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STRUGGLE FOR LAND

CEILING

Communist Party's Call To People

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India met in Delhi from February 20th to 25th. We give below the press release. (Resolutions available on page four.)

THE Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India, in reviewing the situation in the country, gave consideration to the Nagpur Resolution of the Congress on the question of land reforms, especially the question of ceiling on land, and the public sector.

The Central Executive Committee welcomed that the Congress Party, which is the ruling Party in the country, has decided to take up the enforcement of land ceilings.

But it noted the fact that the ceilings will not come into effect by a mere Congress Resolution since many in the leadership and in the Ministerial circles are opposed to the resolution and its implementation.

Hence it decided to call upon the democratic masses and all progressive elements, including Congressmen, to come together and cooperate to move the masses of the peasants and workers in order to get the policy of ceilings and extension and strengthening of the public sector implemented effectively and democratically. The Central Executive Committee believes that even legislation to implement this policy will not be passed without a movement of the people.

The Central Executive Committee endorsed this approach which has been already stated in the article by the General Secretary on this subject in New Age Weekly of January 25, 1959, and decided to elaborate the decisions at the next meeting of the National Council.

6 MAY 1959
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NEW AGE

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PUNJAB: Prisoner Dies In Jail

Repression Reminiscent Of British Days

MOST inhuman and barbarous repression reminiscent of the worst princely and British days is now being resorted to by the Punjab police in its vain effort to terrorise the participants in the anti-betterment levy campaign.

In Patiala Comrade Ramesh Wallia, a member of the Secretariat of the Communist Party's

District Committee was handcuffed after arrest and made to lie down on the footboard of the tonga in which he was being removed; two police constables with their feet on his chest held him down while a third kept him gagged. In this state he was driven through the bazar while enraged people flocked behind and shouted "Police Murdabad" "Kairon Murdabad". In the police lock-up he, like so many other Com-

munist workers, was beaten black and blue in an attempt to extract information of the whereabouts of leaders of the movement whom the police have so far failed in apprehending.

In Sangrur, leader of a women's jatha Jangir Kaur was beaten up. In the same District, the household belongings of veteran Communist leader and ex-MLA Hardit Singh Bhattal have been attacked by the police. And not even a list of these was given.

Inside jail twenty-one year-old Malkiyat Singh of Kandola Katan, district Jullundur, has died of pneumonia—a victim of callous neglect.

The number of these who have been arrested, according to information received in the State Kisan Sabha office, was 2,704 on February 24. Over a hundred of these are Panchoes and Lambardars. In one day (February 24) alone, 334 arrests were made in Jullundur and another 300 in other centres of the State.

The Secretariat of the Punjab State Council of the Communist Party of India says in a statement:

The kisan struggle against the unjust betterment levy has claimed its first martyr. Malkiyat Singh a youth of Kandola Katan (Jullundur District), who courted arrest only ten days ago has died of pneumonia in the local jail. This shows the callousness of the authorities who have refused to supply sufficient clothing to the satyagrahis despite the breaking out of influenza through exposure. They are transferring satyagrahis to other jails by night trains every day without providing them with beddings or blankets. Such inhuman treatment calls for strong protest by all sections of the people.

The Communist Party dips its banner in the memory of S. Malkiyat Singh and expresses its deep sympathy with the family of the deceased.

(Report of the Punjab struggle on Centre pages.)

Soviet Govt. Delegation Emphasises Indo-Soviet Friendship For Peace

AS an important factor for consolidating security and peace the world over, friendship between the Soviet Union and India had already assumed great international significance, stated A. A. Andreyev, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, leading the Soviet Government delegation to

India, on arrival in New Delhi in the afternoon of February 24.

He conveyed most cordial greetings and good wishes to the Indian people on behalf of the Soviet people, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Soviet Government and expressed his confidence that "existing political, economic and cultural cooperation

between the two countries will successfully develop."

Invited by the Government of India, the Delegation includes N. A. Mukhitdinov, a member of the Presidium and a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, who is also Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme

Soviet.

Other members are M. I. Kuchava, Vice-Premier of the Georgian SSR, A. G. Sheremetjev, a member of the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers for Economic Relations with Foreign countries, and V. I. Likhachov, Chief of the Southeast Asia Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

The delegation on arrival at Palam airport was given a warm welcome by Vice-President Radhakrishnan, several Ministers of the Government of India, a good number of M.Ps, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the staff of the Soviet Embassy and representatives of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society.

Later they had meetings with the Prime Minister. In course of its three-day stay in the capital the delegation will meet the Planning Commission, call on the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel and the Minister of Food and Agriculture and attend a reception by the ISCUS.

In the course of their tour round the country they will visit Bhilai, Sindri, Chittaranjan and attend the inauguration of the Institute of Technology in Bombay that is being built by UNESCO with Soviet aid. The delegation will leave Delhi for the Soviet Union on March 12.



The Soviet Government Delegation to India with Prime Minister Nehru. On the left of the Prime Minister is A. A. Andreyev, leader of the Delegation and on his right, N. A. Mukhitdinov.

SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST W. BENGAL SPEAKER

Notice Of No-Confidence Motion

● From JNAN BIKAS MOITRA

The Opposition has given notice of a no-confidence motion against the Speaker of the West Bengal Assembly, Sri S. D. Banerjee, on February 17.

AMONG the signatories to the notice are Comrade Jyoti Basu, Leader of the Opposition, Sri Sudhir Ray Chowdhury (PSP), Sri Hemanta Basu (F.B.), Sri Jatin Chakravarty (RSP), Sri Subodh Banerjee (Socialist Unity Centre), Srimatee Labanya Prova Ghose (Lok Sevak Sangh) and Sri Siddhartha Ray (Independent).

According to the Assembly Rules and Procedure, the notice will come before the House after 14 days, and the motion will be admitted if the requisite number of members (76) stand up in its support. A day will then be fixed for the debate.

Director Of Firm

While speaking on the budget on February 16, a PSP member made the allegation that the Speaker was connected with the National Sugar Mills (Birhum District, West Bengal) in the capacity of a director and

that the company had received considerable financial assistance from the State Government.

Immediately after the P.S.P. member's speech, Comrade Jyoti Basu got up and told the Speaker that if the allegations were correct, he could not continue even as a member of the Assembly. Comrade Basu, therefore, requested the Speaker to vacate the Chair so that the Deputy Speaker might preside until the allegations were cleared.

On the Speaker's refusal to do so, Comrade Basu said that the Opposition would be forced to bring a no-confidence motion against him.

Many other Opposition M.L.A.s said that the decorum and dignity of the Chair demanded that the Speaker should stand aside and allow the Deputy Speaker to preside.

But the Speaker would not listen to any such request. He, however, admitted his association with the company. He further said that he might have attended the company's meeting once but had not de-

rived any profit from the association.

Comrade Jyoti Basu said that the allegations had affected the Opposition so much that none of them could participate in the day's budget discussion. The entire Opposition then walked out in protest against the Speaker's attitude.

Calcutta Convention Against Berubari Transfer

A LARGELY-ATTENDED convention, held in Calcutta on February 21, under the auspices of a Preparatory Committee consisting of the representatives of all Left parties, prominent individuals and a number of organisations, called on the Union Government to abandon its proposal to transfer to Pakistan a portion of the Berubari Union in the Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal.

Dr. P. C. Ghose, MLA, PSP leader, presided.

The Convention adopted a resolution pointing out that even after all sections of the people of West Bengal had protested against the proposed transfer and especially after

the State Assembly had passed a resolution unanimously opposing the proposal, the Union Government had not yet abandoned it. On the contrary, it had been taking steps to implement the proposal.

The resolution declared that if the Government did not desist from this move forthwith, the people would have no other alternative but to launch an all-out struggle to resist the move. It called upon the people of West Bengal to get themselves ready to face this situation.

The convention also expressed its grave concern over the reported transfer of some parts of Murshidabad District to Pakistan and demanded immediate publication of the

confidence motion has been brought against the Speaker. The first motion was sponsored by the Congress Party in the legislature of undivided Bengal in 1926.

It should also be noted in this connection that while replying to the four-day general discussion on the budget, Dr. B. C. Roy, Chief Minister, admitted that the State Government had given the National Sugar Mills Co. a loan of Rs. 1,000,000 in addition to standing surety for Rs. 1,500,000 for the purchase of a plant which had already arrived. He further stated that he was not aware that the Speaker was connected with the company!

full text of the Nehru-Noon agreement.

FATE OF ISI EMPLOYEES STILL IN THE BALANCE

THE fate of about 2,000 employees of the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) still hangs in the balance. The ISI authorities have reiterated their decision to serve "termination of service" notices on all employees and to introduce drastic changes in the existing service conditions.

It is now abundantly clear from the recent statements of the Prime Minister in Parliament that the Government does not intend to reduce the volume of work that it gives to the ISI.

Sri Jagadish Roy, Secretary of the ISI Workers' Organisation, told a Press Conference in Calcutta on February 20, that the employees had also obtained a definite assurance from the Institute's Director, Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, that the volume of Government work would not diminish.

Yet, Sri Roy said, the Director had in a recent circular reaffirmed the ISI Council's decision authorising him to terminate the services of the employees on March 31, despite their repeated requests to the authorities to desist from such a move.

The termination notices are due to be served by February 28 latest. A five-member delegation on behalf of the Workers' Organisation has gone to Delhi to get the Prime Minister's intervention "to save the workers from the uncertainty and insecurity of service conditions threatening them at present." It will also request him to recognise the Institute as an institution of national importance and stabilise it on a statutory basis.

Sri Roy told Pressmen that the employees as well as some members of the ISI Council itself were convinced that there was no ground for serving termination notices.

The real purpose behind the move, according to him, was "to introduce changes in the existing terms and conditions leading to insecurity and arbitrariness in the service conditions." Sri Roy further said that the proposed changes in service conditions ran counter to the spirit of the recommendations of several tripartite conferences on industrial relations.

INSIDE OUR NEWS & ECONOMY NOTES

The Problem Of Export Earnings

INDIA'S export earnings during 1958 amounted to Rs. 583.6 crores compared to a little over Rs. 604 crores in 1957, said the *Times of India* on February 23. And since most of these comprised returns from exports of tea, jute and cotton manufactures (nearly 50 per cent), and mineral ores, spices and other vegetable products (another 20 per cent), any improvement in the future can only be based on a larger shipment of these commodities.

It is precisely in this, however, that the country faces an uphill task. For, notwithstanding the claims apropos revival of the western economies (after the recession), their capacity to even hold the line in respect of imports of our staple commodities are rated none too high. What with the continued stagnation in their industrial activity, and their latest preoccupation with, what the *Economic Weekly* has termed, "policies to immobilise surpluses into monetary reserves," they are not likely to revive much their intake of raw materials and other primary products.

