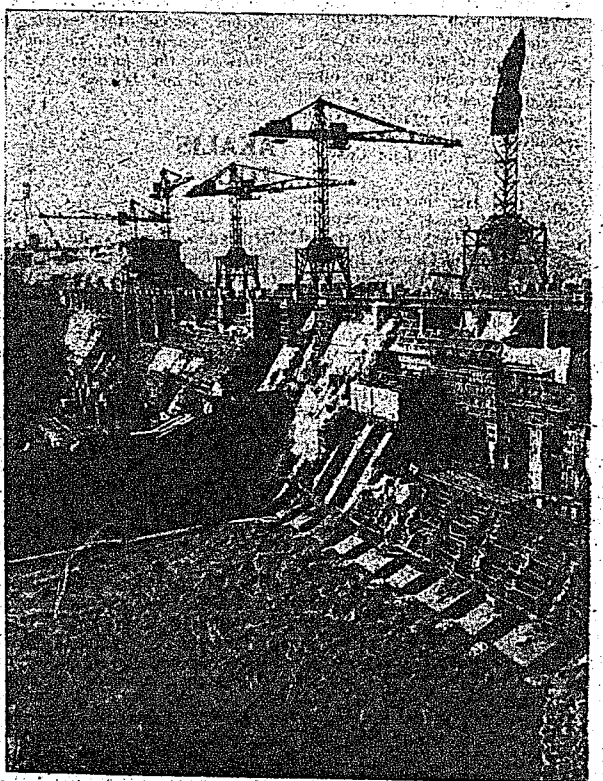
The rapid expansion of water conservancy and irrigation works has played an important role in fighting floods and drought. Vast areas of China's farmland suffered serious natural calamities for three consecutive years from 1959 to 1961.

Had this occurred in old

China, terrific damage would have been done to hundreds of square miles of farmland and countless people would have perished from starvation. In the last three years, however, thanks to the new water conservancy works and the people's communes, the degree of damage and the areas affected have been greatly reduced.

Although China has made great strides in building water conservancy works in the past dozen years, we are in no position to meet all the requirements. Some of the projects are not good enough in quality and some areas are not yet connected with irrigation facilities.

Today the Chinese people are continuing their efforts to improve the water conservancy works.



The Biggest Water Conservancy Project at Sanmen Gorge, on the Yellow River, North China.

## BIHAR GOVERNMENT MUST WITHDRAW THIS BILL

By Jagannath Sarker, Vice-President Bihar State Committee of AITUC

The Government of Bihar is introducing a Bill for amending the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 in its application to the State of Bihar.

THE purpose of this amendment is to compel the industrial workers of Bihar to invest part of their bonus earnings in Government bonds and National Savings Certificates.

In 1961 the Bihar Government first amended the Payment of Wages Act when it was provided that where the amount of "any bonus" payable to a worker exceeded an amount equal to one-fourth of his earnings (exclusive of dearness allowance) for the year to which the bonus related, the excess amount may be invested in the manner prescribed by the Government.

Since an amount of bonus payable to a worker may be less than one-fourth of the annual earnings of the worker, and as such cannot be compulsorily invested in Government bonds, the Bihar Government now wants to make a fresh amendment to the effect that if all bonuses payable during a year together exceed one-fourth of the annual earnings, the Government can force the worker to invest part of the bonuses in Government bonds.

That is, if all bonuses, such as profit sharing bonus, production bonuses, incentive bonus, good attendance bonus, annual bonus and other bonuses payable to a worker in a year exceed one-fourth of the annual basic wages, the worker will be forced to invest part of the bonuses in Government bonds.

By this amendment the Government wants to cast its net wider so that hardly any worker can escape the

provisions regarding compulsory investment.

This amendment has got to be stoutly opposed by all legislators who value the interests of the workers.

The prevailing earnings of the industrial workers in Bihar are very much below the norms of minimum wages laid down by the Indian Labour Conference. The cash value of these norms calculated by the Government of Bihar on the basis of 1958 prices work out as follows for the following centres:

Muzaffarpur	Rs. 136.90
Monghyr	Rs. 157.65
Jharia	Rs. 156.25
Dehri-on-Sone	Rs. 169.98
Ranchi	Rs. 166.30
Jamshedpur	Rs. 171.68

In none of the industrial centres of Bihar have these rates been realized.

The Fair Wages Committee set up by the Indian Labour Conference was of the view that our target cannot be merely to ensure the minimum wages, but fair wages and even living wage, which by their very nature are larger than the minimum wage.

While the minimum wage was to be based on the minimum needs of the worker and was not conditional on the capacity of the industry to pay, our objective should be to raise the wages further, as the capacity to pay improves till we achieve the level of living wage.

Till the workers get the living wage, the payment of bonus out of profits earned helps to bridge the gap between living wage and the pre-

sent paltry earnings to a certain extent. That is one way of approaching the living wage on the basis of increased capacity of industry to pay as reflected in the increase in the profits.

A survey of indebtedness among the industrial workers of Bihar conducted under the auspices of the Government shows that even the comparatively better paid workers of Jamshedpur are sunk in debt.

If the Government compels these workers to invest part of their earnings in Government loans, indebtedness of the workers will become colossal.

It may be argued by the Government that the bonuses

are in the nature of windfall earnings of the workers which are not taken into account by the workers in their monthly budget. Without accepting this argument, one may ask the pertinent question, "Does the Government compel others, who on occasions happen to earn more than their normal incomes, to invest in Government loans?"

Does it compel the employers to invest a part of their super profits, does it force the speculators in the stock exchange to invest their windfall earnings in National Savings Certificates?

Does it compel a lawyer or a doctor who earns thousands of rupees a month, to invest the surplus earnings in National Savings Certificates? Then why this discrimination against the workers?

But a more pertinent question is "Are the bonuses in the nature of windfall?" The Government talks of all bonuses. Any one can under-

stand that performance bonus, production bonus, incentive bonus, good attendance bonus and such other bonuses are directly linked with a certain quantum of labour performed by the workers.

These bonuses are in the nature of piecemeal wages. To unite such bonuses together with the profit sharing bonus is to be a victim of confusion of ideas. And even the profit sharing bonus, as we have seen above, is only a partial fitful effort at ensuring the bare physical minimum wage.

Thus the amendment to the Payment of Wages Act proposed by the Government is against the interests of the workers, against the spirit of decisions of the Indian Labour Conference, against the social targets set by the Planning Commission, and is discriminatory in nature.

The Bihar Committee of the AITUC calls upon the Government to withdraw this pernicious piece of amendment. If not, the legislators should throw it out.

