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P. SUNDARAYYA

**VISHALA
ANDHRA**

P. Sundarayya

VISHALA ANDHRA

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PREFACE

The author, P. Sundarayya is the 32-year-old leader of ten thousand Andhra Communists. He is a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India. As a young boy of 16, he plunged into the national movement in the anti-Simon Commission agitation days. He has dedicated his life ever since to the fight for a free happy Andhradesha in a free India.

In this small book he tells us what British rule has meant to his people, how the Andhras, a people with a proud history and cultural heritage, were disrupted and degraded.

He describes Andhra today, the life in the towns and the appalling conditions in the countryside. He explains the concrete programme that the Communist Party has put forward for the rebuilding of a free Vishala Andhra and the regeneration of the Andhra people.

It is a book every patriotic Indian must read for in it he will see the past glory, the present strivings and the future destiny of one of the many great brother peoples of our glorious Motherland.

A. S. R. Chari.

VISHALA ANDHRA

I. Our Great Heritage

WE Andhras are an ancient people. Our history goes back to 3,000 years.

In the days of Buddha and Asoka we had already a powerful kingdom with flourishing trade and fortified towns.

We carried the Buddhist culture and message not only all over Andhradesha but across the seas to Siam, Cambodia and even to the Indonesian islands.

In the first century A.D., under King Salivahan our people, in a great battle, defeated the invaders who wanted to overrun our land and thus began a new era, the Andhra era or the Salivahan Saka.

We had thriving seaports like Motupalli and Mukalingam, from where our ships used to sail the high seas carrying our flourishing trade with China in the Far East and the Roman Empire in the West.

The greatness of this era can be seen even today—in its cultural relics in the stupas of Amaravati, Jaggayapet and Ghantasala, in the ruins of Nagarjuna Konda, in the caves of Ellora and in the magnificent frescoes of Ajanta.

In the sixth and eighth centuries we had another period of flourishing trade, art and literature in the Pallava and Chalukya periods. The sculptural remains of this period can be seen in Nellore, Kanchi, Mahabalipuram and Vengi.

Two other great periods in Andhra history are the Kakateeya period, and that of the Vizianagar Kingdom of Krishnadeva Raya.

In Rudramadevi of the Kakateeyas, we had our own Chandbibi and Rani Lakshmibai. Her fine administrative

capacity and great personal bravery provide the theme for many of our old ballads.

Like everyone of the great periods in our history, the Kakateeya and Vizianagar periods have also left for us examples of their fine architecture in the ruins of Warangal and Hampi.

Telugu literature also developed and as early as the eleventh century, the biggest Telugu epic **Mahabharatam** was written by Nanayya in the days when Raja Raja ruled from Rajahmundry. It was completed by Tikkanna in the thirteenth century.

The whole Telugu literature and language, developing from the various dialects of the Telugu tribes and the Prakriti of Gadha Saptasati, achieved its most cultured linguistic form in the **Mahabharatam**. Since the older literature was lost, this great epic is preserved as the **Adi-kavyam** or the Original Poem.

Telugu language and literature developed throughout these centuries, not only through the works of Sreenatha, Potana, Surana and the galaxy of poets in the reign of Krishnadeva Raya but also in the great folk tunes and simple verse of Telugu reformers—beginning from Badde Dhupaludu and Palkurki Somanath in the twelfth century to Veerabrahmam and Vemana in the fifteenth century—whose poems are recited in every Andhra home even today.

Telugu music developed into a distinct school of music, the Karnatic music through Sarangadevarayulu in the Kakateeya period, through Kshetrayya and culminating in the thousand devotional songs of the great Tyagaraja, which form the main treasure of Karnatic music even today.

With such a proud and long history and fine cultural traditions, before the great communities of our land—agricultural, labour and trading communities—could weld a united Andhra people and develop into a united Andhra nation and state, our land passed under British sway in 1766. The Nizam of Hyderabad handed over the Circar districts and later in 1800 the Royalaseema districts to the British in return for which the British promised to aid and preserve the Nizam's rule over the other portions of the Telugu land and people. Thus our homeland and our people were split, part under imperial Britain and part under the feudal Nizam.

II. National Homeland Split

TODAY our Telugu people are cut up into various parts.

Two hundred lakhs of them live in the eleven districts of Circars and Royalaseema, covering an area of 67,000 square miles and artificially welded with the Tamilian and Malayalee peoples in the Madras Presidency.

Ninety lakhs live in the nine Telangana districts of Hyderabad State, occupying an area of 44,000 square miles and kept together with Maharashtrians and Kannadigas under the Nizam's sway.

A few lakhs live in the contiguous areas of Mysore State and in the Orissa Province.

But all are under the yoke of British imperialism or under the double yoke of the British imperialists and the feudal autocrats like the Nizam of Hyderabad on the one hand and the Maharaja of Mysore on the other.

It is the Nizam's troops that helped the British to suppress the revolt of 1857 and strengthen their hold over us.

It is precisely during these two centuries of slavery under British imperialism and its vassal, the Nizam, with our homeland split, that our economy was ruined, our peasants, workers and all sections of our people were reduced to poverty and famine struck our fertile lands. Our literature and art languished and our people were plunged into ignorance and illiteracy.

FEUDAL EXPLOITATION UNDER BRITISH RULE

In order to keep our peasants down and strengthen their grip over us the British ruler created the zamindar and made over the peasants' lands to him. He allowed

these zamindars to do what they liked as long as they paid his peshkash. The old rent collectors for the Nawabs and Maharajas now became zamindars under British rule, owners of peasants' land and free to extort as much as they could from the peasants.

In the Telugu districts under direct British rule, 80 estates extort from the peasants 85 lakhs per year according to their own statements; but everyone knows that the real collection by these zamindars is at least double this figure. Twenty-four big zamindars extract 76 lakhs per year, i.e. 90 per cent of this total tribute!

EXPLOITATION UNDER FEUDAL RULE

In the areas under the Nizam, conditions are even worse. The Nizam allowed his jagirdars and paigah nobles to lord it over the peasants. His rent collectors, the **deshmukhs** and **deshpandes** are allowed to molest, harass and extort from the peasants as much and as long as they can, and when they get too old they are presented with large tracts of the best land and pensions in cash totalling as much as 16 lakh rupees per year. This heavy back-breaking load of parasitical zamindars, paigahs, deshmukhs and deshpandes is even today being borne by the impoverished peasants. Here is the appalling picture:

In the whole of the Nizam's State, 110 zamindars collect annually 6 crores of rupees; of this 5½ crores go to 19 jagirdars only!

They extract rent from 42 per cent of the total land and amounting to 75 per cent of the whole State budget.

Many of these jagirdars have judicial powers—revenue, civil and criminal—and they carried on their oppression of the peasantry so shamelessly that even the Nizam had to issue a **firman** banning fully 82 kinds of illegal levies from the peasantry! But the exactions go on even now.

One Visunuri Ramchandra Reddy deshmukh had forcibly collected from the peasants Rs. 80,000 to build a house for himself costing 2 lakhs.

He forced a young peasant woman who had only 3 days before delivered a baby to work on his fields for several hours. The new-born baby died in her absence.

It is against such oppressive feudal terror and exploitation that the Andhra Mahasabha has been fighting and

has thus built a powerful people's movement in the state.

The Nizam of Hyderabad is himself the biggest zamindar owning 8,014 square miles covering 18 talukas. Apart from 70 lakh rupees which he and his family get from the general budget, his income from these personal estates (called **sarfkhas**) comes to two crore rupees per year! But the peasants of the state live in the most wretched conditions.

IRRIGATION NEGLECTED, FAMINE CHRONIC

While forced to bear the burden of the zamindars, the Nizam and the British, the irrigation facilities extended to the peasantry are very meagre.

The old irrigation system that existed in the period of the Vizianagar Empire was neglected till famine became a constant companion of the Andhra people.

From 1780 to 1900, a period of 120 years, 30 years have been famine years affecting one part of Andhra or another. In 1800-1807 there was a seven year long famine in Andhra.

In the famine of 1875-78, the most terrible known in India to that date, practically the whole of Andhra was affected, and deaths due to this famine were estimated at 10 lakhs.

It was only in 1850-60 that the Kistna, Godavari and Penna anicuts were built and about 2½ million acres were brought under guaranteed irrigation.

But Royalaseema and the Nizam's districts are even today without irrigation. Within the last 25 years, 15 years have been famine years for Royalaseema, the last one being in 1943-44, when people were reduced to eating rice husk!

Still the agreement between the Nizam and the British is such that if the area under irrigation is to be increased beyond the million acre mark under the Kistna anicut, the previous permission of the Nizam has to be obtained!

S. V. Ramamurthy, Advisor to the Madras Government, admitted the other day that the Madras Government had spent about 200 crores on famine relief for this Royalaseema tract alone whereas the misery could have been easily avoided if the Tungabhadra project had been completed, a project which was estimated to cost only 2 crores in 1857!

In the Nizam's State the districts of Raichur, Meh-

bubnagar and Nalgonda are similarly ravaged but the feudal Nizam and his corrupt officialdom do not move.

Both the British Government in Madras and the Nizam dragged on negotiations over the distribution of waters of the Tungabhadra and shelved the scheme for over half a century!

Meanwhile, in the rainy seasons, the Tungabhadra floods go waste to the sea.

They could dam the river Kistna at Sangameswar to irrigate a few million acres. This with a supplementary project at Jatapalli, could irrigate all Royalaseema districts—Guntur on the one side and Mehbubnagar, Nalgonda on the other; but this does not figure even in the plans that are being cooked up for postwar development.

Once again interminable negotiations have started over the distribution of Godavari waters, over the building of Polavaram project which would irrigate about 20 lakh acres; and petty bickerings go on though 90 per cent of Godavari flood water goes waste even now to the sea, submerging thousand of acres every year.

Our land is divided and we cannot harness the rivers that flow in our land to save our people from famine and build their prosperity.

Here is a picture of how much land can be brought under cultivation and how little is properly irrigated:

TABLE OF NET SOWN, IRRIGATED AND UNCULTIVATED LAND IN ANDHRA

	Net Sown area in lakhs of acres	Percentage of sown area irrigated by all methods	Canal irrigation only	No irrigation facilities in lakhs of acres	Percentage of Uncultivated land cultivated to sown
British districts	161	27%	15%	109	67%
Nizam's districts	100	10%	1%	40	40%

The yield per acre of rice is 1,300 lb. in the districts under direct British rule which itself is only one-third that of Italy and one-half of Japan.

But in the Telangana districts in the Hyderabad State the yield is only three-fourths per acre of that in British districts. The yield of dry food crops per acre is even lower—bajra being only 25 per cent and jwar being half of that produced in the districts directly under the British. If there is irrigation, the rice crop would yield double that of non-irrigated lands, jwar and bajra 2½ times, and cotton 5 times the present yield.

The British keep up the Nizam, and his satellites in spite of this backward state of agriculture, only to keep our people divided and to suppress our common freedom movement.

INDUSTRIES CANNOT BE DEVELOPED

The British imperialists are, of course, not interested in developing our industries and our mineral resources. They are after our raw materials for their own industries and to dump their industrial goods on us which led them to destroy even our handicrafts. The British companies, I.L.T.D., Parry and Co., and Rally & Co., are the monopolists in tobacco, sugarcane, groundnuts and other oil seeds.

So far our mineral wealth has not been prospected nor is any industry developed. The coal that is found in the Singareni and Kottagudem fields in the Nizam's State was till recently owned and exploited by the British capitalists.

The division of our mineral wealth, in Telangana areas under the Nizam and the central regions of Andhra under direct British rule prevents us from developing any major industries.

The industrial backwardness of Telugu land can be seen from the fact that there were only 900 factories and workshops employing 46,000 workers in British ruled districts and 500 factories and workshops employing 28,000 workers in Telangana area under the Nizam, in 1940-41.

Effective trade and industrial development is prevented by customs between Telugu areas under British rule and Telangana area. Andhras cannot have even exchange of their raw material, food and finished products, between one portion of their land and another.

Just as English is made compulsory and becomes the medium of instruction in the districts directly under the British, so also in the Nizam's territory Urdu has become

the medium of instruction, even in lower forms, except in the primary schools. This has crippled the spread of education, especially of women. The percentage of girls to boys who attend school is only 16 in the state whereas it is 46 in the British districts. The percentage of pupils in the primary and secondary schools to those of school-going age is 9 in the state and in the British districts it is 13.

There are fewer newspapers in the state and their circulation is far less than in the British districts. There are fewer presses in the state and for installing every new printing machine, one has to go through elaborate red tape and even then it is rarely that one gets permission to start it. In the British ruled districts there is one hospital for every 38,000 persons and in Telangana (Nizam's territory) it is one for every 110,000.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

It is in the field of civil liberties, more than in any other, that we see the naked feudal backwardness of the state and what a terrific drag it is on our common freedom struggle.

Hyderabad State till now has had no reforms of any kind. It is the naked autocracy of the Nizam with a nominated executive council and a corrupt bureaucracy that runs the administration. The feudal yoke of jagirdars and deshmukhs lies heavy on the people. Various forms of forced labour and tithes are being extorted.

You cannot hold any meeting without the previous permission of the government for which you have to apply a fortnight earlier—and it is given very sparingly. This permission is required even for literary meetings.

A non-Hyderabadia can speak only if permission is obtained specifically for that purpose.

With the Princes' Protection Act of the British imperialist government to support them, and the rigorous exclusion of the politically awakened people from British India entering the state (there is a ban on the entry of even Josh Malihabadi, the greatest living Urdu poet) the feudal autocracy of the Nizam hopes to keep the Telangana, Maharashtra and Karnatic peoples in feudal bondage for ever.

It not only prevents them from joining their own brethren across the state boundaries but quite recently the Nizam's Government has been laying 'claims' to other parts of Andhra land and wants to grab more territory and bring more Telugu people under its domination. Only recently Khan Bahadur Alladin, a leading industrialist of the Nizam's State is reported to have demanded a corridor for the Nizam to the sea and the seaport town of Masulipatam. This feudal autocrat has kept two-thirds of our land and one-third of our people under his domination with the help of British bayonets.

It is British imperialism and its vassal, the Nizam—it is these two dark forces that have divided our land, disrupted our people, degraded our life to poverty, famine and pestilence and pushed our people into ignorance and illiteracy.

Freedom, peace and prosperity for the Andhra people are possible only when we abolish British imperialist rule along with its vassals—the princes. There is no freedom for us when two-thirds of our land and one-third of our people are made to live under the feudal yoke supported by British bayonets.