Hence, as the weekly has said, "the reliance of countries like ours on export to finance plans is likely to prove disappointing if not disastrous." Bereft of any break-through in this line, therefore, "their prospect is one of a rising dimension of international indebtedness; for them there is little or no alternative," it says, "to capital loans from the industrial world."

Bleak Prospects

What, however, are the prospects of getting these loans either, insofar as the western capitalist countries are concerned? Take the most important of them, the USA, whose leaders are never tired of expressing their concern for the well-being of our "400 million." Even that country, it seems, has not yet been able to make up its mind about giving all the money which our Government needs to tide over its immediate difficulties. Thus, while Senators Kennedy and Cooper have urged provision of aid on a long-range basis, the dominant sections in the American Congress do not seem to have even been convinced of its justification. Not only that. Even as the five-Power conference, convened by the World Bank, is about to

take place, the U.S. is faced with the quandary of "no money in its Development Fund" to back its proposals.

And if this is the situation in the rest of the capitalist world can well be imagined. Take West Germany, for example. "She has been mostly investing her funds so far in Europe, Latin America and Africa," said the *Capital in a recent survey* by its Special Correspondent, and "wherever political considerations intervene to turn some funds away from the easy choices towards needier regions, there exist powerful pressures in favour of regions other than India." In respect of the United Kingdom, a country which had so far been investing almost the whole of its current account surplus within the sterling area within the area itself, the tendency now is "to leave only one half of the surplus "to be so invested."

The bleakness of prospects in respect of obtaining funds from the capitalist countries does not, mean, however, that no funds will henceforth be forthcoming. They would be given all right, but the price charged would be more exacting. Already Senator Kennedy has hinted as much in his testimony before the Senate on his plea for a long-range assistance to our country. This would enable the U.S., he said "to impose meaningful standards for the use of aid, or significant requirements as to what they (the Indian Government) must do to match it."

The character of these "standards" has also been made known in a series of suggestions by the World Bank and other "international agencies" as well as by the entire set of U.S. missions which have been on a visit to the country. It has also been made explicit in the overtures that the more reactionary of our own leaders of trade and industry have been making to attract foreign private capital, as well as in the incentives which they urge the Government to provide for its further intrusion. "The U.S. Government, too, is reported to have suggested broadening of the existing convertibility agreement between the two countries to include guarantees against expropriation."

The Real Alternatives

The alternative before the country does not consist merely between the

★ INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN FAVOUR OF PRIVATE SECTOR ★ GENEROSITY TO LANDOWNERS ★ ORGANISED DECEIT AND DOUBLE-TALK

THE most significant event over the last fortnight in Pakistan was the announcement of a new industrial policy by the Industries Minister, Mr. Abdul Kasem Khan, on February 21.

In its open proclamation of the supremacy of the private sector and its open door to foreign private investment, the new policy statement juts out conspicuously.

As far as private enterprise goes, the Statement declares: "Where private enterprise was inactive, the Government would initiate and operate, only such industries as were essential to the economy... Such industries would, however, be transferred to the private sector when circumstances permit... State ownership would be limited to the manufacture of arms and ammunition and production of atomic energy."

Invitation To Foreign Investors

This is not merely a policy statement but a manifesto, a declaration of faith, in the profit motive, aided by State help. The *Pakistan Times*, of February 23, editorially commented: "The statement seems to rule out the emergence of a public sector in industry."

acceptance of these "standards" and "incurring of further international indebtedness" as some quarters seem to suggest. It consists equally between these two and development of closer economic relations with the USSR and other Socialist countries. Will the Government show enough perspicacity to choose the right course even at this late stage?

Foreign Grip

THE latest issue of the Reserve Bank of India Bulletin has published some revealing statistics on the hold that the foreign-controlled companies still retain on the country's external transactions. Based on a study conducted by its Research Division, the statistics in question disclose that even as late as 1956 and 1957 the share of total exports commanded by these companies was approximately 30 per cent. Among individual commodities, the proportions varied from 70-73 per cent under tea, 40-44 per cent under tobacco, 27-29 per cent under jute manufactures, 18-21 per cent under hides and skins tanned, 17-21 per cent under cotton

Worse is to come. In the previous policy it was specifically laid down that any foreign investor would have to associate at least 51 per cent of local capital in an industrial undertaking he embarks upon. Now the policy is that "there will be no rigidity about the participation of Pakistani capital in any industry where foreign investment is approved by the Government."

Assurance Of No Nationalisation

Further, an explicit assurance is given that no nationalisation is contemplated. All current profits of foreign firms are to be freely remitted and any plough-back of profits is to be treated in the same manner as the original investment when it comes to repatriation. There is to be no insistence on the Pakistanisation of the higher level (and higher-paid) employees in a foreign firm.

Pakistan thus decks itself out to allure all the foreign monopolists that it can. And surely no foreign investor could ask for more. With all the caution that the draconian laws make necessary, the *Pakistan Times* of February 23 comments: "It is important to consider dispassionately whether in its zeal to attract

foreign capital the Government has not overstepped the limits of prudence."

Some more interesting facts have come to light about the proposed agrarian reforms, described by Dawn on February 15 as having "erred on the side of generosity towards the big landowners." The same paper gives the information that the Martial Law administration has amended the jagirdari abolition measures, whereby jagirdars can retain as full owners such lands of their jagir as they choose, up to the ceiling limit. In addition they can grant subsistence holdings to an unspecified number of dependents. One wonders how much of the jagirs will remain to be abolished.

The Land Reforms Report released for publication on February 15 is interesting for the advocacy of ceilings against much the same arguments that are familiar to us from the rantings of Masani, Ranga and Co. It further gives out that its recommendation to give three per cent interest on compensation bonds was increased to four per cent by a Cabinet decision, which also has made these bonds transferable, against the advice of the Land Reforms Commission.

Incentives To Whom?

As we know to our cost among the most crucial questions in land reforms is that of implementation. This is, in Pakistan, to be left entirely to the officials and bureaucrats. There is not even a hint of popular, peasant cooperation. This is exactly in keeping with the aim of land reforms a la Ayub Khan which wishes to cause "the minimum necessary disturbance of the social edifice" leading "to a harmonious change-over" and at the same time "providing incentives at all levels."

A rather sinister development calling for some sort of probe is the visit of General Cariappa to his "friends" in Pakistan, which seems to include Ayub Khan. Cariappa has returned very satisfied. One feels like asking with what? Perhaps his talks with Ayub covered the topic of the mechanism of a military COUP. Perhaps not—one would like to find out.

Secret Conclaves

A high-level conference of Governors, top military brass and civilians was held in Lahore towards the middle of the month, about which suspiciously little has been said. Yet it was no ordinary conference and problems of canal waters and Kashmir came up for discussion. And just before

—ESSEN
February 23, 1959

U. P. BUDGET

OLD WINE IN OLD BOTTLE WITHOUT EVEN A CHANGE OF LABEL

U.P.'s budget for 1959-60, now being discussed by the State Assembly, has aptly been described as "old wine in old bottle without changing even the label."

INDEPENDENT People's Progressive Party leader S. K. D. Paliwal, one time Finance Minister of the State, said that this budget reminded him of the first budget on which he spoke in the house 35 years ago in 1924; there was no fundamental difference between the two.

The budget as before reflects a policy of exploitation and suppression of the people with the difference that now the emphasis has shifted from the defence of the interests of foreign capital to the defence of the Indian vested interests.

The budget shows a deficit of Rs. 1.86 crores with receipts standing at Rs. 119.61 crores and expenditure touching the peak figure of Rs. 121.47 crores. Plan items account for an expenditure of Rs. 32.13 crores, split up as under: Rs. 1.5 crores for industrial development, Rs. 8.5 crores for irrigation projects, Rs. 20 lakhs for public health works and Rs. three crores for agriculture.

The rest of the expenditure follows the old pattern, mounting disproportionately in the case of police and general administration.

For this State, 1958-59, was a year of scarcity, rising prices, food riots, growing unem-

put almost entirely at the service of the Sahu-Jains and the Birlas and others of the private sector.

The concessions to the private sector are being given in contravention of the directives of the Planning Commission but when it comes to the interests of the mass of the people, for example the demand of the cane-growers for a five-anna increase in the price of sugar-cane supplied by them to the factories, the Government comes out with the plea that it is bound by what the Centre and the Commission decide to do.

The bias for the private sector is further apparent in the budget where a paltry sum of Rs. 35 lakhs is allocated for famine relief and a relief of Rs. 50 lakhs is given to a handful of industrialists in the form of concessions in electricity rates.

In this connection it may be mentioned that the Government has so far failed to realise arrears of electricity rates from the Kanpur mill-owners of the order of Rs. 25 lakhs. In fact, the Kanpur industrialists have received loans from various Government agencies totalling Rs. 20 crores; some of these loans are now due for repayment but as far as our information goes no effort is being made to realise them. The sugar factories owe to the Government Rs. 3.54 crores towards cess and another Rs. 80 lakhs to the cane-growers but in this

case too no effort is being made to realise the amounts.

No doubt some relief has been given to the low-paid employees: those getting between Rs. 70 and Rs. 80 have been given an increment of Rs. 2-8-0 in their dearness allowance, and those getting Rs. 80 to Rs. 200 have been given an additional dearness allowance of five rupees per month. But during this period the cost of living index has gone up by 30.8 per cent; in this context the increase in the dearness allowance is not only totally inadequate but seeks to add insult to injury.

Only Platitudes

Going through the budget one feels that for the leaders of this State nothing had happened at Abhyankarnagar. There is no mention of the decisions taken there about imposing ceiling on land holdings and introducing cooperative farming. Even the earlier decision of the National Development Council about State trading in foodgrains finds neither any mention nor any indication whatsoever in the budget. There are platitudes and sweet words about the objects of the Government being the establishment of a Welfare State and a Socialistic pattern of society but not a word about how these objects would be realised.

★ RESOLUTIONS OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ★

MAKE THIS A YEAR OF ACTION FOR RADICAL LAND REFORMS!

THE Communist Party of India has always held that without a rapid development of our agriculture, there cannot be any talk of planned development of our national economy. The stagnation in our agricultural production, serious food shortage and skyrocketing prices, the heavy imports of foodgrains which is resulting in the drain of foreign exchange, the crisis in the Second Five-Year Plan, the inadequacy of capital formation—all these show in what deplorable condition our agriculture, the basic industry on which 70 per cent of our people live, stands. Hence rapid development of agriculture is the most urgent national task facing our country today.

OUR Party had, for a long time, put forward a programme for radical agrarian reforms which include full security to the tenants, reduction of rent burdens, ceiling on landholdings and distribution of surplus land and the Government cultivable waste lands among the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, re-

lief from tax and debt burdens and fixation of fair prices for agricultural produce as the first and essential steps for the development of agriculture.

