

SAPAL - PER

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# KERALA FOOD: E.M.S. GIVES THE FACTS



Kerala is 50 per cent deficit in food. The Congress leaders of Kerala, instead of persuading the Congress and the Government leaders at New Delhi to give Kerala its due are concentrating all their fire on the Kerala Government. The PSP leaders are threatening struggle. The RSP has already launched a satyagraha with the slogan: 'To the gallows with the Ministers!'

Kerala Chief Minister in his statement below has given the plain facts which disclose where the real blame lies and appeals in a manner, that should make sense to all except those who seek to play politics at the cost of people's food.

The text of the Chief Minister's statement reads:

**I** WANT to assure the parties of the Opposition and the general public that the Government is as concerned as they are with the difficult food situation in the State. Food is a problem which, as the Prime Minister observed recently, should be dealt with on a national plane, beyond political or other differences and disputes. I would, therefore, appeal to them all to help the Government in working out a policy which all of us can sincerely and faithfully carry out in the interests of the entire State.

During the recent discussions on the food situation in our State, the question has been raised as to whose is the responsibility for finding a solution for this problem: the Centre's or the State's? I hope that everybody concerned will put an end to this way of posing the question and realise that the food problem cannot be solved either by the Centre or the State alone; it can be solved only if there is the closest and most sincere cooperation between the Centre and everyone of the 14 States in our country.

## Till Formation of South Zone

Let me make it clear that, so far as we in the Government of Kerala are concerned, we are prepared to take the entire responsibility which are ours as the Government in a State which has the utmost deficit with regard to foodgrains. Let me, at the same time, remind my friends in the Opposition in our own State, as well as responsible persons in other States and at the Centre, that we will not be able to discharge our responsibility unless we receive the full cooperation of all of them.

I hope everyone will agree that, while it is the responsibility of every State Government to see that the stocks of foodgrains available within their respective States are properly and equitably distributed, no State Government can, in the present circumstances, shoulder the responsibility of getting supplies from other States unless these supplying States and the Centre create the necessary conditions for it.

This was actually the division of labour between the Centre and the State of Kerala till the Southern Food Zone was formed, as can be seen from

the fact that, till the formation of the Zone, the Centre used to supply a fixed quantity of foodgrains every month to our State. It was with this supply made by the Centre that the Government of Kerala ran hundreds of fair-price shops.

After the last general elections and our assumption of office, we deliberately adopted the policy of expanding the activities of these fair-price shops with the hope that it would help stabilising the price level in the open market. Experience has proved that, so long as these fair-price shops continued, the majority of people were guaranteed a minimum quantity of rice; this exercised a healthy influence on the open market. This would have been the position even now if these supplies were forthcoming.

Unfortunately, however, the situation deteriorated after the formation of the Southern Food Zone. The expectation of the Central Government that the formation of the Zone would lead to free movement of rice from the surplus to the deficit areas within the Zone and meet the full requirements of the deficit States was not fulfilled. The year 1958 has been a period of rapid rise in prices and acute suffering for the people of the Zone. The price level today, not only in Kerala but in other parts of the Zone as well, is higher than at any time in recent years.

## No Help To Get Supplies

So far as our State is concerned, the formation of the Zone did not help us in getting those supplies which are necessary for us to run the fair-price shops, and which used formerly to come to us from the Centre. We have all along been feeling that, since the Central Government introduced price control in the four surplus districts of Andhra after the formation of the Zone, the Central Government should have procured the stocks in Andhra at the control prices and supplied to us as they used to do before. If this was not possible, they should have enabled us to purchase in Andhra at prices at which we could have got those supplies.

It has been our complaint

that the Central Government did not do either. On the other hand, it said that the very formation of the Southern Food Zone meant that Centre's responsibility to supply any State in the Zone ceased; it was for the respective State Governments to get supplies from Andhra or other surplus areas in the Zone. On the other hand, it prohibited us from buying in the surplus areas of Andhra at prices above the controlled rate—this at a time when stocks were not available at or below the controlled rates.

## Orders Had To Be Cancelled

As for the other surplus area in the Zone, i.e., the Tanjore District in Madras, there again, the Government of Madras, and on its advice the Central Government, prohibited our Government till very recently from entering the market and buying rice. Orders for 10,000 tons of rice to be purchased from Tanjore had to be cancelled on the advice of the Government of India.

Let me illustrate our difficulty from what happened in recent months:

Between the formation of the Southern Food Zone and March 1958 we purchased rice in Andhra to the extent of 15,100 tons. These purchases were made at prices ranging from Rs. 32 to Rs. 34 per bag. These, as you can see, are at the controlled rate fixed by the Central Government.

## What Really Happened

From March 1958 onwards, we have been trying to do the same. Actually, we called for tenders to the extent of 70,000 tons from July to September 1958. But no tenders were received in response to this, because the prevailing market rates at that time were above the controlled price. The Central Government did not accede to our request that it should itself procure supplies at controlled rates and give it to us or allow us to purchase at prices above the controlled rate. It actually asked us to buy at any price from anywhere except the four districts of Andhra, which means asking us to buy rice in a place where it is not available!

Let me mention in passing

that, if we were able to buy the 70,000 tons for which we had called for tenders, that itself would have made us subsidise to the extent of Rs. 49 lakhs if the supplies had come at the controlled rates and of Rs. 108 lakhs if it had been at Rs. 40 per bag at which we were allowed to buy after the November meeting of the Food Ministers from the Southern Zone. This would show that it is not our alleged "unwillingness to subsidise food supply", but our inability to get supplies, that created those difficulties.

I am sorry that the difficulties created in our way by the above-mentioned policy of the Central Government are not realised by my friends in the Opposition who accuse us of blaming the Centre when these bare facts are mentioned by us. I hope that they will all agree that the responsibility for securing supplies from outside—or rather, creating conditions in which supplies from outside can be procured—rests on the Central Government. I hope that the entire people of the State will join the Government in demanding of the Central Government that it should

\* SEE BACK PAGE

# For Pantji's Attention!

**T**HE Communist Party cannot even think of building a house without the CID poking their nose into it.

For some time, the Communist Party has been thinking of having its own building in Delhi to house the offices of its National Council.

When negotiations began with the Government of India, the Party was asked to submit a blue-print of the building.

A Bombay firm of architects was commissioned to do the job. The blue-print was duly submitted to the concerned department of the Government.

A few days ago, a CID Inspector called on the architect in his Bombay office along with an assistant, duly established his authority and asked the architect to make a copy of the building plan of the Communist Party available to him.

The architect was quite surprised—he had not expected this at all in our much-trumpeted democracy. He postponed the interview.

Next time, the assistant came alone. The architect got his brother, a well-known person, to sit in the inner office in case he needed help.

The architect told the

CID man: Why should I give you the copy? If the client comes to know, I will lose the contract. And the client is bound to know because my brother is M. G. Desai in the Meerut Conspiracy Case.

It was the assistant's turn to get surprised, he had not known about M. G. Desai. He left hurriedly.

This was rather embarrassing. To avoid such unpleasantness in the future we would suggest to Home Minister Pant to instruct all departments that the Communist Party should be asked to submit everything in duplicate. One copy can then be quietly handed over to the CID.

PITIFUL REMEDIES

THE resolution on the rate of growth passed last week by the Working Committee of the National Congress is full of meaningless platitudes and insincere promises.

The main purpose of the resolution is to stress the need of higher capital formation in the interests of a bigger national effort in the period of the Third Plan and suggest new sources of capital formation. The resolution fails miserably because the Working Committee has no desire to lay its hands on the vested interests, foreign and Indian.

The resolution concretely states: "The experience of the First and Second Plans has shown that the present investment rate is too small in relation to the needs of the country and is not adequate to ensure the solution of the problem of unemployment." This is a proper answer to the World Bank and the Indian vested interests who demand that the Third Plan should be on a lower scale than the Second. But when it comes to remedies to step up the rate of capital formation or investment, the Working Committee has nothing but pitiful remedies to suggest.

The rate of capital formation can be easily stepped up by nationalisation of banks, of foreign concerns or at least by diverting all their profits for national investment; and by nationalising India's foreign trade. But the Working Committee does not suggest it because it does not want to attack the entrenched vested interests.

The rate of capital formation can be further stepped up by an efficient running of State concerns with the help of enthused workers. The Government does not believe in it and the socialistically patterned Working Committee does not suggest it.

An increased rate of capital formation can easily arise if profits are strictly controlled and wealth and luxury are properly taxed. The Working Committee vaguely talks of control of profits, but experience shows it will end in nothing. As regards further taxation on wealth and luxury, the Working Committee does not countenance it.

A rapid increase in surplus production and with it in capital formation is possible if measures are taken to increase labour productivity. It is easy to achieve an enormous increase in agricultural production if only the Congress Governments embark on genuine land reforms ensuring land to the tiller and raising the production enthusiasm of the peasants. But intent on placating all kinds of vested interests, the Congress Working Committee is unable to promise it.

In the private as well as public sector of industry, labour productivity can rise enormously if the outlook of the owner class is given up by the employers and the State; if the minimum demands of the working class are met in time by the State and industry. But here again the Working Committee has nothing to say.

How then does it seek to accelerate the rate of capital formation? First, by a more efficient functioning of the State sector. This is no doubt a rich source of capital formation but it is closed to those who treat the workers as their slaves and who themselves are corrupt. Compared with the needs of the situation, the Working Committee is suggesting only pitiful remedies such as (1) curtailment of imports; (2) expansion of life insurance, (3) avoidance of expensive construction of buildings, etc. These are helpful auxiliaries but cannot be the main source of increased capital formation.

And finally the Working Committee reveals its anti-mass outlook when in the name of capital formation it suggests a practical freeze on wages—"Wages and salaries should be dependent on work done." Is it the case of the Working Committee that people are today overpaid in relation to the work done? Everybody knows that the contrary is true. This proviso is nothing but a sanction for intensification of labour without any increase in wages.

This method of capital formation will only pit the worker against further productive effort.

Such then is the wisdom of the Working Committee. With this outlook the prospects of the Third Plan must be considered to be very bleak indeed. No big national effort is possible without repudiating it. India has enough resources and immense man power. She can work wonders and miracles in production like her great neighbour China if only the impediments created by the vested interests are removed. But this is precisely what the Working Committee and the Congress Government will not do. (December 16, 1958)

SCRAP - BOOK

KALULAL'S KINDNESS

OUR Education Minister, Dr. Kalulal Shirmali is a much-harassed man these days. How unfair it is for the people not to appreciate his zeal in disciplining the Banaras Hindu University students with armed constabulary bayonets.

Few, however, know that Shirmaliji is full of kindness—for his own brothers.

● He is sending one of them, Sri Pannalal Shirmali, abroad under some UNESCO project.

● Another brother, Sri Kesari Lal Shirmali—who, I understand, is not even a graduate—has been put on the staff of an educational institute, where, shrewdly, he has himself assumed the chairmanship of the Store Purchase Committee. How fruitful this may turn out to be is yet to be seen.

In his early nondescript days, Dr. Shirmali himself joined the staff of a high school at Udampur, called Vidya Bhavan, which was originally started by Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta in 1931. Out of overflowing gratitude, Dr. Shirmali, when he became a Minister, got the Bhavan an annual aid of Rs. 136,000, while the school could take only 136 students. Besides, there is a rural institution along with some outfit, which together get a Government aid of Rs. 12 lakhs per annum. Besides, they have already spent about Rs. 80 lakhs on building and other items.

You can imagine how busy Dr. Shirmali must have been all these years with all these problems. Naturally, how can you, in all seriousness, expect such a busy man to waste time in academic pursuits? In all these, Kalulali is quite innocent: he has published no book or pamphlet so far, I hear.

A friend has sent me an interesting piece of information: at the time of the 1942 struggle, Shirmaliji with Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta approached the Maharana Bhupal Noble College and other educational institutions and asked the students not to participate in the national movement, and warned them that if they did join the movement, their names would be struck off the rolls and deterrent actions would be taken against their parents.

And this is the man who is entrusted with the sacred charge of imparting education in Free India—bearing the honour of being the successor to Maulana Azad!

"PUBLIC CO-OPERATION"  
WE hear quite a lot now-a-days about enlisting public cooperation for the Five-Year Plan. The Prime Minister told Parliament the other day that his Government would seek

public cooperation at "all levels."

Curiously enough, if you go to a district, rarely do you find the existence of any other political party but the Congress recognised in official efforts at securing public cooperation. Any number of instances are available.

Here is one from Punjab: Some time ago, the Chief Secretary of the State Government sent out a circular to all Deputy Commissioners where he expressed his intimate feelings that "at present, the National Savings movement is mainly in Government hands."

And he elaborated his views on the subject: "The idea is to associate with it non-official organisations of social outlook to the largest extent and eventually pass the National Savings movement on to the public agencies."

With this laudable objective in view, the Chief Secretary directs his officers to "set up District and Sub-Divisional Advisory Committees immediately." Who should constitute these Committees? Clear-cut instructions were laid down:

"Officials who are concerned in this work and non-officials namely MLAs, MLCs, the District Congress Presidents, selected Municipal Commissioners, social organisations and trade unions, should also be represented on these Committees."

So, the only political party that the Chief Secretary could think of is the District Congress. I suppose the trade union that he could stand is only the INTUC.

Suppose this had happened in Kerala, and in such a drive, only the District Secretary of the Communist Party had been taken. At once, Dhebarbhal would have found irrefutable proof of Communist dictatorship. Sri Asoka Mehta would have howled and Dr. K. B. Menon would have shrieked and fainted.

POLICE CO-OPERATION

SOMETIMES public co-operation scares our careworn bureaucrats and they finally call in their favourite—the police.

Another Punjab example: The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar a few months ago wrote a letter to the Vice-President of the Textile Ekta Mazdoor Union at Chheharta about getting young men and women for training in Civil Defence measures. He complained that the Government Instructor "approached some of the factory owners but the labour did not respond to the request." He asked the Union Vice-President to use his "good offices" to get the labour for training.

The Union at once decided on cooperating and intimidated to the Deputy

Commissioner that "there is no doubt that the number of workers who are anxious to get training will turn out to be quite big." They asked him to send up the Instructor to discuss details with them.

No reply. So, a reminder was sent to the Deputy Commissioner. Yet no reply. Perhaps, by then, the D.C. was scared of the idea of public cooperation.

Instead, it appears, the scheme has been worked through the agency of the police. Naturally, in place of hundreds only a few dozens were trained.

HELPING CO-OPS

LIKE "public cooperation," another term very much in vogue at present is "cooperative." The Prime Minister is divinely enthusiastic over it, but I wonder if he knows how these co-ops function. Here is a simple case in which no Communist is involved:

The District Convener of the Bharat Sevak Samaj in Jodhpur has taken up the idea of cooperatives seriously. I understand he has formed as many as fourteen such societies, mostly dealing with road and building works. Among these, there is a consumers co-op—formed mainly by truck owners—dealing in spare parts and accessories.

The co-op is working well. But the goods that they need are not available to them. The wholesale dealers and manufacturers of these spare parts are not willing to give them supplies direct. They want the co-op to approach the local dealers, who naturally sell the articles on huge commission.

The co-op has made repeated representation to the Government but nothing has been done. Even the facilities extended to a retailer is not granted to a cooperative.

HELPING THEMSELVES

SELLING Dandakaranya to the Bengal refugees has become a headache for the Government. Neither frowns nor exhortations nor implorings seem to work. So, one of Calcutta's prominent dailies undertook to bring out a special supplement devoted to Dandakaranya.

For this act of sacrifice, it is to get all the printing jobs from the Dandakaranya authorities. Such nation-building efforts do not go unrewarded. I hear, the venture will fetch them Rs. two lakhs.

The paper is run by the family of a West Bengal Minister in charge of Rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation—like charity—seems to begin at home.

—DIARIST

Uttar Pradesh: Local Bodies Election Results Show

THE growth of the Communist Party to become the second party in the political life of Uttar Pradesh was once again indicated by the results of the supplementary municipal elections which have now been completed.

Last year when the elections to the local bodies took place, no elections were held to 11 municipalities and two town areas.

The Congress, though yet remaining the first organised party in the State, has received a severe beating. Out of the 13 bodies to which elections

which held, only in two has it been able to secure an absolute majority. One of these, Srinagar (Pauri-Garhwal), is the pocket borough of the Rani of the former Tehri State who has now, with all her friends and relations, joined the Congress; and the other, in Sandi (Hardoi), is the pocket borough of the well-known taluqdar, Begum Ajaz Rasul who is now a Congress MLC.

