

SINISTER PLOT AGAINST UNITY OF THE NATION

Smash Right Reaction's Conspiracy on Language

The Congress Working Committee is reported (as we go to press) to have arrived at a "consensus" and this is expected to be pushed through the chief minister's conference. Any solution which has the appearance of having the consent of representatives of all states will be welcomed by all who sincerely desire the nation's unity. The ruling party can ill-afford, at this juncture, to fail to arrive at some agreement or another in both the Congress Working Committee meeting and the chief ministers conference.

If the solution corresponds to the proposals put forward by democratic forces in the country, and particularly the proposals of the Communist Party, there will be plenty of reason for all true patriots to give the solution the fullest support.

But it would be a serious mistake to blind oneself to the fact that the language issue has become the cauldron round

which the witches of right reaction are dancing, gleefully weaving a most dangerous conspiracy whose target is the nation's unity and indeed the nation's freedom itself.

This is not an exaggeration. On the contrary, no words are strong enough to warn against the sinister plot which is being hatched today by the nation's most cunning enemies, using the language

issue as a popular cause, which can mask their real interest.

Let us not forget the fact that the most vociferous actors in the language drama over the past few weeks have been precisely

Editorial Article

those forces in the country whose affiliations with imperialism and the Indian monopolists with reactionary aims, communalism and separatism are well known.

In Tamilnad, the democratic forces have pointed out that the disruptive and anti-national aspects of the anti-Hindi agitation were the responsibility of the Swatantra Party, the DMK, a group of millowners and old toadies belonging to the former Justice Party.

In pointing this out, the democratic forces do not suggest for a moment that the entire agitation was motivated by purely reactionary aims: if there had not been a general mass resentment against what was considered to be the imposition of Hindi and the suppression of Tamil, the agitation could not have assumed the sweep it did.

But it would be utterly wrong to see only this democratic urge for the mother tongue and not the hand of reaction which sought to distort this urge and to give it a form and a direction which would be destructive of Indian unity itself.

Again, during the last week or so, the Hindu communal forces—

led by the Jan Sangh and the RSS—have launched their anti-English campaigns with a fury and venom which cannot be dismissed as mere innocent agitation.

Here again the Jan Sangh and RSS base themselves on the perfectly democratic demand that English should be replaced by Indian languages: in fact, in their speeches, they are at pains to say that they are not only for Hindi but for all Indian languages.

But once more, one must examine the crux of their demands—and this is that there must not be any amendment to the Official Languages Act.

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Stop Whitewashing Whitecap Corruption

THE reading out in Parliament of extracts from the report of the Central Bureau of Investigation (?) on the allegations against Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra has created a storm, and rightly so.

The Prime Minister has told the world that the cabinet sub-committee has found the gentlemen concerned have committed some "improprieties" (what a beautiful word—it can hide so many ugly ones!), but they have done, nothing to fatten their own pockets.

And now it is alleged that the CBI report came to far more serious conclusions. If that is so, the government must explain why it thought it fit to reject the CBI's conclusions.

The whole question of action against corruption by Congress ministers is being discussed.

Surely it is a totally unsatisfactory procedure which considers that an enquiry into allegations made against a Congress Minister should be conducted by another set of

Congress ministers (the so-called cabinet sub-committee).

No honest person can be satisfied with the white caps sitting in judgment on their fellow white caps.

There is bound to be a tendency to exonerate or reduce the seriousness of of the offences since the matter concerned the ruling party itself.

The demand is being rightly raised that impartial investigation must be made in all cases, when what may be called a prima facie case has been made out.

The force behind this demand has grown with the belief that the CBI report in the Patnaik-Mitra case was at variance with the cabinet sub-committee's conclusion.

Meanwhile, Pratap Singh Karon's sons are reported to have offered to surrender all the property they accumulated during their father's chief ministership. In return, the cases against them are expected to be withdrawn.

The Communist Party had proposed a couple of years ago that all property ac-

quired by a minister or his relatives during his term of office should be automatically confiscated by the state.

This would be a healthy law, and would yield good results.

WORKING GIRLS ON FAST

THIS is the scene at Flora Fountain, the nerve centre of Bombay. Date, February 20.

These are some of the girls working in the pharmaceutical concerns in the city.

On February 20, hundreds of them observed a one-day hungerstrike to protest against an obnoxious rule in the pharmaceutical concerns.

The rule, popularly known as "anti-marriage clause", prohibits them from getting married. If they get married, they lose their jobs.

When the working girls thus went into action for their right to marry and still work, other sections of toiling masses expressed solidarity.

Men and women workers came and demonstrated at Flora Fountain voicing support to the working girls' demand for scrapping the anti-marriage clause.

Only a few weeks before the working girls scored a minor victory when the management of Farmed company suspended the anti-marriage clause.



Assam Agitation Is Off: Sequel To Assurances

From M. BHATTACHARYA

SHILLONG: An all-Assam student strike called by the Gauhati Inter-College Students' Union for February 22 to protest against what was called "imposition of Hindi" on non-Hindi speaking states and to demand constitutional provisions in keeping with the assurances of Pandit Nehru for continued bilingualism was withdrawn following the assurances contained in the President's address to the joint session of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

ACCORDING to a statement issued on February 19 by the sponsors of the strike call, in view of the assurances given by the President in his address that English would continue as long as the non-Hindi-speaking people wished to retain it, there was no need for observing the strike.

The sponsors of the strike call feel, according to the said statement, that the objective sought to be achieved through the proposed strike was achieved and hence the strike call was withdrawn.

This withdrawal of the strike call, it appears, has averted what bade fair to become an all-Assam mass demonstration by the students on the issue of language.

Earlier on February 16 the students of Gauhati University abstained from attending their classes and later on held a meeting protesting against the government's language policy and demanding constitutional provision for continued use of English as official language as long as the non-Hindi-speaking states desired it.

SYMPATHY EXPRESSED

The meeting also expressed its sympathy with those who died in police firing in Madras in connection with the language agitation there.

On the same day the students of Pandu and Malgaon, not far from the Gauhati University campus, also abstained from attending their classes and held demonstrations and public meetings.

Similar demonstrations and meetings were also reported on the same day from Silchar and Karimganj of Cachar district. At Karimganj, according to reports, Hindi cinema posters were destroyed and some other Hindi signboards were also removed by some among the demonstrators.

Assam Sahitya Sabha, a literary organisation that has considerable influence upon the Assamese speaking people in a statement demanded that Hindi should not be imposed on states. It also demanded amendment of the Constitution to give statutory right to the non-Hindi speaking people to use English.

With the news of growing unrest and demonstration among students of the neighbouring states of West Bengal and Tripura reaching here at the same time, and the local Press stepping up the campaign in favour of bilingualism, as it was called, it appeared that Assam would also

these known views of the state government leadership were a factor that contributed to preventing any agitation on a mass scale in this state. Moreover, the polyglot composition of the state also, perhaps, has been unfavourable for any mass scale agitation on this issue.

It is understood that in the coming chief ministers' conference Assam government representatives—the Chief Minister is not likely to attend it because of his indifferent health—will advocate retention of English as an official language and amendment of the Constitution to make statutory provision for that.

Meanwhile, the issue will come up for discussion in the state Assembly during the budget session which began here on February 22.

Two opposition members have tabled resolutions on the issue, both demanding continuation of English as the official language. Both the resolutions have been admitted.

However, even before these resolutions came up for discussion in the house, the official position of the state government would have been made clear at the chief ministers' conference in Delhi.

Political parties in the state, however, have been maintaining strict silence on the issue.

be drawn into the current widespread language agitation.

The Assam government's views on the question were made clear in the telegram that the Finance Minister sent to Acharya Vinoba Bhave, on behalf of the alling Chief Minister, accepting the Acharya's three-point formula.

Besides, it was also recalled that the Assam Chief Minister at one time expressed the view that an official language should be introduced with the consent of the linguistic minority.

Assam Education Minister repeatedly stated both inside the state legislature and outside that for the sake of speedy advance in scientific and technological education and for maintaining the integrity of the country, English should continue for an indefinite time. According to some observers,

ANDHRA: CPI Initiative For All-Parties Meet On Language

From MOHIT SEN

HYDERABAD: After another round of violent outburst of mass rage in the Rayalaseena region, during which two people died as a result of police firing, calm has set in Andhra Pradesh.

WHEN passions were running highest, Pillalamarri Venkateswarlu, Communist leader of the opposition in the Andhra Assembly, issued a statement reiterating the call of the Andhra CPI secretariat for an all-parties meeting on the issue.

He wanted the government to realise that mere use of bullets and lathis would not solve the problem.

Venkateswarlu suggested that the all-parties meeting could evolve a common platform which could become the basis of a joint campaign to assuage the ruffled feelings of the people in this state.

Among the essential points of such a platform should be statutory embodiment of the Nehru Assurance and the speediest possible spread of Telugu as the language of administration and education.

In this connection he contacted the Chief Minister, Brahmamanda Reddy and urged him to call together the leaders of all political parties immediately.

After consulting his cabinet colleagues, the Chief Minister did convey what he called an infor-

SWATANTRA RIFT ON LANGUAGE

BOMBAY: Acute differences on the official language controversy marked the recent meetings of the central executive and general council of the Swatantra Party in Bombay, reports IPA.

ONE group led by Maharani Gayatri Devi of Rajasthan made a frontal attack on Rajaji, the founder-leader of the party, for his stand on the recent language agitation in the South.

According to circles close to the party, the contention of Maharani Gayatri Devi was that the party "stands a good chance" of coming to power in Rajasthan and therefore any strong anti-Hindi attitude by important and revered leaders like Rajaji would mar such a prospect.

K. M. Munshi is also reported to have taken the side of Maharani Gayatri Devi.

Mariyaswamy and Ruthnaswamy, both professors and MPs from the South, however, defended Rajaji and said that on this issue "we can win all the ten seats in Kerala."

Tempers were frayed during this duel. At one stage Rajaji was reported to have offered to "step down and lead my own battle" against the "imposition of Hindi."

It was left to Homi Mody and N. Dandekar to pacify

Rajaji and they saw to it that the matter was postponed for discussion at some other time. No definite stand should be evolved at present, they said. Observers have noted that during the attack on Rajaji, M. R. Masani maintained a discreet silence.

Masani in his report is understood to have stressed the need for streamlining the party organisation. According to him a "hard core of cadres" should be trained and made available for whole-time work.

Masani's report stressed that henceforward the party should have paid workers and they would be assigned definite work to do for the party.

Besides, he wanted that 125 members should be trained to represent the party in Parliament. This way they could dislodge the Congress and have a government of the opposition, he said.

More units of the party should be opened in new centres in the country including Nagaland, according to the report.

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India which concluded its two-day meeting in Trichur on February 21 adopted the following resolution on the official language controversy:

THE Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India expresses its deep concern over recent developments following the introduction of Hindi as official language of the Union on January 26, 1965.

It notes that serious misgivings have arisen in the minds of large sections of non-Hindi-speaking people to the effect that Hindi would be imposed on them to the detriment of their own language.

This led to the largescale agitation which in certain places was taken advantage of by anti-social elements for indulging in acts of vandalism and destruction of public property.

The situation was aggravated at the outset by the provocative acts of the Madras government and the police which resorted to wanton repression and firing.

The Communist Party of India condemns this repression and demands a judicial enquiry into the whole chain of disastrous events leading to more than seventy deaths due to police and military firing.

It expresses its sympathies with the families of all those who lost their lives in these incidents and urges the Madras government to ren-

der them immediate relief.

It is the firm belief of the Communist Party of India that in order to overcome the rude shock which recent events have given to the unity and integrity of the nation and the crisis of confidence they have created, it has become necessary not only to give a statutory form to the assurances given by Jawaharlal Nehru but also to take such other steps as would allay all misapprehensions in the minds of the peoples of non-Hindi speaking states in all respects.

In order to guarantee the full flowering of Indian democracy and our cultural life through the active participation of the mass of people replacement of English by Indian languages at all levels is indispensable. This has been recognised right from the earliest days of our freedom movement.

The Communist Party of India is of the view that Hindi will ultimately have to replace English as the language of communication between the Centre and the states as well as between the different states.

The question therefore is not whether Hindi is to be the official link language or not. The question is how to achieve this necessary objective.

LANGUAGE POLICY a la JAN SANGH

THERE are many queer contradictions in Jan Sangh's so-called anti-English stand. They brought out an anti-English poster in the capital in English. Their mouthpiece, the ORGANISER, has been railing against the foreign language in English. Not only does this tabloid appear in the English language, the editor of the journal has received special training in America.

But the most amusing thing about the Sangh's posturings is the following content of their poster: "We never tolerated English rule, and we shall never tolerate English."

This flamboyant claim takes the palm for chicanery. During the Jan Sangh doing-during the British rule? If you ask them the question, they strike the pose of the veriest lamb and say: "The Jan Sangh was not born then. So why ask us such a question?"

But the question remains: What was their parent body—the RSS—doing during the British rule? And when this is asked, they shrink away into their lairs, tails stuck under the hind legs!

The fact remains that the RSS never took part in the freedom movement. All that it did was to preach communal disruption in order to help the British in their game of divide and rule.

With such an ignominious role in history to its credit, there is nothing surprising that the Sangh has come out today to fan the forces of the national disruption over the language issue.

Golwalkar who called for a

CEC Resolution FIVE-POINT FORMULA TO SOLVE LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY

The Communist Party is of the firm opinion that the correct way to advance towards the solution of the problem is by simultaneously adhering to both the principles, namely, the recognition of the equality and their equal development and the necessity of recognising Hindi as the official link language for all-India purposes by common consent.

Over-emphasis on the latter at the cost of the former or vice versa can only lead to complications and suspicions, resulting in the weakening of national unity.

Inadequate realisation of the need for simultaneous implementation of the twin principles has left its mark on Part 17 of the Constitution which defines the official language and the procedure for its adoption.

There is insufficient emphasis in the Constitution on the immediate necessity of replacing English at state level by the regional languages. There is no directive to the Union government to take steps to promote the growth and development of regional languages other than Hindi while it emphasises the duty of the Union government to promote Hindi as the official language.

Often the Constitution of a country evolves by convention and established usage and not necessarily by amendment of the same. In that sense, if efforts are made by all patriotic and democratic forces in the country to seek a solution of the present difficulties on the basis of firm adherence to the twin principles stated above, a democratic and gradual process can be worked out leading to universal and voluntary acceptance of Hindi as the official link language and its development for that purpose.

If the assurances given by Jawaharlal Nehru are to be implemented correctly and effectively, the following steps should be taken and all necessary amendments made in the Official Languages Act to that end. Rules of procedure of the houses of Parliament should

also be correspondingly amended.

1 English shall continue as an associate language of the Union along with Hindi until such time as legislatures of all states accept Hindi as sole language at Union level.

2 The languages of different states shall within a specified time replace English as medium of administration, of law courts and of education at all levels including University stage.

3 The rights of linguistic minorities shall be safeguarded as provided in the Constitution.

4 The Union government shall grant financial assistance for the development of all regional languages on equal basis.

5 In Parliament and state legislatures every member shall have the right to use his own mother tongue. Simultaneous translations of parliamentary proceedings shall be provided in all state languages.

6 All competitive examinations for all-India services shall be conducted in English as well as in all languages listed in schedule Eight of the Constitution.

7 For practical implementation of this, quotas may be fixed for different states for central services.



LANGUAGE ISSUE DOMINATES U.P. ASSEMBLY

LUCKNOW: It was the issue of official language which dominated the proceedings of the budget session of Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha last week, reports IPA.