These views have been shared by the Congress and other political parties and by many progressives. Land reforms have been recommended

by the Planning Commission in the First as well as the Second Five-Year Plan.

But our Party notes with concern that even though in several States several legislations were passed for land reforms, in their totality, they have miserably failed to give adequate relief to the kisans and to develop agriculture appreciably. Tenants continue to be evicted en masse and high rents continue to prevail. In many States, laws for imposing ceilings on landholdings were not passed and even in those States where such laws were passed, surplus land disappeared and the Governments failed to acquire any such land. Tax and debt burdens continue to increase alarmingly.

Our Party holds that these failures are not fortuitous. Many loopholes have been left

in these laws, which enabled the landlords to evade the provisions of law. The corrupt, bureaucratic and pro-landlord-biased administrative agency further helped the landlords in this evasion. As the Planning Minister himself admitted, social and political pressures on the ruling party and the Government were responsible for leaving these gaps in these legislations.

Emboldened by the ineffectiveness of these reforms, the landlords and their advocates have redoubled their efforts to bring more social and political pressures on the Government and the Congress to give up all talk of land reform. In this campaign against land reforms, even top leaders and State and Central Ministers have joined.

The Communist Party of India notes that the Congress

in its Nagpur Session, reiterated its stand on land reforms once more and stated that laws for imposing ceiling on present landholdings and future acquisitions should be passed by the end of this year. The Communist Party views the Nagpur Congress resolution as a rebuff to these landlord sections who vociferously oppose any land reform.

But the Communist Party is of opinion that mere reiteration of its stand by the Congress is not enough. No time-limit has been put for the speedy implementation of these reforms. Past experience shows that gaps and loopholes make the reforms a caricature and the Nagpur resolution says nothing about them. So long as immediate steps are not taken to stop evictions on any pretext, so long as the evicted tenants are not restored to their lands, so long as ceiling is put at a very high level, so long as exemptions of landlords' lands are made on several excuses, so long as transfer and mala fide partitions are not banned with immediate effect and past transfers and partitions not nullified and so long as a proper democratic administrative agency is not created, any number of laws will not help to solve the agrarian crisis and develop agriculture.

Apart from keeping quiet on all these vital questions, the resolution of the Nagpur Congress session contains some suggestions which, in the given circumstances, lead to harmful results. The proposal that surplus land should vest in the panchayats is one such. Neither the recommendations of the Local Self-Government Ministers' Conference nor of the Planning Commission regarding the panchayats were implemented and consequently today panchayats remain as handmaids of the ruling party and hotbeds of intrigue and factional fights and are dominated by landlord interests.

The ruling Party and the Ministers by their constant intervention in the affairs of the panchayats make the democratic functioning of these impossible and turn them into unaccountable harassments and oppression. The Government should realise that by measures such as these, nation-building tasks can hardly be advanced.

In the opinion of the Central Executive Committee, the demands of the Punjab peasants for the withdrawal of the Ordinance and the cancellation of the betterment levy are absolutely just and legitimate.

The capital cost for irrigation under the Bhakra-Nangal Project can be easily met from the existing taxes on the lands under irrigation without any recourse to the betterment levy. The Central Executive Committee hopes that the Government would retrace its steps and concede the just demands of the peasants of Punjab. The Committee also urges the Government to abandon its policy of repression which can only aggravate the situation.

Finally, the Central Executive Committee expresses its solidarity with the peasants of Punjab in their struggle against betterment levy. The Committee appeals to all sections of the democratic-minded people to raise their voice of sympathy and support so that the Government is obliged to revoke the Ordinance, cancel the betterment levy and withdraw repressive measures.

★ SEE PAGE 13

Cancel The Betterment Levy, Stop This Repression!

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India greets the heroic united struggle of the peasants of the Punjab against the betterment levy. The Committee notes with great expectations the unity of Hindus and Sikhs and indeed all sections of the masses which the present movement against betterment levy has brought about. Never before in recent years has Punjab witnessed such a resounding and massive unity of popular forces.

need of urgent relief, it is never possible either to entice them or bring about any improvement in their productive endeavours. It is a matter of deep regret that in the official scheme of things, this human factor finds little or no place.

The Central Executive Committee further notes that this oppressive betterment levy is being collected, while more than 84 lakh acres of land are affected by waterlogging and this menace is growing year after year, causing heavy damage and loss to agriculture as well as great suffering to the Punjab peasants. It does not require to be said that under such hard and difficult conditions, the imposition of

the betterment levy has only come as the last straw and cannot but considerably add to their already intense misery.

Instead of reviewing its present policy on betterment levy, the Punjab Government has chosen to launch large-scale repression all over the State. The Central Executive Committee records its emphatic protest against indiscriminate arrests of Communists and Kisan Sabha workers as well as against the imposition of heavy fines on the peasant masses. In the name of realisation of these fines, the peasants are being subjected to unaccountable harassments and oppression. The Government should realise that by measures such as these, nation-building tasks can hardly be advanced.

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It is well known that the Punjab Government has already imposed certain taxes totalling more than Rs. four crores per year on the lands to be irrigated under the Bhakra-Nangal Project. Now the betterment levy of Rs. 104 crores is proposed to be collected from the Punjab peasants on the same lands in addition to the existing taxes. It is in order to proceed with such collection of advance payment of betterment levy that an Ordinance has been promulgated by the Government.

causing tremendous hardships to millions of peasants, this betterment levy is bound to work as a positive disincentive to them. This not only affects the interests of the peasants but also the larger interests of the country's economy as a whole will be adversely affected. It will be realised that by imposing fresh economic burdens on the poverty-stricken peasants who are in fact in

COMRADE IRAWAT SINGH

THE Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India deeply mourns the death of Comrade Irawat Singh, the valiant leader of the Manipur people, which had occurred on September 26, 1951.

Comrade Irawat Singh, though coming from the royal family and holding a high judicial post in the State, renounced all his privileges and comforts and completely identified himself with the cause of the people. He led the famous women's struggle against rice exports in 1939 and resigned his Cabinet post in the State Government.

He was the founder of several organisations like the Nikhil Hindu Mahasava, Seva Samiti, Praja Sammelany and Manipur State Kisan Sava. Having seen the misery of the people and the reasons for

that, he ultimately came over to Communism and founded the Communist Party in Manipur State. He led several struggles of the people and went to jail in 1940 and 1943.

Elected to the Manipur Legislative Assembly, he could not take his seat in the legislature being driven underground by the repressive policy of the Government. He led the famous militant peasant struggles in 1949 and 1950. A prize of Rs. 10,000 was put on his head by the Government, thus forcing him to continue his underground life even in failing health. It was under such tragic circumstances that he died.

The Communist Party of India dips its banner in memory of this great leader of the Manipur people and pledges that it will keep aloft the banner for which he laid down his life.

IN PARLIAMENT

DEBATE ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The foremost issue facing the country—that of agrarian reforms—became the focus of the most heated debate in Parliament as well last week when the debate on the President's Address was continued and concluded in both Houses.

AFTER enumerating certain steps already taken by the Government to meet the present food difficulties, the President in his Address had asserted: "Self-sufficiency alone can provide a satisfactory solution."

EVASION ON LAND REFORMS

"Increased yields, by greater and sustained efforts and the adoption of improved methods of agriculture combined with the necessary agrarian reforms which would make agriculture both gainful and economic are imperative. To this end," the President had said, "My Government will seek to promote agrarian reforms, co-operation and devolution of functions to village units."

This was the only reference in the President's Address to agrarian reforms and by any criteria—even those laid down by the Prime Minister in his reply to the Lok Sabha debate—it was inadequate and evasive. It was natural therefore for the leader of the Communist Group, Comrade S. A. Dange, to refer to this fact and express his concern over the lack of any indication in the President's Address as to how the Government proposed to implement the agrarian reforms decided upon by the ruling party at Nagpur.

The Prime Minister despite his spirited defence of the ultimate aim of co-operativisation of agriculture in his smashing reply to Sri M. R. Masani, again evaded the question posed by Comrade Dange about the next steps that had to be taken. The more immediate question of distribution of land and fixation of ceilings was not even referred to by him.

The way the Prime Minister tried to get out of the uncomfortable situation by dismissing Dange's speech ("its seeming profundity and light cynicism," "nothing that I can say is likely to inspire the hon. Member Sri Dange. His inspiration is from sources not available to me.") might have been clever parliamentary tactics but hardly indicated any serious attempt to face the issue.

U. S. PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

In the sphere of industry, too, the Prime Minister, replying to a question by Comrade Bhubesh Gupta in the Rajya Sabha, came out with the plea for increasing U.S. private investment in India's small-scale industries on the ground that there was "a great deal of difference between major industries and such petty ones", as if a wholesale invasion by U.S. private capital only if it is in the sphere of

by ZIAUL HAQ

getting uncovered and hence the demand for an public judicial enquiry which alone can find these out.

As for Bhubesh Gupta having had to limit himself to one topic and one individual it is not merely parliamentary procedure and time at the member's disposal that is responsible.

The Communist Party far from being ashamed of having raised the question has every reason to feel proud as the numerous letters of congratulations being received by its Parliamentary Group testify. People, ordinary commoners and highly placed persons, are still writing giving it a lot more information. It is obvious not only from the parliamentary pronouncements but also the Government's insistence on a departmental enquiry and association with it of certain officials, that the Government is keen on having the most vital aspects of the affair hushed up.

ROUGH TIME FOR MASANI

Sri Masani had a rough time in Parliament this week. He made a fighting speech involving also the innocent Adivasis from whose constituency he had managed to sneak into the Lok Sabha. The Prime Minister described his approach as "nerve," his speech as a "war-like saga" and the whole experience a novel one in his eleven years of parliamentary life. Sri Masani, supported by approving nods from Sri N. G. Ranga, had threatened to raise a civil war in the country if the Government proceeded with its plan of winning the peasants' consent for cooperative farming. He "wanted to make it clear" that there was at least one group in Parliament—the Independent Parliamentary Group of which he is a member—which would give "unrelenting opposition" to the proposals of joint farming in place of "the traditional Indian method of peasant family cultivation."

It was a helpful speech because everyone could see very clearly where the protagonists of Free Enterprise and the American Way of life stood—with ex-Maharajas like Patiala and the spokesmen of the Jan Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha.

THE MATHAI AFFAIR

The Government's most amazing performance, however, was on the Mathai affair. Pandit Pant in the Rajya Sabha called it comparatively "insignificant, trivial and hardly worthy of being mentioned" in the background of the vital issues posed by the President's Address. He charged Bhubesh Gupta with having confined himself to "one topic and one individual" and suggested that raising the Mathai affair in this way might "corrupt, coarsen and vulgarise the entire atmosphere of the country."