The Andhra people stand shoulder to shoulder with all other Indians led by the Congress, the Muslim League and the Communist Party in the common struggle to achieve freedom for all the diverse nationalities living in India, a freedom both from the British imperialists and their stooges, the princes.

The Communist Party stands for a unified **Vishala Andhra** in a free India, to frame its constitution through a sovereign constituent assembly elected by adult franchise, it wants the free constituent assembly of the Andhra people to join the comity of Indian peoples and form the free voluntary Indian Union of free peoples.

The Communist Party of India will work to see that the peoples of Hyderabad State shall decide their future by exercising their own sacred right of self-determination through a constituent assembly.

This alone will create conditions for realising the dream of generations of Andhra people, i.e., a free **Vishala Andhra** comprising the whole of Telugu land, in a free India, in which all our people once more united will be able to build

their prosperity and culture and carry forward the rich heritage left to us by our great ancestors.

We shall carry forward the banner raised 30 years ago by Andhra patriots for a separate Andhra province of British Andhra.

III. Our Toiling Peasantry

THE bulk of our people live in villages. There are 16,300 villages and 80 towns having a population of over 10,000 in British Andhra.

Ninety-one per cent live in villages and only 9 per cent in towns. This overwhelming majority depends entirely on agriculture for its livelihood.

It is the British imperialist rule for two centuries and its policy of crippling and destroying our handicrafts and industries that has driven more and more of our people into this dependence on land. The result is growing pressure on land with only a few having enough land to eke out a livelihood.

The census of 1931 gives the following revealing picture :

Non-cultivating tenants, proprietors and estate managers	..	5.00%
Cultivating owners and tenants	..	61.30%
Agricultural labourers	..	33.70%
		<hr/>
		100.00%
		<hr/>

Of these again 15 per cent are tenant cultivators, i.e., those who do not possess any land of their own or have so little that they have to take land on lease for cultivation.

In our villages 48 per cent or nearly half were landless peasants and agricultural labourers, according to the census of 1931. But the great agrarian crisis of 1931-34 and the war in 1939-45, have pauperised our peasantry even more. The number of the landless must have increased considerably.

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Even the peasant owners of ryotwari areas are being pauperised ; uneconomic holdings of less than 5 acres are increasing rapidly.

Here are the figures calculated from land revenue settlement reports of the Madras Government :

	1935	Average acre- age per hold- ing.	1940	Average ac- reage per hold ing.
No. of peasants owning less than 5 acres	34,40,000	1.5	38,50,000	1.72
Percentage	85%		90%	
No. of peasants owning 5 to 15 acres	5,17,000	7.6	3,42,000	3.25
Percentage	13%		8%	
No. of peasants owning 15 to 100 acres	94,000	28	90,000	24.5
Percentage	2.33%		2.01%	
No. of peasants owning over 100 acres	2,500	134	1,100	179
Percentage	.06%		.02%	

These figures reveal how the bulk of our peasantry has small strips of land and except for a bare 10 per cent of our total rural population, the rest do not have enough land to eke out even a bare livelihood from cultivating it.

ZAMINDARI PARASITISM

But our problem is not only one of uneconomic holdings. It is also, rather mainly, a problem of unproductive parasites, the zamindars whom the British created to grind down the peasants and collect their taxes for them.

Taking the whole of British Andhra, the zamindari lands are 88 lakhs or 23 per cent of the total, and inamdari lands are 27 lakhs or 7 per cent. This means that on 30 per cent of the land, these parasites suck the blood of our peasantry and extort tribute.

The proportion is even greater if we take only the districts where the zamindaris exist, i.e., the coastal districts including Chittoor where the zamindari land is 46 per cent and inamdari land 11 per cent. This means that on 57 per cent of the land, the peasants have to pay a tribute

to persons who do not lift a little finger to help in the production of crops and often hinder it.

There are 448 zamindars who after paying the peshkash due to the government are still left with a net income of 86 lakhs per year ! This they themselves admitted in the evidence given before the Zamindari Enquiry Committee (a committee set up in 1938 by the Congress Ministry, presided over by Syt. Prakasam, the then Revenue Minister and the present President of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee).

Ten of the biggest zamindars get over 60 lakhs, i.e., 62 per cent of this and here is the list showing who they are, how much they get :

1. Vizianagram	16,00,000
2. Venkatagiri	11,00,000
3. Tirupati-Karvetinagar	8,75,000
4. Pithapuram	5,50,000
5. Bobbili	5,50,000
6. Vuyyur	3,40,000
7. Devarakota (Challapalli)	2,70,000*
8. Kalahasti	2,75,000
9. Narayanavaram—Chettinad	2,60,000
10. Parlakimidi	2,30,000
	<hr/>
	60,50,000

Some of these big zamindars supplied figures to the Prakasam Committee purporting to prove that 5 to 8 per cent of their income is spent on irrigation, tank repairs, etc. But everyone knows that this is untrue and that zamindari tanks, etc. are in dire need of repairs and in 1943-1944 the zamindari peasants had to carry out some of the repairs themselves. The zamindars, however, regularly squander their income on horse racing, drinks, etc.

*The Raja of Challapalli has 17,350 acres of private land in addition to his zamindari estate rented to peasants. The tidal wave in the last century wiped out many peasant families and it is said that their lands found their way into his possession !

ZAMINDARI OPPRESSION

These zamindars use all their wealth and power to harass and intimidate the peasants and levy several illegal exactions.

They refuse permission to the peasants to fetch firewood, green manure, etc. from the forests. It was against this form of oppression that the Mandasa peasants in 1940 struggled to assert their rights and were fired upon by the police who is only too eager to rush to the protection of the zamindars.

These rajas and zamindars do not permit the peasants to graze their cattle even on the village commons unless they pay an exorbitant grazing fee to the zamindar. The entire **Zamin Ryot** movement in the Venkatagiri estate has ever since 1929 been agitating against such an inequity.

They preserve wild animals which ravage the peasants' crops but prohibit the peasants from hunting them.

Not content with their huge incomes and their vast estates they often seize peasants' lands and steal the village commons.

These zamindars, like the Rajas of Bobbili, Pithapuram, Challapalli and Venkatagiri are quite naturally opposed to every progressive and democratic movement.

They fought the Congress bitterly for many years. In fact the Raja of Bobbili was such a lawless tyrant that in the last election he caused his elephants to rush and break up an election meeting addressed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

These zamindars have always been British stooges. They slavishly obey the dictates of the imperialists and seek to keep the peasants in unmitigated feudal bondage.

Today, they are all rushing towards the Congress and swear undying loyalty to it because they know that the Congress will come into power very soon. They want to join the Congress in order to continue their feudal tyranny and safeguard their vested interests.

The Communist Party stands for the abolition of these zamindaris—which British imperialism created as its social buttress—for the abolition of all oppressors and rack-rentiers and the parasites who are living on our peasants and are a big hindrance to the growth of our agriculture. They will be permitted to have 100 acres if they want to cultivate

and live on it, but not a bit more. The small zamindars having an income of less than Rs. 10,000 a year may be paid one year's rental as compensation but the big zamindars and those who are given 100 acres of land for cultivation should not be paid any compensation.

The agricultural labourers and the peasants who today till these lands shall become the possessors of them and shall enjoy the fruits of their cultivation in perpetuity without paying any tribute to zamindars.

Abolition of these zamindaris and inams which affect only a few thousands will release 30 per cent of our land from parasitic tribute and give the People's Government 1,20,00,000 rupees (Rs. 96,00,000 from zamindaris and 23,00,000 from inamdaris) to spend on irrigation projects or on education and health of our villages. It will once and for all remove the feudal reactionary interests from hindering our political life and democratic development.

ABOLITION OF ABSENTEE LANDLORDISM

Another obstacle to the growth of our agriculture is absentee landlordism.

In 1931 the census showed that 5 per cent of all those living on land did not cultivate their lands but lived on rent taken from the tillers of the soil. Tenants who depended for their livelihood on leasing lands from them are three times more numerous than the landlords.

During the last 15 years, due to the economic depression of 1930-34 and the war, a large number of our peasants have sold their land to the rich landlords or the town **sahukars**, to liquidate their debt and to make both ends meet. More land has thus passed from the peasants into the hands of absentee **sahukars** and moneylenders.

They lease their land to the peasants at exorbitant rates, amounting in some cases as in deltaic regions where the pressure of dense population on land is great, to three-fourths of the gross yield and in no case less than half the gross yield. This burden of rack-renting by the absentee landlord must be removed from the backs of our tillers of soil. For this purpose, the Communist Party demands that the People's Government should take over all the land above 100 acres, after giving a fair compensation.

The People's Government must insist that the owners

of land must cultivate these plots of 100 acres and not become absentee landlords, and that labourers must be paid fair wages and accorded decent treatment. Those that are not prepared to cultivate their lands must not be allowed to remain a burden on agriculture and on the peasants. They will be paid due compensation and the land be taken away from them and handed over to their tenants for cultivation without rack-renting.

It is mainly the big landlord and the town sahuakar who lease their land and live on the toil of others. Generally the peasants do not lease. But there are cases where the poor peasant, unable to cultivate his tiny bit of land due to lack of cattle, manure, seed or implements, or finding that the yield is not enough to maintain himself or his family, leases it and goes in search of some job or other. Such persons must be helped by the People's Government to restart cultivation :

1. by allotting enough land to their plots so that they may become economic holdings.
2. by granting cheap credits and providing implements, manure and seeds.

Land must go to the tiller of the soil. It is only on this principle that we can free our agriculture from all its shackles and produce enough food for all.

LAND TO THE PEASANT

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Member of Congress Working Committee, ridicules our slogan of "Land to the Peasants" and says it would be foolish to divide the land of the rich among all the peasants for it would not give them more than $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per head. This is a specious plea in defence of his rich patrons and has little relation to truth.

I shall give here a rough idea of how the slogan of "Land to the Peasants" can be worked in practice to give each agricultural labourer and poor peasant family an economic holding and the means for a decent livelihood.

The measures that will have to be taken by the popular ministry are :

1. A decree that land which is already being cultivated by the peasant permanently belongs to him and that he need not pay any tribute to the village parasites, the zamindar, inamdar or sahuakar.

2. Distribute the cultivable fallows among the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

The land revenue settlement reports of the Madras Government show that 90 per cent of the patta holders in ryotwari areas are persons owning on the average $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres each.

If we assume that this percentage holds good even for zamindari peasants it would mean that 31 lakh out of 34 lakh peasant families have only $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres each. To get them a minimum of 5 acres we require 100 lakh acres. Do we have this land available in Andhra? The answer is that more land than what is needed for this is there, only the British Government, the zamindars, etc. have kept it uncultivated.

For example, in British Andhra there are 44 lakh acres classified as current fallows. It is only the rich owners who refuse to permit their cultivation.

There are also another 65 lakh acres classified as "not cultivable with profit." This only means that they lack irrigation, proper manure and modern agricultural implements to break up the virgin soil. If this is done they will yield profitable crops.

It is clear then that if these 109 lakh acres are distributed among the families of poor peasants and agricultural labourers each would get 5 acres.

What prevents this land from being distributed to the toiling peasantry, is the refusal of the rich landowners, the zamindars and the British Government to give up their monopoly ownership of land and their resistance to improvements like irrigation, etc.

Statements like that made by Dr. Pattabhi are not only wrong in fact, they strengthen the hands of the feudal parasites in their resistance to urgently necessary steps in aid of the peasantry.

There are also large tracts of land available in the Telangana districts of Hyderabad State. Even after providing enough land to the peasants and agricultural labourers there will still be large tracts which cannot be cultivated without inviting people from outside. The Nizam today hands over these new tracts of land under the Nizamsagar project etc. to persons whom he specially brings into the state to create a new oligarchy which would

support him against the people. If we could unify our land, all the Telugu people of Telangana, Royalaseema, and the Circars, can have enough land and have enough labour power to bring into cultivation all the available land in the interests of all.

WATER TO IRRIGATE OUR FIELDS

We have already seen how the Nizam and the British Government, not caring for our people, have neglected building irrigation projects. They have postponed the Tungabhadra project for over 100 years and are responsible for all the famines both in Royalaseema and Guntur districts and in the districts of Raichur, Mehbubnagar and Nalgonda bordering on the Kistna.

Water which could have quenched the thirst of our land and turned it into a garden, has been allowed to go waste flooding the villages and crops on its way to the sea. Thus 90 per cent of the waters of the Kistna and Godavari go unused.

Today in the British districts of Andhra only 27 per cent of even the sown area is irrigated. Out of it canal irrigation (i.e., easy and guaranteed irrigation) is only 15 per cent.

In Anantapur only 9 per cent of the net area sown is irrigated from all sources of irrigation—tanks, wells, springs and channels dug laboriously through river beds.

In Kurnool it is even less, only 5 per cent, and in Bellary it is the lowest—2 per cent.

In the Nizam's districts it is 10 per cent from all sources of irrigation and 1 per cent only if we take canal irrigation alone!

Irrigation not only makes new land available for cultivation but guarantees that the present sown area yields regular and better crops. Irrigated land when compared to unirrigated land yields double the paddy crop, 3 times jwar and bajra and five times cotton. Irrigation makes it possible to use manure on an intensified scale which would again increase the yield two or three times more.

Irrigation and flood prevention are the very life of our agriculture. But we have seen how the British, the Nizam's Government and the zamindars have criminally neglected them. Recently both the Nizam and the British Govern-

ment have announced some irrigation schemes as their postwar plans and have started negotiations. These are very inadequate, not at all comprehensive, and the execution will as usual be delayed.

We want all our river valley schemes to be coordinated to utilise all their water for irrigation, for producing electricity and for navigable canals, with proper drainage to prevent flooding and water-logging. This will also remove the breeding ground of malarial fevers.

We demand that:

1. The Godavari Valley scheme be expeditiously carried out with the projected dams in Adilabad in Telangana and at Rampad Sagar near Polavaram in East Godavari. The former would irrigate about 20,00,000 acres in Adilabad and Karimnagar and some parts of Warangal in Telangana and the latter would cultivate 24,00,000 acres in Kistna, Godavari and Vizag districts apart from the lands in Warangal itself.

2. The Tungabhadra project should be expedited and the Sangameswar and Jatapalli projects on the river Kistna be taken in hand immediately so as to form together with the existing anicuts a coordinated Kistna Valley scheme. These would irrigate the whole of Royalaseema and Guntur districts and the Telangana districts of Mehbubnagar and Nalgonda.