Hence one can say that the Congress has received these two local bodies as gifts from the old feudal reactionaries with whom it has allied itself. Besides these, only in three

Communists Have Made Further Headway

FROM BANESH SINHA

others has the Congress emerged as the single largest party. In all, it has secured 75 seats in the 13 elected bodies.

The Communist Party has absolute majority in the Gangoh Municipality in Saharanpur (winning 12 out of 16 seats) and won a total of 23 seats in all the bodies. Six members of the People's Democratic Front, an ally of the Communist Party, have won with the Party's active support. Thus the total number of seats secured by the Party and its close allies is 29.

The Praja Socialist Party, which has the largest group in the State Assembly after the Congress, has secured a majority in two bodies, one municipality and one town area. The way they won Akbarpur Town Area—and has now lost it, makes an interesting story of opportunism.

Due to rampant groupism in

the State and particularly in Kanpur, in which the town of Akbarpur lies, Congress tickets were given to people who till the other day had belonged to the Socialist Party. The so-called "official Congressmen" came to the Communist Party and asked for its symbol. When the Communist Party did not oblige them, they trooped to the PSP, which jumped at the opportunity. It was they who won the seats and the town area for the PSP!

But that is not the end of the story. Latest reports are that the five ex-Congressmen of Akbarpur who had joined the PSP have once again gone back to the Congress fold. The total number of seats won by the PSP in all the bodies have thus been reduced from 25 to 20! And the Akbarpur Town Area, too, is lost for them!

The Jan Sangh has also won about 20 seats. But the largest number—89—have been won

by independents. They have an absolute majority in five of the 13 bodies.

Thus there is still a vast vote in the State which is not allied to any organised political party. While it shows the weakness of the Left parties, it also provides a free hunting ground for communal elements as well as the political pirates of the Congress. It is from this crowd of independents that the Congress leaders of the State will now, using their power of patronage, try to buy votes and create their artificial majorities where no organised party has got it.

The people of the areas where these elections took place are already talking about the emergence of the Communist Party as the chief contender against the Congress. The National Herald, too, has noted this fact in its issue of December 8.

THOUGHT-CONTROL IN PUNJAB UNIVERSITY

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT)

MCCARTHY is dead but McCarthyism lives on—and not only in the USA. Recently a committee of the Punjab University Syndicate formulated service rules for its employees which can easily find a place in any collection of the notorious Wisconsin Senator's works.

The rules that have now been framed surpass even the hated Essential Services Act in certain respects and aim at imposing thought-control on all employees of the University.

● Let us look at some of these rules. "No employee shall take part, subscribe in aid of or assist in any way any political movement." The word "political movement" has been defined as "any movement or activity tending directly or indirectly to excite disaffection against or to embarrass the Government as established by law and to promote feelings of hatred or enmity between different classes of subjects of the Indian Union, or to disturb public peace."

It is obvious against whom this rule is directed—against those teachers who do not subscribe to the policies and ideologies of the ruling party.

A teacher of Political Science commented that in the class room he would have to teach what the ruling party wants him to. For instance, the Constitution of the USSR is taught in the B.A. classes. But no teacher will be able to give an objective estimate of the Constitution since that would violate this rule and he could be hauled up for that.

● Further, "no employee shall canvass or otherwise interest himself or interfere or use his influence in connection with or take part in elections to Parliament, State Legislature, Local Authority or University."

This also has dangerous implications. The Punjab University Act has reserved certain seats on the University Senate for teachers. But according to this rule, no University teacher can seek election to the Senate without the prior permission of the 15-member Syndicate.

The Vice-Chancellor has

been given such wide powers that he now becomes the virtual dictator of the University. An employee has not even the right to file a civil suit against the University in respect of any order affecting his condition of service or disciplinary action against him. One wonders whether the framers of "such rules are aware of the Indian Constitution and its provisions."

How well-calculated is the move for thought-control is indicated by another recent incident. In a meeting of the Senate, a Hindi novel, Nishi Kant came under fire and has been removed from the syllabus. It seems the dihard core of Arya Samajists in the University Senate did not like this novel which relates to the pre-independence period and portrays the idealism of a youth for Hindu-Muslim unity. What made them angrier still was that the author had dared to attack the orthodoxy of certain religions.

As it happens with every institution worth the name in Punjab today, all the factional intrigues and squabbles of the Pradesh Congress have penetrated the Punjab University, too.

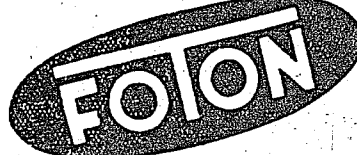
At the moment, the group that dominates the University is aligned with Chief Minister Kairon. This year some younger elements decided to break this monopoly and put up their own candidates for the Senate—an effort which did not succeed because even Ministers are said to have gone round canvassing against them.

College teachers, both of University and private colleges, are perturbed over these developments and feel that the newly-elected Syndicate is incapable of defending the autonomy of the University and would succumb to political pressure.

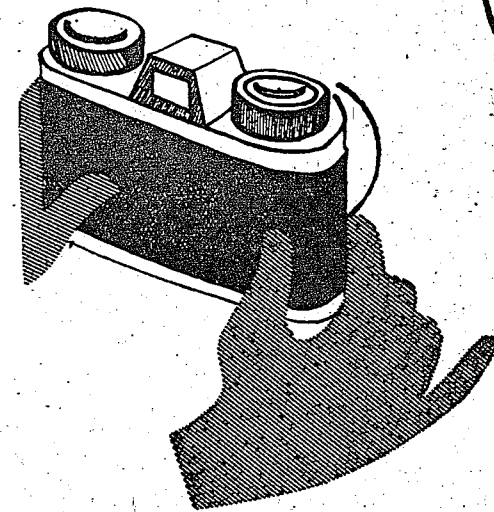
The demand for democratisation of the University Act is bound to come up again. Now out of 95 members of the Senate, 35 are nominated by the Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor is not elected by the Senate. It can be safely asserted that it is the present composition of the University Senate that constitutes the basis for authoritarian tendencies in the University.

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ASIAN

NEW AGE

DECEMBER 21, 1958

LAST week the Lok Sabha discussed and endorsed the foreign policy of the Government of India. This week the Rajya Sabha did the same. The Prime Minister opened and concluded the debate and with what he said on the various issues and the way the debate went off, the colonialists and the war-mongers would not be happy.

Fandit Nehru persuasively answered Gen. Ayub's allegation that India was trying to "isolate" Pakistan and, correctly stated that it was the outcome of "the wrong line of thought" that Pakistan's leaders had been following all along. India's opposition to the Baghdad Pact had been played up as an attempt to isolate Pakistan. "I would like to disabuse President Ayub Khan of this idea that we wish anything but well of Pakistan. We do wish it well because looking at it from our point of view that is advantageous to us and it is not good for us to try to isolate Pakistan."

Fandit Nehru expressed India's fraternal admiration at the emergence of an "African personality" and that after centuries of suffering the African nations were "finding their souls."

He expressed India's sympathy with Algeria "where for several years there has been a most bloody conflict and all kinds of excesses had been committed." He appealed to Gen. de Gaulle to recognise "the basic fact that the question cannot be settled except in the full freedom of Algeria."

He explained his Government's non-recognition of the Provisional Government on the ground that it had not fulfilled the normal tests and that "it would be a brave gesture with no particular meaning."

He admitted the situation in Goa was not satisfactory. Some Indians and a large number of Goans were still in jail.

The Prime Minister expressed himself against the partition of Cyprus which is the British plan. In the U.N. debate, Sri V. K. Krishna Menon had already supported the demands of Cypriots for self-determination.

The Prime Minister admitted that though nothing much had been done to implement the economic resolution of the Bandung Conference, the Indian Government sought to achieve economic cooperation with the countries of the region.

Referring to the Geneva Conference, he said "that is slow progress, but nevertheless it is hopeful progress." He pleaded for the stoppage of nuclear tests as the first step towards disarmament and the end of the cold war.

He saw "a dangerous situation in the East-West tension over Berlin. He, however, did not state from which side came the danger and which was offering a peaceful and just solution.

Communist spokesman Bhupesh Gupta made a notable contribution to the debate, which sought to further strengthen our foreign policy. He characterised the emergence of military dictatorships in Asia as a "menace to the security and independence of Afro-Asian countries." He held U. S.

imperialism guilty. He tried to shake up the complacent who suggest that the Baghdad Pact had become moribund after the Iraq revolution.

He asked the Indian Government to support the Soviet proposals for making Berlin a demilitarised, free city. He urged upon the Prime Minister to recognise the German Democratic Republic as the Indian contribution to the process of peaceful solution of the German problem. He also pleaded for the recognition of the Provisional Government of Algeria. He pressed for speeding up de Gaulle for the de jure transfer of Pondicherry. He suggested that India should buy arms from other countries to meet the threat from increased U.S. arms aid to Pakistan. He also pleaded that steps should be taken to inculcate the spirit of democracy among our armed forces.

The Communist leader appealed to the Prime Minister to take the lead in bringing all parties together and bring about national cooperation to implement the basic issues of our foreign policy. It is only when all the patriotic, anti-colonialist, peace-loving forces of the Indian people get united and actively campaign among the mass of the people for India's independent foreign policy that the reactionary pro-American elements will be silenced, the popular elements in Pakistan get courage and the anti-colonialists and peace forces in the other countries have greater respect for India. Against the new threat from the USA via Pakistan, we need to rouse our own people thus.

**PAK DICTATOR AGAIN**

FRIENDS of America within our country have been trying to put across the line that the Americans will make the Pak rulers behave, for the Americans needed Indian friendship. It is the inherent irony of the situation that President Ayub himself has helped to discredit these attempts to blindfold the Indian people.

On December 12, he described the conditions in India as "no better than they were in Pakistan before October 7," the day the Martial Law was proclaimed!

He virtually charged India for the border incidents when he said: "The sooner they are stopped the better, but if they go on, we know how to answer them." Kashmir was "a question of life and death." He complained of "an organised and centrally controlled campaign against Pakistan by India."

With such an outlook, we have to prepare our people against continuing border incidents and the cold-war type of propaganda over the canal waters dispute and Kashmir.

**CONSTITUTIONAL GARB**

Gen. Ayub has talked to the BBC Correspondent in a televised interview that he would complete the task on hand in about a year's time and then think of preparing his blueprint for the political future of Pakistan.

He claimed that Pakistan had a "representative Government" and also "the substance of democracy."

Like his predecessor, Mr. Ghulam Mohammad, he is flirting with the idea of a Constituent Assembly, but purely nominated.

He is out to perpetuate his autocratic regime under "a Presidential system of Government." The Legislature would have to confine itself to legislative work and would not be allowed to interfere with the executive.

He thinks "it is inferiority complex" to consult other Constitutions.

Pakistan's reactionary rulers are trying to make themselves more presentable before the public audiences of the West, but their handicaps are insurmountable.

The latest Pakistan Martial Law regulations show that for promoting feelings of enmity or hatred against the Government, the punishment is five years, for convening or attending meetings or professions of a political nature, it is seven years, for strikes and agitations, ten years.

After all this, the Pak dictator claims his administration to be "lenient" because no death penalty has been imposed so far. Only last week, the Baluch Gandhi, Khan Abdul Samad Khan, was sentenced to fifteen years' rigorous imprisonment for his supposed anti-State activities.

This week, Faiz, the greatest poet of Pakistan has been arrested soon after his arrival from the Afro-Asian Writers' Conference at Tashkent. There is not a progressive intellectual or a patriotic leader whom anyone of us knows who is free in the Pakistan of today.

The International League for the Rights of Man, a powerful consultant body of the U.N., in a letter to Mr. Mammarskjold, has called the attention of the U.N. to the suspension of human rights under the new military regime in Pakistan.

**PAK ECONOMY**

The Pak Planning Board Chairman indicated early this month that the plan which would cover the period from January 1960 to December 1964 would not be "an ambitious one," and that the fulfilment of the existing plan in many sectors had been "rather dismal."

Most of the big projects proposed by the Pakistan's Industrial Development Corporation and sanctioned by the former Noon Government, are being shelved. The steel plant sanctioned earlier after a long controversy has been eliminated on the advice of the "foreign experts."

Under the new regime all proposals for heavy industries have been given up. Mr. Abdul Kasim, the new Minister of Industry, on December 9, stated that emphasis would be laid on the development of medium and small industries. He welcomed foreign private capital and know-how to collaborate with local capital.

It is obvious that U.S. "aid" has cancelled Pakistan's industrialisation and all that is allowed is consumer industries with U.S. participation and the Pak

market is thus guaranteed for the exploitation of U.S. capital and for harvesting super profits.

Pakistan is likely to have a record deficit in its foreign trade during 1958, according to the Times of Karachi, December 8. In the first nine months of this year, the unfavourable balance of trade was 406 million rupees as against 492 millions in the whole year of 1957. The Karachi paper itself states that the factors responsible were "recessionary trends in the world commodity market, subsidised sale of U. S. farm surpluses and the formation of the European Common Market."

On November 28, the Pak Finance Minister said in his Press Conference that there was an inflationary situation in the country and the recent anti-inflationary measures taken by the new regime had failed to produce the desired result.

It is obvious enough that the Pak economy is not being stabilised but rendered more unstable under the new dispensation.

**U. S. CRISIS AND INDIA**

WHEN Morarji Desai was the Industries Minister and Communist spokesmen in Parliament warned the country against the effects of U.S. recession, Sri Desai had scoffed at the idea of the "developing" Indian economy suffering under any such disease.

During the present Parliamentary session, when the position of India's export trade was debated in the Lok Sabha, Morarji's successor, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri, frankly admitted that the fall in India's export earnings "had, in fact, resulted largely from the declining commodity prices and the set-back in economic activity in some of the highly industrialised countries, more particularly in the U.S. and later in West Europe." According to him, due to this widespread recession, the prices of some of India's primary products had fallen by 18 to 20 per cent.

Commerce Minister Nityanand Kanungo himself revealed the figures of the huge losses in foreign exchange due to the economic crisis in the capitalist world, particularly in the U.S. He estimated the loss at 310 million rupees last year and over 180 millions during the first half of this year. India's loss of foreign exchange in her trade with the U.S. during the same periods was over 72 million rupees and 30 million rupees respectively.

During the first half of this year, India lost 47.2 million rupees on tea, 40.8 million on manganese ore, 14.5 million on cashew kernels, 11.8 million on raw cotton and 5.7 million on shellac.

Export figures also showed a sharp decline. For example, India's tea exports were 440 million lbs. last year compared to 520 million the previous year. Tea exports to the U.S. last year were 23 as against 28 million lbs. in the previous year. The price of tea declined from Rs. 2.80 per lb in 1956 to Rs. 2.45 per lb in the first half of this year.

Members belonging to all parties expressed grave concern at the fall in prices of India's exportable primary goods and the unfair terms of trade.

It is by depressing our prices that the U.S. monopolists make HUNDREDS of millions of dollars from Afro-Asian countries and give TENS of millions as foreign aid, and thus seek to perpetuate the cycle under which they can go on growing richer and we poorer.

President Eisenhower has himself declared that "U.S. foreign aid was not just Christian charity or Red Cross help. Such assistance to other countries was for the best interests of the USA." (Washington, December 11, Reuter)

**THEY ARE LOSING**

The implication of one-sided reliance on the capitalist West are being realised by wider circles of Indian opinion. Hence the efforts to expand trade with the Socialist countries. This week, the trade agreements with the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, negotiated by the K. B. Lal Mission, were laid on the table of Parliament and have been generally welcomed.

The significance of the new economic plans of the USSR and People's China and their impact on India has not been missed by the ruling circles of the West. In fact, it is worrying them no end.

The British Conservative Sunday newspaper, The People (December 7) declared: "The West is quickly losing the economic war with Communism... This year China has doubled its output of steel and doubled its output of grains. Add that colossal achievement to what we know is happening in Russia and you will realise that the Communist half of the world is making mockery of our industrial progress."

It expressed concern that the achievements of Socialist planning would exert great influence on the Asian and African countries.

The Wall Street Journal writes with undisguised fear that "the dramatic progress of the Reds in the economic field" will have their strongest effect "on the countries which recently embarked on the path of independent development."

The New York Times hastens to assure its readers that no leader in the Western States is inclined to "minimise the significance of the Soviet economic challenge." The newspaper arrives at the conclusion: "Russia, which only 40 years ago was a backward country, will serve as a splendid example of rapid economic development. It is perfectly clear that this will make a deep impression on the peoples who don't see a real way out in the conditions of a free (capitalist-PCJ) economy."