The Prime Minister raised the question of somebody trying to persecute Sri M. O. Mathai and carrying on some sort of a "witch-hunt."

People outside Government will find it difficult to swallow this theory of somebody being concerned with an individual and trying to persecute him. It is mainly the ramifications and connections of a strategically placed individual with Big Business links, and maybe some more dangerous sharks that people are interested in

Communists Spotlight Attention On Deterioration In Indian Sports

COMMUNIST Members' motion in the Lok Sabha on the deterioration of the standard of Indian sports and the contributions made by Comrades T. B. Vithal Rao, V. P. Nayyar and Easwara Iyer can be said to have attracted worldwide attention.

The Manchester Guardian in a patronising way pokes fun at the idea of Communists sponsoring cricket. Whatever outsiders may say, Communists in our Parliament are not raising the matter for the first time. The sports situation is a matter of universal distress inside the country.

That was exactly what was reflected in Parliament

when members from all sides—whether it was Dr. Subbarayan or Joachim Alva or Jaipal Singh spoke with the same voice.

V. P. Nayyar said that the Committee which had gone into the matter and given its report had not been equal to the task it had been assigned. He demanded the appointment of another Committee and re-constitution on proper lines of the All-India Sports Council.

Beyond admitting that "all was not well with our sports organisation," the Minister for Education offered no indication of what steps Government would be taking to remedy the situation.

ed the characterisations made in the Communist Opposition's opening speeches. The Government in talking glibly about creating a self-feeding economy by the end of the Third Plan is deceiving itself as well as the people of India. Given their smug, self-satisfied policies such a society—whether capitalist or Socialist—is far from sight.

PRIVILEGE AGAINST E.M.S.

The exoneration of Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad of the charge of breach of privilege of Parliament over which such a storm had been raised by Messrs Masani, Mehta and K. B. Menon was another blow for this group that

came in the course of the week.

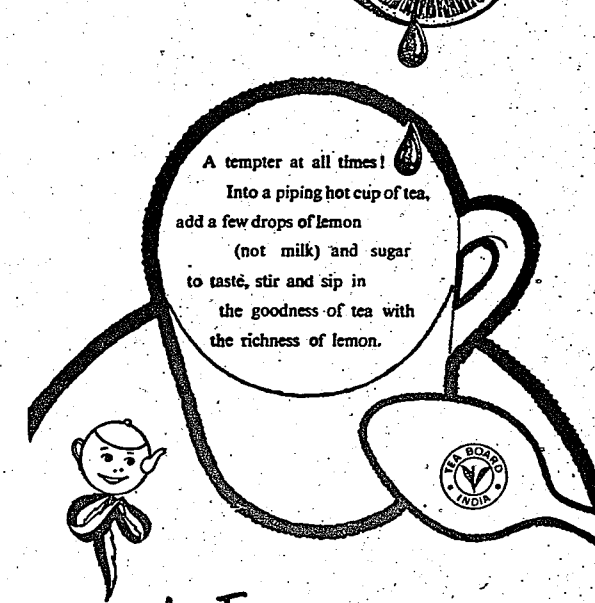
The Privileges Committee released its report recommending that the matter referred to them did not involve any breach of privilege. Undaunted Sri Masani is now seeking to raise a privilege issue on other portions of Comrade Namboodiripad's telegram the full text of which has been released for the first time only in the Privilege Committee's report. The second telegram sent by him to the Home Minister on September 20 reads in part as follows:

"Factual report on Asoka Mehta Motion in Lok Sabha despatched. Cases pending investigations and trial being discussed in Parliament pre-

★ SEE PAGE 12

now, try tea with

LEMON



I am Tea - I am your friend

U. S. COMMUNIST LEADER'S LETTER TO

MAO TSE-TUNG

Comrade William Z. Foster, Honorary Chairman of the U. S. Communist Party, sent a letter to Comrade Mao Tse-tung, dated December 19, 1958.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung sent a reply to Comrade Z. Foster on January 17, 1959. Comrade Mao-Tse-tung's reply reads:

"THANK you ever so much for your letter of December 19, 1958. From your letter, full of warmth and enthusiasm, I could see the soul of the great Communist Party of the United States, and the soul of the great working class and people of the United States.

"The Chinese people know that United States imperialism has done many bad things to China and to the whole world as well; they understand that only the United States ruling group is bad, while the people of the United States are very good. Among Americans, although many of them have not yet awakened, only a tiny part are bad, the overwhelming majority are good. Friendly relations between the Chinese and American peoples will eventually break down the barriers put up by Dulles and his like and develop more extensively with each passing day.

"Although the Communist Party of the United States is temporarily in a situation which is none too smooth, your struggle is highly significant and is bound to bear rich fruit. Dark night has its end. The reactionary forces of the United States are now running their heads into stone walls everywhere, which shows that they will not have too many days to live. Right now, over there in your country, the situation in which 'the enemy is strong and we are weak' is entirely a temporary phenomenon. It will certainly develop in the opposite direction.

"Allow me, on behalf of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, to extend hearty greetings to you, glorious fighter and leader of the American working class, and wish you an early recovery. Warmly welcome your coming to China for medical treatment and convalescence, if it is possible for you to do so."

Extracts From Foster's Letter

We give below extracts from Comrade Foster's letter:

Although you undoubtedly know it, the Chinese, principally workers, have played a very considerable role in the history of the western part of the United States. They began to immigrate into this area in the early eighties, at the time of the famous gold rush in California. From then on, they were to be found for many decades in all the mining camps, lumber woods, ranches and construction works of the great west. They built the principal railroads of California, and particularly they constructed in the latter eighties, the western half of the Central Pacific Railroad, the first transcontinental railroad in America, a heroic achievement.

They had to contend with much chauvinism, intimidation, and violence, which

reached its heights during the eighteen eighties, when the National Exclusion Act was passed, which, rigidly enforced, practically stopped all immigration from Asia.

As an American worker, I am ashamed of the outrageous policy of intimidation, employed by the great monopolies which control the imperialistic government of the United States, to try to strangle the Chinese revolution, and to prevent the Chinese people from carrying forward their heroic achievements in the building of Socialism and Communism.

In recent years, the world Socialist forces, and their tasks, grow more and more

complicated, and yet more simple. The Socialist revolution is proceeding along three major channels:

FIRST, there are the definitely Socialist countries, possessing political power, armed with Communist Parties, and guided by Marxism-Leninism—they are the real leaders of the revolution.

SECOND, there are the many anti-colonial countries

segments of the revolutionary movement, and this is too often not done. Despite their leadership, however, which is often anti-revolutionary, their masses are by their history and by their daily struggle a part of the fundamentally revolutionary movement. They reflect the revolution in the imperialist-capitalist countries. The clear-cut Socialist movement of the world should realise this fact more clearly and be more definitely guided by it.

We must give concrete leadership to all three of these main channels of revolutionary, or potentially revolutionary, forces, no matter how different may be their immediate problems, leadership, programmes, and tactics of struggle.

The United States, at least until the present time, has been one of the hardest lands in the world in which to build a Socialist movement—its difficulties are vastly different, for example, than those of China. The American labour movement dates back to the American Revolution, of 1776—in respect to some of its features, such as local labour parties, etc.—it is about as old, or even older, than that of Great Britain. I was practically raised in the labour movement. My first strike was in 1893; I joined the

Harsh Circumstances

During the meanwhile, the capitalist class has built a powerful and a relentless organisation. With about one half of the production of the capitalist world, they have come to dominate the capitalist world very largely, they have constructed a huge capitalist system, and they would dominate the entire world, socialist as well as capitalist, if they possessed the power to do so. But there is the greatest limit upon their power. With all their wealth and strength, they have not been able to bring the Socialist forces of the world under their control. Here is their fatal weakness, a thing that will eventually bring about their ruin.

Under these harsh circumstances, the American workers and their allies have not been able to construct a powerful revolutionary movement. True, they have built, under infinite difficulties, a trade union movement of some 18 million members; the Negro people, 18 million strong, are the most militant section of the American working class, and have strong organisations; there are powerful farmer movements; also youth and women's movements, etc. These organised millions, despite unreliable leadership, and imperialist corruption policies on the part of the employers, are able to exercise a force which exerts a very considerable influence upon the course of the country.

They have not done so well ideologically, however, as organisationally. Marxist Socialism is very weak among them; their predominant idea (pressed upon them by the tremendously powerful capitalist propaganda machine) is a confused sort of Rooseveltian Keynesism (people's capitalism, the capitalist ideologists call it). As American imperialism has made its tremendous progress, by semi-subjugating the other capitalist and undeveloped countries, this situation has grown worse. Thus, 50 years ago, about one-fourth of the trade union movement openly defended Marxism; now, if one should give the figure as ten per cent (fringe unions) it would be putting it strong. There is no Labour Party in the United States, nor have the workers any other mass political organisation of their own. In their overwhelming majority, insofar as they function politically at all, they go along with the

* SEE FACING PAGE

During the last session of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly, almost on the last day, the Government introduced the "Rajasthan Tenancy (Sixth Amendment) Bill, 1958"—more popularly known as the Ceilings Bill. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee which is currently discussing it. The present Budget Session is expected to consider the measure and adopt it. The problem of ceilings on landholdings is thus very much of a current problem in the State.

J UST as at the all-India level, in Rajasthan also the issue of ceilings has passed through many phases. The question was first mooted as early as 1933 when the State Government appointed a committee to advise it about the fixing of ceilings on agricultural landholdings in Rajasthan. For two years the committee continued its work and more or less finalised its investigations. In the meantime, there were some discussions in the Planning Commission on the question of family holding and so for some months there was a lull in the committee's work.

It was thus only on February 10, 1958, almost five years after its appointment, that the committee submitted its report. This was not just an accident or a pure administrative muddle. The working of this committee and the phases through which this work has passed reflect the attitude of the ruling party itself which for all these years has more talked of ceiling rather than take concrete practical measures to implement it.

There are quite a few, including some important Congress leaders who have the notion that ceilings for a State like Rajasthan are not necessary. It is, therefore, essential to understand how and in what manner the problem of ceilings arises in this State.

According to the Report of the Ceiling Committee itself,

Foster's Letter To Mao

* FROM PAGE 6

two old capitalist parties, principally the Democratic Party, both controlled by the monopolists. The several Left parties are very weak. There is also no Social-Democratic Party at all, except a tiny sect of three or four thousand.

The Trotskyites are also a tiny group, and of even less significance; and the Socialist Labour Party (DeLeon) also has but a very small fraction. In the recent elections, the Democratic Party polled least 40 million votes that should have gone to a popular front party, while the combined five Left-wing parties polled hardly 100,000 votes nationally.