3. Connected with the Kistna Valley scheme there are several other schemes like the Pennar River scheme (by damming it not only at Gondikota in Cuddapah but also at Somasila in Nellore and Perur), the Marutla and Pennar Kumadwati projects in Anantapur districts, etc.

4. Linked with these big river valley schemes the minor irrigation projects as part of the bigger scheme must be taken up and executed. Well irrigation with cheap electricity made available must be extended immediately to the dry areas.

5. A network of navigable canals from Berhampore to Madras from the sea coast to Adilabad; from Adilabad to Hyderabad, Kurnool, Cuddapah, Anantapur to link up with the Mysore canal system.

WE SHALL PRODUCE FOOD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE

Out of the 50 lakh tons of rice or food cereals required to feed our people in British Andhra, the estimated production of food is only 38 lakh tons. But even if the present sown area is fully irrigated, the increased yield would not be less than 15 lakh tons—enough to cover the deficit.

If the current fallows—44 lakh acres—are cultivated and sown with food crops we can increase our food production by another 10-15 lakh tons, and if adequately irrigated by 30 lakh tons.

This shows that if all the present sown area and the current fallows are irrigated we can double our food production and if properly manured quadruple it.

The present sown area and the current fallows are only three-fourths of the area available for cultivation.

We need have no fear that with the capacity to produce so much food our peasants would be ruined with a lot of surplus grain on their hands. We will plan our agriculture in such a way as to allot enough land for oil seeds and other commercial crops like cotton, sugarcane, jute etc., to manufacture various essential goods required by our people.

We have to set apart lands for raising dairy farms, poultry farms and pastures to produce enough milk, butter, poultry, sheep, etc. for our people.

Our population is increasing rapidly and it requires all the food that we can produce from year to year as we go on increasing our acreage and its yield by irrigation and scientific agriculture. And, moreover, we will insist that the People's Government adopt a mechanism guaranteeing the peasant a fair minimum price for his produce which would enable him to live a decent, comfortable life.

The obstacle which stands in the way of organising our agriculture in this manner is domination by the British and their stooges, the zamindars. It is their exploitation that leaves nothing with the peasant for improving his agriculture.

TAX RICH LANDLORDS—NOT POOR PEASANTS

We have seen how zamindars and inamdars extract more than 120 lakh rupees from the peasantry. Apart from this oppression, it is the poor and small peasants that bear the most of this burden not only in zamindari and inamdari areas but even in ryotwari areas.

The land revenue settlement reports of 1935-36 reveal that peasants owning less than 5 acres or on the average $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres pay about one crore rupees on a dry and wet area of 55 lakh acres.

This section of the poor peasants which cannot even eke out a livelihood from its tiny plots must not be taxed. The tax must be levied on a graduated scale on the richer landlords. The richer the landlord the greater the tax he must pay.

Immediately, till we can bring into existence the land reform law the People's Government must levy an income tax so that no feudal or absentee landlord is left with a net income of more than Rs. 6,000 per year from his rentals. Thus the loss of one crore rupees that accrues by abolishing the tax on the poor peasants can be made up. The People's Government need not stint its welfare and constructive work for want of money.

NONE CAN TAKE AWAY LAND FROM THE PEASANT

Rack-rented by zamindars and taxed heavily by the government, with no reserves, the peasant easily becomes a prey to the moneylender. He goes to him to buy seed, manure and cattle or implements or to buy essential goods for his family; to pay these debts the peasant goes to the trader and sells his produce. The greater the need the earlier he is compelled to sell, though soon after the harvest he only gets a very low price. The vicious circle goes on, the peasant getting deeper and deeper into debt and unable to pay back the moneylender sells away his land to his creditor.

Even after the last war, land which was given to the demobilised soldier had to be sold away by him soon after, because he was unable to cultivate it for lack of cattle, seed, manure or cheap credit. The rich landlord and the

sahukar are always on the look out to grab as much land as they can and extract a tribute from the toiling peasants by leasing it at exorbitant rates.

To prevent the land once again passing from the tillers to the rich landlord and sahuakar and to guarantee that the land that is redistributed shall remain with the tiller of the soil, the People's Government must prohibit sale of land except to the government itself. The government when it purchases the land can distribute it to the tillers who are in need of it.

IMMEDIATE MEASURES

No peasant wants to sell his land unless he is forced to do so either because he lacks means to cultivate it or in order to pay back a debt.

The popular ministry must first free him from this load of debt. It must therefore take the following immediate measures :

- (1) Cancel all the debts of agricultural labourers and poor peasants.
- (2) It must implement the Madras Debt Relief Act with suitable amendments such as a) the rate of interest must be reduced to 3 per cent and b) not make benefit of the Act available to rich landlords who are in a position to pay their debts.
- (3) Prohibit private money-lending business. Cheap credit must be made available to the peasants through cooperative and state banks at not more than 3 per cent interest.

For developing agriculture and helping poor peasants to cultivate their lands, the People's Government must take the following measures immediately :

1. Provide the peasant with agricultural implements, manure and seed, or other necessary help to enable him to cultivate his land. This work can be carried out through the expansion of the Agricultural Department.

2. Help to improve his agriculture by opening agricultural farms in every taluka, by setting an example of better scientific cultivation and to help the peasants to fight the crop pests.

3. Cattle-breeding farms and veterinary hospitals

in every taluka. One touring veterinary doctor for every firka.

4. Forests and grazing facilities for the peasants' cattle ; free green manure ; fuel at cheap rates ; hill tribes must be free to sell forest produce free of charge.

5. Encourage cooperative farming by all peasants in the village, especially the poor peasant so as to improve his income and agricultural production by using all modern machinery.

The People's Government must actively help to establish such farms by supplying machinery and technical assistance. Immediate beginnings must be made on the newly colonised lands, the state itself organising model large-scale mechanised farms run by agricultural labour, to inspire the rest of the peasants by practical demonstration. Take over all American Lease and Lend material and army equipment that will be useful for cultivating these lands.

The great vision of transformation of the whole of Indian agriculture which the Communist Party places before the people is to convert millions of small holdings into large-scale cooperative farms run by mechanised methods.

This transformation alone would rescue the poor peasant finally from the grip of poverty and place the agriculture of our country on secure foundations.

It would create the modern village community based on the cooperative effort of peasants, artisans and workers, working in a single farm and sharing equitably the fruits of their labour.

The basis for the realisation of this vision will be laid only when we have a people's state which will have the boldness to go ahead simultaneously with the rapid industrialisation of our country and the modernisation of our agriculture.

It must undertake a thorough-going industrialisation of the country based on nationalisation of key industries, transport and mines and plan agricultural development by abolishing landlordism, nationalising the land, and by settling the landless on newly-reclaimed and fallow lands.

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FAIR PRICE FOR PEASANTS, FOOD FOR THE PEOPLE

After the last war agricultural prices fell steeply and during the crisis of 1929-34, the cereal prices slumped to 42% of the 1919-21 level.

The producers of industrial goods, whenever they are faced with economic depression try to keep the price level by restricting production, lowering wages and throwing labourers out of employment. The capitalist with his control over banks and over credit and currency systems, manipulates the market so that the prices of industrial goods are higher and the prices for the raw material produced by the peasant lower.

Cotton, sugarcane, tobacco and groundnut—the prices of all these commercial crops are directly controlled by the capitalist purchasers with an eye to their profits.

The short staple cotton which we produced in Royalaseema districts was not bought either by the millowners of Bombay or even by the government which promised that it would buy it, if the prices fell below a certain minimum. And this even when there is a cloth famine in the country, cloth prices are three to five times the prewar prices and the millowners are making crores in profits.

Similarly, we know that sugarcane prices are fixed by sugar factory owners like Parry & Co. They enforce these low prices on the peasants by making the government ban the sale of sugarcane to anybody except the sugar factory owners. We have agitated for proper prices for sugarcane in Tummapala, Vuyyur and other areas.

The prices of groundnut are controlled by Rally & Co., the biggest exporters of the crop from Andhra areas; tobacco prices are fixed by the monopolist I.L.T.D. Co.—once again another European firm.

And these crops are cultivated on one-fourth to one-third of the cultivated area in the districts of Andhra, which means that the large number of peasants who cultivate this big area are under the grip of the European capitalists.

FOOD CROPS AND PRICES

It is not only the money crops that are in the grip of the big capitalists and trading speculators.

Even the food crops have during the war years come under the grip of profiteers and hoarders.

The lessons of the Bengal famine are still fresh in our mind. There was only a small deficit in 1943. The zamindars and traders who had purchased the crop from the peasants soon after the harvest, monopolised the rice and sold it at scandalously high prices during the famine months—as much as Rs. 100 a maund in some districts of Bengal.

They thus made 150 crores of rupees as profits! Their profit greed and hoarding of rice killed 15 lakhs (Government's figures). In short, they made Rs. 1,000 for every person killed by starvation.

Though high prices prevailed in December 1943, they soon pushed the prices down to as low as Rs. 2/8 per maund of paddy in 1944 because the new crop had been harvested. They unloaded their hoarded stocks, bought up the new crop and soon began to sell at Rs. 24 to Rs. 30 per maund. It is thus that the zamindars, hoarders and blackmarketeers got hold of the rice and dictated its price—a low one to the peasant at the time of harvest and a high one to the consumer.

In Andhra, too, the poor and middle peasant were forced to sell their paddy even for 4 to 5 rupees per maund in harvest season by the conspiracy of the rice mill owners, though the price of rice at controlled rate (Rs. 8 per maund) would have entitled them to as much as Rs. 5-8 per maund, even after giving the merchant a fair profit. Apart from this, the traders rarely sell at controlled rates. It is always at 9 to 12 rupees per maund, the highest in famine areas and in areas of scarcity.

Recently after the cyclone, with prospects of less yield for next year the big landlords, the millers and the traders who alone possess stocks at this period of the year, increased the price to 2½ to 3 seers a rupee though the controlled rate is 4 seers a rupee. Thus we see that in Andhra too, as in Bengal, the zamindar, the miller and the blackmarketeer are controlling the rice, dictating the price and robbing at both ends.

The government was spending several crores of rupees

during the war years. It does not plan to spend similar big sums to give jobs to the war-employed through starting big industries, rail and road communications, big irrigation projects, etc. It has already started retrenchment all round. The result would be growing unemployment and lower wages. With the government ceasing to spend on big schemes of employment, increasing unemployment and less purchasing power, the prices of all goods will fall. The capitalist would in such circumstances try—and he is in a strong position to do it—to arrest the fall in the price of his own goods, while giving low prices to the food crops and other raw materials like cotton, tobacco, groundnut and sugarcane, etc.

There will be a greater fall in the prices of agricultural produce than in industrial goods. That is, the peasant would get less for his produce and pay more for what he purchases. The consumer has to pay more for all his goods including food because the hoarders would dictate the price.

PRIVATE TRADE IN FOOD, BANNED!

An essential part of our programme for liberating the peasant from the triple grip of landlord, moneylender and hoarder is to take away food-grain distribution out of the hands of hoarders and profiteers.

The people's state should organise a network of sales-purchase cooperatives in every village with branch centres in taluka, district and provincial towns. This cooperative network procures all surplus food-grain which the peasant offers for sale at a fair fixed price.

It organises village food pools and also sells grain to village artisans at reasonable fixed rates. It supplies surplus grain stocks to district and provincial central granaries so that food-grain is available in towns at reasonable control rates.

These sale-purchase societies will also supply the peasant with essential commodities such as tools, manure, cloth, kerosene, and sugar at fixed control rates.

This plan of taking the food-grain trade and distribution entirely out of the hands of private traders will not hit the small merchants and retailers. Already, they have largely become the agents of big hoarders and profiteers and can only function as such. They would get a chance

to put their skill at the service of the people and earn a decent livelihood as officials and technical hands in the cooperative network.

As functionaries in the cooperatives they would be able to earn as much through honest labour in the people's interests as they did as honest merchants.

Only the monopolist traders who turned hoarders and caused all the havoc in 1943-44 will be eliminated

The peasant will profit by this because he would get a fair price for his produce. The village and town consumer will get his food at reasonable rates. The surplus grain stocks would be safely and scientifically stored in concrete granaries in the districts and talukas to be rushed to any deficit area.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

We have seen that the landless agricultural labourers in the villages are about 50 per cent. A majority of this agricultural labour comes from untouchable and Scheduled Castes like Mala, Madiga, etc. They form 20 per cent of the total population of the whole of Andhra. Besides the members of the Scheduled Castes, there are other caste labourers from the Gowda (Settibaliza or Gouwalla), Golla (Yadava), etc. who also live on labour.

The Scheduled Castes live on the outskirts of the villages. They live in crowded, muddy and insanitary areas. They are socially considered as untouchable and are not allowed to take water from the same wells or tanks as the Caste Hindus. They are not even allowed to pass through the streets in some villages.

Their children are not allowed to attend the same village school as the Caste Hindu children. A few labour schools are run separately for them.

Their economic condition is as bad as their social disabilities are appalling. The agricultural labourer who is a farm hand gets anywhere between Rs. 100 and Rs. 250 for a whole year. The daily-wage labourer gets a wage that varies from As. 4 to Re. 1 according to season and the area.

Women are paid even less. The farm labourers do not get even one day's holiday in a month. There is no limitation on working hours. They have to work at all odd hours according as the owner directs, in busy seasons more and in

slack seasons less. There is no provision at all for sickness, accident or old age.

ORGANISING AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

The Communist Party has been working since 1932 to build agricultural labour associations comprising of the Scheduled Castes, irrespective of whether they are Christian, Hindu or others.

It has been developing the movement in close cooperation with the peasants in the village. The demands of both the agricultural labourers and the peasants can be achieved only on the basis of building an agricultural labour-peasant united movement in the village.

It is only the united agricultural labour-peasant movement that would enable them to get waste land, fair wages, decent housing, educational facilities, social and economic security.

It is only such a united movement, that can smash the common oppressor of the village, the British Government and its supporters—the zamindar, the rich landlord and the blackmarketeer.

The Communist Party has led agricultural labour in strike actions in various villages whenever it was necessary against the rich landlords, for better treatment and for fair wages and has rallied the peasants in support of these strikes.

The Scheduled Castes, socially and economically oppressed for thousands of years are awakened today. They are not satisfied with a mere campaign against untouchability, a few Harijan hostels and some scholarships.