## MADHYA PRADESH NEWSLETTER

★ From Our Correspondent

## HIGH COMMAND'S COLD SHOULDER TO STATE CABINET EXPANSION

The delay in the expansion of the State Cabinet is reported to be due to the indifferent attitude shown by the High Command, when Chief Minister Mandloi visited Delhi with the list of proposed members of the State Cabinet.

MAJORITY of the High Command were not pleased by the defeat of Dr. Katju. They wanted Dr. Katju back in Madhya Pradesh, but their desire could not materialise.

So when Mandloi went to Delhi with the list, the High Command asked him to expand the Ministry according to his own choice. The

High Command's line was that as Mandloi had been re-elected leader of the legislature party, it was within his powers to expand the Ministry as it suited him most.

But this is not acceptable to Mandloi because he is anxious to have the sanction of the High Command for his choice. This will help him to surmount many difficulties. Now he is expected to make another effort to seek the High Command's approval after Prime Minister Nehru's return from abroad.

The delay in the expansion of the Cabinet is having its effect on the administration. A feeling of uncertainty prevails everywhere. Almost seven months are over since the third general elections. It is most regrettable that the ruling party has not been able to solve its internal problems as yet.

GOVERNOR PATASKAR visited Delhi recently to discuss the provisions of the Land Revenue Rationalisation Bill with the Planning Commission. The Commission is reported to have advised him to get the Bill modified before giving consent to it.

It may be recalled that during the debate on the bill, many opposition and even some Congress members urged the Government to differentiate between irrigated and non-irrigated land. But the Government did not pay any heed to this plea. Now the Planning body has endorsed the very same plea. Members of the Commission have asked the Governor to incorporate this provision.

The Commission made it explicitly clear that the irrigated and non-irrigated land could not be treated on par. It has become part of the habit of the Congress Government in this state not to pay heed to any constructive criticism. Now it will be compelled

to change the Bill because the Planning Commission has asked it to do so.

It may be mentioned here that the Communist Party and other Opposition parties in the State launched agitation against the new taxation proposals of the State Government. It was due to the pressure of public opinion that the Governor was obliged to keep his assent pending. Meanwhile came the announcement of Prime Minister Nehru in this regard.

After the agitation was launched, the Government decided to exempt irrigated and non-irrigated lands upto ten acres limit. Now after the Planning Body's advice the exemption to non-irrigated land may go much higher.

Even with the present concession, 73 per cent agriculturists will be exempted from land revenue. And with the acceptance of the Planning Body's advice to differentiate between irrigated and non-irrigated land, this figure will also increase.

This can be justly described as the major achievement of the anti-taxation movement.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

From Page 6

authorities is sham. "Amounts shown as people's contribution in some of the blocks include sums paid by the panchayats out of their income from taxation out of the amount received by them as grants from the government, or sometimes out of the value of labour obtained from the people in lieu of the labour tax. There have been instances in which a part of the expenditure on the construction of private irrigation works has been included in the category of people's contribution" (Seventh Evaluation Report).

Despite all the claims to the contrary, the Community Development programme has inevitably become another bureaucratic apparatus. Even Prime Minister Nehru, who sometime back hailed it as ushering in "silent revolution" in India's countryside, had to admit it.

"It was with this object in view—to change the atmosphere of the rural areas—that we started the community development movement a number of years ago. But I must confess that after a while it seemed to lose its shine and get into a rut, like everything else. Things get officialised, things get tied up with bureaucracy. So the community development movement became rather slow-moving though not static" (Prime Minister's speech in Rajya Sabha on the Draft Outline of Third Plan).

In its third and most inspiring aim, Welfare of the Entire People, the programme has been an unqualified failure.

According to a special study of the Ghosi Community Development Block in U.P. prepared by the ECAF, 76 per cent of the area under improved wheat seeds belonged to large cultivators. Only large cultivators have taken to the use of iron ploughs. Over 78 per cent of the large cultivators have benefited from loans and grants while the benefit to medium and small cultivators is negligible.

Capital expenditure for household among small cultivators decreased from Rs. 80.1 in 1955-56 to Rs. 42.0 in 1957-58 and among medium cultivators from Rs. 145.3 to Rs. 107.4. At the same time, among large cultivators, it increased from Rs. 204.7 in 1955-56 to Rs. 245.1 in 1957-58.

This is borne out by a number of surveys and other observers. The Punjab Government Committee's report quoted earlier, says that village-level workers are in touch only with the middle or upper class farmers, "thus confining their work mainly classes which hardly represent ten per cent of the village population." A Study Group on Community Development headed by Jaya Prakash Narayan reported, "The promotion of the general prosperity of the village does not necessarily lead to the well-being and welfare of the weaker sections."

The group suggested that the CD programme had not benefited the poorer sections of the people.

Evelyn Wood, an expert on India's rural development writes: "Wherever the N.E.S. has rattled its skeleton through the countryside, a flourishing U-Sector is its primary development success. This is politely called 'creating leadership'. Sometimes the old land-owning and money-lending or trading families are the ones in the new money; all depends on how pliable they prove to the State's wrought-iron frame, designed in Delhi or State capitals for 'planning from the grassroots'" (Economic Weekly, February 4, 1961).

At the beginning of this article, we have given a saying from Gandhiji. The truth of this statement is vindicated by the ten years of working of the Community Development Programme. Such a gigantic organisation, spending huge amounts, has failed to achieve its purpose.

This is because the main aim of the programme, i.e. mobilisation of the masses in a voluntary effort for nation-building is primarily a political task and not something which can be achieved by administrative or technical measures. The achievement of this task is also dependent on the political, moral, economic and social atmosphere. In the absence of that, the programme seems to fail.

**A Book Review** *by E.M.S. Namboodiripad*

The first casualty of war, it is said, is truth. Suppression of truth favourable to the enemy and propagation of falsehood are considered indispensable to create the mass psychology necessary for a successful military campaign.

INDIA and China are fortunately not at war with each other. In spite of occasional clashes in Ladakh, and recently in the NEFA area too, the two Governments repudiate warlike intentions and are trying to start negotiations.

Their mutual relations, however, are by no means normal. It would not be an exaggeration to say that an atmosphere of cold war pervades between them. The result is that the process of truth becoming a casualty has started.

It was not long ago that groups of economists and experts in other fields of activities undertook visits to People's China with a view to learning at first hand how the new socialist system was being built there.

Many of those who undertook such visits did not applaud or endorse all that the Chinese Government and people were doing. They had some very critical observations to make on this or that aspect of life in China.