From the foregoing pages, showing the deficiencies of the American labour movement, it would seem that this country is in an almost impossible position in fighting its way towards Socialism. But it would be a mistake to undersell the American working class. Despite its present poor showing, it is the period of full-blown American imperialism, it has a good fighting record. Besides, there is a new element entering into the picture, which we would do well not to overlook. This is the influence of the international democratic and Socialist forces upon the American situation. In many respects, this is of great importance to the American working masses. Take for instance, the situation of the Negro people; obviously the strong

entirely underground, which cost the Party many thousands of members; a number of mistakes made by the Party, such as the formation of the Progressive Party in 1948, which also cost us many thousands of members; the effects of the Stalin cult of the individual, which seriously undermined Socialist propaganda in the United States; and all along the poisonous effects of American prosperity corruption, with its theory of American exceptionalism, and the like.

Altogether, in 1955, the Party developed an acute crisis of revisionism, which almost destroyed the Party. This meant the loss of many more thousands of members. As things stand now, our Party, with its membership reduced to a very low figure, is gradually recovering from the serious crisis, in which it has been living. In the main, the revisionists are defeated. Undoubtedly, American imperialism, with its many agents, has been trying to demolish the Party, but has failed.

The foregoing may give you some valid pictures of the situation in the United States, as well as indicate my own admiration of the splendid Chinese Communist Party under your leadership. I hope that, in spite of all difficulties, the time will come when I may be able to see you and become acquainted with you at first hand. I trust that your health is of the best. Please give my best regards to all your comrades.

RAJASTHAN TENANCY AMENDMENT BILL

CEILINGS ARE TOO HIGH, EXEMPTIONS TOO MANY, EVASIONS MADE EASY

★ From H. K. VYAS

of the question that has to be kept in mind. When maximum rent was fixed at one-sixth, and later the Jagir Resumption Act was passed, certain developments took place in the countryside. The jagirdars, not only got thousands of acres of land entered as *khudkashit*, but quite a large number of them "created" farms, big huge farms, in the hope of escaping these laws. In the Ganganagar and other areas tenants were evicted en masse. The result of all this is that in the biswedari area, as much as 55 per cent to 72 per cent of the land is entered as *khudkashit*, even before the Zamindari and Biswedari Abolition Law is enforced. This means that big landed property, concentration of land in a few hands, which is mostly feudal property or big landlord property, still continues. The only way of tackling it is through the imposition of ceilings.

When viewed in this background ceilings are not only necessary for Rajasthan, but are probably the only immediately available way of undoing the big gaps left by earlier legislations in respect of breaking up the big feudal and landlord property.

Let us now look at the proposed Ceiling Bill. The Bill is drafted on the lines of the recommendations of the committee, referred to earlier. This committee in its deliberations came to the conclusion that for a family of seven members, a 2,400 annual income of Rs. 2,400 should be taken as the standard to arrive at the requisite area of land.

However this figure taken by the committee is very illogical. Because when it came to calculating the prices of foodgrains, the price taken for wheat, say, was Rs. 12 per maund and for other crops even less. Besides, production figures, too, were similarly taken as the average for the last three years, for which there was no accurate data. The result is that this Rs. 2,400 on the one hand and the actual area that the committee has taken for each teshil as the ceiling figure bear no resemblance.

Provisions Of The Bill

Thus the figure for ceiling in an area like Ganganagar which is canal-irrigated has been taken as 15.6 acres and for areas like Jodhpur, Nagour and others the figure is 100 and 150 acres; and in some teshils it is as high as 200 and 250 acres. It would thus be obvious that there is no proper scientific system followed in the fixing of these figures. And in many cases they are on the high side.

The second point in the proposed Bill is the declaration of all transfer whether by sale or otherwise for a period of three preceding years as null and void. This is stated to be with a view to prevent the subverting of this law.

The third important point in the Bill is that all land in excess of the proposed ceiling will be taken over from the present holder. What would happen to it subsequently is outlined in another section which says that it would be leased out from year to year.

Besides there is a section which lays down the exemptions, and one of the sub-sections says that "other efficiently-managed farms" will be exempted from the ceilings law.

An examination of these provisions would show that the Bill, though it does seek to tackle the problem in the right direction, suffers from defects which need to be remedied.

● The first change that is needed is that all mutations or transfers done since 1953, i.e., ever since the committee was appointed, should be declared null and void. Everybody knows that the moment Government declares its intention to impose ceilings and appoints a committee, at least from that date the mutations can and certainly are motivated, in many cases by consideration of evading the proposed legislation.

If the Bill really seeks to defeat such actions, then it is

not enough to cover transfers during the last three years, but all mutations and transfers ever since this committee was appointed should be declared null and void.

● Secondly, the clause about exemptions should be drastically amended. If efficiently-run farms, or mechanically-operated farms are exempted, then for whom is the ceiling going to be fixed? Everybody knows that this was the method that many jagirdars and landlords followed to escape provisions of the agrarian reform law. Now to exempt them from the ceiling law would amount to complete surrender to the sinister plans they have made for evading the impact of the agrarian reforms laws.

● The third drastic revision that is needed is in the method of allotment of all surplus land that will be taken over. In view of the Nagpur Congress resolution, the present provision of annual allotment has to be changed. The Bill has to provide for allotting all such land without any cost to the landless labourer; and he can then be persuaded or encouraged to come within the pattern of cooperative. The main point is that the land hunger of the landless should be satisfied.

● Lastly it is necessary to re-examine the figures fixed for the ceilings and make changes in those where the figure has been kept at a very high level.

While this should be the main direction in which the Bill should be amended to make it really useful for the further progress of agrarian reform, the actual situation is that tremendous pressure is being exerted on the Government by the reactionaries, the jagirdars both inside the Congress and outside, and by the big landed interests who are supporters of the Congress. This is more so, say, in Ganganagar District, where there is a strong move to get the present provisions changed. These elements are taking advantage of the figure of Rs. 2,400 annual income and are making a sentimental appeal on that basis. What they are hiding is the fact that the actual acreage worked out does not bear any relation to this academic figure. Now on this basis to change the ceiling upward would amount to giving unwanted concessions to big land interests.

It would be wrong to underestimate the pressure and pull of these elements. There are strong indications that they have partially succeeded, and probably the Ganganagar figure will be revised to, say, 30 acres, and other figures, too, would be somewhat revised. That at least seems to be the position that is emerging out of the present lobbying that is going on.

It is necessary, therefore, that progressive opinion and the kisan movement immediately assert and push back this pressure that is being brought against the proposed measure.

News from brother parties

This treatment was characteristic of how American capitalists have always treated national minorities, worst of all those of a different colour, such as the American Indians, Negroes, Japanese, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Filipinos, etc.

As an American worker, I am ashamed of the outrageous policy of intimidation, employed by the great monopolies which control the imperialistic government of the United States, to try to strangle the Chinese revolution, and to prevent the Chinese people from carrying forward their heroic achievements in the building of Socialism and Communism.

In recent years, the world Socialist forces, and their tasks, grow more and more

that have broken from the imperialists; they are not as clear-sighted revolutionists as the first group, but they are essentially anti-imperialist in nature, and their masses are manifestly related politically to the Socialist countries rather than to the imperialist countries.

THIRD, there are the mass democratic organisations in the capitalist countries—such as the workers' political parties, trade unions, cooperatives, women and youth organisations, peasant movements, national groups, etc., running to many scores of millions. These democratic bodies, often led by opportunist and possessing pro-capitalist programmes, are not so easy, however, to identify as vital

tionary, forces, no matter how different may be their immediate problems, leadership, programmes, and tactics of struggle.

The United States, at least until the present time, has been one of the hardest lands in the world in which to build a Socialist movement—its difficulties are vastly different, for example, than those of China. The American labour movement dates back to the American Revolution, of 1776—in respect to some of its features, such as local labour parties, etc.—it is about as old, or even older, than that of Great Britain. I was practically raised in the labour movement. My first strike was in 1893; I joined the

Iraqi Communists On Relations With U.A.R.

THE Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party has published two statements on the historic significance of the formation of the National Government. It calls upon the people to defend the nascent Republic against all imperialist designs. The Iraqi Communists, the statement continues, are ready to fight to the last drop of blood with the nationalists for freedom and democracy, Arab unity, peace and progress.

Concerning Iraq's relations with the other Arab countries, the Central Committee points out that, in the guise of national unity, the Right bourgeois parties are trying to get Iraq to join the United Arab Republic; moreover, they are agitating for adoption of the single party system as in Egypt.

In essence, this call for a single party is a call for struggle against the Communist Party. Yet ever since its inception, the Communist Party of Iraq has fought resolutely against imperialism and for national independence, democratic liber-

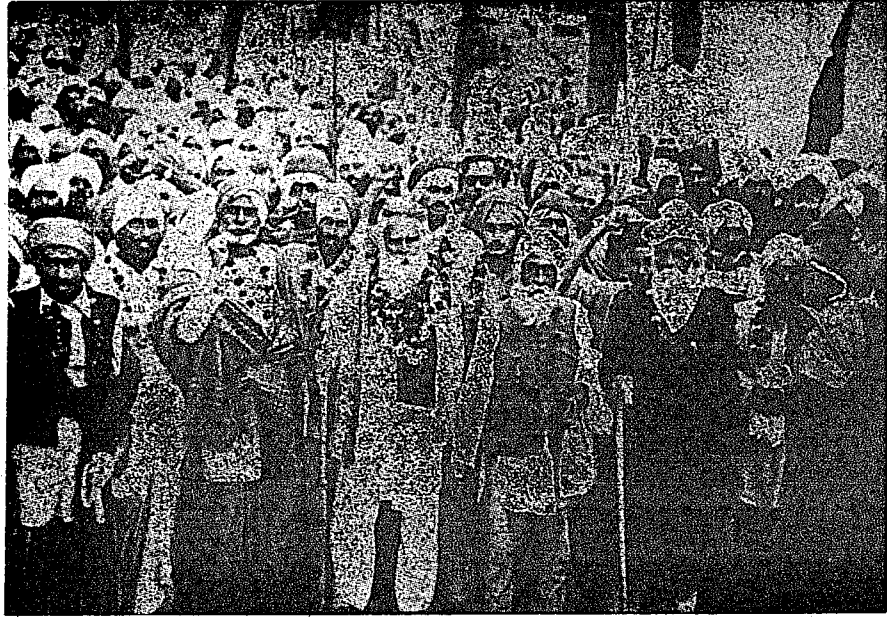
ties and social progress. It actively participated in the Iraqi Revolution and has spared no effort to strengthen the Republic. While supporting every progressive measure taken by the Government, it opposes the Right bourgeois parties and groups who are trying to restrict or reduce to naught the democratic gains of the people and to prevent the further success of the revolution.