Awakened at first by Gandhiji and the Congress movement, inspired by the agricultural labour movement which has been developing for the last 15 years, they demand today equal social, economic and political rights. The educated youth and school teachers of the Scheduled Caste people are increasingly coming forward to build their own organisation, the Scheduled Caste Federation.

We Communists, deeply rooted as we are among the agricultural labourers, will cooperate in developing the Scheduled Caste Federation to include all the Scheduled Caste people belonging to every political group, Ambedkarites, Congressmen and Communists.

CHARTER OF DEMANDS

We will work to get the Scheduled Caste Federation, the Christian Scheduled Caste labourers and agricultural labourers of all other castes, to jointly build a common strong agricultural labour movement.

We will work for the unity of this movement with the village peasants and with the democratic masses in town and village who are led by patriotic organisations like the Congress, the Muslim League and the Communist Party.

It is through this, that we can march shoulder to shoulder to achieve freedom from the British and also win the following urgent demands of agricultural labour :

1. Fallow land to be given to agricultural labourers and poor peasants.

2. Cancellation of all the debts of agricultural labour.

3. A fair minimum daily wage to be guaranteed by legislation. This should be not less than annas 2 (in slack seasons) and annas 3 (in busy harvest and transplanting seasons) for every rupee of the sale price that a maund of paddy fetches. This would work out today at annas 10 to annas 11 a day for slack seasons and Re. 1 in busy seasons. If paid in kind, the full equivalent of the minimum wage must be paid.

4. Statutory holiday of one month in a year, and with the growth and prosperity of agriculture the agricultural labourers to be given the same holiday privileges as the industrial workers in towns.

5. Decent treatment and no abuse.

6. Government to bear the whole cost of insuring agricultural labourers against sickness, accident, old age or unemployment.

7. Government to acquire land and make good sites for houses available to them, lay good streets in their hamlets, dig more wells and open more schools for their children.

8. Proper representation of Scheduled Castes in the services, in the legislatures, in district boards and panchayats—through separate electorate if they so desire till the inequalities of their economic and social conditions are overcome.

9. Throwing open of all public wells, tanks, streets, choultries and schools to the Scheduled Caste ; the practice

of untouchability to be made punishable by law.

10. Building of new industries, big irrigation and road and rail transport projects so as to provide jobs for surplus agricultural labourers.

THE DEMOBILISED SOLDIER

The British Government is threatening to take away the waste land which the agricultural labourers and poor peasants are cultivating to give it to the demobilised soldier. This is on par with its scheme of throwing men out of employment in railways and other industries so as to employ the demobilised soldier.

It thus wants to split agricultural labour among itself, one section fighting the other, the wartime agricultural labourer against the demobilised soldier. It wants to split the working class and make it fight against the demobilised soldier. The Government has neither the wish nor the capacity to plan out enough irrigation, road and rail projects and industrial enterprises to absorb all the demobilised soldiers and all the unemployed, both from the village and the town.

In Andhra, there will be about 100,000 demobilised soldiers and many times this number in other war occupations, who too will be thrown out of employment. The Government has reserved only 160,000 acres in the whole of Andhra.

We demand that the demobilised soldiers be given land not by snatching it from the agricultural labourer or the peasant, but from the fallow lands of zamindars and bringing into cultivation the Government land that is lying uncultivated. New industries and irrigation projects must be started to absorb the rest of the demobilised soldiers.

THE FISHERMEN

The fishermen of Andhra form a section of our people who have special problems and demands of their own.

Most of them live near the sea coast. They depend upon fishing for their livelihood. There are neither facilities for preservation of fish nor fish oil industries.

The fisher-folk in their small boats cannot go far into

the sea for deep sea fishing, and they are thus reduced to starvation due to the uncertain catch nearer the coast.

In Divi area of Kistna district, part of the year they have to live on a bitter stupefying fruit for lack of fish.

In Vizag district near the coastal areas after the 1943 cyclone, whole villages of fishermen were devastated. They are all suffering from starvation and from malaria.

We must build cooperatives for these fishermen which should be financed by the Government:

- 1) to provide yarn and netting;
- 2) to construct boats in which they could go far into the sea and make deep sea fishing possible;
- 3) to erect fisheries and fish oil industries, and to make arrangements for the preservation of fish;
- 4) to organise sale of fish and fish oil in far away markets.

THE TODDY-TAPPERS

The Settibaliza and Gowda communities who live on toddy-tapping are being exploited by Parry & Co. which converts the sweet toddy into various kinds of confectionery. The Communist Party supports the demands of these toddy-tappers to take over that company and build more factories to extend this industry and give them security of jobs and decent conditions of livelihood.

Many of them now unemployed in rural areas will be able to find jobs in these factories.

TRIBAL PEOPLE

In the forest and hill tracts of Andhra, the tribes of Koyals, Savaras, Gadabas, and Chenchus live. Other tribal people like Yenadis, Erukas and Lambadis live in plains. They are subjected to forced labour and to various kinds of oppression at the hands of the corrupt government officials. The Criminal Tribes Act makes them slaves to the police officials. The oppression in the Agency tracts is so great that there have been violent revolts of the tribal people from time to time but they were put down ruthlessly by the British Government. The most famous one was the revolt led by Alluri Seetharamaraju in 1923 for two years. These tracts are excluded areas under the

special powers of the Governor. The Communist Party demands that :

1. All excluded or partially excluded areas must be brought under the People's Government.
2. Abolition of authoritarian exploitation by the tribal elders under the Mutadari system.
3. Abolition of all repressive special legislation directed against the tribal people, like the Criminal Tribes Act, and their liberation from the clutches of the government officials.
4. Abolition of forced labour. Fixation of fair minimum wages.
5. Steps to be taken to see that the tribal people receive proper prices for the forest produce and are not cheated by the merchants and the officials.
6. Special schools to make them literate and teach them handicrafts and agriculture.
7. A study of their social customs and tribal development to help them to cast off the customs that hinder their development and to increase their self-confidence to develop their peculiar culture.

IV. Charter Of Peasant Demands

THIS far-reaching agrarian reconstruction which is so essential to stave off famine, abolish starvation and feed our people cannot be carried out in alliance with the zamindars, the rich landlords and the blackmarketeers, the leeches who have fattened on the misery of our peasants.

Only the united kisan and agricultural labour movement which has organised the Kisan Sabha and the agricultural labour unions and has for the last 15 years fought the zamindars and landlords can carry out this reconstruction.

The Kisan Sabha which led these struggles in the past, will now lead the struggle against the British imperialists and their village stooges, the zamindars, blackmarketeers and hoarders. It will forge the alliance of the peasantry with the townsfolk, with the patriotic parties of our land, the Congress, the League and the Communist Party.

Our Party—the Communist Party—pledges that it will fight, both within the legislatures and outside, to get the popular ministries to adopt the following measures to aid village reconstruction.

FUNDAMENTAL LAWS

The Party pledges that it shall demand that any new popular ministry must pass within its first year, three new fundamental laws to ensure the birth of new free villages.

1) **A Land Act** ensuring abolition of landlordism (see **A Free, Happy India** : Blueprint of Communist electoral policy).

2) **An Anti-Usury Act** abolishing usurious money-lending to the agriculturists and artisans and guaranteeing credit to peasants and artisans through cooperatives which

shall be based on democratic control and which will mobilise the credit resources of the present moneylenders at a reasonable rate of interest.

3) An Anti-Profitier Act abolishing the monopoly-grip of rural wholesalers over people's food and peasants' needs and introducing large-scale "Sales-Purchase Cooperatives" run on a democratic basis and not ruled over by the bureaucracy.

IMMEDIATE MEASURES

The Party shall demand that new popular ministries should pass people's ordinances for the immediate introduction of the following measures so as to give no time to the vested interests to rally their forces and resist urgently needed relief.

1. Agricultural income-tax on all agricultural incomes of statutory landlords leaving them not more than Rs.6,000 per year of the rentals received by them.

2. Suspend collection of land-tax from those owning less than 5 acres.

3. Fallow land of the zamindars and government to be given to the landless and poor peasants.

4. Substantial reduction of rent. Prohibit ejection of tenants till the Land Act comes into force.

5. Guaranteed minimum wage to agricultural labourers.

6. Moratorium on all debts of peasants and credit facilities from the government or cooperative banks at 3 per cent.

7. Immediate strengthening and democratisation of the cooperative movement and subsidising of Sales-Purchase Cooperatives by declaring and guaranteeing fair price for agricultural produce and ensuring industrial goods to villages at non-blackmarket fair rates.

8. Immediate arrangements for training peasant youth in new methods of agriculture and for running rural cooperatives and new cattle-breeding farms.

9. New schools and hospitals, new roads, canals, and industries to provide new jobs for the educated village youth.

10. Equality in wages and all professions to be open for women. Special educational, maternity and latrine facilities in the villages.

V. Industrial Regeneration

FOR two hundred years British imperialism has been the avowed enemy of industrial development in India. It has put every obstacle in the way.

It encouraged the traders to export raw materials to England only to be brought back in the form of finished commodities and sold in India. It has sought to keep India as an agricultural colony—a supplier of raw materials to imperialist Britain.

It destroyed our thriving handicrafts by punitive measures as in the case of the Dacca muslin weavers and by the economic competition of machine-made goods.

It took no steps whatsoever to absorb the artisans who were thus rendered idle.

The handloom industry in India is a typical example of how our industries were ruined; lakhs of handloom workers are today without yarn and without employment.

THE FIGHT FOR INDIAN INDUSTRIES

Such industrial growth as we have seen in India has been the outcome of a big struggle against British imperialist resistance by the Indian Swadeshi and national movement. During the first world war, our industries had grown to some extent but later they were once again obstructed and hindered from developing.

During the second world war, it was the consistent policy of the British Government not to encourage any industry that was likely to become a competitor to British industry, while Australia and Canada have become great industrial countries during the war, developing steel, machine manufacturing, automobile, aeroplane and shipping indus-

tries. None of these basic industries were allowed to develop in our country. Only temporary factories for war-needs—mostly for repairs and small arms—were built and they are now being closed rapidly, throwing a million workers out of employment.

BACKWARDNESS OF ANDHRA INDUSTRY

The result of this all-India policy of the British is seen glaringly in Andhra where industrial development has been neglected more than in any other province. Our mineral and forest wealth has not yet been surveyed—a result of the consistent policy of the British imperialists to rob us of our raw materials but not allow any industries to develop here.

In 1941, the number of factories in British Andhra which used power and employed more than 20 workers was about 888 and the number of daily workers whom they employed was about 46,000. A glance at the list given below will reveal the kind of factories they are. Not a single basic industry has been developed.

Industry	No. of Factories	No. of Workers
Cotton	9	1,520
Jute	4	7,123
Cotton ginning & pressing	255	10,443
Groundnut	122	3,331
Rice mills	361	
Oil mills	82	11,793
Sugar	6	1,460
Tobacco curing	8	7,433
Cement	2	434
Tiles	2	176
Printing presses	7	178
Engineering works	30	2,122
TOTAL	888	46,013

All our factories are only concerned with preparing raw materials like paddy, cotton, groundnut—for immediate consumption or export.

For instance, although groundnut is grown in plenty and exported in large quantities, no vegetable ghee or soap factories are started in Andhra.

In spite of the large quantity of cotton grown especially in Royalaseema districts, there are no spinning and weaving mills in this area to turn the cotton into cloth. Our cotton has to go to Bombay and Ahmedabad to be spun and woven into cloth. The Bombay millowners and traders monopolise it and their agents sell cloth at enormous profits in the blackmarket.

BRITISH PROFITEERS IN ANDHRA

The big factories, employing more than 500 workers, in Andhra are the jute mills, the tobacco factory in Chirala and the sugar factory in Samalkot. All these are owned by British capitalists. It is precisely in these factories at Chirala, Chittivalsa etc., that workers were shot down by the police when they struggled for adequate wages and dearness allowance. The British Government officials in order to safeguard the interests of the European bosses are only too ready to open fire on the workers.

In Samalkot the workers were beaten, arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and ten of them are still rotting in jails for no other crime except that they demanded adequate wages.

These factories and their British owners control the prices, practically, of our entire sugarcane, groundnuts, and tobacco crop. They get enormous profits both by fixing lower prices for the peasants' raw produce and by paying low wages to the workers—themselves pocketing high profits.

This refusal to give adequate wages and dearness allowance—the use of police bullets to beat down the workers' demands and smash up their unions—took place when the profiteering bosses were making enormous profits.

Here are the figures.

Name of factory	Total capital (share & debenture) in thousands of rupees.	Profits 1941-43 in thousands of rupees	Ratio of profits to capital
Nellimarla Jute Mills	1,750	2,100	1-1 $\frac{1}{5}$ times
Chittivalsa Jute Mills	2,700	3,900	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ times
Samalkot Deccan Abkari & Sugar Co., Ltd.	1,364 (share capital)	4,500	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ times

The Chittivalsa Jute Mills' bosses, who made in just 2 years profits which were 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ times their total share and debenture capital, shamelessly refused to give their workers an increased dearness allowance of Rs. 8 per month! When the workers went on strike they requisitioned police help, got the leaders arrested and caused severe repression to be used in order to smash the labour union.

In the European owned Samalkot factory also the workers who went on strike were arrested, and ten of them are still languishing in jails!

These soulless profiteers, who have fattened on the misery of the workers and peasants, must go.

CONDITION OF WORKERS

The workers are paid miserable wages, as low as 4 annas per day, and even the skilled worker does not get more than a rupee in most of the factories. It is only the most skilled fitters and mechanics that receive 2 to 3 rupees per day. From 1941, wages rose a little but it was too little compared to the increase in the cost of living.

Their housing and other living conditions are extremely insanitary, with no educational and medical facilities worth mentioning.

Even the few safeguards given to the worker under the Factories Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Maternity Benefit Act, are denied to a large number of workers because the small workshops employing less than 10 workers or working on manual power—like beedi factories and tanneries—are not classified as factories. Similarly categories of workers like cart-pullers, rickshawallas (municipal workers) also do not enjoy the protection of the Factories Act and other beneficial labour legislation.

Even in many of those factories that are under the Act, the employers do not observe the safeguards and they bribe the Factory Inspectors if on their rare visits, they find any infringement of the rules.

It is against these conditions that the Communists in Andhra have built up the trade union movement from 1934 onwards. It is due to this trade union movement that a partial amelioration in the workers' conditions has been achieved. Casual leave and public holidays have been secured. Daily pin-pricks by the bosses have lessened and a new consciousness has grown among the workers that through their unions they can stand up to their employers.