Jan Sangh has already earned a reputation for its over-zealous and almost aggressive loyalty for Hindi it was no surprise to see that the leader of that party take the initiative in the discussion on the question of official language.

Opening the debate on the subject, opposition leader Sharda Bbakt (Jan Sangh) said that there should be no 'surrender' on the issue of Hindi.

He criticised the stand taken by some of the topmost leaders of the ruling party with regard to the issue of official language and accused that the Congress leaders were solely responsible for the troubles in South India.

He pointedly attacked Congress President Kamaraj as being "the fomentor of troubles in the South".

The general feeling of the UP Congress leaders on this question seems to be in tune with that of the Jan Sangh leaders.

This is evident from the statement made by Congress member Nawal Kishore that the Union government should not submit to any coercion on the issue of Hindi. He wanted that the policy followed during the last 15 years should not be changed.

Communist members of the Vidhan Sabha however struck a

different note on the issue of language. Chandrajit Yadav, Deputy leader of the Communist group, asked the government not to put a ban on English, but keep a balance between the use of English and Hindi in the administrative work.

Almost all leaders of the opposition parties as well as members from Congress benches wanted a categorical statement by the Chief Minister regarding the policy of UP government on the language question.

But Sucheta Kripalani was not prepared to make such a statement, particularly at a time when the Union government was formulating a compromise formula acceptable to both the Hindi-speaking as well as non-Hindi people.

It is generally felt here that the Jan Sangh would not remain silent for long over the anti-Hindi agitation in South India. Some prominent leaders of the Sangh are understood to have planned a counter-agitation in Hindi-speaking areas.

Unless the chief ministers' conference takes a definite stand on the issue, the Jan Sangh is likely to take some direct measures to "counteract" the agitation in the South.

SER WORKERS AGITATE AGAINST RETRENCHMENT

From AJOY DASGUPTA

CALCUTTA: The South Eastern Railway has announced with great aplomb that from April when the summer timetable comes into force, the running time of 19 trains on the SER would be reduced by accelerating their speed.

PASSENGERS are certainly awaiting to see whether this would really happen. At present they are worried over the slowing down of many of the passenger trains on the SER.

Enquiries have shown that speed restrictions are being enforced at least on certain sections of the SER, with the result that the trains are not able to keep to the timetable.

The main cause is the large-scale retrenchment of workers engaged in open line engineering and construction jobs.

Workers now being retrenched are termed casual though many of them have worked more than six years continuously and in the same job. The treatment meted out to these sections of the workers is callous and heartless, to say the least.

The problem of the casual labour is a long standing one. The railway administration had been keeping a large number of workers, estimated to be no less than two and a half lakhs, as casual workers.

PAY SCALE FIXED IN 1951

They are not only liable to be retrenched at any time without any benefit and compensation but also get a poor pittance for their hard labour. The pay of a casual labourer in the railways is Rs. 60 per month for males and Rs. 40 for females in and around Calcutta and it is Rs. 45 and 37-50 respectively in Kharagpur area.

This salary scale was fixed in 1951 according to the Minimum Wages Act. Since then the DA and pay of regular railway workers have been increased four times and the Minimum Wages according to the Act have also been revised in West Bengal, but these unfortunate workers have not received any wage increase, as such.

In 1960 there was a big movement of the casual staff on the railway and the Railway Board and the government were forced to accept the demand that any person working for six continuous months as casual worker will be eligible for the benefit of Central Pay Commission pay scales and allowances.

It was presumed that this also meant that those workers would be treated at least as temporary workers and would not be liable to retrenchment at the sweet will of the authorities. However, by various dubious means, such as not giving work for a day after two or three months of continuous work, a large number of workers were deprived of the benefit.

Nevertheless their movement forced the railway administration to absorb at least 40,000 casual workers in the CPC scales at that time.

When the casual workers in the SER, under the leadership of the casual labour committee, were agitating for the full benefit of the 1960 decision and increase in the emoluments of the casual labour force, the authorities launched suddenly in August 1964 largescale retrenchment.

At first the retrenchment started among the non-CPC staff and then the staff receiving CPC scales were also engulfed. It is estimated that more than 5,000 such labourers have been retrenched in the SER alone.

It is gathered that this retrenchment is being carried out on the basis of the findings of a job analysis, committee appointed by the railway administration in April 1964.

On that committee were representatives of accounts and personnel sections. But there were no representatives of the engineering sections, jobs under which were to be analysed.

And the said committee came to the conclusion that there was a surplus of workers in the engineering department and large scale reduction of staff was called for. They also negated the reports and estimates of the expert committee.

Whereas the Malßen formula had sanctioned 220 workers for PWI section at Kharagpur, this committee has sanctioned only 131. In jobs not covered by Malßen report, the complement has been reduced from 311 to 8.

This committee has recommended the retrenchment of at least 50 per cent of the casual staff and hence this grand 'Operation Retrenchment'. The result is that the engineering work on the lines is suffering due to shortage of labour and as the track cannot be kept in proper order, many engineers are advising speed restrictions.

If this committee is allowed to have its way, there is danger of accidents and total dislocation of traffic on the busy South Eastern Railway which is known as the life line of the steel industry.

MEMORANDUM TO UNION GOVT

The workers naturally have reacted sharply to this wanton attack on their employment. They submitted a mass petition to the Union Labour Minister for his intervention on November 29, 1964. On November 29, a deputation of workers led by Nayan Choubey MLA met Minister of State for Railways Ram Subhag Singh.

Though he assured consideration of the workers' demands, notices were issued to hundreds of workers. The workers held demonstrations in protest of it, at Kharagpur, Mecheda, Balichak and other places.

On January 24 the PWI declared 241 workers more as surplus and the workers marched to the office of the divisional superintendent carrying their shovels, picks and other implements, with the result the divisional engineer had to take them back on the next day.

A big rally was held on January 30 at Kharagpur railway town and the movement is still continuing.

Apart from the casual labourers, labourers under contractors are also very much agitated over their working conditions and the low standard of income.

These workers, in the strict sense of the term, cannot be called as contractors' labour as they continue to work even when the contractors change. They are actually recruited by the railway and are handed over to the contractors.

They do different jobs of permanent nature and for years together at the very same place. Yet they are not taken as railway labour.

Take for instance the scrap yard. Here the work is to dismantle the decapitated engines and wagons, storing, loading and unloading the scrap. So long as railways will remain, this work will also remain. But this sort of work is not handled departmentally but by contractors.

Take another example: loading of coal in the engine tenders is

done by contractors and turning of engines on the turntables are also done by contractors. It does not require much knowledge to understand that these works are permanent and day to day work of the railways but these are done through contractors.

The argument advanced by railway administration is that these heavy type of work can be done cheaply through contractors. Without going into the correctness of this argument, it can be said that this is not also a fact.

On instance will suffice: A contract for Rs. 1,80,000 eventually cost the railway Rs. 6,50,000. Of course the contractor submitted inflated bills and those were passed in the normal course of things. Perhaps the passing officers also benefited, but large number of workers

suffered and the railway sustained loss.

Of course on complaint of some workers to Home Minister Nanda enquiries took place, some papers were seized, an officer transferred and the contractors, N. G. Takkar & Co. lost the contract for the year 1964-65.

But thanks to the sympathetic souls the said contractor is again back in the list for 1965-66 though he was also blacklisted previously.

The workers are carrying on a ceaseless agitation for abolition of contract labour. On January 12 last they staged a one day token strike. The Railway Board has also accepted in principle the necessity of abolition of contract system. The officers are in 'agreement to the principle'.

But when it comes to actual practice they say that it is more convenient to work through contractors. The reasons can easily be guessed. And so again, tenders have been invited this year on January 12.

The casual and contract labourers are carrying on their struggle and will continue it so long as their legitimate demands are not met.



The Bengal Provincial Bank Employees Association held its Thirteenth Annual Conference on February 13. Above are two views of the delegates session of the conference.

Bihar Teachers Plan Satyagraha In March

From K. GOPALAN

PATNA: Secondary teachers of Bihar have decided to offer satyagraha before the Bihar Assembly from March 22 to press their demands for higher pay scales and better service conditions.

THE Bihar Secondary School Teachers Association, representing 20 thousand secondary teachers of the state, has taken the decision to launch the satyagraha after exhausting all efforts to get their grievances fulfilled.

Their main demands are revision of pay scales to the higher grade, raising the rate of dearness allowance and security of service.

LOWEST PAY

A spokesman of the BSSTA said that the pay scales in Bihar were the lowest in India. While a trained graduate in the state gets a minimum of Rs. 100 a month, his counterpart in Assam gets Rs. 250, in Orissa Rs. 150, in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh Rs. 160.

The pay scales demanded by the BSSTA is a minimum of Rs. 200 for trained graduates going upto Rs. 375 for principals of higher

been done by the government. It is this callous attitude of the government which has forced the teachers to revive its agitation.

The agitation was resumed on November 29, 1964 with mass rallies of teachers all over Bihar. Then on December 17 the secondary teachers staged a massive demonstration before the state legislature.

ULTIMATUM GIVEN

A memorandum was submitted to the government and the legislators with the ultimatum that "if the teachers' demands are not met they would be forced to offer satyagraha before the Bihar Assembly from March 23. The government has so far remained silent."

Chandeeswar Prasad Singh, general secretary of the BSSTA, has made it clear that the teachers have no intention of paralysing the functioning of schools while offering satyagraha.

He said: "we want to make it quite clear that in the course of all the stages of our agitation we shall see to it that the proper teaching work in the schools goes on uninterrupted."

PATNA: Fortyfive thousand coalminers under the National Coal Development Corporation in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar are preparing for a one-day token strike in the first week of March.

THE strike is to protest against the policy of the NCDC of reducing and restricting the production of coal and its refusal to pay the minimum bonus to the workers as recommended by the Bonus Commission.

The refusal of the NCDC management of grant any bonus has created considerable resentment among the coalmine workers particularly since other public sector concerns like Sindri Fertiliser



and Pimpri antibiotics factories have paid the minimum bonus recommended by the Bonus Commission.

Far greater concern is felt however over the policy of the NCDC in deliberately reducing the output of coal in the public sector.

The output of NCDC has been reduced by as much as two million tons last year. It has a capacity to produce 18

NCDC Bosses Cut Coal Output

MINERS PREPARE FOR ONE-DAY TOKEN STRIKE

million tons per year but it is producing only 8 million tons at present.

While the declared policy of the government has been to develop the public sector in coal as the dominant sector, this policy seems to have been reversed in the interest of the private sector. The NCDC has been forced to pursue this line of surrender before the private monopolists.

It is rather intriguing to learn that various public sector projects prefer to purchase coal from the private sector rather than the NCDC. The Bokaro Thermal Power Station, for instance, purchases coal from a private mine 20 miles off by ignoring the NCDC mines just by its side.

Even the Coal Board pursues a policy of discrimina-

tion against the NCDC. While private collieries are given subsidy upto Rs. seven per ton for stowing, in the case of the Kargali colliery a promised subsidy of Rs. 2.50 per ton was suddenly withdrawn by the Coal Board which inflicted a loss of Rs. 30 lakhs.

PREFERENCE TO PRIVATE SECTOR

Similarly refusal to give subsidy to Bhadua Pit No. 10 B at Giridih is leading to closure of this mine, throwing 1000 miners out of jobs and loss of five lakh tons of high grade coking coal and one million ton of III B Coal.

Railways too give preference to the private sector collieries which are supplied split rakes. The NCDC has to

pay heavy demurrages in the absence of this facility.

Though a huge amount of money has been invested for mechanising the NCDC mines, 70 per cent of machineries lie in a state of breakdown. And the key officials do not bother to repair them since they are interested in bringing down output.

Chaturanan Misra, general secretary of the Coal Workers Union told the NEW AGE that the crisis before the NCDC was due to its failure to utilise its full capacity.

Misra gave a detailed account of reduction in coal production in Bihar, where majority of the NCDC mines are situated. In Karanpura belt out of a total capacity of 6.5 lakh tons per month only 2.5 lakh tons per month is being produced. In Kathara belt full capacity is 1.65 lakh tons per month, but only 35,000 tons per month is being produced. In Giridih the capacity is 30,000 tons per month but production in the last year was only 20,000 tons per month. Now this is going to be further reduced to 8000 tons per month.

Cut in production has resulted in largescale retrenchment of workers. Misra said

that out of 45,000 coal workers in Bihar NCDC mines more than 8,000 are expected to be declared surplus. Two thousand workers were retrenched last year. Now steps are being taken to retrench the "surplus" workers. 1,000 workers are expected to be retrenched on April 1, 1965 as first instalment.

Misra said that despite the repeated requests of the Coal Workers Union the Government of India has not taken any step to check this process. Memoranda were submitted to the Union Labour Minister and to the Prime Minister. But the situation continues to deteriorate.

Indradeep Sinha, secretary of the Bihar state council of the CPI, has pointed an accusing finger against "certain high-ups in the NCDC and other public sector concerns who have conspired to pull down the public sector NCDC in the interest of the private sector."

He demanded a thorough probe into the scandalous affairs in the NCDC and asked the government to meet the demands of the workers and save the public sector undertaking from the crisis.

CSD EMPLOYEES TO GO ON STRIKE

By OUR STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 1700 employees of the Canteen Stores Department (India) led by the CSD (I) Employees Union, are preparing for a general strike from the first week of March.

THE employees have been led to take this decision in view of the refusal of the authorities to reach a negotiated settlement on any of the industrial disputes raised by the union.

The Canteen Stores Department (India) has a turnover of over Rs. 10 crores and the profit earned by this undertaking during the last year was as high as nearly one crore of rupees.

As a specialised organisation for the purchase and supply of store items for the canteens in defence services, the CSD has an important role but despite its continued existence since the second world war, the establishment has no statutory basis.

It is neither part of the Defence Ministry though mis-called a department nor a statutory corporation as it should have been as a commercial undertaking.

This scandalous situation had prevailed even after the Public Accounts Committee had repeatedly drawn attention to the necessity of giving the CSD organisation, a statutory basis.

The union has demanded that in view of the large surplus earned by the CSD, bonus of two months' wages should be paid to the employees.

As a commercial organisation, the union demanded that the wage scales and amenities in CSD should be on the pattern of the Life Insurance Corporation.

On these two cardinal questions, the authorities refused to have a negotiated settlement. As against bonus, a sum of Rs. 4.5 lakhs was transferred to the so-called "Benevolent Fund" which benefits no one.

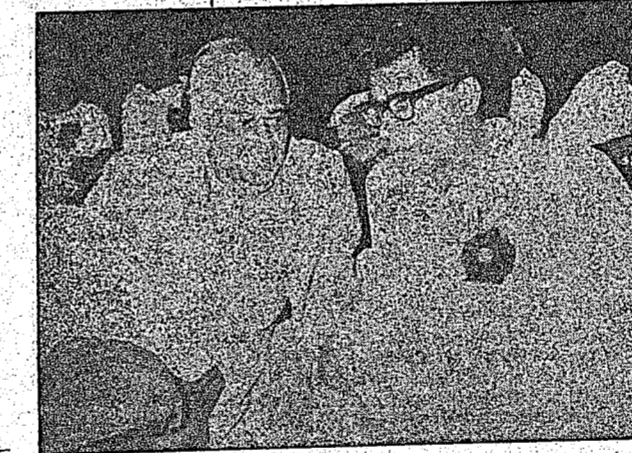
Since the CSD is not a departmental undertaking, there could be no bar on bonus even on the Bonus Commission's recommendations.

The CSD (I) Employees Union had been carrying on a systematic campaign for its demands and there were hunger-strikes in November last, followed by a token strike on January 8 and "work to rule" till February 1.