They were, however, impressed with what was being attempted by the leaders of People's China. Many of them also drew conclusions regarding what can, and should be done in India.

All this has stopped. No effort is now being made by our people to learn at first hand what is being done in China. (This is, of course, true of China; they too do not visit our country and try to learn what is being done here.) We are all depending on "information" supplied by News Agencies and correspondents who do not hide their bias against People's China.

Most of us, therefore, become gullible enough to swallow all that is said and written in the anti-China press regarding "slave labour in Chinese Communes", "acute famine", "collapse of rural life", etc. Many of us have become so hysterical that those who raise doubts about such "reports" are denounced as "unpatriotic", "Chinese Agents", etc.

Such a distorted image of People's China was carried by the author of "The Wall Has Two Sides" when he set out on his first journey to People's China. As he himself observes,

"As an Englishman resident in America, I have been to China twice, travelling on a British passport. I went first in 1957, taking with me all the assumptions and apprehensions generally prevalent in the United States.

"I expected to find a country of vast impoverishment and dreadful, equal and disease. I prepared myself to see a people embittered by the rigid coercions of a police state. That was the China I expected but it was not the China that I found.

"The discrepancy with what I had been led to expect and what I actually saw was at first bewildering and disturbing. No one can be in China for more than a few hours without sensing an almost tangible vitality and an enormous optimism. I saw in the people a buoyancy and confidence which was utterly unlike my expectations."

The reader will note that his

our futures are bound to be influenced by it.

"Throughout my stay in China, as during my visit in 1957, I had an extraordinary impression that China was drawing on resources latent within her for a long time and was moving forward very rapidly to a great future."

This is substantiated by description of what he actually saw in cities and villages, in factories and farms, in schools, hospitals and theatres, in courts and prisons, in both rural and urban Communes, etc. Suffice it to point out here his assessment of the Communes and the food situation — two points on which much has been written in our press in a light very unfavourable to China.

On the Communes, he answers three questions which are generally raised about them:

**People's China Today As A Western Observer Saw It**

such visits to People's China as Greene did.

We do not think it necessary to get first hand information on what is taking place in China before believing all that is written in the imperialist press.

Greene, on the other hand, decided to undertake another visit, and that in the summer of 1960. In between his two visits had taken place many changes in China's external relations, as well as internally.

He was, therefore, naturally anxious to find out all about these changes. Among the points on which he wanted to get the truth was the Communes "about which we had read such dire reports and which were not even heard of when I was there before."

He spent nearly five months in People's China. He talked with Cabinet Ministers and pedicab drivers, with heads of Government Departments and writers. He had a long talk with the Prime Minister Chou En-lai himself. He visited schools, factories, prisons, hospitals and several Communes.

And the story of all he saw, all he heard from a large number of Chinese as well as a few foreign residents in China, all the impressions and views he formed are set out in this 400-and-odd-page book. Written in lucid style, it is very pleasant to read and gives lots of information on all aspects of the people's life in China.

He has, of course, many critical comments to offer on various aspects of life in China. There is, however, no doubt as to what his general conclusion is. Here it is:

"No one can come away from a visit to China today without being impressed, even overwhelmed, by the experience. It is impossible, not to feel while one is there that one is witnessing one of the great episodes of history and that all

were returned to their original owners. Bicycles were 'decommunised'. Undoubtedly new problems will arise and adjustments will continue to be made."

What about the widely reported food scarcity and famine? There is no doubt that 1960 and 1961 were very difficult for the people of China.

"While I was travelling in China during 1960, I saw many signs both of the excessive rainfall and the extreme drought which had afflicted that country during the first half of the year. In some areas there had been no rain for more than 200 days, in others there were disastrous summer typhoons — eighteen hit the North-east coast alone."

It was, therefore, natural that there should be food scarcity already in the latter half of 1960 when he was in China. He says,

"This is a technique of education and persuasion developed in the early days of the Chinese Communist Party and is closely connected with Mao Tse-tung's theories of leadership. Every traveller like myself soon becomes conscious that China is a country where discussions, talks, meetings, debates, take place everywhere on every conceivable subject. The Times once referred to China's Government as 'Government by endless conversation'."

Hardly the picture of a slave labour camp where it is for a small elite of the Communist Party to order and for the people to obey!

On the significance of the Commune as a mass movement and as a technique for solving China's fundamental problems, the author has something to say which will be read in India with interest.

"The Commune movement appears to have tackled this (rural unemployment and under-employment) problem directly. Surplus labour in the country has found employment without migration to the cities. A survey taken in China in 1959, the first year after the Communes, indicated that peasant working days had risen to 300 per year.

"This tremendous increase from the figure of 161 days only two years earlier reflects the results of establishing small rural industrial plants in the Commune and of the use of labour surplus for agricultural capital construction (soil conservation, afforestation, dams, irrigation).

"China thus appears to be approaching what no other underdeveloped country has yet achieved — a solution to the riddle of rural under-employment. I was informed, and I believe correctly, that today in a number of areas there is actually labour shortage — astonishing as this may seem for a country of such enormous population."

How one wishes that our sociologists, economists, administrators and politicians were able to go to China and learn from the achievements registered as well as the mistakes committed, by them in tackling the very same problems which we are trying to solve through our own Community Development movement!

How one wishes, again, that the sociologists, economists, administrators and politicians of China were able to come to India and learn from both the achievements made, and the mistakes committed, by us in this very basic task! Such an exchange of experience of the two countries is unfortunately now precluded because of the strained political relations between them.

"In all the cities I visited, even small strips of earth that sometimes run between the road and pavement were being dug and planted with vegetables. In some towns temporary pipes with taps at intervals were laid as an aid to these efforts. The vegetable plots were all in the open and unguarded; the vegetables could easily have been stolen at night. One man at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told me he and his wife had planted onions in their window-boxes instead of flowers."

It was this organised effort of the Chinese people in the villages (and the cities) that led to the

organisation of the Communes. Far from any imposition from above, the Commune movement arose, developed and is functioning on the basis of the widest possible discussion among and participation by the common people.

"I am convinced," Greene says, "that the key to much of what is taking place in China is group discussion and cooperation. Without an appreciation of this element, it is impossible, I believe, for us to comprehend the power of the mass movements which have swept the country during the past decade — and which will, I feel certain, continue to do so. By whatever name one wishes to speak of it (the Chinese call it 'democracy'), an outstanding feature of life in China today is mass participation by means of mass meetings and group discussions..."