These unions, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Red Flag stood by them throughout the war years. They stood by them in the food crisis and got them food rations, cloth and kerosene, by leading the fight against blackmarketing.

It was the workers through their unions that exposed the blackmarketing of rice mill owners so that the people got rice at controlled rates. The workers kept the railways running, by quick repairs to the engines and by saving coal. The municipal workers too stuck to their jobs, kept towns clean and safeguarded the health of citizens.

THE WAY TO FREE TOWNS

But today, the war being over, the British Government which all along prevented our industries from growing, now tries to throw workers out of employment. In every town, the employers too threaten to throw workers and clerks out on the streets and effect cuts in the wages, taking advantage of the army of the unemployed. Meanwhile our people suffer from scarcity of every commodity—cloth, paper, sugar, etc.

It is only by developing Andhra industrially that we can absorb not only the present industrial workers and the demobilised soldiers but also the surplus population from the villages.

But our industries cannot be built by the soulless profiteers and the alien British Government. Our industrial resources must not be exploited for the profit of a few but must be harnessed in the interests of all our people.

Full and rapid industrialisation of Andhra is possible

by the People's Government of Andhra planning and building it as part of an India-wide industrial plan.

To provide resources for these industrial expansions, the Communist Party advocates the following immediate measures :

1. Taking over all the British owned concerns, in lieu of the sterling balances which they owe us; the ILTD, Parry & Co., the jute mills in Vizag etc., shall be taken over by the People's Government. The monopolist trade in groundnuts and other raw produce to the detriment of our peasants, that is being carried on by Rally & Co. and Volkart Bros., shall be taken over by the People's Government.

2. Mills which are being kept idle by the Indian owners shall be taken over by the government, e.g., the Rajahmundry Spinning Mills and Paper Factory.

3. The war-profiteers' accounts shall be investigated and all the money which they earned through profiteering and blackmarketing shall be forfeited by the People's Government and be used for building up industries to produce goods for the people.

4. The part of the Excess Profits Tax which has been set aside as a reserve fund, returnable to the capitalists, shall not be refunded to the capitalist owners but shall be used by the People's Government for industrial development.

5. Banks, key and heavy industries, mines, transport and public utility concerns shall be taken over by the People's Government.

6. All other factories not owned by the government shall be controlled so as to guarantee fair wages and conditions of work for the workers, to produce goods for the people and prevent profiteering.

7. The workers' democratic right to build their independent trade unions shall be protected. In order to make production efficient, the People's Government shall seek the cooperation of the workers' trade unions and of employers.

8. All anti-labour legislation shall be repealed.

9. An ordinance shall be passed stopping all retrenchment, fixing a minimum wage of Rs. 50, a 44-hour week and declaring a moratorium of workers' debts.

10. A labour code shall be enacted embodying the following rights of workers :

i) Right to a job be guaranteed. Compensation in lieu of job be assured by the government and the owners.

ii) A 44-hour week.

iii) Minimum living wage of Rs. 50 per month and cancellation of debts.

(iv) 15 days' holiday with full pay every year apart from sick leave and casual leave.

v) Insurance against accidents, sickness and old age.

vi) For women workers the following measures shall be incorporated in the code :

a. Six weeks' maternity leave with full pay before and after delivery.

b. Equal wages for equal work.

c. Children's creches wherever women work.

vii) Free education and medical help.

Provision shall be made for night schools and special technical schools where the worker after his day's work in the factory can study and improve his qualifications.

ANDHRA'S INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES

With the workers, the People's Government and the patriotic millowners unitedly working in accordance with an all-India plan, and in close cooperation with an all-India People's Government, we can transform Andhra into a mighty industrial land and build the following industries :

1. Iron. (a) We have good deposits of iron capable of supporting a modern industry in Kurnool (Dhone) and Cuddapah district (Pendlimalli). With electric power from Sangameswar and Tungabhadra and the manganese deposits at nearby Sandur, we can build a great iron industry.

(b) Near Bezwada chromite is found and with coal from nearby Kottagudem and East Godavari Agency, and manganese in Vizag, iron industry can also be built up in Bezwada or in Vizag.

2. Manganese and aluminium (chemical industry). Both these are found in Vizag district. Near Vizag, with its port and railway facilities, chemical and other basic in-

dustries can be developed. Dry batteries can be manufactured.

3. **Mica and copper** (electric goods industry). Mica is extensively found and mined in Nellore. Copper and zinc deposits also exist there. With these we can build a big electrical industry of conducting wires, transformers, dynamos etc. Lubricants for high pressure machinery can also be developed from mica in Nellore. Ceramic industry also can be developed as raw materials for it are found here.

4. **Lead industry.** In Royalaseema districts, in Cuddapah and Cumbum in Kurnool and Guntur (Palnad taluk), large deposits of lead are found and they can be worked.

5. **Gold** in Anantapur.

6. **Graphite** (pencil, batteries and ceramic industries). It is available in Kistna and East and West Godavari. Pencil factories can be built in Bezwada, Rajahmundry. With good kaolin available along with the graphite, porcelain and ceramic industry can be built in East Godavari. In Nellore also ceramic industry can be developed.

7. **Paper industry.** With bamboo forests and other raw materials, paper mills can be started and run in Vizag and Kurnool districts, besides the existing one at Rajahmundry.

8. **Asbestos and cement industry.** Asbestos is found in large quantities in Royalaseema districts. It can be developed on a large scale. Cement factories can be built in Royalaseema districts also, besides the ones that exist in Guntur and Bezwada. (In Dhone, in Kurnool and in Palnad taluk of Guntur and Kanigiri and Madanapalli cement factories can be built.)

9. (a) **Paint industry.** In Royalaseema (Cuddapah and Kurnool) large amounts of barytes and different coloured ochres are available.

(b) **Sandalwood** and other wood distillery factories in Kurnool and Vizag.

10. **Marble industry.** White and coloured, in Palnad; **slate industry** in Markapuram.

11. **Textile mills** to use the locally produced cotton at Tadipatri, Guntakal and Adoni.

12. **Vegetable ghee factories, oil refining and soap.** In Vizag, Bezwada, Guntur, Nandyala, Anantapuram, Madanapalli.

13. **Tobacco and cigar making industries** in Guntur.

14. **Tanning and leather industry** in different districts.
15. **Fruit canning industries** in fruit growing regions of Andhra.

16. **Fertiliser plants** at Bezwada, Vizag and Royalaseema.

RAILWAYS

To fight the unemployment with which the Government threatens the railway workers and to facilitate development of the interior areas of Andhra, the following railway projects must be taken up immediately on hand:

1. (a) A railway line from Vizag to Warangal which will connect the state and the growing industrial belt of Godavari Valley and will open up the Agency tracts.

(b) From Rajahmundry to Bhadrachalam and then on to the Warangal line.

2. Atchampeta, Sattenapalli, Narsaraopet, Addanki, Ongole.

3. From Hyderabad city to Devarkonda, Macherla, Denakonda, Podali, Ongole.

4. Ongole-Podali, Kanigiri, Badveli, Cuddapah, Rayachoti, Madanapalli, Sreenivasapur-Bangalore.

5. Nellore - Badveli - Mydukur, Proddutur - Allagadda-Nandyala-Atmakur.

6. Gudur-Rapur-Rajampeta-Rayachoti-Kadiri.

7. Royadurg - Kalyandurg - Anantapuram - Tadpatri-Koilkuntla-Nandyala.

8. Bellary - Adoni - Kurnool - Atmakur - Erragondapalem-Macherla.

9. Kadiri-Pulivendla-Erraguntla-Proddutur.

10. Khammapet - Tiruvur - Chintalapudi - Jangereddigudem-Nidadavole.

11. Challapalli-Pamaru-Gudivada-Nuzivid-Tiruvur.

Cocanada, Masulipatam, Vodarevu, Narsapur and Krishnapatam (Nellore) must be developed as ports. Aerodromes must be built for linking all our cities with air lines.

ARTISANS AND COOPERATIVES

There are a large number of handloom weavers in Andhra, the number of handlooms being 130,000.

The great weaving communities, Devanga and Padma-

salis, Togata and Karnakarīs and in some places Muslims and the untouchables who earn their livelihood on weaving, have been reduced to penury.

They had all along to face the competition of mill-made cloth and now in conditions of cloth shortage, when they could have eked out a livelihood, they do not get yarn enough to carry on.

On the one hand the government and the millowners cripple their trade, do not provide them with other jobs; on the other hand the master weavers, the trading section of the weavers, boss over them and pay them a miserable wage, far below that of a factory worker.

A Bombay mill weaver earns Rs. 70 per month for 9 hours' work a day, whereas a handloom worker, with his whole family at the job, earns only Rs. 45 to 50.

Most of the handloom weavers have been reduced to wage earners under some weaver or other. Even if he owns his own loom, he has to sell the cloth to the master weaver himself. The master weaver gets cloth cheap by paying low wages to the actual weaver, sells it at high prices to the consumer and pockets big profits. No wonder then that he is opposed to price-control of handloom cloth and bitterly fights fixation of minimum wages for the weaver.

Prof. Ranga and his group support these unjust demands of the master weavers and to confuse the weavers they blame the machines and industrialisation. Instead of showing how master weavers and blackmarketees—helped by the alien rulers—are heaping miseries on the weavers, they say that the introduction of the machines is the cause of all this misery.

The Communist Party has stood by the weavers during the critical war years, it has helped them to organise the Andhra Handloom Weavers' Union. It led the fight against blackmarketing in yarn, secured for the weavers quotas of rationed yarn, got them kerosene permits and frustrated the efforts of the blackmarketees and the master weavers to deprive them of yarn and keep down their wages.

It is not by abolishing machines that the handloom weaver will get his quota of yarn or a guaranteed job. It is only by building up his organisation and by fighting for the following demands, which our Party puts forward on his behalf, that he will be able to do so :

1. Displaced handloom weavers must be taken in the textile factories, with minimum living wage of Rs. 50 per month.

2. Handloom cooperative societies must be established and yarn supplied to them.

3. A minimum living wage for the handloom weaver be fixed.

4. Automatic power looms to be introduced through his cooperative societies to enable the handloom weaver to earn better wages.

5. Handloom cloth to be purchased at a fixed price, and marketed by the government.

6. All possible aid to the handloom weaving families—cheap credit, kerosene, etc.—to be given.

7. Unemployment benefit, when the weaver finds himself without a job, to be provided.

The condition of these handicrafts is very bad. They do not get raw material and they earn very little. The Communist Party stands for building production cooperatives for each of these handicrafts, to guarantee a minimum living wage.

The shop employees also under the influence of the growing trade union movement, have organised themselves in the Shop Employees' Union and have won a weekly holiday, dearness allowance etc. Among the entire middle class, it is this section that is closer to the new working class movement.

PETTY SHOPKEEPERS

The petty shopkeeper on the other hand is under the influence of big merchants and thinks that our fight against the blackmarket is directed against him. He does not yet see that our fight is not against the petty shopkeeper who makes an honest effort to eke out his livelihood. In fact we do not catch the small shopkeeper even when he is selling above the control rates because we know that he himself had to pay higher prices for these goods in the blackmarket. We want all the small shopkeepers to join hands with the people in fighting the blackmarket, so that they may get goods at control rates and sell them to the public at a reasonable profit.

We do not want the petty shopkeeper to ally with the

big blackmarketeers and shield them from public exposure and legitimate punishment. We want him to follow the people's path of honest trade not only in his own interest but also in that of the people at large, however difficult this may seem to begin with.

He must organise himself in a Small Retail Shopkeepers' Association and fight for the following demands :

1. No vexatious interference by the government officials.
2. Guaranteed supply of enough goods by the government to enable him to carry on his trade and earn a livelihood.
3. He must insist on and set an example of efficient service in supplying the people goods of quality at reasonable prices.
4. He must see in the cooperative stores movement an ally and not a rival because it helps him and the people to procure the goods and oppose the corrupt officials and the blackmarketeers who are as much enemies of the small shopkeeper as they are of the consumers.
5. The more he allies with the democratic movement, the more he himself will get strengthened and will bring about the democratic unity of Congress, the Muslim League and the Communists.

THE TOWN MIDDLE CLASSES

The low salaried employees of the government, local boards and commercial concerns were hard hit with the increase in prices during the war period. Dearness allowance had been granted very rarely and tardily, and even that was very inadequate. With increasing rents and the housing scarcity, their housing conditions had become worse. Forced to purchase all their essentials like kerosene, cloth, paper and medicines, their meagre incomes were not enough to make both ends meet, or to give their children all the facilities for education which they desired ; or to protect their dear ones from sickness and disease.

The generally widespread unemployment which existed before the war among the educated, was reduced to some extent by the temporary jobs connected with the war. Now with the war having come to a close, these sections are

once again faced with unemployment, starvation and frustration of their whole lives.

THE TEACHERS

The teachers and the rest of the liberal professions along with the salaried employees must see that their demands for employment, decent wages, and living conditions can be fulfilled only in a New Andhra where the industrial and agricultural pulse would be throbbing with new life under a united democratic People's Government. They must see that a New Andhra and a new cultural and moral life can be built for our people only by a united democratic movement.

It is in New Andhra that they would be able to use all their culture, talent, skill and technique to the fullest extent in the service of the people in building new industries and projects, in running schools, colleges and centres of art and culture.

THE MUSLIM PEOPLE

The Muslim people form a minority of 5 to 10 per cent in Andhra. They are mainly concentrated in towns and big villages. They are mostly poor people, petty shopkeepers, tonga drivers, hotel-keepers, beedi workers and tailors etc. Only a microscopic section of them are well-to-do merchants or in the liberal professions. They are ardent Muslim Leaguers but they have not yet developed their organisation. The Muslim League itself though growing in its influence has not yet taken up the economic and social demands of the Muslim poor.

We can build a united Andhra only if we guarantee them complete freedom for their religion and culture, schools in Urdu, proper representation, if necessary through separate electorates, on local boards and legislature, and proper share in the services. We must guarantee to the Muslim poor, security of employment, a minimum living wage and decent living conditions.

VI. A New Democratic People's State For Andhra

TODAY we are scattered in the districts under direct British domination, in Telangana of Hyderabad State, in certain border areas of Mysore and Orissa and Central Provinces and Bastar. We want all the Telugus living in these contiguous areas to be united into one great Telugu state. Today, under one common administration of Madras Province, our economic, social and political life is stagnating.