There is no channel for resolution of disputes in this organisation since the Central Industrial Relations Machinery refused to intervene and the Negotiating Machinery which was in existence was shelved in 1962 in the name of emergency.

RASHTRIYA SANGRAM SAMITI FORMED IN MAHARASHTRA

From SARALA KARKHANIS



S. A. Dange and George Fernandes on the dias. Below: A section of the rally



FEBRUARY 28, 1965

ASPECTS OF CPI PROGRAMME—III

AGRARIAN PROBLEM AND MEASURES TO SOLVE IT

The agrarian question is central to any discussion of the problems of India and the progress of the people's movement towards a national democratic revolution. The Party Programme, therefore, not only attaches great importance to this question but clarifies in some detail the changes that have taken place in this sphere since the national bourgeoisie became the ruling class.

It is pretty nearly unanimously agreed that during the years of British rule, despite the growth of commodity economy and the linking of Indian agriculture to the imperialist world market, feudal landlordism and some forms of semi-feudal vested interests dominated the countryside.

The result was not only terrible exploitation and abysmal poverty for the overwhelming majority of the peasants.

Total Stagnation

It also resulted in the total stagnation of agricultural production, the severe restriction of the domestic market and a decisive obstacle to the independent development of the Indian economy.

It was only natural, therefore, that the struggle against this agrarian system was an integral part of the people's struggle against imperialist rule, since the feudal landlords were the main social ally of the British rulers.

This struggle manifested itself in sweeping mass peasant movements from the earliest days of the consolidation of British rule. It found expression in the massive peasant response to the call of the anti-imperialist struggle, especially since the 1920s. One of its glorious episodes was

the great Telengana armed struggle, led by the Communist Party.

The Communists of India are justifiably proud of the fact that they played the role of pioneers in building up the mass organisations of the peasants, together with other lifting, radical elements in the national movement.

As a result, the Kisan Sabha had a clear-cut, anti-feudal programme and advanced under the central slogans of "land to the tiller" and "abolish landlordism".

The impact of the organised peasant movement, as well as the pressure of the peasants in general resulted in the adoption by the Congress in the 1930s of a fairly radical agrarian programme, especially at Falg-pur in 1937.

American Path

The thorough implementation of this programme would have meant the eradication of feudalism, the establishment of widespread peasant proprietorship and the opening up of a path of democratic development in the countryside.

In Marxist terminology such a programme could be called the American path of abolishing feudalism, to use a formulation of Lenin.

This would not have established socialism in the countryside but would have helped the growth of a democratic peasant economy, which could be led on to the path of socialism through cooperatives.

Hence, Lenin highly appraised the progressive significance of the American path and contrasted it sharply to the Prussian or Junker path of developing capitalism through compromise with the feudal landlords, through retaining their feudal privileges and converting them into capitalist landlords.

What has happened since independence was won? The Party Programme categori-

cially states that the national bourgeois leadership of the Congress has failed to implement its own programme, has failed to redeem the hopes of a thorough-going anti-feudal revolution which had aroused the vast millions of our peasantry, which was essential for national regeneration.

The overwhelming majority of the peasants have not received any land. The slogan "land to the tiller" remains unimplemented. The economy of the bulk of the self-cultivating peasantry has not improved and continues to be a deficit one.

Semi-feudal burdens continue in the shape of share-cropping, various open and concealed forms of tenancy and in the still predominant role of usury.

The number of landless peasants has increased, following the eviction offensive of the landlords and the general impoverishment of the peasant mass, swelling the ranks of the agricultural labourers.

The market for agricultural products is in the stranglehold of commercial and financial interests, whose grip has tightened enormously.

Market manipulation and price instability are yet another form of robbing the bulk of the peasantry which the ruling class has failed to mitigate.

The combined result of this refusal to implement the na-

main aim of these policies has been to replace semi-feudal production relations by capitalist relations of production.

While following a policy of compromise with and concessions to semi-feudal interests, it has at the same time substantially curbed feudalism.

The feudal and semi-feudal forces are far weaker today than they were in the days of British rule. It is to fly in the face of facts to declare that there has been any consolidation, let alone strengthening of these forces.

Capitalist relations of production have developed significantly both in the shape of semi-feudal landlords turning into capitalist farmers as well through the growth of the rich peasant economy.

Result Of Legislations

It would be quite wrong to imagine that this development is the result merely of the spontaneous action of social forces.

It is basically due to the various land legislation measures of the Congress as well as its credit, marketing and irrigation policies.

It is the conscious direction which the national bourgeoisie has succeeded in giving to developments in Indian agriculture.

It is part and parcel of its main strategic aim of building an independent capitalist India in compromise with imperialism.

The curbing of feudalism and semi-feudalism, together with the development of capitalism, has led to the breaking of the total stagnation of Indian agriculture, which had lasted for centuries, and to a certain growth of its productive forces, however tardy and unsatisfactory it might be. The Indian village today is not what it was prior to independence.

Just as the CPI failed to recognise the fact of Indian independence for many years, it also refused to acknowledge this change of class relations in the countryside. The Party Programme makes a sharp break from this dogmatic, blinkered approach.

It refuses to accept the formal logical pose—either feudalism has been stabilised or capitalism has grown, either rural reaction has been strengthened or rural democracy has triumphed.

It bases itself on the firm ground of the objective, changing reality of rural India.

This reality is that the dominant character of socio-economic life in India's countryside is "the interpenetration of the strong survivals of feudalism and growing capitalist relations of production".

This has produced a new set of reactionary vested interests, "Landlords, usurers and wholesale dealers, often combined into the same person, constitute the modern parasites holding up the progress of agriculture

by MOHIT SEN

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Yadgar Nasiriddinova, Leader of Soviet Parliamentary Delegation now visiting India.

Language Threat to Congress Chances

TRIVANDRUM: The anti-Hindi agitation that spread all over South India and took such a heavy toll of lives promises to influence the coming mid-term elections of Kerala, reports IPA.

ALTHOUGH Congress President Kamaraj has stated that he did not expect the language problem to affect the chances of Congress party in the Kerala election, local Congress leaders are doubtful about the optimism of their leader.

The apprehensions of the Congress Party over this issue can be gauged from the fact that no responsible leader of the party has so far ventured to express definite opinion or issue a categorical statement on the question of official language.

Instead, they prefer to quote relevant portions from speeches delivered by Jawaharlal Nehru and Prime Minister Shastri.

The impact of the Madras agitation on Kerala's political atmosphere can be gauged from the editorial comments of some important local dailies.

Almost all papers of Kerala accused the Union government for not having come out promptly

with a clear stand allaying the fears of non-Hindi people.

MALAYALA MANORAMA, a leading pro-Congress daily wrote in its editorial columns: "In reality it was Hindi fanatics of North India who invited these troubles. There was no opposition in non-Hindi areas to the gradual growth of Hindi as official language. They have been cooperating in dissemination of Hindi by adopting it as a subject for study in schools. It was then that lovers of Hindi insisted on implementing in toto the constitutional provisions about official language."

The daily suggested: "The only way out of the present impasse is a constitutional guarantee that English would continue as the official language till such time as non-Hindi people would want it."

The editorial warned: "The Central authorities should realise that unless the government comes forward with a statutorily guaranteed assurance it is difficult to restore the shattered confidence of the people."

Another pro-Congress daily, EXPRESS of Trichur, points out: "No such urgency exists in the country that Hindi should be made the official language ignoring all the resistance against such a move by using the police and the army."

KERALA KAUMUDI, a prominent daily, at present supporting R. Sankar, the Congress leader, editorially commented: "Unfortunately the central authorities have adopted measures that would deal heavy blows against the unity and integrity and the prosperity of India. They have succeeded in making South Indians speak of North Indian imperialism."

The peculiar nature of the anti-Hindi agitation that spread all over Kerala attracts the attention of political observers here.

It is significant to note that the nerve centres of this agitation in Kerala are Kottayam, Trichur and Ernakulam districts, which are considered to be the strongholds of Congress. Surprisingly enough, students of some of the institutions, who had never before participated in any national struggle, en-

thusiastically led the linguistic agitation.

Furthermore, many teachers of these institutions, who are known to be ardent followers of Congress, have reportedly participated in these agitations and inspired the students to fight against what they term, "Hindi-fanaticism".

Though in the beginning the students of Kerala started the agitation mainly to register their

Kerala

protest against the brutal police hirings in Madras, very soon it assumed the character of an anti-Hindi move.

Some slogans heard in these demonstrations were ominous. At Trivandrum the demonstrators shouted: "Down with Hindi", "Up Up English".

Another noticeable feature of the anti-Hindi agitation of Kerala is that students from almost all the educational institutions managed by Catholic church participated in the demonstrations.

The Christians feared if the importance of English is diminished by the introduction of Hindi as official language, they will be isolated from Western countries.

Though the dissident Congressmen have formed a new Party (the Kerala Congress) with the support of the Catholic Church, the Catholic leaders belonging to Congress Party could prevent large-scale desertion of Christians in the Congress fold to this new Party.

But now, it is reliably learnt, a large section of this community are critical about the policy of Union government on the language issue.

The Kerala Congress (dissident Congress) has tried to fully utilise the opportunity to strengthen its influence and exploit the sentiments of Christians.

KERALA BHUSHANAM and KERALADWANI, two dailies which are known to be the mouthpieces of the Kerala Congress, have editorially criticised the policy of the Union government and inspired the students to agitate against the "northern imperialism".

How far they have succeeded in exploiting the situation is to be seen.

PARLIAMENT A FUMBLING GOVERNMENT COWERS BEFORE ATTACK

From OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

WITH emotions running high on the language issue, the very first days of Parliament's Budget session saw a fumbling government trying desperately to gather spilt beans in a pitcher with many holes.

That the language issue would be the dominant one during the budget session was evident as the two Houses met. It was odd but true that the most important of economic issues in a budget session—the first day's stark statement on foreign exchange crisis by T. T. Krishnamachari and S. K. Patil's new imposts on the common man's rail travel—failed to take away the sting from the language controversy.

The President's address contained assurances that the government will take steps to mend its fences, and provide the country a language policy acceptable to the various regions.

But the succeeding days showed the policyless drift—or a drift in the direction of conflicting and contradictory policies—continued on the part of the government.

It was in this setting that the Lok Sabha straight away said "yes" to the introduction by Communist leader Hiren Mukerjee of an adjournment motion to discuss the government's utter failure in handling the issue.

Before the sharp indictment

of the government's handling of the language situation in both Houses by spokesmen of the Communist Party and other opposition groups, the official mouth-piece was Home Minister Nanda.

In the Lok Sabha Nanda was mostly busy trying to show that the government, and specially the Home Minister, should be absolved from all the blame on account of the language muddle.

In the Rajya Sabha he tried to divert attention from Bhupesh Gupta's biting attack by raising the Red bogey.

It was notable that Nanda had nothing to say on the positive aspects of the government's policy, and what exactly the government proposed to do to clear the muddle.

Even more significant was the silence of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. He sat through the Lok Sabha debate for two hours without showing any initiative or inclination to give a lead to Parliament on this raging controversy.

The debate on the President's address continues to be overburdened by the language crisis.

Parties and groups have taken up rigid postures, with the Jan Sangh on one extreme and the DMK on the other, each vying with the other in a display of utter unconcern for feelings of vast sections of their countrymen in the South or the North.

The Rajya Sabha debate showed a constructive trend, by and large. The exception of course was Jan Sangh

leader Atal Behari Vajpayee. A marked feature of the Rajya Sabha debate was the fissure in the Congress party on the language issue, with different speakers taking divergent lines.

The government had to face another harrowing occasion when the Orissa Congress ministers' corruption question came up. It was obviously shy of producing the CBI's findings or even the cabinet sub-committee's full report.

"Bury the hatchet" was the vein in which Prime Minister Shastri spoke. His was a sort of appeal to Parliament to let them rest in peace. Patnaik and Biren Mitra had already stepped down, so why rake up unpleasant things!

But opposition members appeared to be of different mind. The pressure to disclose the CBI report findings centred on what was expected to be disclosures of a serious nature.

One member did in fact come forward to present to Lok Sabha with what he claimed to be the authentic and full CBI report.

This created a problem in parliamentary procedure—could members who took part in the debate on the President's address refer to the contents of this document?

The Speaker wanted time to decide on the question. It was a complex issue evidently. The sitting on the following day too found no decision from the Speaker who reserved his ruling for a subsequent day.

An interesting thing to watch!

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what the finance minister does & does not say in his economic survey

ECONOMY SLUMPS

As usual, a few days prior to the presentation of the central budget, the Union Finance Minister has presented his annual survey of the economic scene in the country to Parliament. A valiant effort has been made to present an optimistic view as possible.

THE big claim made in the Economic Survey of 1964-65 is that "the rate of growth of the economy during the current year should be on all accounts better".

Is there any basis for this claim? Does the situation as analysed in the survey warrant such optimistic conclusion on the state of the economy?

Or is it only a sleight of hand which T. T. Krishnamachari is pulling on those gullible enough to be dazzled by his "unorthodox" approach to economic problems?

However much one would like to believe the Finance Minister's proclamations, the bitter realities which are presented in the pages of the survey compel one to be extra cautious in doing so.

All that the facts and figures given in the economic survey prompts one to conclude is that the claim made by Krishnamachari is rather tall: the economy is, in fact, facing a slump, the disastrous consequences of which are very much in evidence.

Industrial Production

Take industrial production. The rate of growth in industrial production has fallen. "During the current year, there has been some slowing down in the rate of expansion", says the Finance Minister.

Industrial production increased 9 per cent in 1963-64 against an increase of only eight per cent in 1962-63 and 6.6 per cent in 1961-62. But the prospects for 1964-65 is only an increase of eight per cent over the 1963-64 figure.

The reason given by the Finance Minister for this slump is the decline in coal output and absence of any significant increase in production in steel, aluminium and jute industries. The latter have reached capacity outputs and would need new capacities to raise production.

It is known that the decline in coal output is deliberately contrived. After having faced with a situation where output far outstripped demand, the mine owners had cut down production. This is admitted in the survey also which says that the decline is "partly by slower growth in coal-using industries".

The plight goes to show the agonies of disjointed efforts at increasing production. The

fact that the only positive expectation is that of a good rice crop. Wheat production is still estimated to come upto the 1961 level only.

This is the not-too-rosy picture on the agricultural production side.

The balance of payments position is best said in the same words used in the economic survey:

Important Brake

"During 1963-64, there was some improvement in the balance of payments. India's foreign exchange reserves, which were drawn upon heavily during the Second Plan and which had to be supplemented by a large drawing on the International Monetary Fund during the initial years of the Third Plan, registered a small increase in 1963-64 and it was possible, in addition, to reduce the indebtedness to the Fund.

Again, the engineering and chemical industries have grown fast, to use the expression of the survey. But shortage of imported raw materials and components act as "an important brake on industrial production", in particular, in these two industries.

The "significant increase in the production of a number of important consumer goods such as tea, sugar, mill-made cloth, cotton yarn and motor cycles" has not been able to offset the drag in other fields either.

This, interestingly, goes to counter the pleas of the champions of the private sector for more stress on consumer goods industries to boost growth rate. Only if there is increase in production of basic industries, does the production figure move up in any significant manner.

Now, coming to agricultural production, what does the survey disclose?

Farm Output

Total farm output in 1963-64 was virtually the same as in the last year of the Second Plan. The only solace offered is that the figure in 1963-64 was better by 2.4 per cent than in the previous year which was a very unfavourable year indeed.