Turning to the experience of the amalgamation of Syria and Egypt into a single State—which has its good and bad aspects—the Central Committee declares: "When we hear talk of joining the U.A.R. we feel great concern for the future of our democratic rights, for we know that there is no freedom for parties or public organisations in the U.A.R., no freedom of speech. We cannot concur in a step which might result in our Republic being deprived of freedom for the national, political, social and ideological movement and also the freedom to wage economic struggle." The idea of Iraq

joining the U.A.R., as the Rights conceive it, is disquieting, for Iraq might, in this event, be deprived of the necessary conditions for economic development and remain an economically backward area.

The statements underline that the Communist Party, too, stands for the amalgamation of Iraq with the U.A.R., not however by way of national union, but in a federation of free Arab countries which have made a complete break with imperialism. While supporting the plan for a Federal Democratic Arab Republic, the Communist Party takes into account the diversity of historical and material conditions in the Arab countries and is guided by the principle that within the framework of this unity it is necessary to guarantee the interests of all the countries. The question of what form the amalgamation of Iraq with the Arab countries should take must be decided by the people. The task now is to consolidate the revolutionary gains and the republican system.

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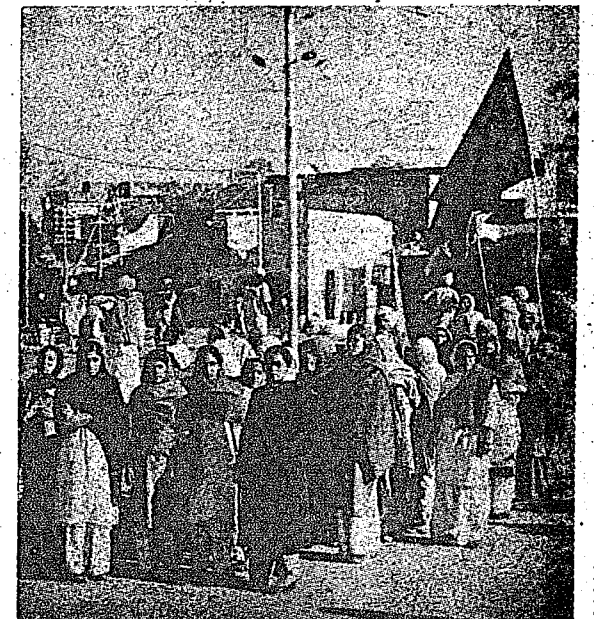


Satyagrahis on their way to court arrest. Thousands gather to express solidarity with the fighting peasantry.

MASS MOVEMENT OF PUNJAB PEASANTRY

Repression Fails Against Biggest Struggle Since The Akali Days Of The Twenties

● FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



The tremendous sweep of the struggle against the betterment levy can be seen in the extent of women's participation in it. Picture shows a jatha of women satyagrahis.

For four weeks now Punjab has been witnessing one of the biggest struggles of the peasantry. Kisan leaders say and it has been proved by the events since the satyagraha against betterment levy was launched, that there has been no such mass participation of the peasantry in any struggle in the Punjab since the days of the Akali movement of 1924.

THOUGH it began as a struggle against the unjust levy of betterment tax which the Government has imposed in the name of recovering the capital cost of Bhakra, what has been seen in the Punjab is the bursting out of the accumulated discontent of the peasant masses. Even the Punjab State Kisan Sabha which gave the call for satyagraha against the levy from February 2 had not expected the movement to assume such a broad sweep.

Mass Participation

The inauguration of the struggle on February 2 itself had shown that it was not going to be just an ordinary struggle against another tax burden.

Twenty thousand kisans had marched in the demonstration in Jullundur to mark the beginning of the satyagraha. The Correspondent of the Times of India reported:

"Carrying red flags and placards and shouting slogans, thousands of kisans from different parts of Jullundur and Kapurthala Districts covered on Jullundur today to protest against the betterment levy. They staged a mammoth demonstration which was led by Mr. Prasada Rao, General Secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha. Four abreast, it took 25 minutes for the procession to pass a particular point in the City. The demonstrators numbered between 15,000 and 20,000."

The Press reported demonstrations the same day in the other Districts—10,000-strong in Ferozepur, 5,000 in Hissar, 5,000 in Jhajjar in Rohtak and 10,000 in Narwana in Sangrur District.

The satyagraha began on February 2 in three Districts—Jullundur, Ferozepur and Hissar—and next day Ludhiana joined. Karnal, Sangrur, Bhatinda and Rohtak Districts followed soon and with Patiala also joining the movement on

February 23, all the nine Districts affected by the levy are now in the thick of the struggle.

Enthusiasm In Villages

If the demonstrations on the day of the inauguration of the movement were huge, those held on February 16 were bigger still. The Press reported that the mobilisation that day in Sangrur was 25,000 and in Kurukshetra (Karnal District) 10,000. The struggle had swept forward and become a mighty torrent, it had truly become a mass movement of the Punjab peasantry.

One has only to enter any village in the Jullundur District of Punjab to see the sweep of the movement. All night through there is beating of drums announcing the programme of struggle, early in the morning prabhat pheris be-

gin their round of the villages. The entire village is on its feet and they march singing songs specially composed for the anti-betterment levy struggle.

The jathas of satyagrahis to court arrest in the district towns start three or four days earlier from the village and visit the villages en route taking the message of the struggle.

Immediately the jatha enters a village, all the villagers including the women are there to receive them. They are served with tea, sweets and food and the villagers pour all their affection on them and when it is time for the jatha to start on its way again, the villagers accompany it to the next one. Not for a long time has the Punjab seen such mass enthusiasm and wide participation in a movement.

Women In The Forefront

An index of the strength of the movement is the unprecedented women's participation in it. Not only are women in the forefront in every village to welcome the satyagrahi jathas, in Sangrur women's jathas themselves

have offered satyagraha and courted arrest.

When the movement began, the instruction of the Kisan Sabha was that only batches of 25 should court arrest every day. But so many satyagrahis were coming forward determined that nothing should stop them, that even before the first week of the struggle was out, the number had to be raised to 50. That even proved inadequate in face of the rush of volunteers and the restriction has had to be removed altogether. Hundreds will offer satyagraha now.

It is estimated that 1,600 satyagrahis have been arrested by the end of the third week of the struggle and over a lakh-and-a-half kisans had participated in the various demonstrations. Thousands of urban people have gathered in district towns when the jathas court arrest and expressed their solidarity with the fighting peasantry.

Even in the Hariyana areas where there is no organised Kisan Sabha yet and the Communist Party is still very weak, the response has been tremendous. Demonstrations are taking place and satyagraha is being offered. The panchayats themselves are organising the

demonstrations. The peasants have taken up the struggle as their own, whole villages are organising it.

Congressmen Take Part

Naturally no one can remain outside it when the movement is of such an all-embracing character.

Rank-and-file Congressmen and even local leaders are participating in it and joining the satyagrahi jathas. Giani Sardara Singh, a leader of the Akali and Congress movements in the State since 1920, resigned from the Congress and led a satyagrahi jatha. Many, more, though they have not resigned from the Congress, are taking part in the movement.

The mood of the peasantry can be gauged from what happened to the squads sent by the Kisan Section of the Congress to the villages to explain to the peasants why it should pay the levy. The villagers would not listen to them and even Congressmen would not organise meetings for them. These squads were driven out from the villages and when the women threw cowdung at them, not one villager could be found to sympathise with their plight.

Akalis Join Satyagraha

In spite of the hesitance of the Akali leadership because of the programme they are organising in Delhi in the middle of next month, local Akalis are in the movement, leading demonstrations and courting arrest.

The extent of the movement can also be seen in what is happening to the village revenue officials who are entrusted with the duty of collecting the levy. Not only are these lambardars refusing to make any collections, in many of the places they are themselves joining the struggle. In Mukatsar in Ferozepur District, 40 lambardars refused to make the collections. In Pindara village in Jullundur District, a lambardar, Bachan Singh, supporter of the Congress, led the satyagrahi jatha and courted arrest after tearing

up the orders to collect the levy.

All that the Congress leaders and their Government have done has failed to disrupt or suppress the movement. How ridiculous Chief Minister Kairon looks now after his brave words in Ludhiana on February 10 that the agitation against the betterment levy would die its own death.

Congress Tactics

When the movement began, the first attempt was to counter it with propaganda.

The Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee which met in Patiala on February 7 decided to launch a campaign "to educate the peasants about the economy of the betterment tax and to counter the propaganda started by the Communist-dominated Kisan Sabha against the levy."

The Kisan Section of the Congress was pressed into service to send squads to the villages. Huge posters were printed and Congress jeeps began to ply the villages. But the villagers would not listen to them and they were driven out.

Of course, they issued statements and distributed handbills saying that Communists were disrupting their meetings—and that when Congressmen themselves were refusing to organise meetings for them. But such statements could not stop the movement from going forward.

So the Government came on the scene and set in motion its entire repressive machinery. The targets are not only the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party but the ordinary peasants as well.

Raids And Arrests

Police raids have taken place on a wide scale in Sangrur, Ludhiana, Hissar and other Districts and indiscriminate arrests are being made.

In Mullanpur in Ludhiana District, the owner of a shoe shop was arrested because he is sympathetic to the struggle.

In Sangrur City, a hotel-keeper and his brother-in-law have both been arrested.

In Hissar, when the police could not find the Kisan Sabha activist whom they were searching for, they arrested his farm hand.

In another place the brother of the person wanted was taken into custody.

This is what has mostly happened. Almost none of the Kisan Sabha leaders and activists against whom warrants had been issued could be found and so anybody and everybody who is found is arrested. And even

one such warrant was actually served within the precincts of the Assembly creating a furore. Among the arrested are also two comrades who are candidates in the municipal elections in Ludhiana.

But this tactic, too, has failed, the bulk of the leaders and activists have evaded the clutches of the police and are organising the movement.

The Government has tried to meet the situation with intensified repression on the peasantry. Satyagrahis are being given the unheard of sentences of up to six

collecting the fines, because the people and the lambardars, too, are in no mood to cooperate with the officials.

Weakness Of Govt.'s Case

This repression does not in any way indicate the strength of the Congress Government. If Chief Minister Kairon really believed in what he said, that the agitation would die its own death, the resort to such repressive measures was not at all necessary.

food situation and the betterment levy.

Instead of answering the case against the betterment levy, Sri Kairon tried to escape by making the usual allegations against the Communist Party.

The agitation, the Chief Minister said, was meaningless particularly when the Government had assured that it had no desire to gain even a penny out of this levy.

This is no answer to the case of the Kisan Sabha and others that the capital cost of the project can be met without imposing the betterment levy. The fact that the Government itself reduced the amount of the levy after it was first announced exposes the weakness of its case.