Economic relations with the countries of the Socialist camp is saving the Afro-Asian nations from bankruptcy. This is also helping them to get the wherewithal for their industrialisation and also puts them in a better bargaining position with the West.

—P. C. JOSHI

(December 17, 1958)

DECEMBER 21, 1958

OVER and over again I was assured by Communist Party members that the 'idea came from the people and not from above. Indeed, the particular one I went to (Suiping County in Honan Province, now known as the Weixing or Spunilk Commune) had its beginnings in the teeth of a proposal by the Provincial Communist Party Secretary that the co-operatives should be smaller, that they should devote more of their funds to consumption and less to accumulation, should return the collectively-managed animals to individual care and expand the individual vegetable plots, orchards and so on of the peasants.

**CONTRADICTIONS**

He made this proposal because there were contradictions (as they say). These were:

- Water conservancy on the scale required was beyond the physical means of the co-operatives, and beyond the financial means of many. If a reservoir was built to serve two co-operatives there were disputes as to its use. Some co-operatives, instead of combining to build a reservoir, each started to build its own — and often could not finish them.
- Afforestation — there is a lot of mountainous land in this County as well as rich plain land. The co-operatives on the mountains had much land and few people, vice versa on the plains. If the mountain people planted trees they could not care for them, and financially could not afford to wait the required number of years for the fruit, timber or what have you.
- Pasturing — same thing. Fewer cattle in the mountains, relatively more pasture, shortage of fodder on the plains, or scattered pasturage which wasted labour, etc.
- Under the 40-Point Programme for Agricultural Development (which has, I found, the most absolute support from everyone) everyone had to plant a certain variety of crops in each area. But there were differences in soils, terrain and so on. One co-op had land good for sesamum, another land good for cotton, but each had to grow both — with the result that the plans did not work out. In other words, irrational use of land.
- The co-operatives had not enough funds to step up capital construction as wanted. I can best illustrate this by saying that they told me a medium-sized co-operative in that area would not be able to accumulate enough to buy a tractor for five years at the existing rate of development. What were formerly 27 co-operatives in one area, have however, since the formation of the Communes, already put the money down for 28 tractors — and only had not received them because they are, of course, on a waiting list.

- There were wide discrepancies between 'advanced' and 'backward' co-operatives. The poorer ones would have liked help from the wealthier but there was no provision for this.

Thus, they told me, the people started last winter talking about a *ta she* or big co-operative. They'd had some experience of what this would do because in the previous summer they had had to tackle a prolonged drought and the only way to solve it was "like a military operation"—i.e., by combining forces and making them very mobile. They had never heard of a Commune, but many had seen Soviet films of collective and socialist farms, and thought large-scale organisation was a good thing.

So while the Provincial Secretary was proposing to make things smaller, the people were discussing making things larger. Fortunately, the leadership of the Communist Party had its ear to the ground, and at the provincial gatherings it held prior to the Second Session of the Eighth Congress, was already coming to the conclusion that wider organisation was the way to get to Socialism quicker.

The enthusiasm is indescribable. I never in my life saw so many contented faces. The harvest was phenomenal, the speed with which they got it in, planted the next crops, etc., etc., was phenomenal too. And with the released labour force that arose from better organisation, they were able to start getting their own iron out of a nearby mountain group (stated to have more than Anshan) where, one month after the start—i.e. at the time I was there—they were already getting out 500 tons of ore a day.

**EMANCIPATION**

Most of this they were sending to the County town, but a whole battery of small furnaces had sprung up and as the peasants finished their autumn jobs (the winter wheat already sprouting nicely and the sweet potatoes were almost in) they went off in batches to smelt iron. All along the roads one met groups, with their bedding rolls and a bundle of firebricks (firebricks appeared to be a sort of "admission ticket" to the site) to start their own ovens.

The setting up of village restaurants, nurseries and old People's Homes seemed to me the real answer to women's emancipation. Said the women, dining rooms save them at least four hours work a day (they used to walk about three miles a day round the stone quern grinding the flour). In one area of 9,000 families, they have now set up 295 dining rooms with five cooks each—

**PEOPLE'S IDEA**

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Dulles calls it "a backward system of mass slavery." He grieves for "the ancient and rich culture of China, the respected customs and beliefs of its people... their family life" which "are being obliterated in the name of the 'great leap forward'." Dulles and his kind had done all they could to prevent the Communists from liberating China. Today they would like to wish it away—but they can't, mere wishing cannot sweep away the colossus. They have tried to close their eyes but China's transformation "into a great military and industrial Power" has become a nightmare for them, tormenting them even in their dreams. So the sudden love for China's ancient culture and customs, so the attempt to take in the gullible, the effort to isolate China. But what foolish dreams. Leave alone Asia which watches China's amazing progress with bated breath, here is what a British visitor to China, one from Dulles's "free" world, says about the leap forward. She knows China and the Chinese language well and saw and studied the People's Communes. The article here is extracted from her letter to an Indian friend who himself has visited China before and after the liberation and vouches for the accuracy and impartiality of her observations.—EDITOR

I would not say, in answer to your question, that the sending of the intellectuals to the countryside had been a big factor in the formation of Communes—I think the countryside changed the intellectuals more than they changed it, for the peasants are

**MILLIONS OF WORDS CAN BE WRITTEN ABOUT CHINA'S PEOPLE'S COMMUNES**

The Commune was formed on April 24, as a "big cooperative" and in May received word from the Central Committee that it was a "People's Commune" not a "Commune" (because though the ownership has widened, it was not yet ownership by the whole people).

Secondly the nurseries and Old People's Homes free them from further household cares. Thirdly, they now get wages, and what is more important, the wages are paid to them, not to the head of the family as under the old "work-point" system. A woman told me that under the old co-op she had to cook, mind the kids, etc., and managed to earn about 6 yuan twice a year which was paid to her husband as head of the family to lay out. So it she wanted a reel of thread she had to ask her mother-in-law. Now, she gets five or 6 yuan a month, paid into her own hands. (The first thing she did was to buy her mother-in-law a present of cloth—"it was the first time I could show her my filial affection," she explained).

**EMANCIPATION**

And since grain and most vegetables in this co-op are "on supply" in addition to the monthly wage they can eat as much as they like three times a day. So can everyone in the family—kids at the nursery, old people at the OPH. The effect on big families, with small labour power is of course tremendous. The general thing is to have what they call "improved living" every five or six days—i.e. to eat meat, which they pay for. Twice a year, was about the record for eating meat in the past.

**EDUCATION**

Finally education. Now 93 per cent of school age kids can go to school and it will be 100 per cent soon. They have set up "Red and Expert" colleges, and new middle schools (Isn't it interesting incidentally that the educationists are now coming to advocate four hours work and four hours study as Rev. Alley and Makarenko both did), two agricultural technical schools, one four-year Worker-Peasant College (160 students), 129 kindergartens, 93 nurseries, 21 libraries, 21 clubs, eight spare time theatre groups, 28 choirs and various sports teams.

DECEMBER 21, 1958

It is not, of course, true to say that the Communes came solely from the people. They came from the "Mass Line," the General Line for Socialist Construction, the 40-Point Programme for Agricultural Development, from China's circumstances, and from the Great Debate on Socialism, which cleared the people's thinking about what road they wanted to take, and whether it was better in unity to "work hard for three years and live well for a thousand" or plod along slowly with gradual individual betterment and the possibility of a re-growth of rich and poor, disunity, usury, and even a return to the old days...

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new clearer-sighted than they, and in the big move to "combine theory and practice" the practical man at the moment is on top. The youth are questioning everything that's in the books, the Communists at basic levels with their "experimental plots" are experimenting with the impossible and succeeding—as you will have noted from some of the crop yields on small fields, etc.

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comfortable homes and jobs to go and teach in the new technical colleges, etc., in the Communes—and are loving it! A soil biologist in a newly founded four-year middle school made me a long speech about his experimental work on bacterial fertilizer, insisted on my looking at it under the microscope, and finished up, in one breath with the rest of his talk: "... and I have learned more and done more in four months here than I did in four years at college which proves the correctness of the Party's line in sending intellectuals to the countryside."

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**PEOPLE'S IDEA**

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DECEMBER 21, 1958

Cairo

Economic

Conference

INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

POSITIVE MOVE AGAINST AN IMPERIALIST DEVICE

THE successful conclusion of the first Economic Conference of the Afro-Asian Countries at Cairo on December 11 marks a historic landmark in their struggle to extricate their economies from the clutches of the imperialists in the West.

Sensing the grave danger which the latest imperialist device—the European Common Market Scheme (ECM)—posed to them in general, and their trade in particular, they decided upon the only right course which they could in the context—that of planning and coordinating their efforts to guard against its ill-effects.

In so doing they also filled a vital gap in the post-Bandung relationship between their continents, which, in the absence of what the Times of India has called "a process of economic regeneration" seemed to have "little significance".

CRITICISM OF E. C. M.

The significance of the Conference is all the more enhanced by the fact that it was held at the level of commerce and trade bodies, which could not be accused of any Left "political doctrinism". On the contrary, in their political predictions most of them were almost indistinguishable from their counterparts even in the countries whose economic policies they had assembled to counter. Still, their verdict against the practices of the latter was clear and unambiguous. Pulling no punches they termed the ECM "a restricted economic group," the preferential treatment between whose members "created impediments in the development of international trade".

In raising their voice against the ECM, the Cairo delegates were only echoing the unanimous view of the delegations from the underdeveloped countries to the recently-concluded Geneva Conference of the GATT, who, as India's L.K. Jha testified on his return, had also "recognised that the new tariff policy of the industrialised countries under the ECM would greatly damage the export trade of the underdeveloped and agricultural countries" (The Statesman).

"Underdeveloped countries had been making representations since 1954," he added, "that apart from recent recession, their trade was suffering from the restrictions imposed by the advanced countries." These restrictions, according to them "were against the principles of the GATT" (ibid). Thus, from the international GATT at Geneva to the Afro-Asian meeting at Cairo—the perfidy of the imperialists escaped no eye.

That did not, however, mean that a mere expression of sentiments could stop them from continuing with it, to the greater disadvantage of the underdeveloped economies. It was, therefore, only proper that the countries subject to it should devise ways and means to counter its ill-effects.

POSITIVE ASPECTS

If it is in the adoption of these steps that the more positive aspect of the Cairo meeting has to be seen, for, the bodies, emerging therefrom, can well become the nuclei of more closely-knit politico-economic bodies in the future which might embody in a truer form the unity of aspirations of the peoples in the two continents. These, therefore, signify the initiation of a process whose potentialities in the rejuvenation of the economies in the Afro-Asian region can never be stressed too much.

What do these steps concretely envisage? FIRST, they suggest formation of an organisation, to be named the "Afro-Asian Organisation for Economic Cooperation" with headquarters at Cairo. SECONDLY, they recommend the establishment of an international organisation of Afro-Asian countries on the governmental level to promote economic cooperation on "a mutually beneficial basis" and THIRDLY, they recommend the establishment of "suitable preferential conditions for trade" between the countries of the two continents to counter the effects of the ECM. In defining these "conditions," the Conference stated that they should include:

- Expansion of trade agreements among member States;
Establishment of associations among producers of raw materials and semi-manufactured products in territories of Afro-Asian nations;

- Improvement of means of transport and communications and encouragement of projects for formation of transport companies linking countries of the area; and
Extension of bilateral financial agreements among Afro-Asian countries to help them achieve economic development and raise the standard of living of the people.

The evaluation of the results of the Conference will, however, not be complete without expatiating a little on the role of our own delegation there. Comprising leading lights of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) it is reported to have initially opposed the location of the headquarters at Cairo—a fact, which, if true, only bespeaks of its members' parochial outlook. There might be, moreover, more than meets the eye in this otherwise meaningless protest, for, it is no secret that they, among all the participants, have been the most committed ideologically to the policy of continuing the links with the imperialist economies. No wonder that they won at the Conference what the Times of India called the unenviable distinction of being of a rather "conservative viewpoint".

That they did not very much relish the idea of attacking the imperialists too much—though they themselves had submitted a lengthy note on the ill-effects of the ECM—is also evident from the tone of one of their leading organs, the Times of India, which editorially deplored the preoccupation of the Conference "with the task of countering the challenge posed by the ECM" at the expense of what it called the "issues of regional cooperation". Moreover, it also expressed its misgivings about "a politically heterogeneous assembly" functioning as effectively as a geographical and economically close-knit group like the ECM.

Hence, while singing hal-lujahs to the achievements of the Cairo meeting it is necessary that our people do not turn a Nelson's eye towards the activities of the capitalists at home—lest their preoccupation with ideological predilections succeeds in vitiating the spirit of concord generated at Cairo.

Without comment

When the Deputy Defence Minister related the sordid tale of the private sector's betrayal of faith in respect of the progressive increase in the manufacture of components of the automobile industry indigenously, the Tatas and Walchandis raised a furor. Here are, however, some facts, as related by the Commerce and Industry Minister, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri, in the Lok Sabha on December 11:

- The percentages of indigenous content in different models of automobiles manufactured in India, as in April 1958:
Cars: Hindustan Ambassador—60 per cent; Fiat 1100—37 per cent; Standard Vanguard—33 per cent; Standard 10—30 per cent; Trucks and Buses: Tata Mercedes-Benz—53 per cent; Dodge (Medium Diesel) 165" WB—52 per cent; Dodge (Light petrol) 126" WB—26 per cent; Dodge Power Wagon—26 per cent; Leyland Comet—38 per cent; Leyland Royal Tiger/Titon—9 per cent; Jeep: Willy's CJ-3B—58 per cent. Comment is unnecessary.

—ESSEN

December 15, 1958

Colonialism Is Negation Of Democracy

Any serious discussion of the problem would be helpful. Prime Minister Nehru had said inaugurating on December 12 in the Parliament Central Hall the Symposium on Problems and Prospects of Democracy in Asia. And truly the Symposium turned out to be very helpful in focusing attention on problems agitating the minds of all those who want democracy to get a chance in India, want it to survive and develop.

SUMMING up the discussion in his concluding remarks Speaker of the Lok Sabha Ananthasayanam Ayyangar declared that colonialism was the very negation of democracy. He condemned those who posed as democrats at home but encouraged the setting-up of anti-democratic regimes in Asian countries.

The same point was sharply underlined by a leading economist of the country and Vice-Chancellor of the Delhi University Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, when he said he had been tremendously disturbed by reactions in the West over the military coup in Pakistan. Authoritative spokesmen from there had gone to the extent of glorifying the military dictatorship set up over Pakistan, he said.

Member of the Secretariat of the Communist Party of India P. C. Joshi participating in the Symposium started by posing the question: Who is it that threatens democracy in Asia today? He answered it by showing how the threat to democracy in Asian countries was coming at present exactly from those who

between the Asian countries' struggle to overcome the colonialist heritage of economic backwardness and sub-human standards of living on the one hand and the struggle to preserve and develop democracy on the other was emphasised by many speakers including the Prime Minister and the Polish Ambassador. The latter said that Powers which called themselves the "Free World" had shown a peculiar predilection for dictatorial regimes based on small elites which found their egotistic welfare at the expense of the freedom and economic well-being of the people.

The new resurgent Asian nations are seeking and developing their own forms of democracy which will enrich the entire idea of democracy, said P. C. Joshi referring in particular to the experiments in Iraq and Indonesia.

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao referring to the democratic experiment in Kerala chided the Opposition parties there for their intolerance and unwillingness to accept the verdict of the people. Himself a non-Com-

Delhi Symposium On Parliamentary Democracy

had organised the Baghdad and other military pacts. He asserted that Parliamentary democracy was no matter of principle with the West and it was given the go-by and sought to be scuttled as soon as the West realised that its domination over any particular country was in jeopardy. He showed how the anti-imperialist democratic revolution in Iraq had served as a signal to alert the imperialists and set them on the course of destroying Parliamentary democracy in Asia, how their friends had started preparing the ground for it.

That while its form too was important it was democracy's content that was much more important was emphasised by many speakers including the Prime Minister who said it was not much use talking about some form of democracy as the last word and the unalterable form of it.

Mr. Clovis Maksoud of Lebanon, Visiting Professor at the Indian School for International Studies, asserted that in the present age there could be no democracy without Socialism and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha declared he could not agree with those who asserted there was no democracy outside capitalism. He said he could not agree with those who said we could have no Socialism in India because that would mean distributing poverty. "Even poverty had to be distributed. For if I have one loaf of bread and my child is hungry and dying I can't eat the one loaf and ask the child to wait till we produce more bread."