"This is a technique of education and persuasion developed in the early days of the Chinese Communist Party and is closely connected with Mao Tse-tung's theories of leadership. Every traveller like myself soon becomes conscious that China is a country where discussions, talks, meetings, debates, take place everywhere on every conceivable subject. The Times once referred to China's Government as 'Government by endless conversation'."

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As usual, the bonus movement of engineering workers in West Bengal has reached the peak just before the Puja this year too. The bonus movement begins just after the annual conferences of the unions.

THE annual conferences begin from the month of June and go on till the beginning of August. In every conference, the balance sheets of the companies are scrutinised and demands for bonus are prepared. From the conferences, demands are unanimously passed and placed before the employers and the Government. This is its pattern.

This year also the movement began in the first week of August with general meetings and demonstration and gained further momentum since the beginning of September.

The employers took a firm stand to reduce the quantum of bonus in view of the work of the Bonus Commission this year. They took adamant attitude towards the quantum of bonus.

But workers in the engineering industry are far more united to let the defiance of the employers go unanswered. Militant demonstrations, gheraos, slow-downs, stay-in strikes etc., began in one factory after the other. According to the figure

**W. B. Engineering Workers' Movement**

★ By MD. ELIAS, M. P. General Secretary, National Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers Of India ★

not to accept less amount of bonus than last year as put forward by the employers.

In Burn & Co., the employers wanted to declare not more than 2½ months' wages as bonus, despite the fact that their net profit was Rs. 47 lakhs, which was more than the last year's.

The workers did not accept the quantum and took out a huge procession and marched to the head office of the Company in Calcutta and kept the traffic and work at a standstill for several hours.

After this, the procession went to the residence of the State Labour Minister, Bijay Singh Nahar. The impact of the procession before the Head Office and State Labour Minister was effective because after that the company declared four months and three weeks wages as bonus.

The workers did not agree and decided to go on one-day strike on September 12. The Labour Minister intervened and called for a joint discussion on September 18. Hence the one-day strike has been deferred. Negotiations are still on.

11,000 workers of Jessop and Co., also unleashed a strong movement for increased quantum of bonus. The company ultimately declared 6½ months wages as bonus, which the workers have accepted with protest pending finalisation of the dispute after the Puja. Guest, Keen & Williams,

have also earned nearly Rs. 67 lakh as net profit which is more than that of last year. The company agreed to pay only 10 weeks' wages as bonus on the plea that the capital has increased from Rs. 2 crores to Rs. 4 crores.

But the 6,000 workers of Guest, Keen & Williams were firm on their demands. Big meetings and demonstrations took place and a decision was taken by the Red Flag Union to resort to strike.

This decision forced the company to accept the proposal of the Deputy Labour Commissioner for adjudication for settling the bonus issue and 13½ weeks' wages were paid as advance pending final decision of the Tribunal.

Brathwaite Co. also earned a higher amount of profit this year and had to accept the demand for increased bonus and declared 5½ months' wages as bonus.

As during the last year, the Hindustan Motor Co. of Birla Bros. has refused to pay a single naya paisa as bonus this year despite their profit amounting to Rs. 3 crores and 40 lakhs.

Its 6,000 workers therefore are left with no other alternative but to go on strike. A meeting of 4,000 workers was held on September 15 where a decision was taken to demonstrate in front of the head office of Birla Bros. at Calcutta and also to take a procession to the residence of the Directors and the State

Labour Minister. If that attempt fails, the workers will go slow and resort to a general strike. To make the strike successful, the workers have decided to collect one lakh rupees as fighting fund.

The practice in the Texmaco is to pay an advance on current year's account. The year is not yet completed and that is why the company has accepted the demand of its 7,000 workers and agreement has been signed for paying 6 weeks' wages as advance. The issue of final quantum will be taken up after the year ends.

The number of bonus issues still pending before the tribunals is about 61. These were discussed in bipartite talks but the discussions have not yet come to an end.

Gardenreach workshop is now owned by the Defence Department of the Government of India. Despite the fact that they have not made enough profits, the workers achieved six weeks wages as advance against bonus.

All these signify the strength of the movement of the engineering workers in West Bengal and expose the defrauding mentality of the employers to part with workers' share in the prosperity of the concern. It is high time that a rational attitude is taken by the employers in this regard. We hope that the Bonus Commission's expected recommendations will put an end to this unnecessary harassment to the workers.

**INDIA AND AFRO-ASIA**

★FROM BACK PAGE

leading part last week with other Afro-Asian and Socialist countries, to urge sanctions against Portugal in view of the mass extermination of the people of Angola; to call for independence at the earliest date for Kenya; and to demand action to free South-West Africa from the stranglehold of racist South Africa.

It is not necessary to illustrate the positive aspects of Indian foreign policy further. India's attitude to colonialism was most markedly observed in the action, however belated, to free Goa and in Indian support for all colonial peoples' struggles.

Let us then be clear as to the answers to the questions we have posed at the start—questions which have loomed large since the recent anti-Indian incidents in Indonesia and the Nepal King's attack on India (following our grant of asylum to the opponents of his monarchical regime).

**Roots Of Weakness**

Let us not underestimate the bad odour resulting from mistakes in our attitude to Asian and African countries, such as those outlined above in this article. These mistakes have certainly not added to India's stature. They are used in anti-Indian propaganda by countries whose national and chauvinist interests bring them into conflict, of one sort or the other, with India.

They are used equally of course by the imperialists and their agents who seek to sow dissensions among the Afro-Asians. (It was interesting, for instance, to note Pakistan's propaganda in regard to the mistakes of an Indian sports official in Jakarta: this propaganda aimed at Asia and Africa, sought to make out that India is for support to Taiwan and Israel, though the Government of India's position has been clear on these issues for several years.)

The hesitations and vacillations in our policy are disastrous for India. They arise from the extensive influence and pressure exercised on Government policies by Right-wing elements, both inside and outside the Government, who keep pulling our policies towards the USA and UK, away from militant Asia and Africa, quite apart from the fact that the Government of India's External Affairs Ministry carries a heavy load of conservative, and in some cases, even pro-imperialist civil servants and professional diplomats.

But the hesitation and vacillations are not all inevitable. Conscious and constructive public criticism, can lessen them, for the essential fact remains that Indian foreign policy continues to have the positive content of non-alignment.

This criticism, however, must clearly demarcate itself from the Right-wing Parties and groups inside the country who also criticise Government's foreign policy and seek its change in a pro-West, anti-Afro-Asian, anti-Soviet direction. Patriotic criticism, first of all, extends support to the broad foreign policy, and deals with mistakes as deviations from that basic policy.