Rice production went up considerably; cotton, jute and sugarcane production was satisfactory. But then, wheat, pulses and mustard did not do what was expected of them.

The sum total result was that imports had to be stepped up by about three million tons and yet the government's buffer stocks had to be drawn upon by about one and a half million tons.

Prospects: weather conditions having been favourable, very good. This is despite the

fact that the only positive expectation is that of a good rice crop. Wheat production is still estimated to come upto the 1961 level only.

This is the not-too-rosy picture on the agricultural production side.

Matter For Concern

"But given the extent to which foreign exchange reserves have already been depleted and the heavy burden of repayments to the International Monetary Funds and to others over the coming months, the present foreign exchange position is a matter of concern and calls for immediate remedial measures."

Nothing need to be added to this frank admission of the precarious foreign exchange and balance of payments position.

The problem of prices is dealt with separately and therefore needs no elaboration here.

The Finance Minister's cure to all the ills of the economy can be summarised

as follows: "The current year, however, has witnessed a sharp decline in the already depleted foreign exchange reserves; and this decline has continued during the current favourable season for exports when we normally gain reserves to meet the requirements of the lean

months from April to September.

He has already taken several measures to "attract" investments. Last year, in the budget he gave significant concessions to the private sector investors.

Recently, he has removed price controls on as many as sixteen commodities which were irksome to the champions of the private sector.

The measures taken to attract foreign private capital has led to even some of his own friends in the country protesting against them, such as the recent order on licensing of foreign collaboration projects.

Indications given in the economic survey are that he would go in for more and more concessions to the private sector in the near future. Some at least can be expected in the coming budget too.

But that certainly is not going to accelerate the growth of the Indian economy because the capitalists are interested only in their profits and not in the strengthening of the economy.

Neither is it going to take us any nearer the goal of socialism, even of the Congress brand.

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Tolling masses are on the move everywhere to resist the inroads into their standards of living. This is a view of the 10,000 strong demonstration of the Maharashtra government employees on February 16 to demand more DA.

PRICES SOAR

The economic survey for 1964-65, presented to Parliament this week by Finance Minister T. T. Krishnamachari has made the claim that "wholesale prices had remained stable over the first two years of the current Plan period", adding that "a small decline in prices during 1961-62 was followed by a corresponding increase in the following year".

ACCORDING to the Finance Minister, wholesale prices increased by 9.1 per cent in 1963-64 and by another 14 per cent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year.

In his enthusiasm to present a rosy picture of the economic situation the Finance Minister was only giving a partial view of the price movement during the past year. And to say that the prices rose by 14 per cent only is quite misleading.

The fact is that after reaching an all-time high 159.7 (base: 1952-53=100) in September 1964, the index numbers for wholesale prices fell sharply to 155.8 in October. And it is exactly this lower figure which the Finance Minister has taken to calculate the percentage rise.

However, the index numbers looked up immediately

thereafter and had stood at 159.2 in December last. This is an increase of as much as 16.3 per cent in the twelve months from January 1964 to December.

The wholesale price index showed an increase from 124.0 in January 1962 to 126.5 in January 1963, to 136.9 in January 1964 and to 159.2 in December 1964. The percentage increase from 1962 January to 1964 December has been as much as 28.4.

The group index for food articles is even more revealing. From 119.6 in January 1962 the index rose to 124.4 in January 1963, to 138.7 in January 1964 and finally to 167.2 in December 1964.

In September 1964, the group index for food articles had gone as high as 171.4, but then it fell to 163.1 in November. It has again picked up since then and is showing all signs of going still further up in the coming months.

The percentage increase in the group index numbers for food articles has been of the order of 39.8 for the three years 1962 January to 1964 December, 34.4 for the two years 1963 January to 1964 December and as much as 20.5 for the single year January to December 1964.

It has been agreed by all concerned that the consumer price index compiled by the Labour Bureau of the Government of India is fraudulent and does not reflect the actual price movement of consumer articles. But even this faulty index given in the economic survey is quite revealing.

The all-India consumer price index numbers rose from 127 (base shifted to 1949=100) in January 1962 to 130 in January 1963, to 140 in January 1964 and to 164 in December 1964—a jump of 24 points in the last one year.

30 Per Cent Increase

This means that in 1964 alone the consumer price index numbers rose by 17.2 per cent, in the two years 1963-64 it rose by 26.1 per cent, and in the three years 1962-64 it rose by 29.0 per cent.

As far as the group index for food is concerned, the rise has been from 126 in January 1962 to 130 in January 1963, further to 140 in January 1964 and still further to 170 in October 1964, the last month for which figures are available.

Again this means that the food group index rose by 21.4 per cent in the ten months January to October 1964; by 30.8 per cent in 22 months January 1963 to October 1964; and by 35.0 per cent in the 24 months January 1962 to October 1964.

The Finance Minister has made an attempt to justify this abnormal increase in food prices. He says: "To a certain extent, the recent increase in the prices of foodgrains has served as a corrective to earlier trends".

The earlier trends, as stated by him, are the comparatively lesser rise in rice prices and actual decline in wheat prices in the decade ending 1962-63.

Krishnamachari has admitted one fact: "Normally, there should have been a significant decline in food prices over recent months in response to expectations of a very good crop... The seasonal decline in agricultural prices this year, however, has not been marked so far..."

And yet, he has no proposal to hold the price line.

PROFITS GO UP, WAGES FALL

Prices have gone skyhigh; rate of growth in production has slumped; balance of payments position is pretty difficult. All these have been made clear in the economic survey. But there are certain other aspects of the economy which have gone unmentioned in it.

PROFITS, for example. The profit figures of the monopoly combines have soared in recent years. And there is no indication of this fact of our economic life in T. T. Krishnamachari's economic survey.

Recently, the knights of the private sector from I.R.D. Tata downwards railed against "the controls" which the government was imposing on their enterprising talents. That however has not deterred Tata from reaping the richest harvests.

The Tata Iron and Steel Co. (TISCO) showed a net profit of Rs. 608.86 lakhs in 1962. This went up to Rs. 1055.68 lakhs in 1963 and further up to Rs. 1647.12 lakhs in 1964. In other words, profits almost trebled in three years!

Volta is another Tata enterprise. Here, the rise in profit figures was from Rs. 137.48 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 178.87 lakhs in 1963. Figures for 1964 are not yet available.

Among the Tata concerns, only the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Co. (TELCO) showed any slump in profits. Even there the fall is so marginal as to be ignored.

Profits, for example. The profit figures of the monopoly combines have soared in recent years. And there is no indication of this fact of our economic life in T. T. Krishnamachari's economic survey.

Recently, the knights of the private sector from I.R.D. Tata downwards railed against "the controls" which the government was imposing on their enterprising talents. That however has not deterred Tata from reaping the richest harvests.

The Tata Iron and Steel Co. (TISCO) showed a net profit of Rs. 608.86 lakhs in 1962. This went up to Rs. 1055.68 lakhs in 1963 and further up to Rs. 1647.12 lakhs in 1964. In other words, profits almost trebled in three years!

Volta is another Tata enterprise. Here, the rise in profit figures was from Rs. 137.48 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 178.87 lakhs in 1963. Figures for 1964 are not yet available.

Among the Tata concerns, only the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Co. (TELCO) showed any slump in profits. Even there the fall is so marginal as to be ignored.

any slight fall in its profits: from Rs. 152.79 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 147.51 lakhs in 1963.

The Hindustan Motors of the Birlas showed an increase in net profits from Rs. 313.19 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 350.00 lakhs in 1963.

The jute companies are said to be having a hard time, but that does not seem to have affected the Birlas in any manner. The Birla Jute Company raised its profits from Rs. 96.65 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 139.85 lakhs in 1963.

The Megha Jute Co. which had shown a loss of Rs. 17.83 lakhs in 1962, suddenly boomed into a profit of as much as Rs. 107.37 lakhs in 1963.

Imperial Tobacco earned net profits of the order of Rs. 446.29 lakhs in 1963 against just Rs. 321.94 lakhs in 1962.

Indian Aluminium Company's profits in 1963 were Rs. 374.31 lakhs against Rs. 240.34 lakhs in 1962; Indian Cables Rs. 189.87 lakhs in 1964 against Rs. 156.84 lakhs in 1963; and Rs. 137.49 lakhs in 1962; Indian Oxygen Rs. 159.38 lakhs in 1964 against Rs. 140.40 lakhs in 1963 and Rs.

135.49 lakhs in 1962. From Rs. 100.74 lakhs in 1962 Kesoram Industries raised its net profits to Rs. 107.12 lakhs in 1963 and to Rs. 150.15 lakhs in 1964. The profits of Rihatas Industries were Rs. 49.28 lakhs for 1962, Rs. 123.07 lakhs for 1963 and Rs. 76.94 lakhs for 1964.

Union Carbide knocked up profits to the tune of Rs. 268.66 lakhs in 1963 against a mere Rs. 186.24 lakhs in 1962 while the figures for Philips India were Rs. 120.21 lakhs for 1962 and Rs. 165.57 lakhs for 1963.

The increase in the profits of the banks were also considerable.

The Bank of Baroda increased its profits from Rs. 63 lakhs in 1962 to Rs. 75 lakhs in 1963; the Bank of India from Rs. 111.53 lakhs to Rs. 125.00 lakhs; the Central Bank of India from Rs. 179.95 lakhs to Rs. 189.26 lakhs; the Punjab National Bank from Rs. 118.83 lakhs to Rs. 125.56 lakhs; the United Commercial Bank from Rs. 73.32 lakhs to Rs. 76.42 lakhs.

With all the monopoly combines of the private sector mopping up profits of this magnitude, it is no wonder that the index of industrial

profits showed a steady upward trend.

The index of industrial profits for public limited companies stood at 194.6 (base: 1955-56=100) in 1962-63 against 178.5 in 1961-62, 166.1 in 1960-61, 119.0 in 1958-59 and 109.7 in 1956-57.

The rise in profits of private limited companies was even more spectacular. The index figures for these stood at 258.8 for 1962-63 against 233.7 for 1961-62, 200.2 for 1960-61, 144.7 for 1958-59 and 119.5 for 1956-57 (source: Reserve Bank of India statistics).

While the big business was thus heaping lakhs upon lakhs of rupees in their safe vaults, the workers' wages were falling sharply. And this also has been found, any expression in Krishnamachari's survey.

A Reserve Bank of India survey into the money wages and real wages of factory workers has shown that though there was a slight rise in the real wages of workers in the First Plan period, during the Second Plan period they fell very sharply.

The index number of real wages of factory workers stood at 115 in 1961. This was lower by seven per cent to the figure for 1955, namely 124 (base: 1951=100). The index for money wages stood at 113 in 1955 and 138 in 1961.

Figures for the subsequent period are not available. But the fall in real wages can be imagined when it is noted that the consumer price index has registered a 30 per cent increase since 1961 and no worthwhile increase has taken place in the money wages of the workers.

To make matters worse, only 41 per cent of the factory workers have their DA linked to the consumer price index and even they do not get full neutralisation. This is apart from the fact that the present index is fraudulent.

What is a still more dangerous portent is that even the money wages of workers have shown a downward trend. According to Labour Bureau statistics, the average per capita daily earnings of factory workers showed a fall in many states in 1962.

The fall was from Rs. 3.96 to Rs. 2.90 in Andhra, from Rs. 2.96 to Rs. 2.85 in Assam, from Rs. 4.48 to Rs. 4.35 in Bihar, from Rs. 3.93 to Rs. 3.88 in Punjab, from Rs. 4.35 to Rs. 4.28 in West Bengal and from Rs. 5.06 to Rs. 3.48 in Delhi.

With slight increases in other states, the all-India average per capita income of factory workers (earning less than Rs. 200 a month) was kept more or less the same. Figures for years later than 1962 are not yet available, but

there is no indication of any improvement having taken place.

The lot of the white collar staff is even more pitiable, in particular, that of the government employees.

A study made recently had shown that the central government employees are today getting a salary which is 14 per cent less than what they got in 1947 in real wages terms. The index of money wages stood at 158 (base: 1947=100) while the index of real wages stood at 84.

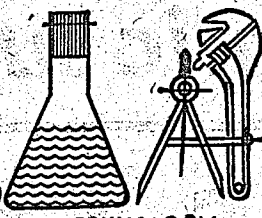
This is the case of the lowest paid employee who draws a salary of Rs. 87 including allowances a month. In the case of the higher paid employees, the fall would be more, since the neutralisation is comparatively lower.

The study was made in the beginning of last year. But recent small increase in the emoluments of the central government employees has not made the situation any better, because it has only followed a much bigger rise in prices. Actually, it should be far worse now with the 18.3 per cent rise in prices.

These are two important aspects of the economy which the Finance Minister has conveniently ignored in his economic survey, but which should compel the attention of all those who are sincerely interested in the progress and wellbeing of this nation.

by
PAULY V. PARAKAL

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FOIL REACTION'S GAME ON LANGUAGE

*FROM FRONT PAGE

They have openly threatened that if any amendment is proposed, they will launch a movement against it.

And they are gathering round them other communal groups as well as fanatical Hindi supporters who are being misled to think that any amendment to the Official Language Act means the "suppression" of Hindi.

Thus, while the right reactionary parties in one part of the country insist that they will have nothing short of an amendment to the Constitution (and virtually, "English For Ever"), in the other part of the country their opposite members insist on no change and the "status quo" (just what the non-Hindi speaking people cannot possibly accept).

The sooner Indian democrats realise that the two "agitations"—albeit in opposite directions—are two faces of the same coin, the sooner they will be able to understand how to fight the reactionary conspiracy.

The target is the same—the nation's unity; the same masters dictate both agitations—the imperialists and their agents inside the country.

One has only to remember that the Hindu and Muslim communalists, during the days of British rule, while fighting each other were both nourished and fed by the imperialists, to understand the division of work among the right reactionary parties today.

If the reactionary parties were the only forces taking part in this conspiracy, it would not be so perilous. The fact is, however, that the right reactionary group inside the Congress are taking the most active part in the conspiracy.

It is an open secret that the so-called "syndicate"—led by Atulya Ghosh and S. K. Patil—have been using the language issue for its own purposes, to

strengthen itself inside the Congress High Command and inside the central cabinet itself.

They have attempted to use their influence with the state ministers and inside the Union government to shift the balance more in their favour.

On the other hand, Morarji Desai has tried to appear as the big champion of Hindi, allied himself with the Hindi lobby and definitely strengthened his position in the Congress set-up.

The language issue has become a weapon in the hands of the worst right reactionaries inside the Congress—to use for their own power politics. And it should not be forgotten that all of these gentlemen in the Congress have the closest links with the right reactionary parties.

It is important to understand the manifestations of the conspiracy. For any consensus which may be arrived at today, at the Congress Working Committee and chief ministers' level, needs to be implemented in the spirit of unity if it is to be successful.

And the saboteurs are ready with their axes to cut at any attempts at forging unity.

In these circumstances, the greatest vigilance is needed. No complacency can be permitted, even if a formula is formally agreed upon by the ruling party's High Command.

Only decisive action for unity by the democratic forces acting together can create that patriotic climate in which the national conspirators can be effectively foiled.

The implementation of agreed solutions requires the watchful co-operation of all genuine patriots to whom this country's unity and independence are more important than anything else.

The reactionary conspirators are going to intensify their dirty work in the coming days. It is time the democratic forces closed their ranks to rout right reaction (whether inside or outside the Congress) on this crucial issue affecting Indian unity so acutely.

(FEBRUARY 23)

CPI Delegation For Moscow Meeting

A three-member delegation will represent the Communist Party of India at the preparatory meeting for the world conference of Communist and Workers Parties which opens in Moscow on March 1.