The present Madras Legislative Assembly has only one-third of its representatives from Andhra, and is subject to the direct veto and domination of a British governor. It is this Assembly that is supposed to make laws for the Andhra people.

In fact, it is the Governor and his agents, the district collectors, deputy collectors of revenue divisions, *tehsildars* of talukas and *munsiffs* in the villages that rule over us, order us about and suppress us economically, socially and politically. The so-called village *panchayats*, the municipalities, the district boards are elected with a very restricted franchise which does not cover more than one-third of the adult population and their powers are more or less consultative.

They have very limited powers in respect to a few subjects that concern the daily life of our people such as health, education and roads. They do not have any voice in taxation or in the economic building of our people. Even these powers are still further restricted through the appointment of commissioners. They are likely to be further restricted by the suggested removal of education, public roads etc., from their control.

The government proposes to administer them through the provincial bodies, whose officials will be nominated by the bureaucracy.

The laws, regulations and decrees of this most unrepresentative administration are backed by a corrupt police and a judicial system 300 years out of date—subject to a great deal of executive influence.

NEW DEMOCRATIC STATE

We want a new democratic constitution to be framed for Andhra by a constituent assembly, elected by adult franchise. Every man and woman over 18 years of age irrespective of colour, creed, caste and religion must have the right to decide what kind of New Andhra he or she wants.

The new constituent assembly shall be composed at the first instance of the representatives of Telugu areas under direct British domination, till our brethren in Telangana throw off the yoke of the Nizam and decide to join us to form a united Vishala Andhra in a free India.

It shall frame a constitution guaranteeing the following fundamental rights :

1. The right of freedom of speech, press, assembly and association ; freedom of conscience and religious worship.
2. The right to carry arms.
3. The right to education in our own mother tongue.
4. The right to work, to a living wage and social insurance.
5. Equality of sexes in education, in employment and property rights and in social and cultural matters.
6. Equality of all citizens irrespective of caste, religion, or creed. Any social oppression or racial discrimination directed against a caste shall be punishable by law. All public resorts, offices, wells, etc. shall be open to every citizen without any discrimination.
7. The democratic right of recall to be guaranteed. Elected representatives of the people whether councillors or officials shall be removable by the people who elected them.

and slush. There is no lighting of the streets and, in fact, little light even in the houses which have only crude oil lamps or kerosene lights.

Of the Harijan hamlets, the less said the better. They are filthy hovels, with thatched mud huts, which are worse than the cattle-sheds of the village peasant.

We have no libraries, reading rooms, parks or playgrounds. There is a complete black-out of all culture in our villages.

HEALTH AND SANITATION

Sanitation is rarely known in our villages. There is no arrangement for latrines even for women. The roadways and canal bends are used by the whole village for the purpose. If our village sanitation is properly planned, our villages will be clean, our people healthy and our fields can be properly manured.

Our villages get their drinking water from open unprotected tanks and our people are thus easy victims to many diseases.

Most of our villages do not even have a first-aid centre, much less a hospital. Our people resort to quacks, to worthless and even dangerous herbs and become victims to the medicines prescribed by every passing quack.

In the whole of British Andhra there were only 515 hospitals in 1938, only half of them being modern hospitals. The rest were Ayurvedic clinics.

We had thus one hospital for every 130 sq. miles and for 38,000 persons.

In Chittoor district there is only one hospital for every 80,000 persons.

In the Telangana districts of Hyderabad State there is only one hospital for every 110,000 persons!

In British Andhra there are only 17 hospitals for women and children.

There is one midwife for every 1,000 births and in villages it is one for every 1,350 births, whereas at least one midwife for every 100 births is necessary in order to ensure skilled assistance.

There is only one bed for every 1,350 deliveries and in rural areas, there is only one bed for every 2,800 births. No wonder then that out of every 1,000 children born, 180

die before they are a year old and 9 mothers die for every 1,000 births.

Under these conditions one should not be surprised if with our poverty and hunger, with practically no medical help, we are a prey to epidemics like cholera, small-pox, plague, typhoid, influenza, malaria and the average expectation of life is only 23 years.

How much our people's health can be improved if only the British imperialist stranglehold were smashed can be seen if we look at a few medical statistics of the Soviet Union which had only 25 years to fight disease and build a new healthy Soviet citizen.

In the Soviet Union there is one doctor for every 1,500 persons as against one doctor for every 10,000 in India. There is one hospital bed for every 250 persons in the Soviet Union as against one bed for every 4,800 persons in our country.

Infant mortality has been reduced in the Soviet Union from 224 per 1,000 births in 1920 to 58 in 1940 whereas in our country, it is still 180. Maternal mortality per thousand births is 1.5 in the Soviet Union as against 9 in Andhra.

To remedy this state of affairs the whole medical profession should be nationalised and every registered and authorised doctor, nurse or compounder should be employed in some hospital or the other. They should be given a decent minimum living wage, fixed hours of work, leave, proper rotation of work and facilities for further study every five years. They should have old-age pensions and sickness insurance.

Small dispensaries in every village of over 500, a decent hospital with a maternity ward in areas and towns having a population of 10,000 and first class modern hospitals in every town of over 50,000—this is the minimum that our country needs.

EDUCATION

We have 7,100 primary schools with 475,000 children and 150 secondary schools with only 76,000 pupils.

The villagers are poor, so most of the school-going children are taken away by their parents to work in the fields or to look after the cattle. Very few can afford to send their children to distant villages or towns even to get

higher elementary education without which what the children learn in the first four years at school is forgotten soon after.

The teachers are paid starvation wages of Rs. 15 to 20 per month and many teachers—including the government aided schools—do not get even this much. Naturally, the education they impart to their pupils suffers for lack of proper training and attention.

Only 14 per cent of the school-going children between the ages of 5 and 15 are in schools and only 6 per cent of the children between 11 and 17 years are in secondary schools.

The education of girls is still worse.

In primary schools there are only 53 girls for every 100 boys.

In secondary schools there are only 12 girls for every 100 boys.

And we are taught in a foreign language and forced to learn it even before we know properly our own mother tongue.

Our whole educational system must be reorganised to liquidate illiteracy, to educate our people, to enable them to build a new agriculture and a new industry and to make our people live a free, happy and cultured life.

The Communist Party stands for the immediate opening of university centres at Vizag, Rajahmundry, Guntur, Bezwada, Anantapur and Tirupati—with modern colleges, especially medical, engineering, agricultural and research centres. The medium of instruction should be Telugu, our mother tongue.

FOR A CLEAN, CULTURED VILLAGE

The Communist Party stands and shall work to build a new village and a new town having the following minimum facilities :

1. Metalled roads for our streets and each village linked with the main roads of the country.
2. Proper street and house lighting, in course of time with electricity.
3. Cattle-sheds and manure-pits outside the villages.
4. Drainage from the households to be absorbed by courtyard gardens or drainage pits.

5. Latrine arrangement for women and men separately, in the courtyards or in public sites acquired for the purpose.

6. New Harijan quarters with sufficient land for each household.

7. Newly dug wells or chlorinated drinking water from canals or tanks.

8. A small dispensary for every village of over 500 persons. A good dispensary with a maternity ward within a radius of three or four miles each serving a population of 10,000.

9. a) A higher elementary school for every boy and girl of school-going age between 5 and 14, as a first step to raise the school-leaving age to 16.

b) For a population of 10,000 a high school and vocational school to cater for the boys and girls passing from these village schools. Such schools to be within easy distance of the villages.

c) Provision for adult education and liquidation of illiteracy.

d) Provision for free food, boarding and books for the poor children unable to bear this cost.

e) Improvement of the condition of teachers, with minimum wages of Rs. 50 in villages and Rs. 100 in towns as per cost of living index ; provision of sickness, old-age and unemployment insurance.

10. a) Every village of over 500 to have a playground, a park, a radio, a library with a hall for indoor meetings, plays and other cultural performances.

b) Daily postal service and the pice post card facility to be revived.

NEW TOWNS

New towns of over 10,000 population should have :

1. Metallic roads.
2. Electric lighting.
3. Covered underground drainage.
4. Abolition of slums. Provision for decent housing quarters for the labouring population at cheap rents.
5. Pipe system for water supply.
6. a) A good dispensary with a maternity ward.

b) First class modern hospitals for every city of over 50,000.

7. A high school, a vocational school for every 10,000 population and a science and arts college in every town of over 20,000.

8. Parks and radios, playgrounds, swimming tanks, theatres and libraries.

9. Unhealthy factories to be outside the town limits.

10. Improved sanitation by the provision of public latrines and urinals, in addition to standard latrines in every household.

11. Provision of markets in centrally located areas.

12. Cheap conveyance, by bus or electric tramways.

CHARTER OF WOMEN'S DEMANDS

To remove all the disabilities and the handicaps under which our women suffer today and to create facilities which would enable them to play their due role in building the new democratic Andhra, the Communist Party stands for equality of sexes in education, in employment, in property rights and in social and cultural rights. It will work for :

1. a) Compulsory basic education upto 14 years of age.
- b) Separate high schools for girls of 11 to 17 years.
- c) More women's colleges so as to facilitate higher education among women.
- d) Reading rooms and adult education centres to liquidate illiteracy among women.
2. Immediate legislation amending and codifying the Hindu law so as to give women the same rights of succession and inheritance to property as men.
3. a) Women shall be eligible for every occupation ; sex shall be no bar to their employment except as in underground mining etc., which are injurious to their health.
- b) Equal wages for equal work.
- c) Maternity leave for working women, 6 weeks before delivery and 6 weeks after.
- d) Special maternity allowance and provision of milk for children.
- e) Provision of creches and nurseries for the children of working women.
- f) Resting places.

g) Lady doctor to visit factories every day where women are employed.

4. a) Education of people about the evils of early marriages below 18 years but as a first step marriages of girls below 16 years must be banned and not recognised by law.

b) Right of divorce for a woman or man provided there is :

- i. Desertion for a period of more than 3 years.
- ii. Suffering from imbecility, mental, infectious or incurable diseases.
- iii. Continued ill-treatment and cruelty.

The children to be with the mother in case of divorce and the man to maintain the woman and the children, unless the woman is an earning member in which case both to share equally the cost of bringing up the children.

5. a) Provision of good hospitals with maternity wards to cover a population of 10,000 with visiting midwives and a touring doctor.

b) Free medical and maternity aid to those unable to bear the cost.

THE WAY TO NEW ANDHRA

This New Andhra of ours can be built by the people of Andhra themselves, standing shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of the rest of India, in our common struggle against the British imperialists and their stooges, the princes and the zamindars.

The new villages of New Andhra can be built by the great peasant communities in the countryside of Andhra building up an independent Kisan Sabha and agricultural labour unions working hand in hand against the British imperialists, against the oppressive landlords, against the rack-rentier and against the usurer.

The new towns which we envisage and the industrial development of Andhra that we plan is possible only if the industrial worker is roused and organised in his democratic independent trade unions and fights shoulder to shoulder with the working class of the rest of India, for building a new industrial India.

It is only thus that a new industrial Andhra can come into existence wherein the workers shall have an equal

voice in production and in building and developing the industrial life of our country.

Only the alliance of the kisan movement, of both peasants and agricultural labourers of the village, the working class movement in the towns and the democratic movement of the middle class, both urban and rural—only the close alliance of all these democratic movements can build the new democracy.

Only the united march of these movements with similar movements all over India led by the Congress, the League and the Communist Party can overthrow the British imperialists and all their stooges—such as the village leeches and town profiteers—and lay the basis for the New Andhra in which this new democracy, art and culture, and a new life of plenty and prosperity can be built up for all Andhra people.

VII. The United Democratic Movement

VEERASALINGAM, the father of Andhra Renaissance, carried forward the best traditions of the great Andhra reformers of the earlier centuries like Vemana, Veerabrahmam and others.

Directly heralding the new awakening and inspired by the same urge that gave birth to similar reform movements in the rest of India, he wrote in a simple language, understandable by the common people. In his dramas, poems and short stories he carried on a vigorous crusade against old outmoded customs and the social backwardness of Andhra people. He gave a powerful call to build a new life, a new culture and a new Andhra.

He was aided in this great task of regeneration by a great band of literary figures like the Mahakavi Chilakamarti Lakshminarasimham, Guruzada Apparao, Komaraju Lakshmanrao and Gidugu Ramamurty. They stirred the whole of Andhra and roused in us the urge for freedom and thus paved the way for the national political movement in Andhra.

The first wave of the Indian national movement, 1905-08, at its very first impact in Andhra awakened the national consciousness of the Andhra people. G. Hari Sarvottamrao defied the government and was sentenced to 3 years' rigorous imprisonment. From social reform and literary renaissance, the turn towards political action was taken.

The new Swadeshi consciousness had to be carried to the people all over Andhradesha. As in other parts of India, the weapon of patriotic journalism was used for the purpose. Syt. Mutnoori Krishnarao of the *Krishna Patrika* and Syt. K. Nageswar Rao of the *Andhra Patrika* be-

came the founders of Telugu journalism and the leaders of the new patriotic upsurge. In 1913, the Andhra Mahasabha came into existence to agitate for a separate Andhra Province—the form in which our desire to rebuild our national life effectively expressed itself.

SECOND WAVE—NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

The call of the Non-Cooperation movement under the leadership of Gandhiji found a ready response in Andhra. The Andhra people had been nurtured on the great patriotic songs of Guruzada Apparao, and the pioneers of the social and literary renaissance. It must be remembered that Guntur was the stronghold of militant patriotism and undertook a no-tax campaign even before Gandhiji gave the call. It was Gandhiji who called upon them to pay up the taxes. The peasants and town population of Andhra rose to great heights of heroism and self-sacrifice. In Palnad taluk of Guntur district, the peasant leader Kanneganti Hanumanth Reddy was shot dead by armed police. In Chirala, the people migrated out of the municipal limits and lived in the open fields for 6 whole months so as not to pay municipal taxes.

Scores of lawyers and teachers spurned their jobs at the call of Gandhiji; students deserted their schools and colleges. The A.I.C.C. meeting at Bezwada in April 1921 drew a huge mass of the Andhra people such as was never seen again till 23 years later when the All India Kisan Sabha held its session in April 1944 at Bezwada.