The Government has in fact come out with such concessions, bit by bit, but these concessions have not yet been properly formulated and are at best an attempt to sow confusion in the people about the stand of the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party.

For any one who has been to the Punjab in these four weeks and seen the tremendous enthusiasm of the Punjab peasants and their mighty mobilisation in the countryside, there can be no doubt of their grim determination to win their demands.

And everywhere in the State the movement has created a new atmosphere. So far the people of the State had been witnessing communal demonstrations and working up of communal tension. But now it is all different. The slogan of the struggling peasantry of the Punjab today is Hindu-Sikh unity and this slogan is being echoed and re-echoed in the State.

The peasants have challenged the contention of the Government that the scheme is not productive, they have said that the capital cost of the project can be met from the regular revenue. The Government has not dared to meet this challenge.

Their demands are just:

- Withdraw the Ordinance for the collection of the betterment levy;
 - Cancel the realisation of the levy.
 - Capitalise the cost of the project.
- And they will wrest these demands from the Kairon Government.



All-India Kisan Sabha General Secretary N. Prasada Rao leading the 20,000-strong demonstration in Jullundur on the inauguration day of the satyagraha.

Electricity Has Also Become A "Home-Made" Product In China

by LIANG KUANG

China's electric power industry is shooting ahead at lightning speed, stimulated by the need for bridging a gap between supply and demand.



The electric power industry in China has also begun to walk on "two legs"—with big modern power plants and small ones operated by the masses of the people. Picture above shows a rural power station in Chinpi village in Shansi Province. The Hunng-nao County where this village is situated has already set up 62 such hydro-electric stations and power stations.—Photo: HUA KAI.

WHY did a shortage arise? Not because the output of electricity has not grown. On the contrary, the increase has been truly phenomenal. The total generated in 1953 is estimated at 27,500 million kwh., 43 per cent more than in 1952. Last year alone, more than 100 new large and medium power plants went into operation along with a great many smaller local units of all descriptions. They helped raise the national generating capacity by over two million kw. This was more than two-thirds of the total increase for the First Five-Year Plan (1953-57). It was ten per cent more than the total generating capacity built in all the years prior to 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded.

Yet even such speed proved insufficient to supply the booming economy. Steel production doubled last year. Other power-consuming industries mushroomed all over the country. With continued fast industrial growth this year, particularly as the small local iron and steel smelters are merged and modernised into integrated iron and steel works that require more and more power, the pressure will continue for some time. In accordance with China's principles of planning, any imbalance that has arisen in the course of the great leap forward should be readjusted in a positive way—by strengthening the weak link, not negatively by reducing overall speed.

New Power Plants

In the drive for more power, the building of big modern power plants is being stepped up. It is expected that about 700,000 kw. of new generating equipment will go into operation in the first quarter of 1959, more than 30 times the increase in the same period last year. Northeast China will put eight big new power plants into operation between January and March. Among other areas, four new generating units will start work in Shanghai and in Peking, generating equipment with a total capacity of 150,000 kw. is expected to be commissioned in the first half of this year in the capital's huge new heat-and-power plant alone.

To meet longer-range requirements, construction of many giant hydro-electric power plants is being pushed ahead of schedule. They include: the Sanmen Gorge Hydro-Electric Power Plant on the Yellow River in Honan Province, the Liuchia Gorge

Hydro-electric Power Plant on the Yellow River in Kansu Province, the Tanchangkou Hydro-Electric Power Plant on the Han River in Hupeh, the Hsinan-chiang Hydro-Electric Power Plant on the Chekiang River in Chekiang Province, the Chaoping Hydro-Electric Power Plant on the Kwai River in the Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region and the Chehsi Hydro-Electric Power Plant in Hunan Province. Other big hydro-electric power plants are going up in Liaoning, Yunnan, Kweichow, Kwangtung and Anhwei Provinces.

Many of the new power plants will be completed ahead of schedule as construction and equipment installation become more and more efficient through technical innovations. The time needed to instal a 25,000 kw. steam turbine generator has been cut from some two months to 100 hours. The average time for designing and construction has also been reduced considerably.

Output Increased

A second great new source of electricity is the veritable revolution now taking place in power plants already in operation. The workers have raised the output of existing equipment. The pioneer in this movement is the Shihchingshan Power Plant in Peking, where the workers have got 27,500 kw. of extra capacity, almost one-quarter of the plant's total rating of 115,000 kw. One of the steam turbine generators is working at 42 per cent above its rating and three boilers at 40 per cent above rating. Similar results have been achieved in Anshan and Shanghai.

These extraordinary achievements are the results of bold thinking combined with level-headed scientific analysis and careful experimentation. The revolutionary technical measures were generally introduced only after careful testing, and after safety had been fully ensured. Months of operation at levels above rating have proved their complete success.

The significance of these measures is not limited to economics. In engineering practice, rated output has been considered a limit beyond which one must not trespass. The taboo has now been broken. Men have become the real masters of machines. This marks the beginning of a technical revolution in the power industry—which

will profoundly influence not only the operation but also the manufacture of generating equipment.

Like every other productive activity in China, the electric power industry has "two legs"—the big modern power plants and small ones employing indigenous methods, built and operated by the masses of the people. On the modern "leg" alone, the industry would encounter difficulties. On both "legs," however, it can rush ahead in giant strides.

The potency of the "mass line"—relying on mass initiative for development—is being proved in electric power as it has been in other branches. The northeastern port of Lushun-Talien (Port Arthur-Dairen) provides a good example.

Ingenious Inventions

After August 1958, a power shortage arose in Lushun-Talien. It grew so serious that a number of factories had to suspend operations and city lighting had to be heavily curtailed. To meet this situation, a mass campaign was launched. Factories, mines, shops, government offices, schools and nurseries—even housewives, cooks and barbers—all began to produce electricity for their own use. By means of ingenious popular inventions, more than 20 new ways of getting electricity from various sources have been found. "Home-made" devices got power from water, wind, methane gas, coal gas, steam and oil.

In three months thousands of small power generating units, with a total capacity of over 130,000 kw. arose, using old lorry, tank and aeroplane engines, repaired steam en-

gines and improvised turbines. As a result, scores of institutions in Lushun-Talien now supply their own power needs, and some produce a surplus for others. City lighting is fast improving, and industrial output is rising steadily.

To popularise this experience and to make the electric power production the business of the whole people, an on-the-spot demonstration conference was convened in Lushun-Talien. It was attended by representatives from all parts of the country and helped set off a nationwide campaign to build power stations by popular efforts.

As a prelude to the electrification of the countryside, a multitude of small hydro-electric power stations have been set up by the local people with only a minimum of outside help.

In the single county of Yungchun, in Fukien Province, southeast China, over 1,000 small hydro-electric power and hydraulic stations have been set up. More than half its villages now have electricity and in the processing of grain alone, millions of man-days were saved in 1958 by using water power. In Fukien Province as a whole, 1,300 small hydro-electric power stations with a total generating capacity of 37,000 kw., were begun or completed in 1958.

Equipment Made In China

The people's communes, since their formation, have begun to go in for medium-sized hydro-electric power plants as well as small ones. People of the Shuhsung Yi Autonomous Chou in Yunnan Province, southwest China, are now building medium hydro-electric power plants with

a total capacity of over 300,000 kw.

As the electric power industry races ahead, it creates a new necessity—the manufacture of more and higher-quality power-generating and transmission equipment. In 1958, equipment with more than one million kw. of generating capacity was produced in China, twice as much as in the entire First Five-Year Plan. Recently, the first domestically manufactured 50,000 kw. steam turbine was made at the Harbin Steam Turbine Plant. With a 230-ton high-pressure boiler, already built, and a 50,000 kw. steam turbine generator which is still under construction, it will form a power unit that can light a city of five million people. Enterprises in Shenyang have made China's first 60,000 kva. 110,000-volt transformer and 220,000-volt high-tension transmission cable.

The soaring demand for power-generating equipment calls for a many-fold increase this year. In this effort too, the "two legs" principle is applied. The large machine-building plants in Shanghai and northeast China, which shoulder two-thirds of the burden, are stepping up production—coordinating closely with many other plants that produce accessories.

The small machine-building plants set up all over the country as a result of the boom in local industries are also turning out power-generating equipment, using improvised machine tools as well as modern ones. Even a black-smiths' cooperative in Hsingtai County, Pei Province, has successfully turned out 1.5-kw. generators and water turbines (maximum capacity 70 kw.)

Using both legs, China's electric power industry is forging ahead.

An Assessment Of Stalin

BOOK REVIEW

STALIN AND HIS WORK: Soviet Encyclopaedia. Communist Party of India publication. Price 20 Naye Paise.

IF truth as the statement of the development of reality is controversial, then so is Stalin. Unlike Jesting Pilate, however, we do stay and demand an answer.

The great merit of the assessment of Stalin by the Soviet Encyclopaedia now made available in English, is that it gives us all the clues we need for an answer.

The assessment sets out the main events of a life which literally spans the centuries—from the last years of the 19th to the middle decades of the present century. Even the stark enumeration of these events cannot but strike deep chords in anybody with any respect for history's forward shove.

More significant, however, is the evaluation of Stalin's deeds and his theoretical propositions.

Mistakes Analysed

The mistakes are clearly analysed—the land distribution error, the failure to move quickly enough following February 1917, the tinge of chauvinism in the early twenties.

Then, in the later thirties came "the wrong thesis that

class struggle inside the country would grow sharper as Socialism made rapid strides... (the) massive repression against his ideological and political adversaries... which, in the new conditions, was not necessary."

Stalin's false assessment of the international situation on the eve of the Great Patriotic War, the failures in post-war agrarian development and "grave errors... on certain questions of foreign policy (e.g. the break with Yugoslavia)" are mentioned, together with some wrong formulations in the Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

Very categorical and sharp criticism is made of the development of the cult of personality, whose origins are traced to "the concrete historical and objective conditions in which the building of Socialism was accomplished in the USSR and also certain negative traits in the personality of Stalin himself."

Yet after all the negative points have been brought out the conclusion is immensely positive. "All his (Stalin's) activity is linked with the realisation of great Socialist changes in the Soviet country. The Communist Party and the Soviet people remember and respect Stalin. His name is inseparable from Marxism-

Leninism..." A little earlier it is stated: "In the course of long years, Stalin has been the leader of the Party and the Soviet State. An outstanding proletarian revolutionary, he has played a great role in the organisation of the struggle of the proletariat of Russia... In his theoretical writings Stalin developed the Marxist-Leninist theory by applying it to the concrete conditions of building Socialism in the

USSR. This was of great importance to the international working class and Communist movement."