The close interconnection

munist who differed with the Communists on basic and vital points, he disagreed with those who in their intense dislike for Communism would sanction resort to any undemocratic means to stop democracy working out its course in Kerala. He declared his faith that Communism itself would undergo a change in the process.

P. C. Joshi declared that anti-Communism could never strengthen Indian democracy. He said that the task of strengthening Indian democracy had to be seen not from the partisan but from the patriotic point of view.

The Ambassador from Iraq traced in his speech the fundamental difference between the July 14 Revolution in his country which destroyed a tyrannical and despotic pro-imperialist regime to create conditions for democratic development and the military coup of the Pakistan type. The UAR Ambassador also emphasised how the Arab countries had still to cope with the task of completing their national liberation which they were doing simultaneously with trying to evolve forms of popular participation.

Organised by the Indian Bureau of Parliamentary Studies, the Symposium reflected the urge of thinking Indian patriots to unite to defend the gains of our national struggle. President of the Bureau Sohan Lal explained at the beginning the aims of the Bureau and the present Symposium and Sri Naushir Bharucha, M.P. thanked the participants at the end.

NEWS FROM STATES

The recently-concluded session of the Mysore Legislative Assembly has been an important one in many respects. It passed a resolution unanimously—something unique in the history of the State Legislature—calling upon the Central Government to include the Rs. 55-crore Sharavati Valley Project in the Second Plan itself.

TOWARDS the close of the session, when everybody had lost almost all hope, the Revenue Minister dramatically moved the Mysore Land Reforms Bill—a comprehensive measure covering rents, ceilings on holdings, etc.

The session also discussed the food situation in the State. The resolution on the Sharavati Valley Hydro-Electric Project was moved by former Chief Minister K. Hanumanthiah on behalf of 81 members who had signed it from all sides of the House.

The resolution called on the Central Government to include the Project in the core of the Second Plan and provide the necessary foreign exchange for it as otherwise the State's economy will suffer a big setback.

Shameful Neglect

Mysore has been considered a pioneer in the generation of hydro-electric power. But it is now being shamefully neglected. With the formation of the new Mysore State, power shortage has become very acute.

The execution of the Sharavati Project which would cost Rs. 55 crores (foreign exchange needed: total Rs. 24 crores, first phase Rs. 6.4 crores) and be

the biggest in South India, generating 931,000 KW of power, would enable the State to overcome its power shortage and have abundant electricity at cheap rates. People were disappointed when such a project so vital to the State's development was not included in the core of the Second Plan. Successive Ministries in the State had also failed to press the cause of this project with the Centre.

When the Assembly discussed the resolution, strong sentiments were expressed by many members, some even demanding the resignation of the Ministry and satyagraha on the issue.

A very effective speech was made by Communist Member, Narasimham, who on the basis of facts and figures, underlined the importance of the project and demanded the maximum united pressure on the Centre to get it executed.

Former Ministers and Chief Ministers like Hanumanthiah, Nijalingappa, Veeranna Gowda, Baliga and others, who while they were themselves in office did not do anything for the Project, were very vociferous in this session.

The Minister for Electricity, while defending the Central Government, promised that everything would be done to get the Project.

It was after months of delay that the Government at last

introduced in this session the Land Reforms Bill.

The Committee to make recommendations for a comprehensive land reform measure was set up in June 1957 under the chairmanship of Sri Jatti. It had submitted its report in September of the same year. Subsequently, the Assembly had a general discussion on the report.

A Bill was being expected on the basis of these recommendations when the Ministry was overthrown and a new Ministry with Sri Jatti as Chief Minister took office. For those who expected that since the Chairman of the Committee had become Chief Minister, the Bill would be hurried, disappointment was in store. The Bill was being delayed and no session of the Assembly was also being called.

When this session was called, it was thought that in view of the discussion that took place in the Hyderabad AICC, no Bill would be introduced this time also. But the Ministry sprang a surprise by moving the present Bill which is based more or less on the proposals of the Jatti Committee.

The Bill contains some additional welcome features as on the question of ceilings where it proposes uniform ceilings on existing as well as future holdings at three family holdings (the Jatti Committee's proposal was 4½ family holdings for existing ones). No exemption is given to charitable, educational or religious institutions. While existing plantations are exempted, future acquisitions of plantations are brought under ceilings of a special type. But with all that, the Bill still provides for a large number of exemptions which may vitiate the purpose of the Act.

A family holding has been defined as the extent of land with a net income of Rs. 1,200 per year. Net income is calculated as half of the gross produce in perennially-irrigated land and one-third in the case of other lands. In case of large families with more than five members, for every additional family member one additional family holding is allowed subject to a maximum of nine family holdings for Aliya Santhana families and six for others.

Turning a blind eye to all this, Sri Khanna is said to have okayed Sri Chailha's proposal to stop all rehabilitation benefits to refugees who entered the State prior to 1952. The Government is not bothered as to what happens to tens of thousands of families who have not yet been rehabilitated but are still to be refused doles only because the Government says that they should have been rehabilitated.

But the refugees have different ideas. Sri Khanna himself was given a taste of it when he visited the State. When the Union Minister was having his parleys with the State Chief Minister in the Circuit House, thousands of refugees living in and around Gauhati paraded the streets raising slogans. This was something new—all these years the refugees have been content with sending petitions and appeals. Later leaders of the demonstrators presented to the Union Minister the refugees' charter of demands.

Rent And Resumption

Rent is fixed at one-fourth for land irrigated with continuous supply of water and one-fifth for others. An addition to the Jatti Committee's recommendation in this regard is that where the existing rent is less than this, the same will continue.

Resumptions are allowed for those landlords who own less than one basic holding which is the extent of land fetching a net income of Rs. 400 per year. And such

MYSORE ASSEMBLY UNANIMOUSLY DEMANDS ELECTRICITY PROJECT

FROM N. L. UPADHYAYA

landlords are allowed to lease them out in future also. Others are allowed to resume only half of the land leased, subject to certain other conditions.

Compensation to landlords will be at the rate of 15 times the annual rent, to be paid in lump sum to landlords with less than basic holdings and in instalments to others.

There is also provision for reviewing cases of evictions from different dates in different areas of the State. Twenty-five land tribunals will be set up throughout the State to determine the yield of the land, classify them, etc.

The financial memorandum attached to the Bill says that the total extent of land leased to tenants is 61.4 lakh acres. The ownership of about 25 lakh acres will be transferred to the tenants under the provisions of this Bill.

Compensation To Landlord

Compensation will amount to Rs. 37.5 crores at an average of Rs. 150 per acre. The Bill provides for the recovery of this compensation amount from all tenants in 20 annual instalments spread over 20 years. Only about two lakhs acres of surplus land under personal cultivation are expected to become available for distribution.

The landlords of the State have already launched their attack on the Bill. The landlords' association of South Kanara has decided to boycott all official functions in protest and not arrange receptions to Ministers. Papers in the State like the Deccan Herald and Prajavani have warned against any hasty steps which would dislocate agriculture. The Hindu from Madras has bitterly attacked the Bill. It is yet to be seen what the Government will do under this pressure to a measure which is on the whole welcome in its present shape.

Food Situation

It was a very apologetic Food Minister who faced the Assembly when the food situation was being discussed. Prices are shooting up—by over 30 per cent as admitted by everybody. In addition the dry crops in the State have totally failed.

The Food Minister tried to show that the situation was not so bad, that steps were being taken to prevent further rise in prices and so on. But the people are not satisfied with such empty assurances as can be seen from their response to the Communist Party's campaign on the worsening food situation.

KASHMIR TODAY

Kashmir has an impressive record of progress under the First and Second Five Year Plans. The following publications will give readers a detailed account of the achievements registered:

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4. PHYSICAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN
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# PANCHAYATS TO BECOME REAL ORGANS OF SELF-GOVT.

Many people in India, including the highest in the Congress organisation, have often talked about decentralisation and people's participation in administration at the lowest levels.

GANDHIJI himself used to lay the greatest emphasis on this. He said once: "The centre of power is now in New Delhi or in Calcutta or in Bombay, in the big cities. I will have it distributed in the 700,000 villages in India." But all the talk has not changed the situation one bit. It remains a pious wish and an ideal, even after the Congress has become the ruling party. In eleven years of freedom, the Congress leaders have not thought of putting into practice what they had preached.

But for the first time in India, a legislative measure is on the anvil and as has been happening in many cases since April 5, 1957, this measure has been initiated by the Communist Ministry of Kerala. For the first time, there is to be a radical and democratic reorganisation of the panchayats to make them real units of self-Government.

The Kerala Panchayats Bill published in the last week of November and to be introduced in the current session of the Legislature is a measure "to provide for a unified and decentralised system of administration of village affairs through panchayats by organising them as units of local self-government at village level in the State."

The preamble to the Bill states that "it is necessary to so reform panchayat legislation as to enable these bodies to function effectively as units of local self-government embracing all aspects of village life, including agricultural, economic and social services activities, collection of land revenue, maintenance of revenue records and formulation and implementation of the Community Development programme."

And further, "it is a Directive Principle of State Policy embodied in the Constitution of India that village panchayats should be endowed with such powers and authority as would enable them to function as units of self-government."

The Bill is the first major step taken by the Kerala Government to implement the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Committee which has suggested that the Panchayats should be made the basic units of administration at the village level.

The functions that the panchayats are entrusted with under the Bill fall into three broad categories:

- Those in respect of which panchayats would have full devolution of power as units of local self-government, raising their own taxes, deciding policies and implementing them;

- Those for which the panchayats would function as agents of Government with executive delegation of power; and

- Those which involve a higher optimum level of policy-making and organisation in respect of which the panchayat's role would be mostly advisory.

The proposal is for making the panchayats the only organisation at the village level between the Government and the people. They are to be made the media through which the villagers would come into contact with the Government. This would ensure that nothing takes place within a panchayat area without the panchayat being associated with it in one of the capacities as stated earlier.

The functions in respect of which panchayats will have full devolution of power include:

- Construction and maintenance of petty irrigation works;

- Improvement of agriculture and agricultural stock;

- Promotion and encouragement of cottage industries;

- Expansion of primary education;

- Establishment and maintenance of dispensaries;

- Establishment and maintenance of maternity and child welfare centres;

- Distribution of manure and insecticides; and

- Supply of protected water for drinking purposes.

The Government may authorise a panchayat to exercise any power or discharge any function such as collection of land revenue, maintenance of survey and village records, collection of village statistics, supervision and control over Government primary schools, medical, public health, child welfare and maternity institutions, execution of community development work including improve-

ment of agriculture, animal husbandry and village industries.

The main purpose of bringing all these activities under the control of the panchayats is that instead of the multiplicity of functionaries now operating at the village level, the panchayats should function as the organisation which coordinates all Government activities at the lowest level with full responsibility for formulation of policies and their execution.

In general, panchayat areas will be de-limited on the basis of complete revenue villages.

The panchayats will be constituted by direct election on the basis of adult franchise, with one seat reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes and another for women.

The panchayats are empowered to constitute functional committees for different subjects like sanitation, communication, public health, education, etc., consisting of both members of the panchayats and others who are interested in public welfare.

Panchayats can also constitute ward committees with the members elected from each ward and other local persons to study and report

on the needs of the wards.

Every panchayat will have an Executive Officer appointed by the Government who will be a Government servant responsible for the implementation of the decisions of the panchayat. The Executive Officer has the right to attend meetings of the panchayat or any committee constituted by the panchayat but purely in an advisory capacity with no right to move any resolution or to vote.

The annual budget of the panchayat will be prepared by the Executive Officer and he will send it in advance to the taluk tehsildar for scrutiny. The tehsildar will see whether provision is made for the obligatory expenditure for the fulfilment of the statutory functions and functions delegated to the panchayat. After such pre-scrutiny, the budget passed by the panchayat does not have to be sent up for approval.

But the Kerala Government could not accept that view,

report a beginning in that direction.

He did not consider that anybody could object to the need for such changes in the administration or oppose the basic approach in the report.

What was this basic approach? The Constitution of a Parliament at the Centre and Legislative Assemblies in the States on the basis of adult franchise were not enough for full democracy.

Changes are necessary at the lower rungs, at the district and village levels, if democracy is to be real and its spirit is to be respected. People should have a greater share in the day-to-day administration at all levels and only then can planned economic development and progress towards Socialism be achieved.

There might be differences on how to achieve this reform, continued the Chief Minister. But there can be dispute that more and more power should be transferred to

the people.

There might be risks and pitfalls when the people are given more power at all levels of administration. But these have to be faced, as Prime Minister Nehru himself had said, in the context of a planned development of the country which cannot be achieved unless the people are associated with the formulation and implementation of programmes of national reconstruction.

The Chief Minister said that the advantages from giving more power to the people will far outweigh the risks and dangers. He appealed to critics not to sacrifice the principle of associating the people with reconstruction programmes in the name of these dangers.

The Panchayat Bill, the Chief Minister said, had been framed on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee, and added that some more would be published soon.

## Progress Not Possible Without Democracy At The Village Level

—E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

Without democracy going into the villages, no progress is possible—was the trend of the 20-minute speech with which Chief Minister E. M. S. Namboodiripad introduced the Kerala Administrative Reforms Committee's Report for discussion in the Kerala Legislative Assembly on December 1. The Chief Minister explained the basic approach in the report to the question of administrative reforms, an approach which the Government had endorsed.

THE most important point touched by the Committee, he said, was to explain the need for fundamental changes in the administrative set-up.

When the Government formed a Committee to go into the question of administrative reforms, some people had expressed doubts about the need for such an elaborate study. They had argued that the Central Government had already gone into the question and report of Mr. Appleby and others were available. They had said that the Kerala Government need only study those reports and implement whatever reforms were found necessary and suitable.

But the Kerala Government could not accept that view,

several big changes have taken place in our country during the last ten years. We have adopted a democratic Constitution. Secondly, we have accepted planning as necessary for our nation's progress and accordingly, the Five-Year Plans were formulated. Thirdly, the Indian Parliament has decided that Socialism should be the goal towards which our nation must progress.

But no serious discussions had yet taken place on what changes were necessary in the administrative set-up in consonance with these changes. The Kerala Government, Chief Minister Namboodiripad said, considered the Kerala Administrative Reforms Committee's

report a beginning in that direction.

He did not consider that anybody could object to the need for such changes in the administration or oppose the basic approach in the report.

What was this basic approach? The Constitution of a Parliament at the Centre and Legislative Assemblies in the States on the basis of adult franchise were not enough for full democracy.

Changes are necessary at the lower rungs, at the district and village levels, if democracy is to be real and its spirit is to be respected. People should have a greater share in the day-to-day administration at all levels and only then can planned economic development and progress towards Socialism be achieved.

There might be differences on how to achieve this reform, continued the Chief Minister. But there can be dispute that more and more power should be transferred to

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The Panchayat Bill, the Chief Minister said, had been framed on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee, and added that some more would be published soon.

# DEEPER LIES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ALL THIS TALK OF LAW AND ORDER

## KERALA LAW MINISTER'S DEVASTATING EXPOSURE OF OPPOSITION TACTICS

A devastating exposure of the tactics of the Opposition in Kerala was made by Law Minister V. R. Krishna Iyer replying to the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the motion to discuss the present law and order situation in Kerala moved by the Congress Leader of the Opposition, Sri P. T. Chacko.

FOLLOWING are some extracts from the Law Minister's speech.

DEEPER MEANING: I apprehend that this law and order motion has a deeper significance and a wider purpose than a mere discussion on the state of law and order in the Kerala State. Had it been brought by a party which has more leaders than followers, it could have been dismissed as a desperate display of political frustration.

But it has been brought to the House not by any such party but by one which is in power in the 13 States of India and also at the Centre. It is, therefore, difficult to view this motion in isolation, as a simple enterprise in assessing the state of law and order in Kerala.

On the other hand, if we probe into the background, if we cast our eyes a little beyond, in the setting of the topical importance and all-India amplitude of this particular controversy, we can easily see that there is another deeper, more important meaning than what appears on the surface.

I feel this is important because in the whole country, particularly in Kerala, there

is what may be described in simple terms as "Operation Overthrow" organised against the present Kerala Ministry.

RESISTANCE AND SUBVERSION: We find significant guidance in the concluding passage of the Opposition Leader's speech. He said: "If such things continue, we will have to organise the people to resist."

I ask: To resist what? I find in one of the big newspapers in one of the bold headlines: "to resist the vicious tendencies of the Government and party in power." How is this resistance to be organised? By counter-force? So here is the implicit idea that "we will organise resistance by force."

This idea of resistance and organisation for resistance has been given colour and profound meaning by one whom I may call the doyen of this Assembly (the reference is to P. S. Pillai). He said: "We must subvert."