BEGINNINGS OF KISAN MOVEMENT

Though the Non-Cooperation movement was called off by Gandhiji, the tribal people in the Agency tracts of Andhra did not give up the fight. Long oppressed and tyrannised over by the corrupt bureaucracy, they rose in revolt under the leadership of the legendary figure Alluri Sitaramaraju and carried on regular guerilla warfare for over two years. It was a struggle that inspired a whole generation of Andhra youth.

The Andhra people had now started on the path of struggle for their democratic rights and they continued the fight on every issue that affected their life and liberty. In

1929, the government wanted to enhance land revenue assessment in the ryotwari areas. They announced a re-settlement to increase the tax. The peasants of Godavari, Kistna and Guntur rallied in thousands to campaign against this iniquitous move. In the zamindari areas, particularly in the vast estates of the Raja of Venkatagiri, the peasants fought the zamindar over the issue of *kanchas* (grazing rights) and much needed repairs which it was the zamindar's duty to carry out to the irrigation tanks in his estate. The beginning of the kisan movement was laid in these struggles.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND TERRORISM

The slump in agricultural prices—due to the burden of the world economic crisis being transferred to the shoulders of India by the British imperialists—hit the Andhra peasants hard. Hundreds of families were ruined. When the call for fighting the British came in 1930, the movement spread wider and went deeper into the Andhra villages. Thousands of peasants came forward to fill the jails, to face lathis and bullets.

Young peasant lads responded to the call of the Congress and participated in the movement. The movement, however, failed and these patriotic youth who had so much faith in victory began to look round. Inside the jails they had come into touch with terrorist revolutionaries. They heard of the great heroism and intense patriotic urge of the Ghadar and the Akali movements. Those were the days when Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and the Chittagong Armoury Raiders were fearlessly battling against the hated British ruler.

A REVOLUTIONARY MASS MOVEMENT

These young peasant lads came into touch also with new ideas, new methods of mass movement. They read books about the Russian Revolution which had overthrown the absolutist tyranny of the Czarist regime and abolished the feudal oppression of the landlords. It had freed the peasants and was building a new life for the people. Inside India, the Meerut Conspiracy Case revealed that the

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patriotic movement had given birth to a new force, to a new outlook.

This newly born Communist movement inevitably attracted the patriotic peasant youth of Andhra. It had all the intense hatred of foreign rule and selfless heroism of the terrorist movement; it based itself on awakening the masses and moving them towards concerted action, as the Congress under Gandhiji had wanted. It stood unequivocally for the abolition not only of alien rule but also of its allies—the native parasites who together imposed the triple burden of taxes, rents and debts on the impoverished peasantry. It stood for justice and equality to all, and particularly the most oppressed section, like the untouchables.

In the Communist movement, therefore, the patriotic peasant youth saw the unifier of the various uncoordinated, spontaneous movements that Andhra had already seen. They plunged whole-heartedly into the Communist movement. It was a natural step for them to take.

These young Communists of Andhra were thus awakened to patriotism by the Congress and Gandhiji; their love for a new Andhra was aroused by the powerful writings of Veerasalingam and Marxism only deepened their patriotism and clarified their vision. They built the new kisan movement, the agricultural labour unions of the untouchable landless, the trade unions of the workers, and carried the Congress to every nook and corner of Andhradesha. Their aim was to build the Congress as a unified front of the various awakened sections of the people for the fight against British imperialism, its corrupt officials and its stooges—the princes, the zamindars and the usurers. They built up the student, youth and women's movements and helped to develop a new cultural renaissance based on the common people through folk songs, ballads, *burra-kathas* and other folk forms.

PEASANT STRUGGLES ORGANISED

They organised the great Kisan March of 1937 from Ichhapuram to Madras, covering more than 1,500 miles and 525 villages, rousing the peasants of the zamindari, ryotwari and even of the famine areas of Royalaseema districts. They awoke in them a new consciousness and confidence that through their kisan sabhas they could fight for their

democratic rights. It was this mighty awakening that accounted for the heroic struggles waged by the peasants under the leadership of the Kisan Sabha at Kalipatnam, Mungala and Mandasa. The leader of this great Kisan March, Kommareddi Satyanarayanmurti, a young Communist, took ill and died later. His comrades Vasudeva Rao and others are carrying forward his great work.

It is due to this kisan awakening and constant agitation and struggles that the Congress Ministry in Madras set up a committee under the chairmanship of Syt. Prakasam, the then Revenue Minister, to inquire into the zamindari system in Andhradesha. The Kisan Sabha put the demand for complete abolition of zamindari before this committee.

ROLE IN THE CRISIS

During the crisis of 1942-45, the Kisan Sabha worked for the release of leaders, and relief of the famine-stricken areas of Royalaseema, Vizag and Malabar. It campaigned for a fair price to the peasant for his crop and secured an increase from Rs.9 to Rs.10|8. It campaigned for irrigation facilities, for fallow land to be given to landless peasants and agricultural labourers. Nearly 20,000 acres were thus brought under the plough. It fought against blackmarketing in iron implements, took over distribution and saved 50 per cent of the iron imports from going into the blackmarket. The Kisan Sabha campaigned for and secured Rs. 14 lakhs as loan from the Agricultural Department for seed, manure etc., to the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

Through the trade unions, the Communist Party led the workers' fight and secured dearness allowance, food ration, cloth and other essentials at controlled rates.

Through "self-help" campaign a nine-mile length of the Kistna Canal was cleared of silt, resulting in increased water supply to the peasants' fields and more land brought under irrigation. Through the Sweepers' Union, it ran a "clean town" campaign.

Through numerous campaigns of constructive service, through the political campaign for unity to win the release of Congress leaders and achieve a National Government, the Communist Party kept up the morale of the people, developed and built their organisations and ins-

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pired them with faith in their own strength. A new consciousness of self-help was built among the kisans. The Kisan Sabha sent volunteers to the Royalaseema and Vizag famine areas to save the people there. K. Raghava Reddi, himself from a peasant family in Kistna, was one of those patriotic volunteers who, while working tirelessly at his post in Sompeta in North Vizag, contracted typhoid and died. He embodies the new spirit of the Andhra kisans—the spirit of selfless service and mutual aid.

VILLAGE UNITY BUILT

The organisation of agricultural labour, which in Andhra is mainly composed of the so-called untouchables, started in 1934 under the banner of their union and led by the Communist Party. The most oppressed section of our village population stood up and fought the oppressive rich peasant and landlord. The Communists through the Kisan Sabha roused caste Hindu peasantry to support the elementary democratic demands of the agricultural labourers for proper wages, decent living and social equality.

It is in one of these struggles that Rapuka Suryanarayana, the hero of the agricultural labourers, was arrested, beaten up brutally by the police in the lock-up and died. He had spent his whole life in organising Telugu labour in Burma and on his return to India led the agricultural labour movement in East Godavari. Organisers of this movement had to face heavy repression. A student Communist, P. Venkateswar Rao became an organiser. He was being hunted by the police, and one dark night, while trying to elude the police who were chasing him, he fell into a ruined well and died. The agricultural labour movement was built on the sufferings of the labourers and the sacrifices of its many martyrs.

In the towns, the Communist Party built up for the first time, a militant trade union movement which would not merely wait on the pleasure of the owners or the whims of the bureaucrats. In the various minor industries—in the rice mills, jute mills, sugar factories, small engineering establishments, etc.—the working class has been organised in its trade unions. Most of the industries in Andhra are owned by British capitalists and the difficulties in the way of organising independent trade unions

were immense. But the workers struggled hard, many of their leaders were jailed, many of them were beaten and fired upon. The working class too produced its own martyrs, the greatest of them being Venkateswar Rao, who built up the illegal press for the Communist Party of India, worked it for many months and died of tuberculosis at his post.

MASS ORGANISATIONS OF ALL SECTIONS

This awakened peasants' and workers' movement is reflected in the growth of student, youth and women's movements. It is the Communists who for the first time in 1937 built the students' unions. These unions tackled the day to day grievances of students, initiated strikes against fines, caning and abuse from the teachers and against the iniquitous system of detaining the students from appearing in public examinations on account of their political activities. To the students these unions became the forum for political and intellectual discussion and through them they organised many a political strike. In the war period, the student movement stood up against police repression and when education was threatened for want of paper and kerosene and lack of accommodation in the schools, the students' unions were there solving these problems. These unions are also forging a new relationship of mutual confidence and respect between teachers, pupils and their parents.

The peasant youth and the worker youth established innumerable youth clubs, reading rooms and night schools for illiterate adults. They revived the cultural life in the villages and among the town poor. They participated and organised relief and social service work during festivals, fought against social evils, campaigned against epidemics and nursed the sick. They fought against blackmarketeers and secured food and other necessities at control rates for the people. The youth movement grew in strength participating in sports, culture and social service.

The women of Andhra roused by the call of the Congress had courted imprisonment in the 1920 and 1930 movements. They picketed foreign cloth and liquor shops and put up with all the filthy abuse showered on them by the toadies. The new awakening among the kisan masses

brought forward the kisan women in larger numbers than ever before to participate in peasant struggles. During 1938-39, the women of Munagala, Kalipatnam and Mandasa faced police lathi charge, arrest and even firing in defending their kisan rights. In the Mandasa peasant struggle the first martyr was a peasant woman called Gunamma who was shot dead by the police. When Jap invasion threatened, women's associations took a spurt forward and became 20,000 strong. Women workers were trained, sent to villages to start reading groups, to establish maternity and child welfare centres and to tackle the many problems that face women every day, such as scarcity of kerosene and rice; also to fight for equal rights and opportunities necessary for their all-round development.

The cultural life of the village has been revived. **Burra-kathas**, folk dances, folk tunes and short plays are awakening the patriotic instincts and social conscience of Andhra workers and peasants, and enriching their life. Thousands and thousands of men and women sit throughout the night and hear the new **burra-kathas** and songs calling on them to eradicate evil, fight oppressive social customs and join the freedom battle. They are the direct inheritors of the traditions set up by the pioneers like Veerasalingam. One-fourth to one-third of these audiences are women.

No less than 150 titles have been published in the course of three years, by the Prajasakti Publishing House. They are books on varied subjects and priced cheap so as to be within reach of the common people. So many and so varied are these books that even those who oppose us politically have to concede that after the first renaissance period of Vignana Chandrika Grantha Mandali, it is the Communist Party and its Prajasakti Publishing House that are continuing and carrying forward the great tradition of bringing culture and education within reach of the common man.

It was the Congress movement that awakened the oppressed States peoples to fight for their liberties. Politically awakened intellectuals started the Andhra Mahasabha in 1923 in the Nizam's State. Quite a number of youth joined the 1930 Satyagraha movement in British India. It was in 1938 that the Hyderabad State Satyagraha for civil liberties began, the State Congress was formed and

hundreds courted imprisonment. But once again it was under the influence of the newly awakened kisan, worker and Communist movements in Andhra that the Andhra Mahasabha movement in Telangana (Nizam's State) took the form of a mighty upsurge—fighting the oppression of corrupt officials, feudal levies and exactions—kindling new hope and infusing new strength in the long oppressed peasantry. The Andhra Mahasabha in Telangana under Communist leadership became a united people's movement with 80,000 membership and more than 1,000 active workers.

CONGRESS AND COMMUNIST PARTY

We see from the above that it is the Congress that inspired the common patriotic upsurge in Andhra—the kisan, working class and States peoples' movements are only the off-shoots. They enrich this common heritage. The Communist Party itself is born out of this upsurge and is proud of its origin. The Communist Party broadened this upsurge, built the kisan sabhas, agricultural labour unions, trade unions, youth, student and women's associations and strengthened the State people's movement. It took the Congress itself deeper into the villages. Thus it extended the base of the united democratic movement.

The Congress leadership in Andhra did not like this development. Instead of welcoming it, they opposed it from the very beginning. It would be a mistake to imagine that Dr. Pattabhi, Kaleswar Rao and others have been opposed to the Communists only after 1942.

As early as 1934, Dr. Pattabhi tried his utmost to keep the Communists out. In a single month he invalidated thrice the elections to the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee because radical elements had swept the polls, time and again. In 1938-39, with the growth of Communist influence and the independent organisations of workers and peasants, Dr. Pattabhi became even more panicky. He and the other right-wing Congress leaders in Andhra adopted every tactic to exclude the left-wing from the Andhra Congress.

They changed the electoral areas so as to weaken the voting strength of the radical strongholds; they tampered even with the ballot boxes. They cancelled wholesale the primary members enrolled by the Communists. For in-

stance, in West Kistna, they arbitrarily rejected 34,000 members enrolled by us.

Dr. Pattabhi even went to the length of disqualifying me from standing for elections on the plea that as a Communist I was a believer in violence! The matter was taken up to the Congress Working Committee in an appeal and Dr. Pattabhi's decision was over-ruled; and when I actually stood for elections I was elected for three years in succession to the A.I.C.C., the highest elective body of the Congress.

Dr. Pattabhi and Brahmayya, the then President and Secretary of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, quite openly sided with the Raja of Munagala and the zamindar of Kalipatnam against the peasants who were carrying on a satyagraha struggle to recover the lands that had been forcibly taken away from them by the zamindars. It was under the Congress Ministry again that shooting was resorted to by the police at Chirala and Chittivalsa on the workers who were on strike.

During the imperialist war period, the Communist workers had to go underground to elude the police who were hunting for them. Many a peasant and worker home received us gladly, protected and helped us to carry on our movement against the British imperialist rule. They enabled us to bring out **Swatantra Bharat**, the illegal organ of the Communist Party, month after month and distribute 3,000 copies of it in as many villages for a period of 2 years. We were the vanguard of the freedom struggle and kept the banner high. The police placed heavy prices on our leaders' heads, but in vain. We earned the love and admiration of the Andhra people, including Congressmen for our relentless struggle against British imperialism.

In the second phase of the war, when the Nazis were ravaging the Soviet Union and the Japs were threatening to do the same to our motherland, we Communists called on the people to defend their hearths and homes, and the honour of our motherland. We said this was the only way to freedom. We campaigned for a National Government to defend the country and popularised this national demand in hundreds of villages in Andhra.

When the Congress leaders were arrested, we campaigned for their release in every nook and corner of Andhradesha. In the columns of **Prajasakti** we repudiated

Amery's lies that the Congress was a fascist organisation. During the upsurge of 1942, we characterised sabotage as suicidal because the Japs were at our borders and helped several patriots to break away from such a policy. In spite of the worst repression, and though half of our total membership was jailed by the government, we fought against repression, stuck to our people and defended their interest on every single issue.