The delegation consists of S. A. Dange, chairman, C. Rajeswar Rao, general secretary, and S. G. Sardesai, member of the Central Executive Committee.

The decision to send the three-member delegation was taken by the Central Executive Committee of the CPI at its meeting in Trichur on February 20-21.

The CEC also decided to call a meeting of the National Council of the CPI in Delhi from April 5 to 10.

Agrarian Problem and Measures To Solve It

* From page 8

and supporting right reaction".

It is to change this reality and to smash the modern parasites that the CPI will devote all its energies. To accomplish the national democratic revolution a radical transformation in the Indian village is essential.

All sections of the peasants including the rich peasants, can and must be united to bring about this radical transformation.

At the same time for the sake of this very peasant unity and to give invincible strength to the force of agrarian revolution, the CPI in the village will base itself on the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

Such is the class line of the new Party Programme in the matter of the national democratic revolution in the countryside.

The crux of this revolution will be to smash all

forms of landlordism, both semi-feudal and capitalist and to distribute land free to the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, while fully protecting the interests of the small landholders.

In addition, the Programme works out a whole set of measures beneficial to all the toilers in the countryside and essential for a rapid step up in agricultural production.

This includes the aspect of breaking the stranglehold of usurious and commercial capital over the peasants produce.

The Party Programme puts forward an alternative path of agricultural development to what the national bourgeoisie has been pursuing these seven years. This is the non-capitalist democratic path.

This path would thoroughly eliminate all vestiges of feudalism and semi-feudalism, would abolish all forms of landlordism, break the grip of money-lenders and wholesale traders and completely change the pre-

sent balance of class forces in the countryside.

In place of the present landlord domination, including the usurer and big trader it would be the toiling peasants and the agricultural labourers who would determine the direction of village life. This would be nothing less than a revolution in the Indian countryside.

Such a revolution would not immediately destroy all capitalist production relations in agriculture, though capitalist landlordism would be abolished.

It would institute a system of toiling peasant proprietorship and give the rightful dominant position to the overwhelming majority, i.e., the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

Together with state aid to co-operative forms of production and consumption and nationalisation of wholesale trade as well as other measures to quickly raise agricultural productivity this would constitute a peasant economy which would form a sound basis for the gradual transition to socialism.

SHILLONG: Group rivalry in the Congress, very acute in several other states but considered to be not so serious in Assam, has hit the Assam Congress also reports IPA.

THE last meeting of the Assam Pradesh Congress Executive, held here early this month, took a "serious note" of certain publications attributed to a former general secretary and now a member of the executive, R. P. Salkia.

In the publication Salkia is said to have made serious allegations of "misappropriation" of Congress funds by certain leaders, including the present president of the APCC.

It is reported that he brought out a booklet containing these allegations and circulated it among the FCC members. He is also reported to have submitted a memorandum to the High Command containing the said allegations.

His contention is reported to be that money collected by the Congress for the last general elections was not properly accounted for by the PCC president, who was the then general secretary.

Apart from circulating the said booklet, Salkia is also alleged to have utilised a "section of the press" to circulate these allegations.

The PCC executive felt that this action of Salkia "lowered" the prestige of

the Congress, and hence suspended him with a show cause notice asking him to explain within ten days why further disciplinary action should not be taken against him for "violating" Congress discipline.

It should, however, be noted that the FCC executive did not issue any disclaimer to refute the allegations made by Salkia.

On the other hand, it appointed a sub-committee to "re-examine and re-audit" the accounts of the PCC for the period when Salkia was in charge of the Congress funds and accounts. The sub-committee was also authorised to examine witnesses, if needed.

It is not known what action the High Command has taken or will take on the memorandum reportedly submitted to it by Salkia.

It is felt that the anti-ministerial group will not rest until it could force the High Command to intervene in the affairs of Assam Congress, even though it is said to have but little chance of winning the favour of the High Command as the present ministerial group has powerful backing in New Delhi.

LEFT PARTIES JOINT RALLY IN CALCUTTA

CALCUTTA saw a massive demonstration on February 12 when ten thousand people marched to the state legislature to demand reduction in prices of essential commodities, nationalisation of banks, state trading in foodgrains and release of political prisoners.

The demonstration was organised by the joint front of eight left parties namely, the Communist Party of India, the rival Communist Party, the SUC, the Bolshevik Party, the RCPI,

the RSP, the Workers Party and the Marxist Forward Bloc.

Among those who led the demonstration were Bhowani Sen (CPI) Saroj Mukherjee (rival CP), Nihar Mukherjee (SUS) and Nepal Bhattacharya (Bolshevik Party).

This is the first time that the rival CP has shed its inimical attitude towards the CPI since it broke away.

The procession in which

large number of women also participated started from the Ochterlony Monument and went to the point near the Assembly where it was stopped by the police.

A deputation consisting of the leaders of the eight parties went and met the Chief Minister and gave him a memorandum listing the demands.

The demonstrators squatted on the road till the deputations came back and reported on their meeting with the Chief Minister.

Police stop the demonstrators near the Assembly



CHARGES OF SWINDLING

Factionalism Comes To Assam Congress

Nonetheless, competent sources maintain that as the next general elections draw nearer, the group fight in Assam Congress will also grow fiercer.

The anti-ministerial group has now been reinforced by the entry into the Congress of a group of former PSP-men.

Even after the recent Varanasi episode, while PSP is being revived in many states, including Assam, the group that joined the Congress does not seem to be inclined to go back to their old party.

Their alignment with the anti-ministerialists has not been considered to be a wise move by some observers. For, the anti-ministerialists, with the fall from grace of their two stalwarts, have lost their popularity even among the people of the state.

The labour wing of the Congress, INTUC, is also in-

fectured by the group rivalry of the parent body.

The INTUC with its wide mass base in the tea gardens of the state that have no fewer than five lakhs of voters is getting split.

In Darrang district this split is now a fait accompli. The split-away group, led by a former deputy minister who was suspended for six years by the PCC, though the suspension order was subsequently quashed by the High Command, is reportedly trying to join the Free Trade Union Centre.

Another group of former PSP-men who did not join

either the Congress or the SSP (whether this group will rejoin the revived PSP is not clear) and have some trade unions under their control are also reported to be in league with the split away group of the INTUC.

The Congress power in Assam is considerably dependent on its hold over the tea garden workers.

If the split-away section of the INTUC, together with the above-mentioned former PSP men, can carry with them a substantial section of tea garden workers they can pose a serious challenge to the official Congress leadership in the state.

HIREN MUKERJEE

*FROM PAGE 5

into the firing and also for reviving the national integration programme which was initiated by Nehru and sharply criticised Nanda's silence in regard to both, He said:

So many of us have cried ourselves hoarse about the idea of national integration, about the idea that government should consult all parties in the country, that government should hold consultations not only with political people but also with cultural representatives, with literary figures and artistic figures and others and that sort of thing, that government should come forward for resuscitation of the whole national integration programme that Jawaharlal Nehru had initiated.

If the government of this country has said good-bye to statesmanship, well, they are very welcome to do so. I am sure that this country will not be irreparably damaged if the government of today retires from its seat. Parliament has tried to focus attention on a serious matter, but there is no response from this government; there is nothing.

This government is incapable of statesmanship. This government seems to be incapable of generosity, of imagination, or sympathetic understanding of people's problems when they suffer, when they are in turmoil and in turbulence. They have no understanding of the wound in the human heart and they have the pumpation to rule this country. If they can do so, God help this country. That is all I have to say.

I am only counting upon my memory. But I do not think

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WHAT DO CZECH PEOPLE EAT?

Some foreign visitors to Czechoslovakia find a typical Czech meal rather heavy going. The Czech traditional diet is inclined to be rather fattening.

MOST popular, especially with the older generation of men, is roast pork, accompanied by a helping of sour cabbage and a big portion of dumplings, made from flour, chopped white bread, yeast and eggs.

People eat lots of beef served in various ways and accompanied by dumplings or potatoes. Veal is very popular too, less so mutton or lamb but everyone likes poultry, such as chicken, duck, goose and turkey, according to the season.

In summer time when there is a lot of fresh fruit, Czechoslovak housewives make a variety of puddings, cakes, and a typical Czech dish—fruit-filled dumplings sprinkled with sugar or grated cottage cheese.

No one feels that a midday meal is complete without a good plate of soup to start off with, and the Czech housewives are real experts at soup-making. Great efforts are being made by doctors and dieticians to persuade the Czech people to eat a lighter diet, containing less starchy food and more fruit, vegetables and milk. This may work with the younger people but it is difficult to change the habits of the older generation.

As far as drinks are concerned, the most common is beer, which is cheap, plentiful, and served at all restaurants and even at works canteens. Draught and bottled beer can also be bought at grocers shops or public houses to take home.

At midday on Sunday and on weekday evenings one can see people of all ages carrying home a pint glass or a jug with foaming beer for the family meal.

Wine is reasonably priced and it is gaining popularity. Spirits are priced high in order to discourage excessive spirit drinking. But at Christmas and other special holidays most families buy a bottle of their favourite spirits to set the festivities going.

Czech Beverages

As to beverages, the Czech people make their tea weak and coffee strong—Turkish style. More and more soft drinks are coming on the market, including "Kofola" which could be described as a Czech version of Coca-Cola.

Almost everyone in Czechoslovakia has breakfast at home. The Czechs get up rather early and start work at an early hour—the main shift at factories begins at 6 a.m. and offices usually start work between 7 and 8.

Breakfast is rather a light meal. It consists, as a rule, of tea or coffee, bread or rolls, butter and jam. Very often, because of this early breakfast, working people have a light snack

later on in the morning in their works canteen or a local restaurant or buffet.

The mid-day meal is generally taken on weekdays in one's works canteen. Canteen meals are cheap and consist of soup, the main meat dish, a sweet and tea or coffee. People whose place of work is near their homes, sometimes wait for their main meal till they get home—that is if their work ends at 2 p.m. and if their wives are not employed as well have time to get the meal for them.

Almost everyone takes the evening meal at home. Housewives are helped by the fact that many shops sell semi-prepared foods that don't entail much work.

On Sunday, the majority of families take their main meal at home, and Czech housewives take pride in providing a fine Sunday dinner for the family. On the other hand, where father and mother are both employed, the whole family may prefer to have their Sunday dinner in a local restaurant.

Every now and then, everyone likes to eat out. Every town and city and even village has its restaurants. Big cities like Prague, Brno, Bratislava or Ostrava have a great variety of them. They range from modest self-service or waiter-service inns, to smart places with their own bands or orchestras and their own dance floors.

There are old-world wine taverns which specialise in very

good food and drink served in an intimate atmosphere, modern brightly-lit restaurants and coffee houses, and restaurants which serve the dishes of other countries.

In Prague, one of the most popular restaurants is the "Sofia", named after the Bulgarian capital. This is so because the highly-seasoned Bulgarian cuisine appeals to their taste more than typical Czech cooking. The "Moscow" restaurant is popular with those who enjoy Russian food, the Chinese restaurant with devotees of Chinese dishes, the Budapest wine restaurant with those who like Hungarian food and wine, and so on.

Restaurants are divided into four price categories. And eating out at the more modest restaurants costs little more than a meal at home.

The question of shopping depends on the place of living. If the home is in a big town or city, there is a wide choice. Most often the Czechoslovak housewife buys her family supplies in the neighbourhood where she lives, for every district has its shopping centres.

Variety Of Shops

Although most of the shops in the cities are state-owned, this does not mean that one is restricted to buying from one shop or type of shop only. In each district there are usually several grocery stores, butchers' shops, one or more poultry and fishmongers, green-grocers, bakers, pastry shops, confectioners, dairies, and so on.

Socialist World

In addition, most districts have several self-service stores and in every bigger town one will find a market, selling a large variety of foodstuffs, sometimes in a market hall, sometimes out of doors in a market square.

Prices are controlled and one will be required to pay the same for the goods wherever one buys them, but tastes are varied and some people like one type of shop, some another.

The quite, shy type of people and those in a hurry like to shop in self-service stores where one can pick up a wire basket while going in, choose the goods off the racks, put them in the basket and pay on the way out, with the minimum of fuss and conversation.

Others prefer the sort of shop where one can chat to the shop assistant and ask his or her opinion on the merits of the goods.

Consumer Cooperatives

In country districts, most shops are run not by state concerns but by consumer cooperatives. In the majority of larger villages there are modern self-service stores similar to those in cities, only often selling a still bigger variety of goods—from bread, groceries, bicycles, to television sets.

In smaller places there are general stores where buying is over the counter. The very tiniest villages and outlying hamlets that have no permanent stores, are served by mobile shops—that is to say motor buses fitted up as shops, which arrive at each village or settlement at a given time on a given day of the week.

Some bigger places of work sell a certain range of foodstuffs to employees in their works canteens. This is a great timesaver to the housewife who goes out to work.

Shops selling consumer goods, clothing and so on, also take a variety of forms. Some go in for just one type of goods, others are big department stores which sell almost everything, from cars and motor-cycles to buttons and sewing thread, foodstuffs to fur-coats.

There are many shops run both by state and municipal concerns and cooperatives where clothes are made to measure for the customer. Most Czechoslovak families tend to have their best clothes made to measure and buy their every day clothes "off the peg", but as the standard of clothing industry improves, more and more are tending to save time and money by buying readymade clothes.

—RUTH SHEPHERD

LEANING MINARET STRAIGHTENED

IN Samarkand, the most ancient city of Uzbekistan, the Soviet engineers have straightened the leaning Ulugbek Minaret, whose top was inclined vertically by 156 cms and for 30 years was supported by cables.

Engineer Emanuel Gendel, who was in charge of the job, said that the method they used could certainly be applied to bolster up many structures including the leaning Pisa Tower in Italy. The 32-meter Minaret is a component part of the Madrasah of outstanding Astronomer Ulugbek. The tower was built in the first half of the 15th century and weighs 970 tons.

The news is of interest to New Delhi because the engineers here have recently discovered that Qutab Minar is also leaning off its base and needs to be safeguarded against further inclination.

MOSCOW PROTEST AGAINST US ATTACKS ON N. VIETNAM



SEVERAL thousand students staged a demonstration on February 9 before the American Embassy in Moscow, protesting against the American raids on populated localities of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Taking part in the demonstration, along with Vietnamese students, were many students from a number of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as a large group of Soviet students.

The demonstrators circulated the statement of protest handed to the United States Ambassador, and also the petition addressed to the co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva agreement on Vietnam.

The picture shows the demonstrators sticking and hanging posters on the railings of the building of the American Embassy during the demonstration.

VIETNAM EYEWITNESS

Yanks And Puppets Are Doomed In S. Vietnam

A fierce battle is developing round the approaches to Saigon, matched within the city by political struggles of mounting intensity and militancy.

a large-scale raid from which we escaped by moving underground into a system of tunnels while the thumps and bumps of bombs,

The small boy and the buffalo were the only casualties of several scores of tons of bombs dropped over several weeks for the benefit of our little group.

In one "biggest raid" of the war" personally led by the commander of the puppet air force, Maj. Gen. Nguyen Cao Ky—against the unit which blew up American bombs at Bien Hoa airfield, 125 tons of bombs were dropped in a night bombardment.

Ky claimed he had caught the unit asleep and "hundreds of Viet-Cong were killed". In fact, Huynh Minh, who commanded the unit which pulled off the audacious exploit at Bien Hoa, assured me that there was not a single casualty in the bombardment—nor did they lose a single man in the attack at Bien Hoa. I passed over a bridge that I had traversed during the first visit. About 30 yards long, it had been put out of action by the guerrillas when they attacked a

Sawn in half with hacksaws, each 110lb bomb makes two efficient anti-tank mines. From others the explosive is used for all sorts of mines and hand-grenades, and the metal finds a wide variety of uses.