A wide popular national front in support of the positive aspects of the non-alignment policy is being built up to fight the reactionary pro-imperialist pressures and defend the Government's efforts for peace, disarmament and anti-imperialism.

It is this popular mass support which will, at the same time, prevent the backsliding on vital issues which takes place on occasions and help to strengthen and push forward India's foreign policy in the direction of closer and closer cooperation with the Socialist and non-aligned countries, in support of peace and national independence.

**SOVIET PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO BELGRADE**

BELGRADE, September 24:

Leonid Brezhnev, the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, today arrived here on a return visit as guest of President Broz Tito of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

LEONID Brezhnev and the members of his party were met at Surcin airport by President Broz Tito, high Yugoslav leaders and thousands of Belgraders. A crowd estimated at 100,000 about a fifth of Belgrade's population, lined the route.

An article appearing in the day's Pravda said:

The Soviet people are convinced that L. I. Brezhnev's visit to Yugoslavia that is starting today, will be a new considerable step forward in the development and strengthening of fraternal friendship between the people of the Soviet Union and the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

We, the author continued, as a country building communism will do everything to have good co-operation with Yugoslavia, despite the differences in the understanding

tions of ensuring international security, that the Soviet Union sincerely strives to see the efforts of the two countries, exerted in the struggle for stable peace in the world, applied in the same direction.

In this connection the author of the Pravda article said that the working people of Yugoslavia, together with the Soviet people, and the other peace-loving peoples, are deeply interested in a peaceful settlement of the German question. They support the Soviet proposals on general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the article says further, are also unanimous on such an important international issue as the liquidation of the infamous colonial system, the rendering of aid to peoples who have already freed themselves from colonial slavery, and to those who are still fighting for their national independence.

In conclusion it said that Soviet people ardently wish the fraternal Yugoslav people big successes in the struggle for peace, in the building of the new Yugoslavia.

\*"The Wall Has Two Sides", author: Felix Greene, Publishers: Jonathan Cape, London.

# SOVIET MEASURES TO EASE BERLIN TENSION

★ From P. K. KUNHANANDAN NAIR

BERLIN, September 22: The Soviet Union has taken a number of important measures to ease the tension in Berlin that was mounting to a shooting point last month.

SOVIET Union agreed last week to request of the allies to 'discontinue the use of armoured cars in West Berlin. It now uses military buses as usual for goods transport. Since August 20 following the fascist rioting and stone throwing against Soviet guards of honour at the war memorial Soviet soldiers were using armoured cars for their transport.

Right under the nose of Western occupation forces and West Berlin police on August 13, 18, 19 and 20, bandit elements in the American sector at Charlie check point tried to prevent by use of force the passage of Soviet servicemen going to relieve guards at the monument of Soviet martyrs.

Fascist rowdies also indulged in similar criminal acts against Soviet diplomats and officials of the Soviet Embassy in GDR who were driving through the American sector. It is these acts of violence encouraged by occupation forces that forced Soviet side to use armoured conveyance to ensure protection for their soldiers.

The Soviet side also had complied earlier with a Western request to stop using Charlie check point in crossing the American sector and to cross instead at the Sandkurg bridge in British sector. Soviet move to ease tension was described by Western papers as "obeying the orders of Western powers." Instead of acting in a strong-muscle manner, the Soviet Union is doing everything possible to ensure peace in Berlin.

There were intense diplomatic activities too on Berlin at high levels. At his vacation villa in the Black Sea coast, Prime Minister Khrushchov received and held talks with many important personalities.

## Discussions On Berlin Issue

Those who have discussed the Berlin situation with him recently include U. Thant, acting Secretary-General of the U.N.O., Stewart I. Udall, United States Secretary of the Interior, Hans Kroll, the recalled West German Ambassador in Moscow.

Herr Kroll later told the press: "I am convinced Prime Minister Khrushchov intends to sign a peace treaty." The Chairman of GDR Council of Ministers, Walter Ulbricht had long discussions with Khrushchov on the German peace treaty.

The American diplomats have told Khrushchov that it is difficult for the United States to negotiate on a German peace treaty now as elections to the American Congress are due in November.

The Soviet Government declaration of September 11 reckoned with this and indicated that the Soviet Union was prepared to wait until November elections are over before resuming negotiations on Berlin. But it made also perfectly clear that one cannot link the solution of the question of German peace treaty all the time to elections in this or that country. It is clear that the USSR will not permit indefinite delay of signing a German peace treaty.

is already a 20,000-strong occupation army in West Berlin now.

● In West Berlin itself, occupation troops carried out war exercises last Tuesday night. In full battle kit American, British and French troops moved into positions. Mock attack, defence and "occupying enemy territory" (East Berlin) and similar other exercises were successfully carried out.

While Soviet Union as ever before takes a very conciliatory attitude towards Berlin question, what is the Western side doing? The West is redoubling its efforts to whip up tension and war hysteria. These sordid facts of recent days will further confirm this.

Following President Kennedy's Cuba call-up, the American commandant in occupied Berlin announced on September 17 that the USA intended to move about three thousand fresh troops this week to West Berlin. These troops will be coming from West Germany demonstrating along the 110-mile autobahn, misusing access facilities given by the GDR. There

is already a 20,000-strong occupation army in West Berlin now.

● The West German Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Economics, Dr. Erhard announced in Washington after talks with leading American politicians that West German Government intends to buy arms and military equipments worth seven hundred million dollars in the United States.

And the obvious result of de Gaulle's recent visit to Bonn was a tough foreign policy line of the Bonn-Franz collusion to block any East-West settlement on Berlin. While West Germany in league with France intensifies the struggle against all proposals aimed at achieving a German settlement, programme of Franco-West German joint action in the nuclear arming

## ASSAM NEWSLETTER

# FACTS OF KARIMGUNJ CLASH

★ From MADHUSUDAN BHATTACHARYA

Karimgunj, a border town in the district of Cachar, Assam, was recently the scene of an ugly clash between Bengali and Hindi speaking groups. The trouble sparked off following an alleged clash between a "sirdar" of the steamer "ghat" labour and two other persons belonging to the other linguistic community. This clash took place in the evening of September 10.

TWO persons who are alleged to have clashed with the said "sirdar", it is learnt, lodged a complaint with the police the same night that the said "sirdar" under the influence of liquor assaulted them. Following this, the police made some enquiry the same night, but no arrest was made, nor was any other precautionary step taken by the police.

The communal elements, particularly the newly organised Jan Sangh group, seized upon the incident. What was only a personal quarrel—that the two sides belonged to two different linguistic groups was only an accidental circumstance could be understood by any sane man—was given a communal colour by the Jan Sanghs who spurred themselves into action, conducting an inflammatory campaign among the town people, particularly among the students.