The leader of the Opposition said: "We will resist." He was followed by the leader of the PSP who said: "We have to subvert." In political language all this means violent overthrow of a Government. I charge the

hon'ble member with giving a lead to the people for violent overthrow of a legally-constituted Government.

The other day it was said in Trichur in relation to the Sitaram Mills strike that for the liberation of Kerala, a vimoehana samaram was to be started. What is meant by this? It was amplified by a Congress leader of the State at a Bombay Press Conference. A five-lakh force is being organised "to resist the goondalism of the Communist Party and its followers in Kerala."

What is its purpose? Pious and peaceful visits to churches and praying that the Communist mind may change and goondalism may go down and at the same time that democracy may flourish? They say that the five-lakh force is being organised for this. But it is impossible to believe that.

Our democratic sense is outraged when we hear that five lakhs of men are being organised—5,000 men for each DCC or so. Is it for defence? It is difficult to understand the talk of defence when you are getting ready an army of five lakhs and getting them trained by some retired Malabar Special Police man.

THE OPERATION OVERTHROW: Let us see how this "Operation Overthrow" is worked in this State. It is done

in various interesting ways.

People's attention is distracted from the constructive activities in this State by means of this continuous tension and agitation.

There is hardly any cause, small or big, which does not have a guardian or god-father in the Opposition parties here and outside.

And there are satyagrahas and black flag demonstrations to keep the people's attention and activities distracted away from constructive purposes which are so badly needed.

There is another thing that is going on—a campaign against Ministers and other leading people, of a horrible degrading and vilifying sort that nobody in India has known and no journalist of self-respect can tolerate.

PARA-MILITARY ORGANISATIONS: There are also other things going on here which according to me are dangerous. The most dangerous thing that is taking place in our State, particularly having relation to the major political parties, is the paramilitary organisations coming up communal-wise and otherwise.

The Christopher organisation has been there. It might have certain pious purposes or religious objectives. Its announced purpose is to protect the people from Communist tyranny.

Blue-shirts, white-shirts and some other coloured

uniforms do drills and practise with lathis and truncheons of that kind. If we imagine that Christians are there for Christians, Nairphers for Nairs and Ezhuvaphers for Ezhuvaphers, where are they leading the country? We should never do such things which are of a very destructive character. But then people here are encouraging it.

Then there is the Santi Sena—Father Vada's brand—a force of some five lakhs. Then there are other organisations under some other names.

Remember what the conditions would be if such things are allowed to take place in the 13 other States of the Union where one party is in power. I hope democratic-minded people inside the Congress Party and in all other parties would desist from encouraging this tendency which is very dangerous. If these things take root, they will be like Frankenstein's monster and per chance, the monster will consume the very persons who produced it.

Sometimes we are asked: Why don't you take legal action against these organisations. Our Constitution is broad and liberal and what we depend upon is not the Draconian law but healthy democratic public opinion and practices to cry down such evils and make these paramilitary organisations wither away.

TAMPERING WITH POLICE FORCE: I want to point out to a very dangerous tendency—to tamper with the police force of the State and its loyalty.

There is what is called the Ex-Policemen's Association which has been recently revived. I know that ex-Ministers of the Congress Party and some leading PSP members are actively associating themselves with this Ex-Policemen's Association.

It is not merely an ex-policemen's concern. The Ex-Policemen's Association has among its objectives one to concern itself with the fight for the welfare of live policemen, not the extinct ones.

The Association has been organising public meetings at which demands have been put forward for more emoluments and better pay and all sorts of similar things calculated to instil into the policemen a sense of unrest for the purpose of making certain demands in an organised way. They take care to call themselves an association of ex-policemen. But in point of fact it is a bridge between the outside world and the inner ranks of the police.

drum and elsewhere. Imagine our army and navy having their ex-army and ex-navy associations infiltrating into their ranks! How dangerous will that be?

It is not an isolated activity of some innocent and glibble men. I have material with me to show that in the early days after this Ministry came into office, two or three top Congressmen who have the moral authority to represent this organisation were getting into touch with some policemen. What was the purpose? They told the police that when the time was ripe they would inform them when their assistance would be required. This is the Ayub tendency which is being slowly brought into the Kerala climate—most dangerous, disastrous for the democratic development of the country.

What is the next step that they are taking now in tampering with the police? They champion the cause of individual officers in public. I also find from reports some police officers being praised from political platforms or condemned from them. Some police officers are pictured as good and independent and others as pro-Communist.

Whichever the party that indulges in this game, I for myself would say that it is wrong and not healthy for the country's growth or for the maintenance of public order.

If a police officer is transferred for corruption he has a political champion. If another is suspended for misconduct, he too has a champion.

CURIOUS SPECTACLE: But my point is that such transfers and postings of officers, such kind of administrative activities and processes are taking place everywhere, in every other State and in the Centre, too, and if they are to be tested and scrutinised through a microscope for the satisfaction of every individual member of this House, then I do not know how the administration can go on or how it can progress.

Even in the Centre, there are scandals raised against the Government, criticisms levelled against policies or conduct of persons and charges made against them. And Government says that it is enquiring into the matter. There the matter ends if it is a routine thing.

But here there is a curious spectacle. If a constable or police officer is transferred, a theory is built up, a facile theory, that the Communists of that locality must have said that they should be transferred.

TAMPERING WITH LOYALTY OF OFFICIALS: Tampering with the loyalty of officials is yet another tactic that is being tried. In the Trichur Samaram, in the pseudo-liberation satyagraha-cum-samaram, which came to

its glorious or inglorious end, there was an interesting thing.

The daily programme in this struggle started with satyagraha, police arrest and removal to the police station and a procession and meeting. In these meetings the daily exhortation by a top Congress leader of eminence was, "officers, your wives will hate you for obeying the behests of the Government. Do not obey this foolish Government's orders."

Law and order depends upon the integrity and independence of the officers, who should be protected and who should be proof against political intervention. But you find threats being held out in public meetings that IAS and IPS officers are being marked out by the Centre. Even Magistrates and the Judiciary come up for condemnation and such political attacks.

All this is Opposition party politics forming part of a general scheme of "Operation Overthrow."

TELEGRAMS TO CENTRE: Then another threat is there. For every small thing, telegrams are sent to the Centre that 'A' has done this, that 'B' has walked along the road and obstructed a Congressman and so on.

If this takes place all over India, if everything is passed on to the Centre by tele-

\* SEE PAGE 12

## GIVE A FAIR DEAL TO MOTOR TRANSPORT WORKERS

THE Indian Labour Gazette of August 1958 carries a Labour Bureau report on "Labour Conditions in Public Motor Transport in India" (Indian Labour Gazette, Vol. XVI No. 2, pages 122-149).

The first enquiry into the conditions of labour in rail-ways and bus services was conducted in 1944-45 by the Labour Investigation Committee (Rege Committee). But this was confined to Calcutta, Karachi, Madras and Bombay.

Since then this sector has expanded tremendously and a fresh enquiry has long been overdue.

The Labour Bureau of the Government of India has, therefore, done a good job despite the many deficiencies.

According to the Census of 1951, the total number of persons engaged in road transport was about 893,000 of which 389,000 came under the category of employees. The report admits that since then "the number of persons employed in the motor transport industry would have increased considerably."

The enquiry was confined to the public sector and one thought that it would be comparatively both easy and complete. But it is amazing that the report begins with an apology for insufficiency of material as "many State Governments" were slow and incomplete in their response. The Bureau had to move its own staff to collect the material and hence the difficulties and the deficiencies.

### Trade Unions Ignored

The Bureau, it appears, has also not taken the trade unions into confidence in collecting the data, both about the industry and actual working conditions.

The Bureau has also not gone into the financial aspects of the industry—the capital invested, the cost of operation and maintenance, the wage bill and how it compares with the other items of expenditure, etc. This information is vital in any scheme of investigation of the working and labour conditions in any industry. And much more so in the case of transport for, after

all, power and transport are considered to be the "Advance Guard" of a nation's economy while machine-building, steel and food are considered the three "Marshals."

Nevertheless, the report is very revealing and completely vindicates the demands advanced by the National Federation of Road Transport Workers of India from time to time during the last four years of its existence.

### Workers Kept Temporary

Out of the 45,375 workers employed in public motor transport in the country in 1956, only 15,741 (or 34.7 per cent) were permanent, 24,238 (33.4 per cent) were temporary and 2,628 (5.8 per cent) were casual.

It is amazing that in States like Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madras, Orissa and West Bengal not a single worker is permanent whereas the labour force in these States respectively is 1,790, 978, 2,049, 395 and 3,434. And the number of temporary workers (not including casual) was as high as 78 per cent in U.P.; 61.3 per cent in Delhi; and 59.1 per cent in Bombay; and 59.1 per cent in Himachal Pradesh. The percentage of casual workers was as high as 24 per cent in West Bengal; 19.9 per cent in Madras; 16.9 per cent in Himachal Pradesh; 13.9 per cent in Delhi and 12.7 per cent in Orissa.

This is, a sad commentary on the nature of employment in public motor transport. The mode of recruitment also reveals a complete lack of uniformity. Kerala recruits through the Public Service Commission, Bangalore Division allows the General Manager to recruit to posts carrying a salary up to Rs. 60 per month, some other States recruit through the employment exchanges.

The system of apprenticeship and training also varies from State to State. Under "labour turn-over," the report reveals that out of a total of 36,356 workers (excluding casual), 1,604 had to leave during the year ending September 1950. It is significant that out of them, 190 either retired or died; 446 left of their own accord and 968 (or 60 per cent) were "dis-

# LABOUR NOTES

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

charged." Uttar Pradesh tops the list in "discharges" with 250 to its credit. Bihar, Mysore and Bombay follow with 174, 138 and 113 respectively. Himachal Pradesh discharged 43 out of its labour strength of 640.

Why this heavy number of discharges in the public sector? Obviously trade-union activity is not to the liking of these employers.

The data concerning basic wages is also very disturbing. Apart from the fact that there is absolute anarchy in the rates of wages prevailing in different States, the report reveals that horribly low wages exist in certain States and categories.

The monthly basic wages of drivers ranged from between Rs. 35-50 in Assam and Rs. 75-130 in Andhra Pradesh. Even if the entire monthly earnings of the drivers are to be considered, only in Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and a unit of Bombay certain sections of drivers get more than Rs. 150. In Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and U.P. the monthly earnings are less than Rs. 100.

The basic wage of a conductor varies from Rs. 25 per month to Rs. 55 per month and his total earnings range from Rs. 39.60 in Madhya Pradesh to Rs. 157.50 in Bombay. These are more than Rs. 100 in Andhra, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Madras, and the Punjab and less than Rs. 100 in U.P., Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and so on.

The basic wage of cleaners ranges from Rs. 15-33 in Madhya Pradesh to Rs. 35-40 in Bombay. Their total earnings varied from Rs. 42.90 in Orissa to Rs. 92.70 in Assam. Such are the wages paid to the workers engaged in this hazardous industry—motor transport. And this in the public sector!

### Dearness Allowance

The same picture obtains even in the system of dearness allowance. Though paid in all the States "the scale and system of payment differed from State to State."

It was only in Bombay (one unit) that for workers getting a wage up to Rs. 200 per month, the dearness allowance "was linked to the consumer price index number and was paid on the Bombay mill-owners' scale."

Other allowances for the running staff varied from State to State. Night shift allowance was paid only in Bombay, Punjab, West Bengal, Madras and Kerala.

Bonus was paid in Kerala. In certain other States incentives such as good attendance bonus, good conduct bonus and good driving bonus were paid. There were States where none whatsoever, was paid.

"The percentage of workers housed varied from three to 55" says the report—12.8 in Andhra Pradesh, eight in Assam, three in one unit in Bombay.

House rent charged was also different in the different States. In Andhra Pradesh (Districts) it was five per cent

of the cost or ten per cent of the basic pay whichever was less; in Assam ten per cent of the basic pay or standard rent whichever was less; in Santacruz in Bombay, the rent was 15 per cent of the employees' wages subject to a minimum of Rs. 18 and a maximum of Rs. 25.

Tenements under the subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme were provided only in one unit in Bombay (960 tenements out of a total labour force employed of 6,500).

### Working Hours

According to the Motor Vehicles Act as amended up-to-date motor workers are required to work nine hours a day and 54 hours a week.

In many States, the working hours were eight in a day and 48 in a week. Only in one unit in Bombay, the working hours were seven-and-a-half in a day by agreement. This was so in the City and Suburban Service in Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh.

But the spread-over was in most cases the trick to extract more work from the workers.

Only in Kerala and West Bengal, it was eight hours. It was 11 hours in Mysore, 12 hours in Himachal Pradesh, 14 hours in one unit in Bombay, 16 hours in one unit in the Punjab and 12 in the remaining States.

It is the universal experience of workers that they are called upon to remain on duty in practice for the entire period of the spread-over. That is why in the Tripartite Transport Legislation Committee workers' representatives unanimously demanded that in no case should the spread-over be more than 10½ hours.

Even in the matter of leave and holiday with pay, there is absolutely no uniformity. In Madras, there is no casual leave. In Mysore, there is no distinction between casual and sick leave.

Casual leave ranges from ten days in Bombay (one unit), Delhi, West Bengal to 14 days in U.P., 16 days in Bihar and 20 days in Punjab and Kerala.

In Rajasthan there is no paid holiday whereas paid holidays vary from two in Bombay (one unit) and Orissa, to three in Himachal Pradesh, four in Bihar and Mysore, seven in Madras, 12 in Jammu and Kashmir, 19½ in Assam, 20 in Madhya Pradesh, 22 in Assam, 23 to 27 in U.P., 23 in Delhi and 29 in Manipur.

The report reveals that the number of accidents during the year ending September 1956 were 1893 minor, 116 serious and 109 fatal. The only States where there was no accident were Kerala, Rajasthan and Manipur. The biggest number of accidents were in Madras (577—eight fatal), Bombay (577—two fatal), West Bengal (505—12 fatal) and U.P. (309—78 fatal).

And the report says that well equipped dispensaries existed only in Bombay, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Madras and Mysore.

That is why the National Federation of Transport Workers of India demanded the

opening of dispensaries in all centres where 150 workers or more worked.

In the field of industrial relations, the Report reveals that standing orders had not yet been framed in Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and U.P.

Delhi and West Bengal have been exempted from the provisions of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946. However, service regulations were passed in Delhi. But in West Bengal, there were no rules. In other States, workers were governed by State rules.

Works Committees existed only in Bihar, Bombay (one unit), Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madras, Mysore, Orissa and Punjab. "In West Bengal, there is no works committee but workers had free access to superior officers in case of need or any grievances." So the West Bengal transport is a happy feudal family!

There are trade unions in all the States. But West Bengal has not recognised the union. Unions are recognised only in Andhra Pradesh, Bombay, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Madras, Orissa, Kerala and Punjab. In the rest of States, unions are there but not recognised. In Assam there is a union which is neither registered nor recognised.

Do not the recommendations of the 16th Indian Labour Conference concerning the recognition of trade unions apply to State Governments?

The report is a revealing document. It fully vindicates the demand of the Workers' Federation that a Tripartite Committee be appointed to enquire into the conditions in the industry. This suggestion was also made by the Tripartite Motor Transport Legislation Committee which was presided over by the Chief Advisor (Factories), Government of India.

Much has to be done to improve the wage and working conditions of public road transport workers and bring about uniformity in their services. (December 13)

# I R A Q

To make facile comparisons can be considered as the innocent pastime of the superficial. But it becomes something more and worse if current burning developments are the object of the game. This is exactly the case with the parallel some interested quarters are seeking to draw between the July revolution in Iraq and the sordid, Pakistan coup of October.

THE similarity: the rôle of the army. Beyond this only plus moralising or even a somewhat impious wish: democratic institutions are unsuited to Asia.

Let us look at some of the differences. Or, at any rate, let us briefly rush over what was overthrown in Iraq and what the new regime has set about accomplishing. The sparse telling of facts would give us the difference—and also the real lesson.

The old Iraq constitution—drafted in the British Colonial Office under the Mandate system—had a senate appointed by the king, who had the right to dismiss the Cabinet even if it enjoyed the confidence of Parliament, which could also be dissolved when it suited the royal pleasure. All decisions of the Cabinet, all laws passed by Parliament had to be approved by the king—a British plaything who had an absolute power to veto.

Even this hamstrung Parliament was never genuinely elected, since no political parties were allowed, newspapers were licensed by the Ministers of the Interior, trade unions were banned as well as meetings and demonstrations. Leaving aside for the moment the Nuri clique's foreign policy, what the Iraqi revolution overthrew was precisely this "police State" as it has been aptly termed by Iraq's Ambassador to India.