Mines Out Of Bombs

Despite the "ring of steel", despite the dawn-to-dusk watch over the approaches to Saigon; despite helicopters hovering at tree-top level and raking fields and homes with machine-gun fire, the liberation troops move ever closer to the city.

The "strategic hamlet" of Tan Thanh Tay in Hoc Mon district, about seven miles from Saigon, which was in enemy hands when I was smuggled into it last time, has since been liberated and the two military posts that "protected" it have been wiped out.



The standard haversack among liberation Front soldiers has been "donated" by the people of the United States

THE war in the countryside has already been lost by the American Command and feverish attempts are being made to draw a ring of steel around Saigon and other major cities.

These attempts will fail. The U.S. puppet regime, no matter what the new personalities the puppet-masters may push to the top in the endless cycle of coups and counter-coups, is doomed.

I have just returned from a second visit, this time almost two months, in the liberated zones and battle-fronts of South Vietnam, living and moving for the most part with regular units of the Liberation Army.

Great changes had taken place since my first visit. Most of impressive of all, the Liberation Army has grown up. Guerilla bands that I met last time are now at company strength and integrated into the regular army, their village self-defence duties taken over by girls.

Battalions that I visited then are new regiments; highly disciplined, magnificently trained units; perfectly adapted for the type of war they have to wage.

Famed Unit

It was one such unit that I had visited last time which played a major role in the battle of Binh Gia, described by Western journalists in Saigon as the most crushing defeat the U.S.-Saigon command had suffered since the war started.

Crack units of the "strategic reserve" were out-fought in classic daytime battles and 24 of the 11 "strategic reserve" battalions were completely wiped out, all their weapons captured.

This battle of Binh Gia can also be counted an important action in the battle for Saigon.

Although it took place some 30 miles east of the capital, part of it raged over Route 15 which links Saigon with Cap St. Jacques.

Cap St. Jacques is gradually being turned into a "junk hole"; certain key installations are being transferred there from Saigon because the Americans fear being caught in a Dien Bien Phu-type trap at Saigon.

Emergency evacuation from Saigon could be made impossible, but evacuation by sea from the port of Cap St. Jacques would be much easier.

The Binh Gia battle was waged largely by Catholic recruits in the Liberation Army who have been slipping away in twos and threes over the past several years, supported by local guerrillas from the Catholic villages and with complete support from Catholics in the 6,000-strong "strategic villages" of Binh Gia.

But it was a cruel disillusionment for the Americans who believed that the Binh Gia area was the one solid, friendly spot left in all South Vietnam.

At one point on this visit, the Americans became aware of the presence of our little group of journalists.

A day or two after U.S. news agencies reported the presence of a white man with the Viet Cong, persistent attempts were made to wipe us out.



The standard haversack among liberation Front soldiers has been "donated" by the people of the United States

The report was an understatement because there was also a "white woman" with the "Viet Cong".

Madeleine Riffaud, of Humanite, also made the trip, but as she is slight and dark it was fairly easy to camouflage her as a Vietnamese.

My bulk and greying hairs probably showed up on the air reconnaissance photographs, and before dawn one morning the group of trees in which our hammocks were stung for the night received the attentions of four bombers, which flew straight to those trees, no circling and dumped their bombs there, one after another.

Fortunately, despite our innocent protests, the guards with us had dug air-raid shelters immediately on our arrival the previous night and the first blast almost blew us into the holes.

The first "daisy chain" landed within 200/300 yards but the solid jungle trees and mass of undergrowth absorbed most of the blast and flying metal.

The waste of bombs is fantastic and would cause a whole generation of U.S. tax-payers to die of apoplexy if they could see it.

One Boy And A Buffalo

A great victory for the U.S. run air force, however, was that the bombs blew a little boy and his buffalo to pieces.

Normally planes do not bomb in the dark and they circle, looking for a target, so the little boy had not taken shelter, as he would certainly have done in daylight.

This attack took place on one of the approaches to Saigon and for the next week there were incidents every day, attempted ambushes, bombing and machine-gun attacks, and on one occasion

nearby post. They had laid some planks across the debris, sufficient for foot and bicycle traffic. The bridge is still there, but the whole surrounding area is so pitted with craters that it resembles a photograph of the moon's surface.

It is bombed every day—but astonishingly enough never hit. The Americans think it must be some key link in a non-existent supply system.

Even if it were blown to bits, lack of a bridge would not hamper bike or foot traffic for even a couple of minutes.

The Liberation Front's ordnance department has a permanent team stationed at this point, to defuse and salvage the non-exploded bombs.

While I was in Gia Dinh province, which surrounds Saigon—this time, posts were destroyed three miles and just over a mile from the city outskirts.

A Liberation Army song and dance ensemble gave a performance inside Saigon, less than 500 yards from the U.S. Embassy.

Such incidents, like the infiltration of a heavily armed unit through the most tightly-guarded defences that surrounded the Bien Hoa airfield or the major victory at Binh Gia, or the blowing up of The Brink "U.S. ONLY" officers' hotel, in the very centre of Saigon are only possible because the Liberation Front has the total

OVERLEAF



Members of the South Vietnam Liberation Forces take part in a Sing Song in the jungle. The Slogan on the Banner reads: Determined to Win.

Eyewitness Account on South Vietnam

HOW LIBERATION FORCES LIVE, WORK AND FIGHT

FROM OVERLEAF

support of the population, including many who officially are serving in the enemy army and administration.

A marvellous thick canopy of green protects most of the Liberated Zones of South Vietnam from the cameras and bomb sights of prying planes.

Under it miracles of ingenuity have been accomplished to meet the wartime needs of the Liberation Front.

Newspapers and books are produced on primitive, home-made printing plant; documentary films are processed; Liberation Radio puts out its nine broadcasts daily—its voice never once silenced despite bombing raids.

Arms plants convert unexploded bombs and scraps of destroyed planes and bridges into grenades and mines and a wide variety of other arms.

I visited the Central Laboratories of the Public Health Commission—in effect the Ministry of Public Health—and was astounded at what was being done.

The laboratories are housed in attractive bamboo huts; the roofs made of leaves of a certain tree which even when dry do not burn—a precious quality in case of napalm attacks.

The interiors are lined with spotlessly white parachute nylon, laboratory workers are also clad in crisp white gowns.

The laboratories—all the buildings well spaced in case of bombing raids—had only been transferred to the present site in a dense patch of jungle, a few months previously.

"In May, 1964 there was only forest here," said Dr. Trung, who heads the laboratories and the attached hospital and medical training centre.

"Apart from a handful of workers sent to help, we built everything ourselves. We are medical workers but we had to become architects, handle axes and saws and when necessary act as rice porters at times and solve all sorts of problems to make our equipment."

He indicated a sterilising apparatus where anti-smallpox vaccines were being prepared. It was made of an American petrol drum and was set in what seemed to be fire-brick.

"In fact it is the earth from an ant-heap," explained Dr. Trung. "There is no way of getting fire bricks here but we found that the earth in termite mounds has splendid refractory qualities.

"They permit us to produce temperatures of up to 180 degrees C. necessary to produce various cultures. We adapted the petrol drum to get up to 37 atmospheric pressure."

A group of people, clad in light blue parachute nylon, were working around a table on which was mounted a complicated system of glass containers and tubes.

One girl slowly manipulated a pump which withdrew a viscous liquid from one of the containers while another girl directed it into tiny glass ampoules.

A third lab assistant working a foot pump, directed a jet of flame to seal off the ampoules fed to him a dozen at a time.

"Of course we don't have gas here to seal the ampoules but we use kerosene, the heat being stepped up by adapting a pair of fire bellows to give the necessary pressure."

He explained that season for season was approaching and the team at the table were preparing anti-smallpox vaccines.

"We don't have glycerine in which the doses are usually prepared but we found that diluted honey does quite well," he said.

With such rudimentary means the laboratories were also turning out anti-cholera and anti-typhus serums and within a few months production of anti-tetanus serum would be started.

"When the cholera epidemic started in Saigon at the end of 1963," said Dr. Trung as we continued our tour of the installations, "it was confidently predicted in Saigon that the epidemic would quickly spread to the liberated areas, especially in the densely populated Mekong Delta area."

"But in fact we rushed the production of many tens of thousands of doses and sent them to the perimeter areas of Saigon.

"Our public health teams went to work. Inoculation was free but obligatory and we did not have a single case."

He revealed that after the typhoon-flood disasters in Central Vietnam a few months previously, they had also dispatched hundreds of thousands of anti-cholera and anti-typhus doses to the stricken areas.

While we watched a verification test of the latest batch of anti-smallpox vaccine on a white rabbit, Dr. Trung remarked that they had just completed the distribution of one million doses of such vaccine and that the Liberation Army was 100 per cent inoculated against smallpox.

I asked where they obtained the nylon tubes which linked up many of the glass containers. "It is not nylon," he explained.

"We make them out of pig's intestines. And we had no rust-proof containers for fertilising anti-cholera germs but we rigged up air-proof stoppers from Saigon beer bottles and they do just as well."

One interesting serum which was prepared in massive doses was injectible bacillus subtilis, discovered in 1953, by Dr. Pham Ngoc Thach, present Minister of Public Health in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Injected directly into the lungs, it has proved extremely effective and is regarded as a major development in treating TB.

Dr. Thach has presented several papers on this at international anti-TB conferences.

"We produce it on a mass basis," said Dr. Trung, "and we have found it very effective also against napalm burns and infected wounds. (The bacillus has been developed considerably since it was discovered.)"

"We sell it in the Saigon-controlled zones at one third the price charged in the Saigon shops."

He went on to say that cholera and typhus are always major worries during the dry seasons and that smallpox in the very recent past was a regular scourge among the national minorities in the highland areas.

"But by next season," he said, "we will be producing enough anti-cholera and anti-typhus vaccines to take care of all our requirements."

"As for smallpox we have not had a single case in the last two years and we think it is a thing of the past, although there are cases quite frequently, in the Saigon-controlled zones."

"We visited a hospital which specialised in head injuries and complaints, including eyes, ears and throat and a dental clinic. Virtually all the surgical instruments were of duralumin—from downed U.S. planes."

The cadres, most of them trained only since the war started handled complicated cases involving advanced surgical techniques for all sorts of head injuries resulting from bomb injuries—everything from delicate brain operations to removing bone and muscle tumours and creating artificial jaws.

Every rank and file soldier went through courses on how to

bandage various types of limb injuries and apply first-aid. First surgical attention could be had within half an hour and major surgery within two hours of a wound.

Evacuation of wounded to a base hospital is effected within a maximum of two days and if a military operation is planned in an area more than two days transport distance from a base hospital, a field hospital, with similar facilities, is set up at a maximum of two days distance.

As to how they trained medical cadres, Dr. Trung had this to say: "We did not have regular medical schools. We provided accelerated training courses as basic training; then they learned in practice."

"We rely above all on bringing medical cadres together in specialised conferences where they discuss together, exchange experiences; raise their problems."

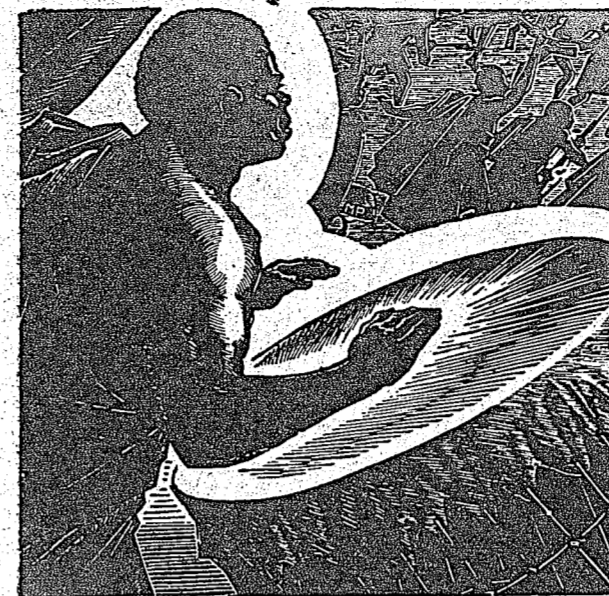
"We have had two conferences on war surgery for auxiliary medical officers and this was also a big success."

"There were exchanges of experiences on such things as direct intra-venal blood transfusions during a battle, the substitution of bamboo to replace nails in bone surgery; the use of bamboo for the spongy trunk of the banana palm for splints; the development of touch and feel of osculation in determining injury because we have very little X-ray equipment."

Once again one could only marvel at the spirit and determination of the Liberation Front cadres at overcoming such formidable difficulties, creating an efficient medical service out of virtually nothing except revolutionary determination.

It was the spirit one found in every field of Liberation Front activities.

(To be continued)



LUMUMBA VARSITY STUDENTS PROTEST AGAINST US AGGRESSION

From Masood Ali Khan

MOSCOW: At an international meeting of protest held at the Lumumba (Friendship) University here under the auspices of the Association of South-East Asian Students, the studying youth of Asia, Africa and Latin America expressed their wrath at the American imperialist aggression in Vietnam. The students pledged their support and solidarity with the people of South Vietnam fighting for their freedom.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of an Indian student, Vimal Kumar. He demanded an immediate cessation of the barbaric American raids over the towns of North Vietnam, withdrawal of American troops and bases and a stop to interference in the internal affairs of that country.

"We are with you our

Vietnamese friends in your struggle against imperialism," declared Vimal Kumar amid thunderous applause. Another Indian student, Parameswaran, speaking on behalf of the Indian students described the US action as "a violation of the principles of peaceful coexistence," and condemned the American aggression. "No to Imperialism and war," he declared.

The African, Asian, Arab, Latin-American and Russian students joined in expressing unity and solidarity with Vietnam and the representative of the Vietnamese youth who gave an account of their heroic struggle against the US, was enthusiastically cheered.

Peaceful coexistence not only among the big powers but with all powers, big or small, was demanded by the students.

SETBACK FOR HALLSTEIN DOCTRINE

TANZANIA ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH GDR

From Kunhanandan Nair

BERLIN: After the recoil of the Hallstein Doctrine resulting from its threatened implementation against the UAR, the West German government has received yet another blow.

THIS has come from Dar-es-Salaam. By a special announcement on February 20 the Tanzania government has accorded permission to the Government of German Democratic Republic to open a Consulate General in Tanzania.

The Hallstein Doctrine which is in line with the old world gun-boat diplomacy is a part of the West German revanchism. By trying to invoke this outdated and ineffective doctrine, the West German government is meeting defeat after defeat.

FEBRUARY 28, 1965

FREEDOM COMES TO GAMBIA

By Baren Ray

With the achievement of independence by Gambia on the midnight of February 18 came to an end Britain's oldest and last West African colony and came into existence the 37th independent state in Africa, the 116th member state of the United Nations and the 21st member of the Commonwealth.

THE smallest sovereign state in Africa both in area and population (320,000), Gambia is surrounded by Senegal from which it is not only geographically indistinguishable but the two countries are also populated by kindred tribes.

Situated in a strategic position in West Africa this area was the object of expansion first by the Portuguese and Dutch colonialists and subsequently by the French and the British and was a major centre of slave trade.