## Jan Sangh's False Propaganda

That night and the next morning these elements went round the town working up the sentiment of the people by an utterly false, but well-designed propaganda to the effect that the workers of steamer 'ghat' had molested women. With this kind of propaganda young minds were worked up to a frenzy.

This false propaganda was carried on through a whispering campaign among the students as also through other means in which the commu-

parade of the units armed with tanks under different conditions."

While these armed demonstrations were going on with the intention of occupying East Berlin, a West German Bundestag Deputy, Herr Teinholds Rehs made a territorial claim even on the Soviet town of Kaliningrad.

Addressing a revanchist rally in West Germany he further declared that West Germany would never be prepared "to give up Germany's eastern territories." West German leaders have often stated that FRG do not recognise its post-war frontiers.

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of the Bundeswehr is already afoot.

Commenting upon the talks in Washington between British defence Minister and U.S. Defence Secretary, the British papers noted that the point at issue was the possibility of handing over to France, the Anglo-American nuclear means.

President Kennedy's earlier opposition to giving nuclear aid to France has weakened considerably since then. It is also reported that Britain will not raise any objection to France getting nuclear assistance from U.S.

Therefore, it is obvious that a nuclear channel may be opened for Bonn to acquire the most destructive arms of our day. The mad men of Bonn who make territorial claims on European neighbours and are already playing with war flames, will no doubt spell disaster by starting a third world war if they are armed with nuclear weapons.

A German peace-treaty which would settle for ever the frontiers of two German States and pledge to prevent revival of militarism and a declaration of non-aggression is the only way to banish danger of another war in Europe. Delay in signing the German peace treaty is a danger for peace.

went into action directing the wrath of the students and others against the entire Hindi speaking workers. What is most significant is that their target was only the working people, rickshaw pullers, cobblers, day labourers etc. living in different parts of the town who had nothing to do with the steamer "ghat" or its labourers and far less with the previous night's incident. These working people were attacked and injured at random. Their one "fault" was their language and the other "fault" was that they were working people!

A number of these working people had been injured in different localities of the town; some of them were seriously wounded. All these working people who became victims of this rowdy attack had to leave their work and seek shelter.

A student-cum-public meeting was held at noon. The real motive and nature of the organisers of this gangsterism was revealed in the speeches made. According to available reports, with the honourable

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## Kerala Newsletter

C. Achutha Menon, Secretary of the Kerala State Council of the CPI met Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Union Home Minister and urged upon him to direct the State Government to issue orders releasing C. A. Balan, the Communist leader now undergoing a life sentence in Trivandrum Central Jail.

Achutha Menon pointed out that the Madras Government had already taken steps in this regard. C. A. Balan was convicted in a Court at Madras and was transferred to Kerala since States reorganisation. Political prisoners involved in similar cases have been recently released in Madras, the Government having remitted the unexpired portion of their sentences.

Balan has undergone 12 years imprisonment and now both the Madras and the Kerala Governments appear to play hide and seek in regard to the issue of Balan's release. Achutha Menon urged upon the Union Home Minister to see that the Kerala Government exercises sympathetic consid-

eration in Balan's case and sets him free.

In another Memorandum presented to the Union Home Minister, Achutha Menon fervently pleaded for fair and just treatment to the Kasargode areas of Kerala while it was part of Madras was neglected and still continued to be neglected.

The memorandum went on to say: "When Kasargode became part of Kerala in 1956 as a result of states reorganisation, the first elected Government in Kerala took certain steps to help these areas to develop fast. The present coalition Government had not

only not followed up the measures but had in certain cases reversed the gear.

The Kanarese speaking people in the area were not getting fair treatment. The undeveloped areas of Kasargode remain backward and even the sanctioned schemes under Plan were not taken up for implementation. For linguistic consideration also, the area needed special treatment.

Referring to the problems and difficulties of the area, the memorandum pinpointed the following:

1 Malayalam speaking teachers were appointed in the schools in the area on the plea that trained Kanarese knowing teachers were not available. This adds to conflict. Special efforts to get Kanarese teachers could be taken.

2 The construction of the extension buildings for the only arts College in the area is not proceeding rapidly.

3 The policy of indifference and neglect adopted by the Government in regard to getting Kanarese text books for the school-going children in the area has resulted in enormous difficulties and heartburning.

4 There is no cooperative movement worth the name in this area. One of the difficulties is the lack of Kanarese speaking officials.

5 Funds allotted for Plan schemes lapse due to non-availability of contractors to undertake work. As in Madras, the state government should increase the estimates by 25 per cent and attract men to undertake the schemes in the area.

6 Adequate power and irrigation facilities are still lacking and should be provided.

7 Communication facilities are absent. Roads and Bridges under construction take a long time.

8 Kasargode Taluq is an area not producing centre. An area nut distribution centre that was set up in this area, has been shifted to elsewhere.

9 There is no industry of any type here. There are, of course, possibilities of setting up certain industries and it was mentioned that a paper mill will be located in the area during the Third Plan period. The location of that unit has also been shifted.

Achutha Menon emphasised that from all accounts the area requires special and serious attention of the Union Government.

# CPI APPEALS FOR AMITY

★FROM FACING PAGE

After 1 p.m. police pickets were posted and later on the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police arrived at the spot and held discussions with the leaders of above political parties. The above-mentioned "sirdar" was later on arrested and sent up to the district jail at Silchar.

But the communal-chauvinist elements continued their sinister campaign and reports of stray assaults on workers poured in from different localities till the evening of that day.

However, Communists and other democratic elements had become active by that time. Even at great risks to their own lives, some people came forward to provide shelter to the workers.

About one hundred persons are reported to have sustained injuries in the day's incidents; though only a few had to be detained for treatment. In hospital and others could be discharged after first aid. Fortunately no life was lost.

Later on it came to light that the story of "molestation of women" and similar other "incidents" circulated by the organisers of this anti-worker rowdism were absolutely unfounded and cooked up. This made many even among the young participants in the incidents of the day express their regret for what was done in the heat of the moment.

Communist Party's Cachar District Council in a statement strongly denounced this naked communal-chauvinist incident and exposed its real face. The party also condemned the inaction of the Police at the initial stage. The statement has demanded that all the workers affected by this incident should be compensated the loss they sustained and should be helped to resume their respective occupation.

It has warned the people of Cachar against the danger of this kind of clash and has demanded an enquiry into the

whole incident to ascertain how in spite of a large number of police being present in the town, this assault on workers could go on for hours together in broad daylight and yet the culprits could go scotfree.