OUR GROWTH

While the Congress leadership was in jail, the Ranga-ites and Forward Blocists, who were organising the sabotage, slandered us as "agents of government" etc. because we were campaigning against sabotage. They tried to break our meetings. They abused our women comrades.

The **Kulukola**, a dirty rag financed by the Raja of Challapalli—one of the worst zamindars in Andhra—started spreading all kinds of scandals against members of the Communist Party, boys and girls. A filthy drama, called **Vengamma**, was written and was enacted to malign the Communists. We answered all these lies and slanders in mass meetings, calling upon the people to judge for themselves. We continued to grow in strength in spite of all these slanders. This was evidenced in the one lakh-strong rally at Bezwada session of the All India Kisan Sabha in April 1944, which the premier nationalist daily of Madras, the **Hindu** described as reminiscent of a Congress session. The mass organisations in which we worked also grew.

Growth of Party and mass organisations in Andhra

	1942	Now
Party Members	1,000	10,000
Kisan Organisations (both kisan & agricultural labour associations)	60,000	200,000
Trade Unions	10,000	30,000
Students' Unions	6,000	11,000
Mahila Sanghams	4,000	20,000

ATTITUDE OF ANDHRA CONGRESS LEADERS

When the Andhra Congress leaders came out of jail, instead of welcoming this new awakening and extension of mass organisations, they were worried by it. They had expected that the Communists would be smashed. On the contrary they found that the Communists were rallying the peasants in huge masses just as the Congress did in the twenties. Instead of seeing in the growth of Communist influence and the mass organisations the strengthening of the freedom front against the British rulers, they regarded them as rivals to their leadership and a danger to their old policy of alliance with the vested interests—the feudal rajas and zamindars.

Syts. Kaleswar Rao, Ranga and the other Congress leaders tried “the-Communists-are-traitors” slogan. It did not cut any ice. The mass of peasants in the Congress strongholds of Kistna, Godavari, Guntur and in all areas where we Communists exist had seen us work for the last 3 years. The Congress leaders had imagined that a word from them—men in such high authority—would smash us up; but the kisans judged us by our actions, not by the abuse that the Congress leaders showered on us.

THE WORTHY AND THE UNWORTHY

Dr. Pattabhi preached even the gospel of the lathi against the Communists. In a speech at Masulipatam he said :

“Non-violence does not extend to self-defence and Congressmen must be ready to use better weapons to face the Communists’ violence !”

All the dirty, toady, vested interests, the rajas and zamindars, the blackmarketeers and hoarders—who had found all along that the Communists were a thorn in their side—took courage. They rushed readily to the support of the Congress leaders. The Congress leaders reciprocated this new-found love. Today, the Andhra Congress leaders and the nationalist press call every village rowdy or blackmarketeer, who picks up a clash with the Communists, a Congressman.

The Andhra Congress leaders are vigorous in their

abuse of the Communists. They stood solidly for throwing the Communists out of the Congress, as unworthy of being in the national organisation. Let us see the type of people they are welcoming into the Congress as worthies.

In Kankipadu village, a petty book-binder called K. Janardhan Rao was helped by some anti-Communist Congressmen into becoming a book-seller. His main stock-in-trade are the anti-Communist slander publications, *Mulukola*—the Challapalli rag—and *Vengamma*. For this “national service” he was made the Joint Secretary of the Kistna District Congress Assembly!

In Bezwada town a goonda called Suryanarayana who acted the main character *sundayya*—an obvious distortion of *Sundarayya*—in the vulgar anti-Communist drama *Vengamma* was rewarded with the vice-presidency of the Town Congress Assembly!

Nowhere more than in Andhra was the Kasturba Fund collected wholly from the big zamindars. The Raja of Challapalli gave Rs. 20,000, of Bobbili Rs. 20,000 and of Pithapuram Rs. 40,000.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a member of the Congress High Command, hurried to attend the 60th birthday celebrations of the Raja of Pithapuram. The Yuvaraja had wisely joined the Congress. So Dr. Pattabhi appealed to the senior Raja :

“All the praises due to the Maharaja for the many things he has done in the people’s interest have already been said. There is only one thing left for him to do. He must follow the lead of the Yuvaraja. Why should we not think, ‘If the son joins Congress today, the father will tomorrow?’”

That is how feudal exploiters are glorified as paragons of public virtue. This is how the Andhra Congress leaders are busy throwing the Communists out, fighting the kisans and appealing to the zamindars to kindly come into the Congress.

WHAT ANDHRA CONGRESS LEADERS ARE DOING

Congress leaders like Dr. Pattabhi, Syt. Prakasam, etc. have taken to slandering and lying against the Communists. Dr. Pattabhi for example, says in his public speeches that

“Communists contract marriages on a monthly, weekly and even hourly basis.” All this slander is meant to screen the fact that they are allying with the old toady reactionary vested interests in the villages and fighting the democratic movement of the workers in towns and the peasantry in villages.

The tragedy is that Andhra Congress leaders are busy destroying all the fine noble traditions that the Congress movement had stood for, in the Andhradesha.

Not only do they divide villages by declaring war against the Communists and the Kisan Sabha, they are also re-creating the social gulf that divided the caste Hindus and the untouchables for centuries. Ever since 1933, when Gandhiji found Andhra campaigning against untouchability, Congress functions have always been setting an example by refusing to discriminate between caste Hindus and untouchables. But Syts. Kaleswar Rao, Ranga and others at the Govada Kisan Conference in April 1945, organised a separate kitchen for the untouchables and segregated them from the rest—decisively going back on all that the Congress had done in Andhra for several years.

They misrepresent us as supporting the Muslim League in all its unjust claims and its anti-Hindu, anti-Congress campaigns.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

We, Communists, do not support the League's unjust claim for six provinces. We sharply oppose it. We support neither the anti-Congress campaign of League leaders, nor the anti-League campaign of Congress leaders.

We believe that we, the Indian peoples, can unite on the basis of justice to all, for freedom from the hated British rulers. We believe that we must unequivocally concede to each of the seventeen growing nations in India the sovereign right to determine their destiny, their own sacred right of self-determination through their constituent assemblies, based on universal adult suffrage. This will ensure to them that they will be masters in their own homelands which are to be demarcated according to their natural national boundaries such as Baluchistan, Pathanland, Sind, Western Punjab, Central Punjab, Hindustan, Raja-

sthan, Gujerat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, Kerala, Tamilnad, Orissa, Bengal, Assam and Bihar.

It is from these sovereign constituent assemblies that we want delegates to be elected to an All-India Constituent Assembly. This Assembly will face the British with the united demand of all the Indian peoples viz. “Quit India,” to be embodied in a treaty. In case of refusal by the British to do so, it shall prepare us to make the final bid for power, for the final battle for Indian freedom.

We believe that a free Indian Union can come into existence only by the sovereign nationalities freely and voluntarily coming together and not by denying to them the just and sacred right of self-determination.

We, Andhra Communists, want to ask: Do the Andhra Congress leaders deny that we Andhras are a nation by ourselves—a people of 3 crores with a long history, our own language, our own rich cultural heritage, with common economic features and life? Do they or do they not stand for a united Vishala Andhra—not only of British Andhra but also of Telangana? Do they stand only for a separate province for Andhra, and not for a sovereign Andhra nation which will join a free Indian Union voluntarily? If they do stand for the sovereign right of the Andhra nation, how can they oppose the same just right to the peoples of Sind, Baluchistan, Pathanland, Western Punjab and Bengal, where the Muslims form the majority of the people?

We Communists work for all these growing nations to freely join the INDIAN UNION but it shall be for the peoples themselves to decide.

VIII. Let The People Decide

THE Andhra Congress leaders call us disruptors of the Congress. We, Andhra Communists, have spent 15 years of our young lives in taking the Congress to the Andhra villages, in building the Congress as a united democratic freedom movement of all sections of our people. It is for you, the Andhra people to decide: Are we the disruptors of the Congress?

We Communists roused every section, even the most downtrodden like the agricultural labourers; we united and organised them to fight for life and liberty. For over 3 years of the 1942-45 crisis, we campaigned as none else did to defend the fair name of the Congress against the foul lies of Amery and his gang. Are we the enemies of the Congress?

It is you, the Andhra people that must judge us on the one hand, and Dr. Pattabhi and the present Andhra Congress leadership, on the other. They mouth the vilest slanders against the patriotic womanhood of Andhradesha, and thus throw overboard the fine traditions that the Congress itself had built earlier by urging women to play an equal part with the men in the struggle for freedom.

Who are the enemies of the Congress? Is it we who stood by our people and fought for their interests or the Congress leadership that is allying today with the worst enemies of the people, the toady zamindars, the black-marketeers and hoarders and thus dragging the fair name of the Congress in the mud?

They call us traitors.

Despite the worst repression against us and the imprisonment of half our total membership, did we not defend the Congress name and demand the release of the Congress

leaders? Did we not brave the wrath of corrupt officials, police, zamindars, blackmarketeers and hoarders to fight for the interests of our people? Are we traitors?

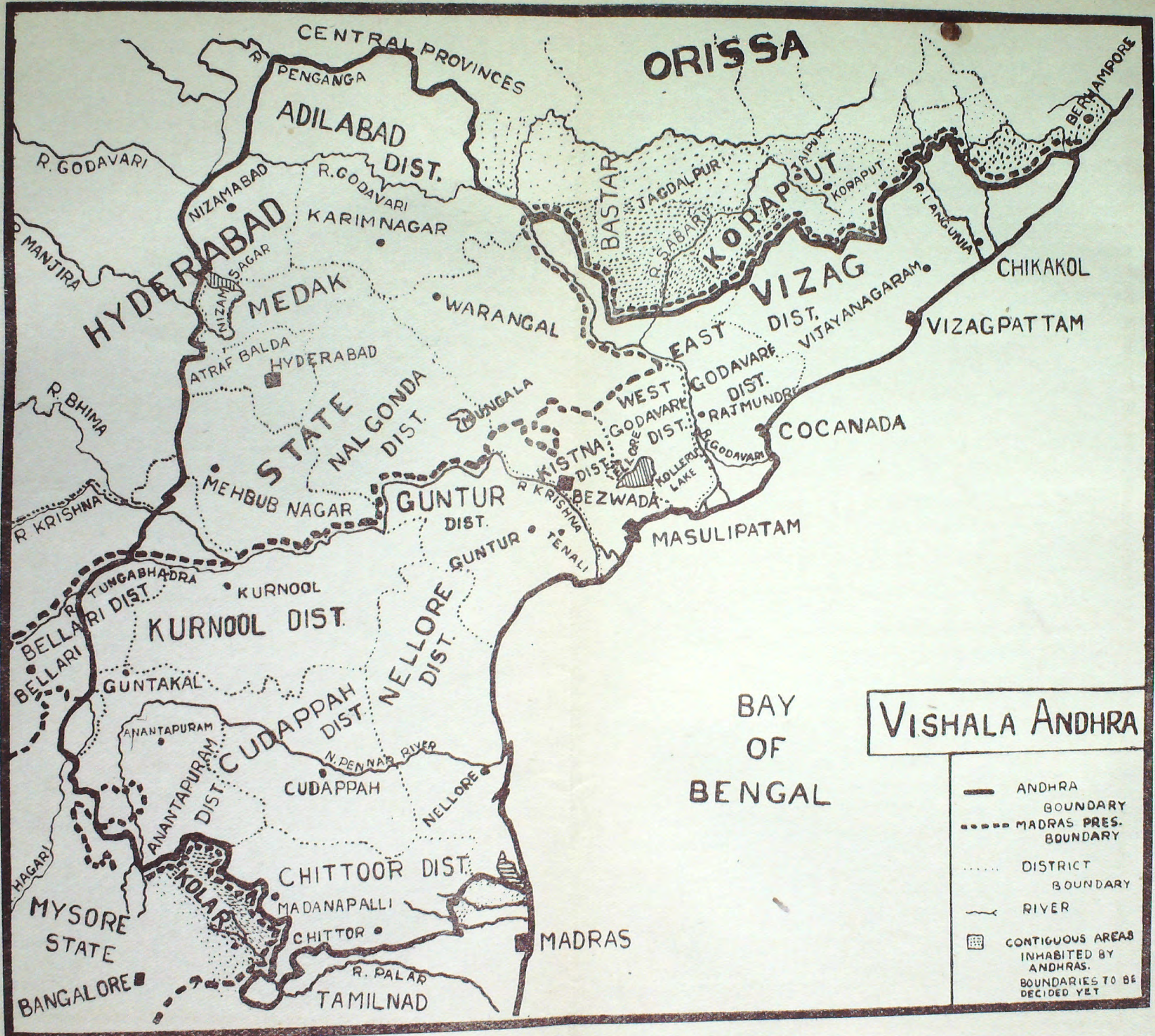
We, Andhra Communists belong to the Communist Party of India, a party that can proudly claim among its members the best freedom fighters from every single patriotic movement that has been seen in our motherland. In it we have the white-bearded Babas of the Ghadar movement, the Babar Akali heroes, the colleagues of Bhagat Singh and the Chittagong Armoury Raiders—the fearless band of the legendary Surjya Sen and the heroes of non-violent struggles in the national movement as in the twenties, thirties and in 1942.

We belong to a party that built the organisations through which our workers and peasants have waged heroic struggles to defend their rights and win freedom for all. We belong to the party of the Kayyur martyrs who led the Malabar peasant struggles against police and landlord oppression and who were hanged by the British in 1943.

We ask you to recall our own work amidst you and then decide: Are we traitors or selfless workers and fearless fighters for freedom?

The Andhra Congress leaders are today setting up rival organisations to the existing kisan sabhas, the trade unions, etc. on the ground that Communists are in them. They are thus disrupting the mass organisations, the organised strength of these classes of people—a strength built through a great deal of struggle and suffering.

The national movement in Andhra can proudly claim its integral part in the glorious struggles waged by every section of our people, the Guntur no-tax campaign, the Chirala struggle, the guerilla warfare of our tribal people under Sitaramaraju, the peasant struggles against the zamindars of Kalipatnam, Munagal and Mandasa, the trade union struggles of the workers against the British capitalists of Chirala and Chittivalsa. It is the Andhra Congress leaders that are disrupting the great heritage by setting one section against the other. They ally with the dirtiest, most oppressive elements in town and country to fight the kisan and labour movements, and thus repudiate the proud past of the all-India struggle for freedom. They are leading the Congress—which itself was strengthened by the struggle and sacrifice of our people—into policies of



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