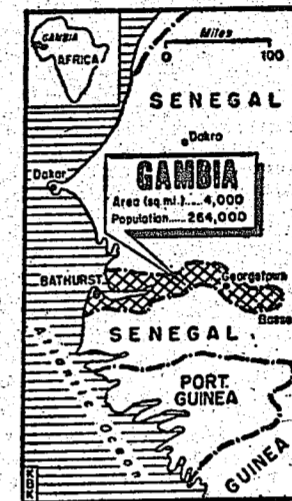
Gambia consists of a narrow strip of land 350 kilometres long extending from the Atlantic coast along both the coasts of the River Gambia, never more than 30 kilometres wide on either side.

This country was artificially created as a result of the Treaty of Versailles of 1783 which gave the surrounding territory of Senegal to France and left this strategic strip controlling the river as well as the small island St. Mary at its mouth in British possession.

Prior to this Senegambia, as the combined territory of Senegal and Gambia was called, was a British colony for twenty years.

Thus split into French and British possessions the river front was artificially separated from its natural hinterland.

The countries provide typical examples of colonial monoculture producing groundnuts and nothing else for the French and Bri-



Like Malawi, even after political independence Gambia has to rely on British remittances.

Dependence on Britain

Britain has promised £ 745,000 for the 18 months ending June 1966 and another £ 360,000 for the following year ending June 1967, plus a development aid of £ 800,000 yearly which brings the total for two and a half years to nearly £ 3,000,000 or about £ 10 per head.

But such is the position of

Gambia's economy after 300 years of British rule that even at the end of these two and a half years of British aid, there will be no chance of the economy becoming self-sufficient.

Such being the situation, independent Gambia will have only three foreign missions—at London, Dakar (Senegal) and at the UN. She will be represented by Senegal in all other countries.

The natural solution for Gambia would be her eventual unification with Senegal and a UN mission investigated this matter.

There were three proposals—complete unification, federation of the two states and special treaty relations uniting the two countries.

The greatest difficulty however comes from the fact that the two economies are entirely competitive and while Senegal is tied to the French franc and is an associate member of the European Common Market, Gambia is tied to the sterling.

British monopoly interests dominate not only the export of her groundnuts but even its production to an extent.

However, under the impact of the general upsurge of the national liberation movement in Africa, Gambia achieved full internal self-government in 1963 and now with the achievement of full independence, under Prime Minister David Fawara of the People's Progressive Party, Gambia and Senegal are united by a special agreement which has already received Parliamentary approval in both countries.

There is an FAO sponsored plan for the construction of dams in the upper waters of the River Gambia in Senegal to be undertaken jointly by the two countries which will irrigate 100,000 acres, improve fertility in another 160,000 acres and protect from salt water intrusion a further 160,000 acres.

This will also open up great production possibility of rice which has now to be imported and will give work to over 1,200,000 persons and generate tremendous economic momentum in both the countries.

All these possibilities will be realised to the extent the problems of cooperation and unification between the two countries are successfully solved.

In this and in all other problems facing new Gambia, India and all Afro-Asia send her their best wishes and acclaim the proclamation of her independence.

intended to supply weapons to centres of tension."

It is also proved now that enlargement work on the Beja base in South Portugal is being speeded up for use of air force. The expansion project is directly entrusted to a West German air force officer.

POLITIK UND WIRTSCHAFT reported a few days ago that West German pilots are to be trained at the Beja base.

Only a few days back, West German Chancellor Erhard had asserted that his government "no longer

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IMPERIALISTS GO FOR ARM-TWISTING TECHNIQUE

By N. TURKATENKO

The United States and West Germany have launched a new diplomatic offensive in East Africa for the purpose of bringing the governments of the countries in this area to heel.

RECENTLY the United States took offence at the ousting of Gordon, counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, and Carlucci, the Consul-General in Zanzibar, by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for subversive activities.

U.S. Ambassador Leonhardt in Dar-es-Salaam intends to make a show of his trip to Washington to discuss the current situation with the State Department. U.S. Ambassador Atwood to Kenya has also been summoned to Washington for these talks.

The Americans are taking great pains to spread rumours among diplomatic circles in Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi that the United States may take sanctions against Tanzania by cutting off economic aid, and revising its policy in regard to the East African countries.

Naturally all this fuss was not caused simply because a couple of diplomats were declared persona non grata. This was merely a pretext, whereas the true reason for the developments in question lies much deeper.

The crux of the matter is that the United States and their NATO partners are highly dissatisfied with the policy which the East African countries openly profess in regard to the Congo.

The East African countries openly profess their sympathies for the struggle of the Congolese patriots and sharply censure the continuing armed aggression of the United States and Belgium in the Congo as the recent statement of the Government of Uganda proclaimed.

Not Diplomatic Activities

The opinion shared by local journalist circles is that the activities of the Americans who were banished from Tanzania were far removed from diplomacy. They organised and supported opposition groups for the purpose of creating inner-political strife and diverting the attention of the government and people of Tanzania from participating in the solution of the Congolese problem.

They spared no effort in hampering the work of the representatives of the national-liberation movements stationed at Dar-es-Salaam, and hindered the activities of the nine-member committee of the Organisation of African Unity, which coordinates the struggle of the anti-colonial movements in Africa.

Besides this, American diplomacy in East Africa is road-blocking the efforts of the special commission of the Organisation of African Unity in the Congo.

West Germany is trying hard to keep up with her American partners in East Africa. But West German diplomacy is "twisting arms" for a somewhat different purpose. It is common knowledge that the question of developing relations between the United Republic of Tanzania and the German Democratic Republic is now a topic of discussion. West Germany has resorted to blackmail and is openly bringing pressure to bear in order to prevent this.

Testimony to this is, for instance, the fact that it was precisely at the time of Tanzania Foreign Minister Oscar Kambona's visit to the Federal Republic that West Germany's Foreign Minister issued a warning to the United Arab Republic in connection with the planned visit to that country of Walter Ulbricht,

Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, to the effect that West Germany might break off economic aid to the UAR at any moment. This warning was properly assessed in Tanzania as the headlines in the newspaper Nationalist showed: "Bonn threatens the UAR."

Words And Deeds

At the same time all Africa knows that the German Democratic Republic, like the other socialist countries, is sustaining a genuinely unselfish friendly policy in regard to the African states. As for West Germany, it gives assurances of friendship and selflessness on one hand, but makes stipulations of all kinds on the other.

Moreover, the Federal Republic readily renders assistance to the mortal enemies of the African countries by expanding trade with the South African Republic and Southern Rhodesia.

West Germans can be found in the police forces of South Africa and Rhodesia and Tshombe's mercenary army.

It is very significant that not a single embassy of West Germany in the East African countries has made any move to refute these reports.

NEW AGE

FEBRUARY 28, 1965

PAGE SIXTEEN

NEW AGE

Nigeria After Elections

PEOPLE SEEK WAY OUT OF REACTIONARY HOLD

By A Special Correspondent

Lagos: "Nigeria. Business as usual after brush with disaster", was the headline in a New York paper declaring the end of the election crisis in Nigeria.

THE haste with which the publishers rushed the announcement is a gauge of the anxiety and concern of West European capitalists, chiefly British and American, over the future of Nigeria—the Nigeria which had turned out to be the feeding-ground for gregarious neo-colonialists.

Yes, disaster was in the making for foreign big businessmen who are bent on milking Nigeria dry of her immense wealth. A defeat for the feudal-led Nigerian National Alliance at the December polls would have been disaster enough for foreign capital investment in this most populous African state.

But the elections are over and a cynically-called national government, a government of feudalists and the compradore bourgeoisie, has taken office. And with it is the resumption of exploitation of the country's economy by British and American neo-colonialists as usual.

Imperialists' Interest

West European capitalists have reason to be concerned over Nigeria. Nigeria's economy is vital to the self-interest of British and American profit ventures; Nigeria's geographic location is of strategic importance for aggressive imperialist military adventurism south of the Sahara in the losing battle against the national-liberation forces.

Nigeria exercises great influence on Africa's politics. Hence the capture of this African giant by imperialists is a primary prerequisite in the economic reconquest of Africa backed by aggressive military offensives.

The aim is to re-colonise Africa and where this proves impossible (as it should), to isolate Africa from the socialist countries, and to perpetuate capitalism which is dying a painful death in many emergent nations of Africa.

British and American imperialists are not concerned over Nigeria's millions of poverty-stricken masses in a country of bounty and wealth. So long as there is an unrestricted export of profit, so long as some Nigerian politicians will play slave-boy to their European masters, so long as Nigeria blesses imperialist military aggression in Africa, all is well within the country in the eyes of the decadent west. But Nigerians know better.

They know that political independence without economic independence is a sham. There can be no economic independence where the basic sector of the economy in industry and agriculture is in the hands of foreign private businessmen, who for certain moral reasons had Nigerian partners.

It was largely on the understanding of this fundamental law of economic growth that after four years of independence Nigerian politicians were convinced that a review of the nation's association with the capitalist West has become necessary.

Hitherto, suggestions that the trouble with Nigeria's economy was inherent in its capitalist nature was dismissed. Following the formation of the Nigerian Marxist-Leninist party (Socialist Workers' and Farmers' Party), the public became increasingly aware of the dangers of the capitalist path of development to the national economy.

Even the national bourgeois parties (National Convention of Nigerian Citizens and the Action Group) could not resist the urge of the masses for a thorough overhaul of the economy.

As a result of this the National Front had emerged as the centre of political power following this national democratic Revolution consisting of the representatives of all the political parties as well as the mass organisations of the different sections of the people who had participated in it.

What has happened now is the result of imperialist plot and machinations for several months. The vexed "Southern problem" was to be the convenient handle for undoing the people's gains of the October

Anti-Feudal Front

Any attack on neo-colonialism in Nigeria should be aimed first at feudalism, which had enslaved the entire Northern part of the country. Hence the need for the formation of an anti-feudal front of all the progressive parties.

Though the call for a United Democratic Front of the progressive parties by the SWATP was snuffed by the national bourgeois parties, an alliance of these parties was concluded (United Progressive Grand Alliance). The time de-

manded cooperation of all anti-feudal forces as a matter of expedience, if for nothing else.

The feudalists did not take it lying low. Supported by the compradore bourgeoisie party of Western Nigeria (Nigerian National Democratic Party), they formed the Nigerian National Alliance, determined to oppose socialism in any of its forms and resolved to defend feudal capitalism with the last drop of their blood.

With the support of the masses craving for socialism, a defeat of the feudalists at the December polls was nearly certain. It was abundantly evident that the Nigerian National Alliance was not prepared for elections. The alliance resorted to violence and made free and fair elections impossible.

The alliance organised and trained terrorists who killed candidates of the progressive parties resulting in the return of many candidates of the National Alliance unopposed at the close of nominations on December 19.

The tragic circumstances under which the election campaigns were held demanded that the progressive parties boycott the elections. This they did and resolved they would not recognise any government sworn in on the basis of the said election.

The national bourgeoisie in the UFGA had retreated from this standpoint following an invitation that they form a national government "ending" the deadlock over the election crisis.

In the face of the boycott,

the feudalists announced that they had won a landslide victory. On January 4, President Azikiwe invited Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, deputy Prime Minister on the understanding that he (the Prime Minister) will form a broadly based national government.

A broad-based national government is hardly a cure to Nigeria's economic crisis. A thorough change from the capitalist path under the conditions of Nigeria shows the way out.

So long as the feudalists control affairs in Nigeria such a change is out of the question. This knocks at the base of the belief among the leading national bourgeoisie that participation in the national government by the progressive will eventually convert the feudalists to socialism.

What is eventually possible is that the leading bourgeoisie will capitulate to the feudalists. What Nigerian workers need is a routing of the feudalists via free elections. Where free elections become impracticable, the feudalists will hold themselves responsible, if the masses take to the superior method of struggle in their quest for freedom and liberty.

AFRO-ASIA

SETBACK In The Headlines FOR PROGRESSIVES IN SUDAN

THE recent reorganisation of government in Sudan replacing the former coalition government that had come into being following the Revolution of October 21 last year by a new all-Party coalition government is a victory for the reactionary and conservative forces and a temporary setback for the National Front consisting of the working class and the intelligentsia under the joint leadership of the Communist Party and other progressive forces.

The National Front government had come about as a result of a political general strike when not only the entire working class and peasantry and other labouring people had come out in the streets and barricaded all government buildings to remove the military dictatorial regime but the entire intelligentsia, students, professional classes, government employees and officials too had all participated in this unique mass political action for restoring a civilian democratic regime.

As a result of this the National Front had emerged as the centre of political power following this national democratic Revolution consisting of the representatives of all the political parties as well as the mass organisations of the different sections of the people who had participated in it.

What has happened now is the result of imperialist plot and machinations for several months. The vexed "Southern problem" was to be the convenient handle for undoing the people's gains of the October

revolution. Clashes were organised against the non-Arab Negro minority in the South which gave way to retaliation. Following this a campaign was let loose by the conservative elements, the Umma Party, National Unionists and the Muslim Brotherhood to bring about an atmosphere of religious fanaticism.

The latest development began when thousands of Ansars, the religious and political heirs of the nationalist prophet and religious leader Mahdi of the 1880's descended upon Khartoum about two weeks ago and camped around his tomb.

This became a great display of religious fervour and traditional loyalties and the national government was charged with trying to postpone the general elections due on April 21.

It was no mere coincidence that the high point of this reactionary upheaval was made to coincide with the state visit of the British Queen. The leader of the Ansars, the Imam Hadi who is the grandson of prophet Mahdi, arrived in Khartoum to meet the Queen on February 19 when the crisis reached the climax.

This movement of backward Muslim fanaticism is in no way unconnected with imperialism. While the Imam remains the spiritual head of the movement its political wing, that is the Umma Party, is led by his nephew Sadiq al-Mahdi, an Oxford graduate, who maintains a double face, one of a traditional Muslim with his two wives and enjoying unquestioning loyalty of the backward masses and quite another "modern" face to maintain his connection with the West.

Imperialism's strategic interest in Sudan is obvious. A progressive government in Sudan with its common frontier with the Congo can seriously undermine imperialist interests there.

Following the crisis the Prime Minister, Serr el-Khatim Khalifa has formed a new so-called all party government where the Communists have been given one seat compared to the five seats which they previously held together with their allies.

THE most important Portuguese delegation ever to visit Southern Rhodesia consisting of a 39-man trade and technical delegation was received in Salisbury on February 17, by the White Prime Minister Ian Smith who pledged staunch alliance with Portugal.

This marked the beginning of a 10-day conference between Rhodesia and delegates from Lisbon, Angola and Mozambique, as well as the beginning of closer cooperation in all fields including a future military understanding between the white countries of Southern Africa.

What African nationalists have been apprehending for long, namely the line up of Southern Rhodesia with Portugal and South Africa is taking place. This development heralds Dr. Verwerd's plan for a common market of white dominated central and southern Africa.

Yet another slide-back from the election commitments has been made by the British Labour Party. This has come in the form of a record defence bill which has been presented to Parliament on February 23.

THE Wilson government has not only failed to fulfill its commitments; it has actually reversed a number of pre-election defence policies.

The estimated budget will amount to about £2,150 million which means that each man, woman and child in Britain will have to provide per head about £40. The Tory defence bill last year amounted to £1,998 million and the Labour government instead of bringing it down has increased it. This is one step which alone spells out the anti-people planning of the Wilson government.

The main reason for the increase in the defence estimate is due to Britain's commitment in West Germany, Aden and Malaysia. About £500 million are spent every year for maintaining British armed forces in these areas.

Wilson's stand with regard to nuclear armament and his government's increased involvement in neo-colonialist designs; his failure to improve the lot of the common man while granting greater concessions to big business are taking him more and more away from the position of confidence in which the British people placed him.