It is believed that if an enquiry is held, more light will be thrown on the sinister game of those who organised this gangsterism on workers, misleading the students and youth, dangerously threatening the much talked of national integration.

Meanwhile, leaders of different political parties, including the Communist Party, have been conducting a campaign for peace and amity there.

## Resentment Against Tax-Burden

THE recently imposed tax on goods and passengers carried by motor transport and country boats in Assam has evoked widespread resentment in the State. This tax, known as Assam Carriage Tax, levies ten per cent tax on fares and freights of passengers and goods. The responsibility of collection of this tax lies with the private owners of buses, trucks and boats who are to deposit it with the Government.

If local experience can be taken as a guide, it would appear that while the Government is to receive 10 p.c. of the rates of fare and freight, the paying public will have to pay more than 16 per cent extra. For instance, for every ticket of the value of 0.06 nP for the local city bus service, the passenger has to pay 0.01 nP extra as "tax". Likewise, for a ticket of the value of 0.12 nP the tax is 0.02 nP and so on.

Again there seems to be little arrangement to ensure that what is taken from the people as tax will go to the state exchequer. No Govern-

ment stamp is used for realisation of this tax; the ticket bears only a rubber-stamp impression: tax. Thus while the public have to pay an additional 16 per cent in the name of tax, one cannot be sure that this amount goes actually to the state exchequer.

The owners of motor buses and trucks also complain that they have to face the wrath of the people on whom this additional burden has been imposed, as they have to collect it. Besides, they are subjected to various types of harassment by Government officials who realise the tax from them. These officials function under an "unfounded conception" that the owners are not depositing the amount they should and make arbitrary demands on them.

No wonder, therefore, that the association of the motor bus and truck owners has also raised its voice against this tax and has demanded that this should be abolished. In fact, it is they who started moving against this tax first.

Recently a deputation on behalf of the Shillong city bus owners' syndicate waited upon the Government with a memorandum urging the Government to abolish this tax. This deputation was reported by the Finance Minister that as owners of buses they were not to pay the tax and hence they should not move against this; they should rather try to collect the tax more carefully.

Meanwhile the Assam State Council of Communist Party of India in its last meeting called upon the people of the State to observe September 29 as protest day against this tax. The move of the Communist Party seems to have evoked wide response from various sections of the people. Preparations are afoot all over the State to observe the protest day.

In Shillong an all-parties committee has been formed to carry forward the movement till the tax has been abolished. The Hill Leaders

who usually do not take up issues of this nature and seldom come to move jointly with other sections of the people on such issues, however, themselves took the initiative this time to bring other sections of the local people into this movement. They also agreed to make some adjustments in the programme they had worked out earlier on their own to synchronise the movement with that in the other parts of the State.

Wilson Reade, the septagenarian MLA of the Hill Leaders' Conference, has been elected the President of the committee. A number of MLAs of the Hill Leaders' Conference who usually stay in Shillong have been included in the list of speakers for the proposed public meeting of

September 29. Communists and others, including some influential citizens who are not aligned with any party have also joined the committee and have agreed to address the proposed public meeting.

A number of local Congress leaders had been invited to attend the meeting where this broad-based committee was formed; but none of them turned up.

The committee has decided to follow up the public meeting of September 29 with bigger rallies and other forms of action.

Reports from other districts also indicate that preparations are afoot to observe the protest day on a big scale with public meetings and demonstrations where possible.

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# India and Afro-Asia

## what is, wrong with our foreign policy?

Is India losing face, becoming isolated, in the Afro-Asian world? And if this is so, is it due to a mistaken foreign policy? And if this is also true, in what direction should the foreign policy be changed or corrected?

THESE are not questions from an ivory tower? They are questions which are being posed in political circles, in the press and amongst patriotic and thinking people in all parts of the country. And perhaps it is as well to take up these questions at a moment when Prime Minister Nehru is making his first visit to West Africa and is receiving a tumultuous welcome in Lagos, Nigeria.

The Nigerian visit, in a way, highlights the tremendous regard which the national independence movements of Asia and Africa

### ROMESH CHANDRA

have had and have for India's struggle for liberation from British rule and for the leaders of that struggle. It is this regard which has given India a front-rank place among the new Afro-Asian independent countries during all the years since we won our independence. But the picture of India battling against imperialism and setting an example to the entire colonial world in the period of British rule has, it must be frankly admitted, tended to be blurred at moments. This is not the place to go into a long history of some of the omissions and commissions.

#### Weaknesses

Suffice it to mention just a few recent outstanding weaknesses in our policy, which irritated nationalist Afro-Asian opinion:

1. Algeria: India's failure to accord recognition to the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, right to the very end, after many Afro-Asian Governments had

done so, was resented by the Algerians and equally by progressive people all over the two continents.

Despite a campaign for recognition run by the Afro-Asian Solidarity and Peace movements, despite demands made at mass rallies organised by the Communist Party and democratic mass organisations, the Government of India refused to budge.

2. Belgrade Conference: The role of the Indian officials participating in the preparatory meeting at Cairo for the Belgrade non-aligned Summit, was equally regrettable and succeeded in confirming the impression of a wishy-washy India, in which the fire of anti-imperialism, to say the least, burnt low.

No excuse can be found for the opposition which these gentlemen put up at this Cairo meeting, to the participation of Algeria in the Belgrade Conference, nor for the lukewarm attitude they took on questions of colonialism.

3. Congo: Again, on the question of the Congo, the role of Indian officials, has not always been one which commanded the support of Afro-Asians. Apart from the positive and commendable efforts of Rajeshwar Dayal, which were checkmated by the Hammerskjold machine, the part played by Indian military and civilian U. N. officials helped further to alienate us from anti-imperialist opinion in the two continents.

The argument that our officials worked under U.N. direction, while a statement of fact, could not excuse, and has not, excused India for allowing its personnel to carry out actions in the Congo, which are at times a negation of U. N. resolutions and an aid to the imperialist powers in their efforts to continue to domi-

nate and divide the Congo. Repeated criticism of our Congo policy by the Afro-Asian and Peace movements and by several MPs—Congressmen, Communists and others—has failed to produce results. So unpopular has become this policy now that the Times of India has editorially (September 25) come out with a call for the dissociation by India from the U. N. Congo operation:

"There is no reason at all," says the paper, "why New Delhi should continue to associate itself with a do-nothing policy which in practice allows the Tshombe regime to entrench itself and increase its capacity for secessionist mischief."