There is a fair amount of appreciation of the radical turn taken by the new Iraqi Government in its relation to the imperialist Powers. To put it simply it knocked Baghdad out of the Baghdad Pact.

### Swift Action

What, perhaps, is as yet not sufficiently known are the far-reaching internal reforms which have been initiated.

Immediately on coming to power, the property of the monarchy and 65 leading Nuriites was confiscated. All royal titles were abolished.

Swift action was taken against the former key officials in the Security Department, Foreign Ministry as well as in the Education and Public Works Departments. Only some weeks ago, the three top traitors—Raifa Aref, the former Chief of Staff, Jamal, the former Prime Minister, and Daghastani, the former Deputy Chief of Staff—were condemned in an open trial. The verdict, according to the foreign news correspondents, was received with thunderous applause.

Telling and heartening indeed was the charge-sheet: "The accused opposed positive neutrality, endorsed the Baghdad Pact, accepted American military assistance...."

Side by side with this went the amnesty for all political prisoners, the recall of the exiles, the reinstatement of professors and students who had

unjustly been dismissed. A thousand oil workers turned out some two years ago in a victimisation drive, got back their jobs.

Democratic liberties are gradually being established, for which, according to a Labour Monthly Correspondent in Baghdad, there is a wide demand. Eight dailies are now appearing and trade unions have set up their foundation committees. An eight-hour working day has been proclaimed.

A ceiling of 15 per cent has been placed on all profits. The rents of houses and of premises for shops have been cut down by 20 per cent. There has been a 20 to 40 per cent reduction in the prices of bread and meat. Taxes on tea, sugar and medicinal goods have been scaled down together with a rise in taxes on luxury goods like beer, spirits, cosmetics, etc.

Perhaps most significant of all has been the projected land reforms. Contrary to the

# CYPRUS Who Is For Freedom

DEBATE SHOWS

THE recent United Nations debate on Cyprus was revealing, to put it mildly. Once again India found herself out of tune and step with the United Kingdom and the other members of the mystical—or is it mythical?—Commonwealth.

All manner of banalities were uttered by Commander Noble and the United States donned rather awkwardly the mantle of "neutrality". But the New York Times of November 30 was cruelly truthful when it wrote:

"These losses (of Mediterranean bases) have impelled the British to cling all the more to Cyprus.... Its value is apparent from the fact that it was used as a staging area for both the British-French Suez expedition and the British intervention in Jordan last summer."

### HARD WALL

That was the hard wall which would not yield to all Krishna Menon's skill in wooing. The British position, backed up by Turkey, was that the United Nations should approve the steps she was taking to tackle the problem and allow her to continue her efforts.

And what were these steps? Denial of independence to Cyprus, partition of the country along Cypriot-Turk lines and a nebulous "partnership" scheme.

The Greek delegate, backed by Archbishop Makarios as the spokesman of the Cypriots, made a bid for conciliation by

small's pace in many countries, these reforms were ready in draft from as early as ten weeks after July 14.

Straightaway rents were reduced and the landlords were made to pay for all the irrigation charges. Following this, came the project for "operation onslaught" on the monstrous landed system. In the old Iraq there were some 100 estates of more than 12,000 acres—two of over 600,000 acres. Side by side, 25,000 plots existed of less than 2½ acres, 68 per cent of the rural population owning something like eight per cent of the land.

### Ceiling On Land

The projected new land law puts an upper limit of 1,000 donams (One donam equals 2,500 square metres) for irrigated land and 2,000 donams for rain-fed land. This is expected to give an income of between 1,000 to 1,500 dinars. A

lower limit of 60 donams for irrigated and 120 donams for rain-fed land has also been prescribed.

A Labour Monthly Correspondent in Baghdad writes in its December issue: "A shortcoming of the law is that it gives compensation and the peasants are to pay some money for the land they receive. True, the aim, of course, is to create a middle class in the country. But if the land law is put into practice in a vigorous manner (as sure it will) it will create cooperatives in every village and trade unions for the farm workers (both points are in the law itself)."

It is in this vigorous and forward-looking atmosphere that a certain reshuffling of the Cabinet has taken place. The Correspondent, whom we have just quoted, analyses the removal of Col. Aref, Jabir Umer and Rikabi as a great blow to the Right-wing elements in the revolutionary coalition, who are rather more

influential in the Istiqlal and Baath Socialist Parties. He says, "so now, though there is a need for another shake-up which might come soon, now things for the internal policy are much better."

The Right-wing elements in the Baath Socialist and Istiqlal parties have "bowed their heads after the reshuffle" and joined with the Communist Party and the National Democratic Party in reinforcing and activating the National Front, which symbolises and organises the unity of all the healthy forces in Iraq.

The Communist Party and the National Democratic Party stand for federation with the United Arab Republic, more or less in the same way as Yemen is associated with it. They stand for the freedom of political parties and for the independent tackling of internal affairs, while desiring common federal policies for defence, foreign affairs and coordinated programmes for cultural and economic affairs.

The National Front programme proclaims the unity of all Arabs, sets out the principles of foreign policy as non-alignment and anti-colonialism, declares the Arabs and Kurds as partners with equal rights, stresses the need for a genuine democratic life and sets forth the goal of a strengthened and uplifted economy through industrialisation.

Many problems face the young Republic. The withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact has not yet been formally effected, nor the Special Treaty with Britain abrogated. Then there are the treaty with the USA and the Point Four Programme. Finally the question comes in of withdrawing from the sterling area which involves the question of Iraq's sterling balances and the future payment system, royalties, etc., of the British petroleum company in the country.

Internally, fierce resistance from the big landed interests and the tribal chiefs is expected as well as the impact felt of the quick abolition of all tribal laws. The problems of rapid development are also not going to be automatically solved.

But the seven months since July have amply demonstrated the capacity of the Iraqis and their leaders to grapple with these problems, strong in their own unity and the fraternal sympathy of the Socialist world and the other countries of the vast peace zone. Confidence and determination fill the air of Baghdad, now a name of freedom.

States in the name of strict neutrality and the reluctance of many West European delegations... nullified that effort."

The upshot was that the Political Committee of the U.N. passed the Iranian resolution bringing Cyprus under NATO patronage. India found herself voting against together with the USSR, UAR, Greece and 19 others. The 31 positive votes were those of the U.S., the U.K. and other illustrious "freedom-lovers." There was an almost record number of abstentions.

Finally, however, the General Assembly passed a tame resolution to the effect that "continued efforts will be made to reach a peaceful, democratic and just solution in accordance with the U.N. Charter." This took the position back to 1957—and ensured continued British atrocities and the Cypriot resistance.

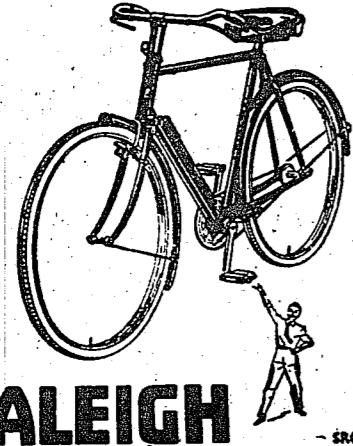
Archbishop Makarios, who was fully backed by the Left-wing Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL), said, "we are grateful to India" and added, "the U.S. is following the same wrong policy on Cyprus which she has been following in the Middle East."

We in India need to look closely at the Cyprus situation not only to express our solidarity but even more to learn once again who are with us when we stand for freedom and peace, and who malign us precisely then.


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PAGE ELEVEN

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Printed by D. P. Sinha at the NEW AGE PRINTING PRESS, 5, Jhandewallan Estate, M. M. Road New Delhi, and published by him from 7/4, Asaf Ali Road, Delhi.  
Phone: 25794  
Telegraphic Address: MARXBADI  
SUBSCRIPTION RATE  
INLAND: Yearly Rs. 12-0-0;  
Half-yearly Rs. 6-0-0 and Quarterly Rs. 3-0-0.  
FOREIGN: Yearly Rs. 16-0-0;  
Half-yearly Rs. 8-0-0.  
All cheques and drafts to be made payable to T. MADHAVAN and not to NEW AGE.

DECEMBER 21, 1958

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NEW AGE

## LITERATURE SALES

### Andhra Experience

ANDHRA set up a new record this year during the sales week to sell Party and progressive literature and to enrol subscribers to the Party's Telugu daily *Visalaandhra*. The sales figure this year was Rs. 50,000—Rs. 2,000 more than the 1954 figure of Rs. 48,000.

This achievement becomes all the more creditable when the economic situation in the country and the Party's organisational position are considered. It at the same time has shown what great possibilities exist for pushing up the sales of our literature and the Party journals.

The credit for this great success should go to the comrades who showed enthusiasm and determination to overcome all obstacles.

K. B. Mangayya, a textile mill worker, for instance, was sorry that he was not included in any sales squad. So he wrote a letter to Visalaandhra expressing his resolve to sell literature worth at least two rupees. With this resolve he started selling and finished with a sale of Rs. 90.

In Parachuru village, a tobacco growing centre, literature worth Rs. 70 was sold and six new subscribers for Visalaandhra were enrolled. They were able to do so much despite the fact that this is the tobacco transplanting season and the growers are short of cash.

From Nellore, the literature taken by the various units was as follows: Nellore students—Rs. 654, Kovur units—Rs. 435, Nellore Taluq—Rs. 100, Pundiri Taluq—Rs. 100, Kamigiri Taluq—Rs. 85 (in addition to what they got from Vijayawada directly), Gudur Division—Rs. 250, altogether Rs. 2,000.

The women's squad of Eluru sold the first consignment of literature worth Rs. 150 and ordered another Rs. 250 worth of literature.

The Mustabada squad had combined the sale with political propaganda. They carried on a campaign on kisan problems, particularly on the question of the High-Level Channel and collected signatures on petitions. Altogether they sold Rs. 200 worth of literature, held one public and two group meetings, and collected four to five hundred signatures on the petition for the Channel.

Parvalipuram is a border taluq in the north and the movement here is relatively weak. Moreover, traditions of any literature sales drive are almost non-existent here. Still the comrades resolved to push the sales. They took literature for Rs. 2,000, deciding to sell as much as they can during the week and then open a bookshop or a reading room with the rest of the books.

The sales in Maruteru were very encouraging. In the first week of November, comrades there had sold Rs. 2,400 worth of literature and they expect to sell another Rs. 150 worth. They have enrolled 24 annual subscribers to *China Pictorial*.

In spite of the devastating floods in the last month,

# A SAMPLE OF KERALA CONGRESS CULTURE!

TO supplement all the filthy abuse that is poured out against the Communist Ministry, every big meeting in Kerala organised by the Opposition parties and addressed by top Congress and PSP leaders has a cultural programme at its end. What the Opposition leaders speak is itself something which ordinary decency, leave alone political responsibility, would not allow leaders of parties to say from a public platform. But even they have limits and that is where the cultural programme steps in.

The most notorious item of this Congress cultural programme is a *Katha Kalakshepam*—the narration of a story in prose and verse to the accompaniment of actions and gestures. The entire theme is illustrated with imaginery from current everyday life or from well-known tales and anecdotes.

The Congress version of the *Katha Kalakshepam* is entitled *Bhagwan Macaroni*. The title originated from the efforts of the Communist Ministry to popularise tapioca macaroni. It is written and rendered by a Congressman.

Congress and PSP leaders consider *Bhagwan Macaroni* an additional attraction to their meetings. Every Opposition meeting worth the name is announced with: After the speeches there will be a cultural programme when *Bhagwan Macaroni* will be rendered...

Here below are some of the printable extracts from *Bhagwan Macaroni*—we leave you to imagine what the unprintable portions would be like. We have not made any improvements on the translation that has been sent to us—since that might make it look a little more civilised.

### GIVE WAY, HERE COMES THE CART

The cart that all the thieves get together in, the cart that all the blackleg leaders push, the cart that the Macaroni Ministers get into, the cart that little Macaronis pull, the cart that celebrates marriages in succession quick, the cart bought in the name of labour and the cart that is now on the throats of labour. That is for the Communist Government.

### NOW FOR ITS CHIEF MINISTER, E. M. S. NAM-BOODIRIPAD:

Do you see the Nambudiri ruling to ruin the land by his rule, lying on the cot like a dog blowing untruth every time he opens his lips even if stammering halts, that is the good man, the Minister Chief.

Vizianagaram comrades sold literature worth Rs. 100.

Handloom weavers are hard hit by the crisis in the industry. Still handloom weaver comrades in Eluru sold Rs. 200 worth of literature and comrades in Sanivarappeta of the same town sold Rs. 100.

It is the transplantation of tobacco season in Ongole taluq when people do not have much cash, but comrades here sold literature for Rs. 2,400.

In Kanigiri, one person, Sri Suryanarayana, sold literature for Rs. 340.

Such cases of enthusiastic work can be multiplied any number of times.

These sales revealed yet yet another fact. No political and ideological differences came in the way of people buying literature.

The largest sales were of political literature, mainly those published by the Visalaandhra Publishing House. Most popular were pamphlets on Kerala, Sarvodaya and Gandhian ideology, on China, the Amritsar Party Congress Resolution, the Party Constitution, and on land reform measures.

### AND FOR THE FOOD MINISTER, K. C. GEORGE:

What is this Macaroni the Food Minister has brought to vex the poor? What is this Macaroni that changes men into frogs and bloats the stomach like pumpkin? Like Mundasseri's Education Bill a mixture kneaded with tapioca flour and cake of groundnut mixed with wheat O, Macaroni Payasam! if a drop gets into the stomach, like the frog you will leap and with Inquilab and Zindabad in the stomach, to a hospital you run with fear.

The charter certificate for the Food Minister reads: In food deals, lakhs he swallowed, that is the hero our Food Minister, the Food Minister swallowed 16½ lakhs.

### THE EDUCATION MINISTER:

To settle old accounts prepares he Bills, such blockhead is our Minister Education. And in prose: A Mundasseri who does not know how to spell "academy" should be called a blockhead of an Education Minister.

### THEN ABOUT THE PARENTAGE OF COMMUNISTS:

It is admitted that we (non-Communists) are not persons like Communists without a father. We are not called boys, without a sire or bastards like those of Vayalar.

### MINISTER FOR HARJAN WELFARE CHATHAN:

If it is known that Chathan is coming, the mothers of grown-up daughters say: Chathan Minister is coming, my girl, fly my girl and hide in the cellar.

### LAW MINISTER V. R. KRISHNA IYER:

Law unknowing he jabbars, the spring of nonsense, this is the Minister Law.

And so on... it goes into thirty pages. This is the level of the culture that is served out in Congress and PSP meetings in Kerala. Congressmen in the rest of India who read this will be doing great good to our public life and to our glorious cultural traditions, if they tell their Kerala counterparts that they are not doing any service either to themselves or to the Congress by descending to such despicable depths.

## Opposition Tactics In Kerala

### \* FROM CENTRE PAGES

grams, then what is the state of provincial administration in this country?

INCREASE IN CRIMES: I am so sorry that the figures in relation to the increase in crimes given here are wrong. Actually, I find that in 1954 there were 160 and odd cases; in 1955 it went up greatly and in 1956, it came down. Does it mean that men were peaceful during President's rule or that the Government in 1955 encouraged crimes?

LET US NOT BARK AT EACH OTHER: In this country we have yet to do big things. A Master Plan to harness our water resources is coming up before the House for discussion. What a vision it unveils before us!

Kerala is just born; the infant must grow strong quickly; it must have more vitality and more enthusiasm. For that we must produce more social wealth. That is what is required.

On the other hand, if we are to dissipate our energies in squabbles, satyagrahas and demonstrations in season and out of season, and if we are

not tolerate it. I would, therefore, say that the law and order position in Kerala is perfectly normal and there is no question of totalitarianism here.

Let us put an end to this seasonal thing of having to discuss the breakdown of law and order over and over again. On the other hand, if we look at Andhra, Bengal, U. P. and even the Punjab, we will find the same charges made there against Governments. In Andhra Pradesh, there are even statements by Congress Ministers that law and order there has broken down.

There is no law and order problem here. Here people sleep in their beds. People are going to work in factories and they return home peacefully. This being so, it is not proper to paint a macabre picture.

I, therefore, request that we must direct our attention away from these destructive things and devote ourselves for the greater service of our people and the glory of our land. For this, may I ask the cooperation of our friends sitting opposite?

to have this periodical law and order controversy, these things are not going to be helpful to a growing State.