They are gradually coming to realise that the Wilson-led government, for all practical purposes, is hardly any better than its Tory predecessor. At least the

A section of the "Nehru Exhibition" recently held in Moscow

Every Briton to Pay £40 Tax on Defence!

British people knew what they could expect from the Tory government while the Labour government is actually trading on the goodwill of the people on the one hand and selling their interests down the drain, on the other.

Tshombe

Kicks Up Trouble

A new provocation against Uganda has been started by Tshombe and his mercenary gang of thugs. US-supplied planes piloted by American citizens and other mercenaries bombed two Uganda villages on February 13 at Tshombe's directions.

A series of attacks on Uganda's border were carried out during the week that followed. The plea trotted out by Tshombe to justify these attacks was that the Ugandan troops were occupying a number of Congo towns with the assistance of Congolese rebels.

The false pretext of Tshombe was exposed by Uganda Prime Minister Dr. Milton Obote who categorically declared that no Ugandan troop had crossed the border.

Earlier Dr. Obote had openly denounced the US for inciting the attack and helping Tshombe with American arms and planes. He said that the American manoeuvre in the Congo was "the clearest example of neo-colonialism."



Nasser not only denounced the West German pressure-tactics but also knocked the bottom out of the West German claim of aiding the UAR by showing how the UAR has been repaying the Bonn loans at high interest rates.

He declared that the visit of Ulbricht "is a matter that primarily and ultimately has to do with Egypt's independent policy and no body can dictate our policy." He emphatically announced that "we have invited a man who supported us in all questions....."

Meanwhile, a section of West German press has come out sharply questioning the correctness of West German foreign policy, while another section is carrying on a virulent campaign of slander against Nasser. This is the same section which had derided Nehru at the time of Goa's liberation.

But the outcome of this UAR-West German tangle is clear; it has once again proved the failure of Bonn's policy. It is West Germany that stands to lose if it seeks to precipitate the matter.

This has also unmistakably demonstrated that the Afro-Asian nations fully appreciate the GDR's policy of peace and friendly cooperation, and are opposed to West German bullying tactics. All this amounts to a signal success for the GDR's foreign policy and an ignominious defeat for West Germany.

No Longer Good as Gold

THE stability of dollar which has suffered in the course of recent weeks has put a big question mark against the American claim that dollar is "as good as gold". The supremacy of dollar has been challenged and the US is faced with the cold fact that it does not have enough gold to meet the monetary requirements of the major trading countries of the world.

The US President has of course assured the world that the US would honour all its commitments and undertake to pay in gold all foreign debts owed by the US. The debts today amount to some 28,000 million dollars.

The message of the US President is a mixed bag of goods. On the one hand, it contains palliatives to allay the reasonable fear of the dollar-holding countries, on the other it holds out a threat that as an essential measure the American private investment abroad will have to be reduced.

Another measure which has immediately been implemented is the cutting down of tourism. All passport offices in US are now shorn of posters which urged

Americans to travel abroad. President Johnson had suggested that Americans should spend their holidays in US to reduce the dollar drain.

These measures, aiming at cutting down the flow of dollars to other countries, are obviously feeble attempts to stabilise the dollar.

The big question that is posed before the American people is how the government is going to stop accumulation of dollars in foreign countries when a very large amount in dollars is spent by the US as military aid and military out-payments overseas.

By Sadhan Mukherjee

That foreign governments buy US military supplies and 85 per cent of US foreign aid is tied up with the buying of American goods hardly constitute a safeguard for the American people, when they find every year allocations on military expenditures in foreign countries going on increasing.

The US is certainly not facing an impending disaster but the fact stares at its face that the supremacy of dollars is fast receding and the day when the dollars will no longer be "as good as gold" may not be very distant. And with it will come the day when American products will not be bought by those countries in the same manner in which they buy them today as a fait accompli.

Students on Move in Portugal

STUDENTS are more sand more coming out in defiance of the Salazar regime in Portugal. About 70,000 students in Lisbon held a protest demonstration on February 18 demanding the removal of the Minister for Information and the Rector of the Lisbon University as well as the release of all student leaders arrested during the recent weeks.

That this demonstration was held a few hours before Salazar was to make a radio speech is a measure to gauge the reaction of the students who are struggling against the "brutal repressive measures taken by Salazar to quell the agitation demanding university autonomy."

The students carried banners demanding university autonomy and declaring that the regime that maintains itself by force only manifests its weakness.

A large number of students had been expelled recently from the university and many detained after summary court trials. Many of the detained students have been tortured in prison and at least one student is known to have died as a result of these tortures and another reported to have committed suicide to escape interrogation.

The demonstration of the students, in the wake of growing democratic protest which is developing in Portugal and which was symbolised in the statement of 119 important public figures who condemned the actions of the Salazar regime, is a proof of the gradual crystallisation of popular forces against this hated regime.



DOLORES IBARRURI TO GO BACK TO SPAIN

From MASOOD ALI KHAN

MOSCOW: Dolores Ibaruri, chairman of the Communist Party of Spain, now in exile, declared her intention at a press conference in Moscow on February 22 to go back to Spain for the defence of her comrades now being prosecuted under the threat of death by the fascist regime of Franco.

Ibaruri has already written to Mendez, the Spanish Minister of War, and Castiella, the Foreign Minister, for permission to appear as a witness for the defence at the trial of the Communist leader, Justo Lopez.

Lopez is facing the charge of having directed military operations in his capacity as a leader of the People's Army which defended the legal Republic of Spain against the fascist mutiny which plunged the country into bloodbath of 1936.

Lopez is at present serving a 23-year sentence passed by a Madrid tribunal. A few days ago a new charge was brought by the authorities accusing him of "participating in a prolonged military rebellion."

Party was executed on a similar charge.

The legendary La Passlonaria of Republican Spain in a voice charged with emotion spoke at the press conference of the terror now launched by the Franco regime against all democrats to save itself and to somehow overcome the mounting crisis and people's opposition.

Speaking of her decision to go to Spain, she said that she had taken this decision fully aware of the danger that she would be putting herself at the hands of the fascists. "I am prepared to face all" as "I know that the people of Spain will be with me," she declared.

Julian Grimau, member of the central committee of the Spanish Communist

STAGE SET FOR KERALA ELECTIONS

CPI Fights Heroically Against Heavy Odds

TRIVANDRUM: Next week Kerala will go to polls to elect its representatives to the Assembly from among 552 candidates in 133 constituencies.

ON an average over four candidates are contesting in each of these constituencies; Numerically speaking, 14 parties are contesting this election. But many of them are only nominally in the field, contesting one or two seats here and there and most probably most of such parties will not be heard of again, at least till another election. They have therefore not attracted any special attention.

The multiplicity of contests has brought a large crop of unattached independents (98) into the field. In Trivandrum district the dissident PSP which has split away from the SSP is contesting four seats. The Karshaka Thozhilali Party and the Malanad Karshaka Union which are local parties that arose as an offshoot of the struggles of a section of peasants in some regions of the state have also put up five and four candidates respectively.

Such a glance is the election scene, variegated, but hardly real to the political issues which confront the enlightened electorate in this state. For, the main fight is between the Congress and the left democratic forces; a sweeping victory for the latter was assured before their unity was disrupted by the "ultrarevolutionary" rival Communists. The present multi-cornered contests are primarily due to this disruption.

No Hope for Congress

The Indian National Congress is of course fighting for all the seats; that in itself has however no special significance, except that as the hitherto ruling party in Kerala and as the all India ruling party, it must put up a show that it can and will still fight in all constituencies.

If anything is clear now itself about the impending election, it is the fact that the Congress Party absolutely does not stand the chance of winning a majority. In fact it is standing trial for its misdeeds and anti-people policies that have brought the state and the people to ruin. And the verdict can be predicted.

Next in the field with 108 candidates is the United Front of the Communist Party, the RSP and the progressive independents. The United Front is the only party that has entered the election battle with a concretely worked out programme and the declared intention of implementing it if a majority is obtained.

The rival Communist Party has put up 78 candidates. After having refused to join the United Front, it has entered into various sorts of understandings with the SSP and the Muslim League. Whatever be the real nature of

its confusing understandings with other parties, one thing is already clear. These understandings do not include agreement to form a government.

Indeed, there cannot be much in common between the feudal communal Muslim League and the rival party that both together can form a government; whatever the 'progressivism' that the latter has lately discovered in the Muslim League. In other words it is sheer opportunism that has sheered these two together.

And with its own 78 candidates many of whom have been put up in constituencies which cannot be won under any circumstance, the rival party cannot hope to win a majority and to form a government on its own.

Communal Combine

Then in the field is the dissident Kerala Congress-Muslim League combine. Together, they have only 72 candidates. Despite the advantages the Muslim League has derived from its understanding with the rival Communist Party, the danger of this combine being able to form a government seems to be less.

However, the split in the Congress and the emergence of the Kerala Congress as a separate party opposed to the former are bound to affect the Congress prospects in the elections. It is difficult to assess at this stage the actual impact of these developments on the outcome of the elections.

But there is no need to be surprised if the Kerala Congress makes some serious inroads in the traditional Congress strongholds in Kottayam and Ernakulam and parts of Quilon and Alleppey districts.

When the rival Communist Party walked out of the United Front, their main excuse for the step was that an understanding with the Muslim League was necessary to ensure the maximum defeat of the Congress. Now it is possible to have a closer look at this understanding and its implications.

Their agreement with the League is confined to the following constituencies: Cannanore-I, Kozhikode, Mancheri, Guruvayur, Kasargode, Mattancheri, and Cranganore. In these independent candidates acceptable to both parties were to be set up.

But now it turns out that in all except two constituencies the candidates put up are actually well known leaders or active workers of the Muslim League with the label of "independents" attached to them. In one constituency, Mancheri, a rival com-

munist worker is put up as the League independent!

How has this agreement helped in defeating the Congress? The fact is that in most of these constituencies, the rival CP's support to the League may facilitate a Congress victory by splitting the votes.

Cannanore-I and Kozhikode-II where the CPI candidates are also in the fight may be mentioned as cases in point. Moreover, the League independent who was put up as a candidate in Cranganore constituency withdrew from the contest to help the Congress candidate there.

Splitters' Role

In the other constituencies the rival CP claims to be fighting the Muslim League. It is a case of fighting the League in order to help it to win seats by splitting the opposition votes.

In the Muslim majority areas of Kozhikode and Palghat districts, where it used to win traditionally several seats entirely on its own strength, this time the League influence is at a low ebb. The Muslim League leaders themselves privately admit that if they are to face straight contests, they might not win more than about five seats.

It is a fact that in many of these constituencies, against the united opposition of all parties including the Congress and the League, the Communist Party lost in 1960 elections by only relatively narrow margins. Now that the allies of 1960 are at loggerheads, the League's chances could have been really bleak. In these constituencies, the rival Communists have obliged the League by putting up candidates to split the non-League progressive votes.

Official Muslim League candidates are contesting in some of the constituencies against the rival communists, in Madai against K.P.R. Gopalan, in Nadapuram against C. H. Kanaran, in Mepayur, Kozhikode-I and Beypore against other prominent rival Communist candidates. In all these constituencies the League candidate's contest would adversely affect the rival Communist's prospects.

And the Muslim League is openly committed to support Kerala Congress candidates wherever they are contesting. Then what has the rival Communists gained by their understanding with the Muslim League? It seems to be a clear case of the League outmanoeuvring the rival Communists, who out of sheer prejudice and wrong politics were too willing to lend their help to the League.

It is difficult to believe that the rival Communist Party would bargain for such an outcome. Is it for this that it broke away

from the United Front? On closer examination, however, another aspect of their election strategy which perhaps comes as the first consideration in their calculation is clearly discernible. That is to defeat the candidates of the Communist Party.

In their negotiations with SSP and the Karshaka Thozhilali Party, the rival party has bargained away some of the strongest seats of the Communist Party. Besides the liberal gesture made to the Muslim League, the SSP has been allotted some 30 seats. Some of the Communist Party's seats have been presented to Karshaka Thozhilali Party also.

The strength of these parties does not justify this liberal boon of seats. There cannot be any other explanation for this step except that it is aimed at splitting the votes of the Communist Party, to defeat the Communist candidates. For, these other parties stand no chance of winning most of these seats.

The Communist Party could not be expected to give up fighting in its most influential constituencies simply because the rival party chose to give these seats to some other parties. The result in some of these constituencies may well be the victory of the Congress candidates.

In some other constituencies mutual fight between Communist and rival candidates also may lead to a Congress victory. The Communist Party sought some understanding with the Rival Party in such constituencies in order to prevent a Congress victory. But no understanding could

But the progressive, democratic sections of voters, including those who support the rival Communist Party, are gradually realising the danger of the rival party's election tactics. Their ranks are unhappy over this dangerous development. In many places their active cadres have openly come out and issued statements condemning the opportunism and support to reaction by their leadership.

Responsible Stand of CPI

Unlike the rival party, the Communist Party and the Left United Front have adopted a very responsible attitude in regard to the aim of defeating the Congress and the Kerala Congress-Muslim League combine in this election. As is well known, the Party tried its utmost to come to an agreement with the rival party. On failure, it tried to bring about some adjustments at least locally.

When these efforts also failed, the Party decided to withdraw from several constituencies unilaterally where mutual fight posed the danger of the Congress winning. The following are such constituencies: Neelavaram, Madai, Edakkad Mancheswaram in Cannanore district; Meppayur and Tirurangudi in Kozhikode district; Malampuzha, Palghat, and Perintalmanna in Palghat district and Palluruthy in Ernakulam district. In these ten

From
S. SHARMA

be arrived at, because of the rival Communist's stand.

Come what may, the CPI candidates should be defeated in their attitude. That this is not an unfair or summary accusation can be seen from their behaviour in some of the constituencies where originally they were not to put up candidates on the basis of their electoral understandings with other parties.

A Case in Point

A case in point is Cranganore constituency. It was given by them to a League independent who was persuaded by the Congress candidate to withdraw. There it was to be a straight fight between the Congress and the Communist candidate. At the last moment in came a rival Communist candidate. His only purpose is to split the votes of Gopalakrishna Menon, the CPI candidate and Kisan Sabha leader who incidentally happen to be the first ever Communist MLA in the state.

Their support to League independents in Cannanore, and Guruvayur and putting up their own candidates in Tellicherry, Sreekrishnapuram, Punalur, Adoor and several other constituencies are all dictated by the same strategy. In none of these constituencies have their candidates or the allies they support, the prospects of victory. If the Communist Party would be defeated, the only victor would be the Congress.

constituencies the Party is supporting the rival party candidates.

Besides, in Mankada and Tritala constituencies in Palghat, and in Attingal constituency in Trivandrum district against the ex-Chief Minister Sankar, the Party is supporting rival Communist candidates without any conditions.

As against this, in the whole of Kerala, the rival party is supporting a CPI candidate only in one constituency, Changanacherry.

In 10 constituencies in the state, mutually acceptable independents are being supported by both the CPI and the rival party.

Unfortunately, however, in several constituencies, the Communist Party has been compelled to fight it out with the rival party much to its own dislike. In over 40 constituencies the CPI and the rival party are contesting against each other. This is of course besides the support the rival Communists are extending to other candidates against the CPI.

Thus it is a difficult and complex situation. Still the Left united Front, its candidates and workers, have organised its election campaign through meetings, distribution of leaflets and house to house canvassing, explaining to the voters how only the victory of the United Front candidates could ensure the replacement of the hated Congress by a Left democratic government in Kerala. In this they have been able to win more and more support and sympathy of the electorate.