4. Officials: It is necessary also to underline the fact that very often our diplomatic personnel as well as the expert administrators, doctors, engineers, etc., lent by India for service in newly independent countries fail to win the affection and comradeship of the Asian and African peoples among whom they are supposed to work. They sometimes appear to be sitting on their "high horses", some kind of black sahibs, come to make

money and then quit. These are exceptions, it is true, but it is the "bad" ones, who sully India's name and are talked about.

It is interesting to note that several Indian newspapers in their comments on the Nigerian visit, have called for a greater appreciation in the External Affairs Ministry's work of the importance of Africa. The Times of India, for instance, editorially (September 26, 1962) calls for the building up of "a corps of diplomats with a thorough knowledge of African affairs and composed of men who have a deep and genuine interest in the history and culture of the African peoples."

It goes on to state that "it must be hoped that following Mr. Nehru's visit to Nigeria, some remedial measures will be taken in the External Affairs Ministry so as to end its pre-occupation with the Western world."

#### "Gone Over"

Above have been underlined heavily the negative aspects of the Indian Government's performances in regard to Afro-Asia. But from this, the conclusion can never be made that Indian foreign policy has become now "almost an adjunct of imperialism"—as is sought to be concluded by some sections of opinion in the two continents.

The fact is that these lapses, these wrong actions,

have certainly disappointed friends of India and are, unfortunately, highlighted in an ugly manner by those who have made up their minds that India has "gone over" to the West and are engaged in a determined effort to "prove" this by any means, with a view to isolate India among Afro-Asian peoples.

#### Essentiality Positive

But the Government of India's foreign policy continues to be one which, as a whole, stands for peace and national independence, and assists the struggle against war and imperialism. That is why the Communist Party continues to give it its overall support, while criticising strongly its weaknesses and mistakes and demanding the strengthening of the policy.

Even the most recent acts and pronouncements of the Government of India and its spokesmen bear out the positive aspects of this foreign policy.

★ Prime Minister Nehru's clearcut attack in the Commonwealth Conference on the ECM and his political description of it as an attempt at a new form of colonialism, was the sharpest anti-imperialist statement made at the Conference.

★ In the U. N. General Assembly's Committee on Colonialism, India took a

★ ON PAGE 13

## PRESSMEN ON STRIKE

BOMBAY, September 25:

3,500 employees of Times of India and allied publications, including the journal's editorial and reporting staff, had to resort to a sit-down strike since September 21, as a measure of protest against the gross violation by the management of the terms of agreement arrived at on July 17, 1962.

THIS is the third time, the employees have been forced to strike work during a period of three months. As recently as on July 16 and 17 last, the employees were on strike due to the management's refusal to grant increased wage-scales and bonus.

That strike was called off following a tripartite agreement in which it was decided that a tripartite committee would be constituted to settle the disputes, and such issues as might remain unresolved would be referred to a Judge of the Bombay High Court for arbitration.

After the withdrawal of the strike, the tripartite committee met from July 25 to August 10 and an agreement was arrived at on some of the demands. The union raised the question of wages for the days of strike and also demanded interim relief pending arbitration of the disputed issues.

The management opposed both the demands tooth and nail and did not implement a single term of the agreement arrived at in the tripartite committee. They did not even agree to the Government's suggestion that some interim relief be given and the strike days be adjusted against leave.

On being pressed by the union, the General Manager at one stage agreed to partially accept these demands. But on September 10, he went

back on his word and refused to grant any concession.

Meanwhile, the demand of the union to appoint a High Court judge as arbitrator was also kept hanging and finally on September 20 night when the employees had already decided upon the course of strike, the Maharashtra Government referred the issue to adjudication, contrary to the terms of the earlier agreement.

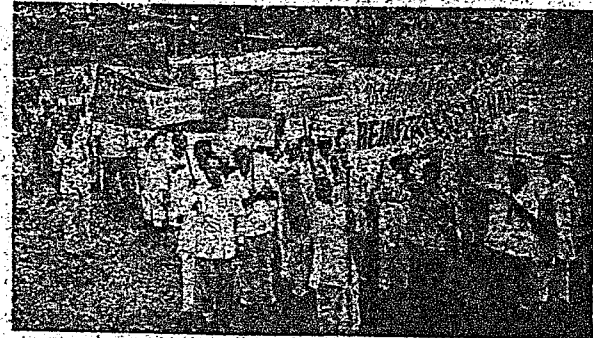
The Times of India and Allied Publications Employees' Union, which is leading the strike of the employees, was therefore left with no alternative but to remain firm on the decision to strike work and since September 21 the strike is on.

The demands of the em-

ployees are only just and it was a false plea trotted out by the management when it expressed its inability to pay interim relief of Rs. 10 to the workers for alleged lack of funds.

The balance sheet of the company proves the contrary. The balance sheet of 1961-62 shows a net profit of Rs. 45 lakhs. (In 1957, the profit was just a little more than Rs. 2 lakhs.) The total revenue of the company has gone up during this period from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 4.75 crores. The income on account of advertisement shot up from Rs. 1.17 crores in 1957 to more than Rs. 2 crores in 1962.

The dividend distributed by the company has increased from 15 per cent in 1957 to 35 per cent in the current financial year. Only four directors of the company pocketed Rs. 13.6 lakhs as dividends while the bonus to all the workers amounted in all to only Rs. 11 lakh. The facts are only too clear to establish that the workers' action is only justified.



Delhi Journalists Demonstrate against high-handed removal of a colleague (See page 3).

## Ajoy Ghosh Memorial Fund

\*FROM FRONT PAGE

will be followed by others.

Immediately after the appeal was issued, the AITUC unit did not wait. They decided to be the first—of course, after Rashid. They have given me Rs. 201 collected from amongst themselves—with a promise of more to come.

Comrade J. Ballabh, who is a new arrival on our New Age staff, has given Rs. 50 from his wage, even though he himself is in difficulties.

From Andhra, K. Ganga Seth has sent a money order of Rs. 5. These amounts are most welcome, for they show the regard that they have for the Party which Ajoy Ghosh served during his life.

The last but not the least, comes a draft for Rs. 500 from Baba Gurmukh Singh, whose whole life has been devoted to revolutionary movement. His arrest in connection with the Gadar movement, his sensational escapes from the police and his sojourn in the Soviet Union is well-known to all.

Like most of the revolutionaries of the early days Babaji joined the Communist Party. In spite of his age, he is still very actively working for the Party.

Expecting, dear Comrades, your whole-hearted response.

S. V. Ghate

New Delhi,  
September 25, 1962