All of us have a great responsibility to the people. Therefore, let us sink our differences and not bark at each other inside and outside this House or quarrel with each other on account of the desire for grabbing political power.

Let us work for the good of the people. In the words of Tagore, I may say: "The song we came to sing remains unsung this day." Let us learn to sing the song of national progress in chorus.

I want to assure the House that every helpful suggestion that has come forward from the Opposition in regard to the maintenance of law and order as a condition of progress will be warmly welcomed. But in the guise of law and order as a condition precedent, let us not try this "Operation Overthrow."

It cannot succeed and will not succeed because the commonsense and democratic sentiments of 38 crores of Indians who are also interested in the Kerala experiment will

## KERALA NOTE-BOOK

### DISCRIMINATION

DHEBARBHAI and other Congress leaders are fond of charging the Kerala Government with political discrimination. The louder they shout about this, the more they think they can hide the actual discrimination that goes on—by the Congress against the Communists.

Recently three representatives of Kerala's rubber workers had to be nominated to the Central Rubber Board. If they were to be really the representatives of workers, they should have been chosen from organisations which represent the majority of the workers.

But whom did the Congress Centre choose? C. E. Bharatan (INTUC—Mahe), E. K. Nair and K. Karunakaran, President and Secretary of the Kerala Branch of the INTUC. Their qualification—obviously that they belong to the INTUC.

The organisations which represent the majority of the rubber workers of the State—the AITUC and UTUC—have rightly characterised this as political discrimination. Dhebarbhai should first answer them before flinging wild charges against the Kerala Government without producing a single fact to substantiate these charges.

### LIE CAMPAIGN

WHEN he was asked in the Assembly why the allegations which appeared in the Kerala Press against the Kerala Government were not being refuted, Law Minister Krishna Iyer said this would necessitate the creation of a separate portfolio. And he certainly was not joking.

Leave alone the smaller papers which have made this a regular trade, the instance I am giving here relates to the respected national daily, the *Mathrubhoomi*.

When the students' struggle was withdrawn some time ago, one of the assurances given by the Chief Minister was that all cases arising out of the struggle would be withdrawn. The *Mathrubhoomi* a few days ago launched an editorial attack on the Chief Minister charging him with breach of promise.

Then Sri Kelappan, the well-known Sarvodaya leader who had helped in settling the students' struggle, brought out a few facts.

What are these facts? The total number of cases registered in connection with the struggle was 128. Out of these 109 have been withdrawn—that is, all the cases in which students alone and students and others jointly were involved. The other 19 cases are

those in which only non-students are involved.

If the *Mathrubhoomi*'s demand that these cases also should be withdrawn is to be justified, it should mean that anybody who commits any violent act in any place where a struggle is going on must not be prosecuted. Or the *Mathrubhoomi* should admit that the students' struggle was not just a students' affair, that it was something more, part of "operation overthrow," and that is why it is demanding withdrawal of all cases including those in which only non-students were involved.

The *Mathrubhoomi* did neither. In a later editorial, it tried to extricate itself by saying that it had written earlier on the basis of a statement by the Chief Minister that the cases pending would only be withdrawn after an examination into their character.

Here again, the *Mathrubhoomi* was being dishonest because the Chief Minister had issued no such statement. The only statement that had been issued was by certain student leaders who claimed that the Chief Minister had said this. And the very responsible *Mathrubhoomi* did not think it even necessary to make an enquiry before rushing into an editorial.

This is the type of newspapers with which the Kerala Government has to contend and the Law Minister was right when he said a separate portfolio would be required to deal with them.

### THEIR PRACTICE

ONE can hear even now, though not as loudly as before, that the Communist Government in Kerala protects Party members and fellow-travellers who have encroached into Government lands.

Here again, like the charge of political discrimination, the boot is on the other foot.

Another Congress-led encroachment has just taken place in the High Ranges in Kottayam District.

On-the-spot enquiries show that the decision to encroach on Government land was taken at a meeting in the Karimnagar Primary Congress Committee office.

A high-powered organisation went into action immediately and people were brought in buses and jeeps to occupy the land! The talk in the area is that P. T. Thomas, brother of the Congress leader of the Opposition, Sri P. T. Chacko, staunchest champion of law and order in Kerala, and another Congress leader T. J. Antony gave the leadership to this. Sri B. K. Nair, Kerala INTUC chief, is another one who is said to have given instructions for entering a particular area.

There are thousands of acres of cultivable Government land here and the idea behind the present illegal occupation is to sabotage the land distribution programme of the Kerala Government.

The organised kisans in the place understood this and protested. Immediately the champions of law-and-order burnt down the Kisan Sabha office in Panchavayal and began terrorising Sabha workers.

When these people will be evicted by the Kerala Government as they should be, there will, of course, be another series of political discrimination charges.

### WISHFUL THINKING

READING the Times of India on December 9, all friends of the Kerala Government would have been perturbed. The particular news-item was headed: "Red majority is threatened—Independent Kerala MLA's Attack."

The report was based on a criticism of the Government's food policy made by an independent member belonging to the Communist Bloc. "The significance of the statement," said the report, "was that it came on the eve of the food debate in the Assembly tomorrow."

The Times of India and quite some others must have been very much upset when the food debate took place and nothing happened to "threaten the Red Majority."

All that happened was a statement by the independent member which never found its way into the columns of the Times of India. That is, of course, normal with the objectivity of our bourgeois Press.

The independent member said that he had made his statement because of the difficulties of getting rice in the rural areas. He had made a representation to the Food Minister about his own constituency and had received no reply. This disappointment had found expression in his statement.

Then he warned the wishful thinkers: The statement had not come out of any change in attitude either to the Communist Party or to the Kerala Government. He was pained to find such interpretations being given.

Earlier also, there was once a report of an imminent walk-over by some members belonging to the Communist Bloc. All that came out of it was a sensational exposure by a Communist MLA of a dirty Congress attempt to buy him over.

I am awaiting the next such report—because some people find it difficult to accept that the Communist Government in Kerala has come to last.

—OBSERVER (December 17)

## Police Reprisals Against Communists

TWO hundred policemen cordoned the office of the District Committee of the Communist Party at Bharatpur (Rajasthan) late in the night of December 12. They had no search warrant but they carried out a raid. They said they had come to arrest a member of the District Committee, Comrade Suraj Bhan.

According to them he had committed an offence under Section 392 Cr. P.C. and had been wanted for some time. Hardly three hours before this police swoop, Suraj Bhan had been addressing a public meeting where the police and C.I.D. people were present in force. One wonders why he could not be arrested there if he had been wanted.

The demonstrative and provocative raid has strengthened the impression among people on the spot that this, alongside the systematic harassment of Communist Party workers

by implicating them in fabricated cases of petty thefts, etc., launching of prosecutions under Section 107 Cr. P.C. and constantly shadowing them which has been going on for a long time, is part of a calculated move to spread terror in the locality.

This has been stepped up according to local observers since the demonstration staged before the State Home Minister under Communist leadership on December 7 to protest against the high prices (Rs. 30 to 32 a maund) of food.

Local police officials have openly declared that whatever is being done by them now is as a result of that demonstration and on instructions of the Home Minister.

The Secretary of the District Committee in a memorandum to the Home Minister demands the calling off of this reign of terror in Bharatpur.

## THE MOBILE EXHIBIT

SPEAKING on cut motions on the Labour Department in the Lok Sabha on December 15, Comrade S. M. Banerjee had some interesting things to say about the Union Deputy Labour Minister Abid Ali. Some extracts follow:

I am extremely happy to know that the pavilion of the Labour Ministry in the India 1958 Exhibition is quite attractive. My attention has been drawn to a speech of the Hon'ble Deputy Minister of Labour. I am all for having a good exhibition. But this Deputy Labour Minister sometimes becomes a mobile exhibit. While he moves around the country, he sows seeds of disruption among the workers.

I was shocked to see the Deputy Labour Minister's speech at Indore. I do not mind his attacks on the Communist Party of India. I wish only to remind the Hon'ble Minister that Communist-hunting has in the past led to suicide and insanity. I do not want that my Hon'ble friend should become a victim of either of these.

(An Hon'ble Member: He can't help.)

But here, my Hon'ble friend in the form of a mobile exhibit goes to Indore and what does he say?

Comparing the wage structure of textile workers in the Communist-ruled State of Kerala with other States, he said the State-managed textile mills in Kerala paid considerably less wages to the workers than the mills in Indore and elsewhere.

The Hon'ble Deputy Minister knows it very well that a wage board has been set up in the country and that the wage board will also cover the textile workers of the State of Kerala.

The Kerala Government has not said that it is paying the highest wages.

Here we have all sorts of propaganda in the 1958 Exhibition about the various States' achievements,

the labour problems confronting the various States and how the Centre is trying to help the States to solve these problems.

And then the Deputy Labour Minister goes and explains to the textile workers that there is a Communist Government in Kerala State and it is paying the lowest wages. This Deputy Minister did not have the courage to go to Kanpur where 5,000 workers are facing starvation and have not been paid lay-off allowances or wages for the last one year. He does not have the courage to go to these millowners or Babu Sampurnanand and ask why it has not been paid. Instead, he goes to Indore to criticise the Kerala Government.

I feel that all these exhibitions, the amounts which we are spending on them will all be useless if this mobile exhibit moves about vomiting this hatred and disruption.

I would request my Hon'ble friend, the Deputy Minister, to at least follow his own Minister, the Labour Minister, who is trying his best to follow a code of conduct.

How can we blame the employers for the breach of the code of conduct when we see the Deputy Labour Minister, when he goes to Indore becoming the Deputy Minister of the Indian National Trade Union Congress? It should be clarified once for all whether he is the Deputy Labour Minister of the Union Government or the Deputy Minister of the Indian National Trade Union Congress.

Dr. Melkote: Let me know as a matter of fact, whether wages in Kerala are lower...?

S. M. Banerjee: Let us discuss the wage problem, I am ready to discuss everything from mill to mill, from place to place, from person to person; I am ready to discuss even the wages of the Ministers here and in Kerala.

## Another Direct Action To Begin Refugees Expose Govt. Claims, Determined To Fight For Rehabilitation Inside State

CALCUTTA, December 15.—The direct action of over two lakhs of East Pakistan refugees, now living in about 125 camps in different parts of West Bengal, will begin from January 7, under the leadership of the United Central Refugee Council (UCRC).

The main demand put forward by the UCRC is an integrated development of West Bengal's economy for realising simultaneously the objectives of refugee rehabilitation, distribution of land to the local peasantry and solution of the acute unemployment problems facing the State.

The Government, however, contends that there is no scope for the resettlement of more than 10,000 camp families within West Bengal and, hence, the remaining 35,000 families must go to Dandakaranya. The Government issues such a declaration without making any comprehensive survey of West Bengal's resources by an expert committee.

### Alternate Scheme Ignored

The UCRC and the Communist Party have repeatedly indicated, on the basis of official reports and their own investigations, that the untapped potentialities of the State are still very considerable. Not only that, about four months ago, the UCRC submitted to the State Government an alternative scheme, concretely showing where cultivable waste land could be reclaimed and what specific industries could be set up for rehabilitating all the camp refugees within West Bengal.

Sri Mehr Chand Khanna, Union Rehabilitation Minister, declared in the Rajya Sabha on December 12 in reply to a

discussion raised by Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, that he was also "willing to consider any scheme for rehabilitation of camp refugees in West Bengal."

But has the Government given any consideration to the very definite and practicable scheme submitted by the UCRC?

The people can no longer be hoodwinked by such crude propaganda stunts. It is now abundantly clear that the Government is determined to bundle off the refugees to Dandakaranya, if it can.

The UCRC has, therefore, rightly pointed out that the Government's "assurance" that refugees will not be forced to leave the State against their wishes is meaningless in view of the Government's decision to close all camps by July 31, 1959, and to undertake no further responsibilities for the resettlement of those unwilling to go to Dandakaranya beyond giving them a grant of Rs. 72 in case of an adult and Rs. 48 to a minor.

### Govt. Begins Offensive

While talking glibly of not using any threat or force, the Government has already launched an offensive.

Disbursements of all types of rehabilitation grants have been stopped; facilities enjoyed so long by the refugees are being curtailed; a sense of extreme uncertainty about their future is sought to be created by put-

ting out rumours that this or that camp will be disbanded by a particular date; individual families have been told that their doles will be stopped, even before the camps are closed, if they do not signify their "willingness" to go to Dandakaranya.

The entire administrative machinery of the camps is being geared up for intimidating the refugees.

They cannot be, however, cowed down by such tactics. They are confident that their just struggle for rehabilitation within West Bengal will have the active sympathy and support of the entire democratic movement.

### Pitting Others Against Refugees

This explains why the Government is making desperate efforts to drive a wedge between the camp refugees and other sections of people of this State by asserting that the resettlement of these refugees within West Bengal "will adversely affect" the interests of the local peasantry and also of 11 lakhs of partially rehabilitated refugees!

To "prove" its contentions, the Government now claims that a recent re-survey by its Directorate of Land Records reveals that the total area of cultivable and uncultivable waste land in nine out of the 16 districts of the State is 129,378 acres. It is stated that about 15,000 refugee families can be settled on this land provided steps are taken to develop and irrigate it.

But then, it is pointed out, the Government "cannot overlook the needs" of 512,000 owners—having holdings of two acres or less, 700,000 families of bargadars (sharecroppers) and 698,000 families of landless labourers.

It is, therefore, argued that if the entire cultivable waste land is distributed, after reclamation, among the refugees, it will mean depriving the local peasantry of its legitimate share. The people of West Bengal are sought to be frightened with the prospect of permanent tension between these two sections of the peasantry on this issue.

The Government further maintains that the employment of camp inmates in new industries will adversely affect the employment position of partially rehabilitated refugees.

All these "arguments" and "statistics" will not, however, stand the test of even a casual scrutiny.

FIRST, Dr. B. C. Roy himself stated in his budget speech of 1955-56 that "11 lakh acres are waste land that can be brought under cultivation by development or reclamation."

In his reply to the UCRC's memorandum, he again admitted as late as October 13, 1958, that the reports of the State Statistical Bureau and the State Agricultural Department showed that the total area of cultivable and uncultivable waste land in West Bengal was 10-16 lakh acres.

Government would have us believe that the resettlement of camp refugees within West Bengal will adversely affect the employment position of partially rehabilitated refugees.

There is now hardly any reason to doubt that the Government's decision to despatch the camp refugees to Dandakaranya has been wholly motivated by political considerations. These refugees constitute a powerful section of the democratic forces in this State. An overwhelming majority of them voted for Left candidates in the last general elections.

No wonder that the Congress and its Government should want them to be physically removed from West Bengal and scattered in isolated pockets in Dandakaranya.

## QUIT AFRICA DAY REPORTS

END foreign domination in Africa! Africans must be masters in their own country!—were the demands raised by a packed meeting held in Calcutta at the University Institute Hall on December 10.

The meeting was called by Dr. Sunil Kumar Chatterji, Chairman of the West Bengal Legislative Council, Dr. Trilokya Sen (Mayor), Sri S. C. Ray (Sheriff), Dr. Kallidas Nag, Smt. Mira Dutta Gupta (Congress MLA), Dr. Nag Chowdhary, Editor Vivekanand Mukherji and others.

Dr. Sunil Kumar Chatterji presided and welcomed Mr. Cherif Guellal, the Algerian Representative. Speakers included Jyoti Basu, Vivekananda Mukherji and others who stressed the solidarity of the Asian peoples with the liberation struggles of the Africans.

Two other meetings, one of the workers in Metiabruz area, were also held attended by 7,000 persons.

In Nagpur, High Commissioner of Ghana J. B. Erzuah addressed a very well-attended Quit Africa Day meeting organised by the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee on December 7. Editor of Hitavada A. D. Mani presided and gave a warm welcome to the visitor.

Poet Amar Shekh sang songs on African freedom and amidst great enthusiasm a message of full support was sent to the Accra Conference.

Mrs. Erzuah earlier addressed representatives of various women's organisations on the same subject.

On December 15, the Punjab 'Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee organised a public meeting in Julundur at the Town Hall. The main speaker on the occasion was the Ambassador of Sudan.

S. Darbara Singh, M.L.A. President of the Punjab Congress, Harikishan Singh Surjeet, Secretary of the Punjab Committee of the Communist Party, S. Amar Singh Dossanjh, General Secretary of the Shikhandi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Prof. Mota Singh and Sri Jagat Narain, M.L.A. spoke and expressed India's united support for Africa's liberation.

In the face of a planned termination to keep war danger alive, Khrushchov has again declared:

# BERLIN

# PEACE AND FREEDOM

by MOHIT SEN

Berlin still blazes in the headlines. Pandit Nehru has brought it right into the sphere of our urgent concern by briefly touching on the topic in the Rajya Sabha on December 15. Comrade Bhupesh Gupta has emphatically drawn attention to the seriousness of the situation in the same debate. Peace is indivisible as never before in this hydrogen missile and jet age. We cannot afford to misunderstand the issues now that we can no longer ignore them.

THE Western Press and Radio persistently plug the line that by bringing up the issue of Berlin, Khrushchov has heightened international tension. Echoes of this reverberate in our country. A feeling exists that things should have been left well alone, that the peace and calm has been disturbed.

### Active Initiative

In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. It is a dangerous fallacy to imagine that peace can be preserved by passivity. Moreover, the imperialists whether in Asia or in Europe are not sitting back with folded hands. Bit by bit, they prepare their plans of aggression, hoping to catch the world unawares.

To preserve peace, active initiative is essential. Moves and suggestions and plans are required to settle problems, to reveal imperialist plans and step by step force the aggressors to respect co-existence.

Khrushchov's bold and timely move on Berlin comes in precisely here. It is not stirring up trouble but prodig the aggressors to give up at least one segment of their global game. It has already served to highlight the dangerous aims of the Western Powers, shown up their reluctance to budge an inch from their positions and unleashed the powerful forces of world public opinion.

All this becomes clear if we glance even very briefly at the European situation.

NATO has come close to ten years of existence. Western Germany, under Adenauer, has come to acquire a position of dominance in the European section of this alliance. Western Germany with its resurrected monopolies and reinstated Nazis has come to full stance as an Imperialist Power ready for mischief.

To such a Power has come the offer of nuclear armament, the prize of leadership in the Western European military build-up.

It was noted by all serious observers of the European scene that the Soviet leaders were seriously perturbed by this gathering threat to peace. Khrushchov had made it amply clear in his widely reported interview with Walter Lippmann.

Polish leaders had issued warning after warning. The Rapacki Plan in its original version of a denuclearised zone in Central Europe had been framed first and foremost to meet this threat. Nor was it an empty threat—Adenauer and Strauss, the Defence Minister of Bonn, had contemptuously referred to the German Democratic Republic as "middle Germany" and made crystal clear their Drang Ostchen plan of scuttling the

Oder-Neisse frontier of Poland.

The Soviet leaders offered plan after plan—European Security Treaty, peace treaty with Germany, non-aggression pact between the Western NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries.

As against all these proposals, "the West has conspicuously failed to produce anything that begins to look like a plan. It will neither make a serious effort to consider what the Russians propose, nor propose anything of its own, because it is obsessed with the idea that a settlement is a bad thing in itself." (New Statesman, December 6).

The only proposal was "free" all-German elections, the "freedom" of this new State to join any alliance it likes and refusal to entertain

## Why This Western Rage Over A Simple Proposal

would be no objection on the Soviet side if they honoured Potsdam and agreed to the above solution.

But to expect the Western Powers to respond favourably to any idea of "de-imperialising" West-Germany is naive, to say the least.

Hence, the next section of the Khrushchov initiative—a free city of West Berlin. It should be realised here that West Berlin is no ordinary city. It is situated miles inside the sovereign German Democratic Republic; it teems with spies and subversive organisations; it is openly recognised by the West as its "advance post" against the Socialist camp.

### Dangerous Plans Ahead

The Soviet note of November 27 aptly characterised: "Its role in the relations between the Powers can be compared with a slow match taken to a powder barrel. Incidents arising here... may cause a conflagration which it will be difficult to put out."

It went on to add: "The only conclusion one would draw from the Western persistence in preserving their occupation of West Berlin is that some plans for a yet more dangerous utilisation of West Berlin are ahead."

All this with regard to a city which is a full 100 miles inside the territory of the sovereign German Democratic Republic. The Prime Minister of the GDR said on December 9 that in such a situation it would have been best if the Western sectors of Berlin were merged with democratic East Berlin "but being aware of the dif-

"The best way to solve the Berlin question would be for a decision to be taken, based on the enforcement of the Potsdam Agreement on Germany. But this would be possible only if the three Western Powers resumed, in common with the USSR, a policy towards Germany which would accord with the spirit and the principles of the Potsdam Agreement."

In the present circumstances, this would mean the withdrawal of the Federal Republic of Germany from NATO, with the simultaneous withdrawal of the German Democratic Republic from the Warsaw Treaty organisation and the achievement of an agreement in accordance with the principles of the Potsdam Treaty, whereby neither of the two German States would have any armed forces in excess of those needed to maintain law and order at home and to guard their frontiers.

The Western Powers have shouted hoarse about repudiation of Potsdam. There

facilities of such a step, we have agreed to the creation of a free city of West Berlin." It should be recognised that the GDR acceptance of the Soviet proposal is a very definite sacrifice made in the interests of world peace and European security.

### West Berlin's Status

What the Soviets have proposed is difficult to misunderstand. They fully respect the right of West Berliners to live under whatever political and economic system they want—hence a free city.

West Berlin is to become an independent political entity, with guarantees from the U.K., USA, USSR and France, as well as the two German States to respect this status. This status could also be suitably registered with the United Nations.

Any economic difficulties that may be encountered would be met by the Soviet Union, if the normal channels

the brighter imperialists thought of adding to the "freedom" banner the moth-eaten flag of "all-Germany, not Berlin alone" as the theme of discussion—hoping to nip in the bud the new hopes, new stirrings.

Barren talks on the same old themes cannot substitute new initiatives. It is these new initiatives themselves that must first of all be taken up. The approach has to remain that of solving problems one by one, since total solutions have not been possible.

The real reason for the Western outburst can best be gathered from their own favourite papers. The New York Times of December 7 wrote that to agree to a settlement on Berlin "would be de facto Western recognition of the East German regime and of the permanence of the Communist hold on Eastern Europe." In other words, the West would have to recognise the existence of the realities of today's Europe and abandon

of trade and commerce— which could "be fully kept open—failed to satisfy the requirements of the West Berliners.

### Dulles, Lloyd And De Gaulle

All that would change would be the occupation regime. American, British, French—as well as Soviet—soldiers would no longer have to tramp the streets of this German city. And—here comes the snag—Berlin could no longer be used as a centre for espionage and subversion.

Khrushchov made it clear: "This status would remain in force as long as West Berliners agreed to remain a free city."

Against this simple proposal all the rage of the West has found vent. Adenauer took umbrage even at Dulles suggesting that the GDR officials could be treated as officiating for the Soviets. Dulles warmed his heart by making it clear the next day that the "freedom" of West Berlin would be maintained by keeping foreign troops there.

Selwyn Lloyd hurried from advising his delegate Noble to vote against the independence and integrity of Cyprus, to refurbish the 1955 Eden plan of all-German elections.

And as for the newly crowned dictator, de Gaulle—"his backing for the maintenance of the status quo in Berlin was so emphatic that Mr. Dulles sounded by comparison a wavering crypto-neutralist." (London Economist, December 13)

When this refusal to budge an inch began to look too much like mental paralysis,

"roll back" ideas. Even more dreadful, the New York Times of the same date warns, would be the fact that such acceptance "would touch off a worldwide surge of the neutralist view that the West should compromise some of its other basic differences with Moscow." In other words, the West would have to adopt the posture of Fanch Shila.

And the final horror would be that the invaluable Adenauer would be mortally offended—and his revanchist plans mortally wounded. What the Time of December 15 described as the "Rapacki fever of disengagement" would undoubtedly spread—the contagion of peace.

### What India Can Do

The Soviets have made clear that they will go ahead, with their plan in six months. It is time enough to ensure that reason and not Adenauer dictates the response of the West. India's dynamic neutrality can well play here a most useful role.

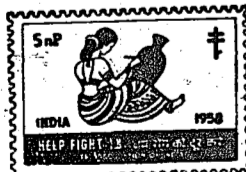
The path of action could be a three-fold one:  
① Recognition of the German Democratic Republic.  
② Insistence on negotiations, but with Berlin as the agenda.  
③ Insistence on strict prohibition of the use of force over the issue.

Such must be our response to the new possibilities for initiative opened by the daring and fruitful proposals of Khrushchov. Fanch Shila must spread its mantle over Europe.

(December 16, 1958)

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# Revolutionaries Get Together

● by PAULY V. PARAKAL

Parade Grounds in Delhi, opposite the historic Red Fort, which has witnessed the rise and fall of many a regime, saw an unprecedented sight last week-end: the maidan was the venue of a conference of India's old revolutionaries—perhaps the first get-together of those fearless patriots who had taken to the militant path to achieve the country's Independence.

THE conference brought to the Capital a galaxy of great names in India's freedom struggle—names which had at one time inspired the youth of India to come out against the British Raj, risking their careers, discarding their studies, forsaking their families. It recalled memories of those comrades who are no more, the mere mention of whose names always rouses the Indian people.

With the portraits of leaders like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and Hemu Kalani flanking the platform, a befitting atmosphere for the conference had been created. Banners proclaiming "Inquilab Zindabad" and "Give me blood and I shall give you freedom" expressed the philosophy under which these revolutionaries had taken recourse to action.

Moving among these old revolutionaries, who had been housed for the occasion in the old Delhi District Jail, where many among them had spent years of their life—the jail itself faces the Khooni Darwaza (Gate of Blood), so named because there the British had started their massacre of Indian patriots by brutally murdering the sons of Bahadur Shah in 1857—one could see many of them, now bent with age, who had gone back to different professions and some to comparative obscurity after at one time flashing like comets in the horizon of India's freedom movement.

I met Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, leader of the Ghadr movement and of the Kama Gata Maru expedition fame, who is now devoting his time to a school in his native village and has taken to agriculture. Lala Hanumanth Sahai of the

Hardinge Bomb Case was there, as also Dr. Khan Khoje, who had during his exile roved from country to country in Europe, enlisting support for the freedom movement. I saw Sri Parmanand Jhansi, who has spent 31 out of 68 years of his life, in jails, as also Pandit Sunderlal, who is now President of the Indian Peace Council.

There were people from different walks of life, as also from every political party. Congressites like Sri Jogesh Chandra Chatterji of the Kakori Conspiracy Case, Communists like Shiv Verma, comrade-in-arms of Bhagat Singh and accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case, and PSP men like Dr. Bhoopal Bose of the Dalhousie Square Bomb Case and Calcutta Conspiracy Case had come for the conference. Practising doctors like Smt. Sumiti Ghosh, who at the age of 14 was accused of shooting District Magistrate Stevenson at Kumila, lawyers like Sri P. N. Chakravarty, professors like Sri Raj Kumar Sinha of the Kakori Conspiracy Case and journalists like Sri Viswanath Vaishampayan of the Delhi Conspiracy Case were assembled there.

The highlight of the conference, however, seemed to be the dissatisfaction of these revolutionaries at the poor recognition that has been accorded in Free India to their role in the freedom struggle.

Dr. Bhupendra Nath Dutt, brother of Swami Vivekananda, presiding over the conference, traced the history of India's revolutionary movement and said that the Indian struggle for freedom was a continuous one.

Raja Mahendra Pratap, who had headed the "first independent Indian Government" in Kabul in 1913, was

only voicing the feeling of many of the assembled when he said: "This is not the Swaraj for which we had fought, today it is restricted to a few circles." Shiv Verma, on the other hand, stressed that it was as much their duty to protect the freedom as it was theirs to achieve it, while Sri Bejoy Kumar Sinha, a close associate of Bhagat Singh and accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case, exhorted the youth to protect and consolidate the freedom that has dawned, and to work determinedly to usher in the new Socialist society.

The conference requested through a resolution the setting up of centres of revolutionary relics and observing all-India days to commemorate great revolutionary events. The demand for national monuments of revolutionary martyrs brought to the fore an unfulfilled national task, which shone in glaring contrast with the care with which monuments of British rulers are still preserved in the Indian Capital and other important cities.

The abiding decision of the conference will perhaps be the one to write a history of the revolutionary movement in India, to tell the growing generation that freedom of their country was obtained at a dear price. Many fell fighting in the glorious struggle inside and outside the country, while those who remained kept the torch burning, braving bullets and gallows, suffering chill penury and brutal repression. A committee of 13 consisting of well-known revolutionaries, has been set up to collect data and compile an authentic history of the movement.

One of the most solemn ceremonies connected with the conference was the homage they paid to the three martyrs who were hanged in a cell in the Delhi Jail in connection with the Hardinge Bomb Case in 1913. There were tears in the eyes of all, and an old comrade could not help bursting out: "It is here that people should come first even before they go to Rajghat," thereby stressing that in fact, these revolutionaries had prepared the ground on which Gandhiji had built up his great movement.

An unhappy feature of the conference was the exclusion of a section of the old revolutionaries who are now members of the Communist Party. Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Party, who was a close associate of Bhagat Singh and Jatin Das, and co-accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case, was not invited. Ambica Chakravarty and Ganesh Ghosh of the Chittagong Armoury Raid Case were left out as also Kalpana Dutt (now Smt. Kalpana Joshi), the heroic name which had once stirred the hearts of thousands of India's youth. Smt. Bina Das of Bengal, who had shot at the Governor as she went up to receive her degree at a Convocation, was also not present.

The sponsors of the conference had left out the heroes of the Meerut Conspiracy Case and the Cawnpore Conspiracy Case, who were also accused of the "crime of conspiring to over-

throw" the British Raj. Two of the most organised of the armed revolts against foreign domination also went unrepresented. Hardly any of the well-known figures of the I.N.A., the soldiers who had entered Imphal with the inspiring battle-cry of "Dilli Chalo", were seen at the conference, while the heroes of the R.I.N. strike of 1946, who had hoisted the flag of open revolt inside the enemy camp itself, were also excluded.

Was all this because those who paid, were calling the tune; or was it the result of some evil intellect working behind the scenes? It is for the sponsors of the conference to clarify. It would have been much more becoming of the great heritage of sacrifice and selflessness of the revolutionaries if such petty considerations had not been dragged into such a solemn function.

Pandit Nehru had said some

days earlier about Delhi: "This city is the symbol of old India and the new. Even the stones here whisper to our ears of the ages of long ago and the air we breathe is full of the dust and fragrance of the past, as also of the fresh and piercing winds of the present. Tradition of millennia of our history surrounds us at every step, and the procession of innumerable generations passes by before our eyes."

But Delhi saw last week people who had created history in the recent past. These were the people who had taken up arms against the foreign rulers to achieve India's Independence, comrade-at-arms of Bhagat Singh, Jatin Das, Sukhdev, and Chandrashekhar Azad.

And on their faces were writ the history of the long and bitter nine decades of India's freedom fight.

## Kerala Food

\* FROM FRONT PAGE

either supply us the quantity of rice that is necessary for continuously running the fair-price shops, or in the alternative, create such conditions in the surplus areas of Andhra or anywhere else where we can freely buy rice at rates which are reasonably low for our people.

Recently, however, some change has been brought about. The Central Government has permitted us to buy rice in the surplus areas of Andhra at prices above the levels which had been fixed by it as controlled prices. We have already made arrangements for the purchase of 10,000 tons under this arrangement; nearly half of this has already been loaded and is shortly expected to arrive. We are making arrangements for further purchases on this basis. Our Minister for Food, and the officers of the department are proceeding in a couple of days to Hyderabad for making a more stable arrangement for regular supplies on this basis; we hope that this will enable us to run the fair-price shops in the coming months.

I would also take this op-

portunity to request my friends in the Opposition to realise that the difficulties which we are facing in this State are part of the difficulties which the entire country is facing today. The rise in prices of foodgrains is an all-India phenomenon and is not confined to this State. That is exactly why the Prime Minister and other leaders of the Central Government are expressing their concern at this and are appealing for a national approach to this problem. I hope that the parties of the Opposition in this State also would look upon this as a national problem and help the Government in solving it in the best interests of the entire people.

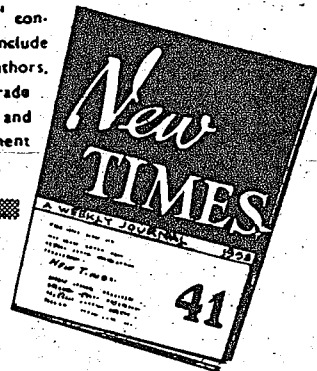
Our Government proposes shortly to convene a meeting of the State Food Committee which was formed some time ago. I hope that the parties of the Opposition represented in the Committee would offer constructive suggestions which, if accepted and implemented by the Government, will help the entire people.

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