In view of the rather prolonged campaign against "Stalinism" by the more vociferous of the anti-Sovieters, the present assessment should help greatly to clear the issues and give cold comfort to these "stalwarts."

Equally would it militate against those who would like to point to a reversal of the

20th Congress trend, a retreat to the mistakes of the past. So penetrating a grasp of the past can only be the result of an advance from it.

Stalin through his leadership of vast work created conditions where his deeds would be surpassed, his mistakes corrected and he himself properly understood. It is this maturity that speaks through the Encyclopaedia article.

—Mohit Sen

A NEW BRITISH POLICY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND MIDDLE EAST, a report by a Chatham House Study Group. Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. pp. 123. 1958. Oxford University Press, London. 12 Sh. 6d.

IT is difficult to match or beat the duplicity of British diplomacy in the Middle East in simultaneously entering into solemn pledges to unite the Arab-speaking areas and promise a 'National Home' in Palestine to the Jews during World War I.

It was followed by arbitrary division of the area into five

States following the San Remo Conference in 1920. Grudgingly recognising these historical events and the 'beating' given to the 'British prestige and respect for British political sagacity' resulting from the Suez fiasco as great liabilities, the Chatham House Study Group in this report under review, has attempted to retrieve the precarious British position in West Asia by providing a coat of 'scholarly' respectability.

The Royal Institute of International Affairs, popularly known as the Chatham House, is for all practical purposes an unofficial wing of the British Foreign Office and has a reputation for defending conservative and reactionary ideas in its numerous publications. It is all the more interesting to find such a conservative group candidly admitting that 'the vacuum was chiefly filled by local nationalism' and not by Communism as the State Department would like us to believe.

Revealing Conclusions

The conclusions reached by the Study Group about Britain's future policy are revealing of the hard thinking going on in "well-informed" circles among the British ruling class. The two main props of the proposed policy are loyal coordination with the Americans and coming to terms with the rising middle class in the Middle East.

The Smell Of Oil

This study admits the secondary role of Britain in the area and seeks to retrieve as much as possible by playing second fiddle to the Americans and British economic interests through what Nasser has appropriately termed, as the West's collective colonialism.

But mere Anglo-American coordination would be reckoning without the host, i.e., the Arab people. Hence, the Study Group is not averse to coming to terms with the bourgeoisie and sacrificing the Sheikhhs, wherever compromise with the native bourgeoisie becomes imperative.

The book abounds in certain naive observations like that 'possibly the biggest chance of peaceful change lies in Iraq (of Nuri el-Said), the Lebanon, and perhaps Kuwait.'

The group has been keenly perceptive, however, on several other issues. It recognises, though reluctantly, the progressive impact of public opi-

The Study Group seems to be resigned to recognition of the fact that this area was now primarily American responsibility. Thus the utter ineffectiveness and bankruptcy of British policy have been frankly admitted once for all. It is in a hurry to salvage the British economic interests through what Nasser has appropriately termed, as the West's collective colonialism.

But mere Anglo-American coordination would be reckoning without the host, i.e., the Arab people. Hence, the Study Group is not averse to coming to terms with the bourgeoisie and sacrificing the Sheikhhs, wherever compromise with the native bourgeoisie becomes imperative.

This policy has been foreshadowed in the West's newly acquired "reasonableness" in the recent Anglo-U. A. R. negotiations and the renewed offers of economic aid. It is a new tactic to serve the same old ends.

—Kamal

PAGE ELEVEN

Disappointing Biography Of Rammohun Roy

RAMMOHUN ROY—Iqbal Singh. Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1. Rs. 14. 75.

THIS is the first part of what the author calls 'A biographical inquiry into the making of modern India.' However the subject is strictly confined to the times of Rammohun Roy, roughly from 1774, when he was born, to 1824, when he was just emerging as a full-fledged political leader.

Until Independence, we all looked at the great men of the past in a sort of sentimental manner, and a few legends and stories about them were sufficient to satisfy the needs of the times. It is necessary now that we know them as they were, and we cannot but thank the Asia Publishing House for undertaking the publication of a series of biographies and autobiographies.

It is difficult to write about those who are near to us, since they have not yet emerged out of the present-day political controversies, and it is almost impossible to write about those who are sufficiently distant from us since there is hardly any material available. Mr. Iqbal Singh has been faced with the latter problem when he tries to unravel the story of Rammohun's life for the period ending 1824. It is plain that he had very little to go by. Even the year when Rammohun was born is under dispute. Then the fog of ignorance is dense until almost the time he joins the

for the earlier half, both the reader and the author are aware that they are in the arid region of his life in which nobody has any interest. Indeed who today is prepared to go through the metaphysical maze in which our elders went round and round.

Only two things strike out in this whole book: Rammohun's stand on Sutte and on the freedom of the Press. The modern leader will only be seen in the next volume, and we are sure to get good value for our money there. If this volume had been cut to the bare minimum then there would have been ample space to deal with that part of Rammohun's life in which all of us are interested.

And what a giant of a life it was. Whatever one may feel about the limitations of his stand, Rammohun in his incisive thought, his range and depth of vision can stand comparison with any and that he was our countryman adds to our stature.

One thing more. We can forgive the temptation to spin a book out of airy nothing, but why go out of your way to attack Calcutta? We have here two pages devoted to vituperation against this our only political city. Of course, it stinks, but the stink has given a political headache to many a Viceroy since Lord Curzon and a Bidhan Roy today. The roots of modern history are in Calcutta, then how can Calcutta have any roots in modern history?

TEDIOUS

Even the latter half of the book, where it stands on more solid ground, is tedious because here Rammohun is only matching his theological casuistry with that of the Serampore Missionaries. In spite of voluminous quotations, to make up

—H. B. Rao

NEW AGE

MARCH 1, 1959

MARCH 1, 1959

DEVICOLAM'S ANSWER TO INTUC CHIEF

SRI G. RAMANUJAM, the President of the INTUC, has been unceremoniously denounced and removed from the presidency of the Devicolam Plantation Labour Union (INTUC) for his conspiracy with the planters and betrayal of the plantation labour during the famous plantation labour strike in High Ranges in October last.

The General Body meeting of the union was held at the Munnar Congress House under the presidency of Sri N. Ganapathy, Congress MLA of Kerala.

Conspired With Planters

The resolution passed by the meeting records:

"Its regret over the action of the union President Sri Ramanujam, who when the workers were conducting a struggle for their just demands, conspired with the estate owners and withdrew the struggle suddenly.

"Because the struggle was withdrawn suddenly as a result of this conspiracy, not only the plantation workers of Devicolam, but of the entire State had to lose their bonus.

"In the light of this action, the Council records its no-confidence in the leadership of Sri Ramanujam and decides to remove him from the presidency of the union immediately."

The same resolution has further condemned Sri Ramanujam and his associates in the following words:

"The Council believes that Sri Ramanujam and his associates are responsible for the split among the workers and for clashes between sections of workers leading to the firing incidents."

The General Body also found that one Sri Rajagopal,

who was made the Office Secretary of the union, without any reference to the General Body had indirectly secured contracts from the estate owners for supply of worker blankets, etc.

The General Secretary, Sri Kuppusswamy, and the Office Secretary, Sri Rajagopal, had also avoided submission of accounts for more than Rs. 5,000.

The General Body has, therefore, indignantly denounced them and removed them.

A new Council of 21 members has been formed.

And workers are actually guarding the union office and the union records so that the overthrown leadership and its hirelings do not attack the office and tamper with the records.

Such is the 'finale' of the disruptive game that Sri G. Ramanujam and the all-India INTUC leadership tried to organise in the High Ranges in October last year.

Ramanujam's Speech At Dibrugarh

FROM having thus met with his fate for conspiring with British planters in Munnar in Kerala, Sri Ramanujam seems to have drawn no lessons either for himself or for his organisation, the INTUC.

He was speaking to the INTUC annual 'mela' at Dibrugarh in that border State of Assam, the house of foreign planters and their intrigues.

Read through every page of his address and every line of his speech, there is hardly any mention of the British planters and their nefarious activities both in the plantations and in the trade.

No Message To The Worker

There is hardly any message to the Indian worker to warn

LABOUR NOTES

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

him of the dangers to not only our economic development but even to the security of the country.

Yet this was the "nationalist" leader of the "national organisation" of India's working class speaking!

For Sri Ramanujam the main thing was the "Red challenge" to INTUC supremacy. And his entire emphasis is on intensifying the cold war against the Communists and dividing and splitting the workers on the basis of "Gandhism vs. Communism."

Sri Ramanujam knew that the plantation workers not only in Munnar and Kerala as a whole but also in West Bengal in the Doars and the Terai had gone into united action irrespective of affiliations to win their urgent vital demands. He knew that the only way to prevent this united action was through conspiracies with the employers as he did in Munnar. The only result of this disruption of united action is denial of demands to the workers. And the only fate that disruption of this kind meets with at the hands of conscious workers is the one that Ramanujam himself met with in Devicolam.

Yet he had the courage (or the reverse of it?) to warn the INTUC ranks against any talk of "joint fronts or joint action committees with Communists, even for a temporary period."

The logic of workers' life is leading to united action to win urgent demands.

The logic of the INTUC leaders' policies and practices is to prevent such united action and deny demands.

But the lessons of life are more lasting.

The Calcutta tramwaymen know the glory and the strength of united action. Bombay's working class is

forging ahead with the united Textile Union emerging in defiance of all the heroes of cold war and the perpetrators of splits and divisions.

If the INTUC leadership refuses to see this and tries to prevent this natural tendency in the movement, it would be to its own detriment.

"For our class and our country," we the workers and trade unions have to unite and go into united action.

S. Indian Labour Ministers Meet

WHEN the Communist-led Government of Kerala took the initiative to fix minimum wages in such sweated and misery-ridden industries as bidi and cashewnut, the employers tried to circumvent this by shifting their operations into the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras.

The Labour Minister of Kerala, therefore, invited the Labour Ministers of Madras and Mysore to Trivandrum to discuss problems of mutual interest affecting common inter-State industries like bidi and cashew.

Dr. U. Misra, the Vice-President of the Jamshepur Mazdoor Union has warned the Workers' Union (INTUC) leadership that demand for the reinstatement of 400 victimised workmen would not be allowed to be sacrificed.

And it is not merely the question of a round sum increase in the wage bill—the actual increase granted to various categories and the proposed rates and grades should all be first discussed by the mass of workmen and decided by them.

Meanwhile, the Bihar State Trade Union Committee of the AITUC is preparing to hold its conference at Jamshepur to mobilise entire Bihar behind this valiant detachment of the working class of that State.

Bihar trade unions are preparing for a Statewide campaign on the TISCO workers' demands of revision of wages, reinstatement of the victimised and release of all the workers and withdrawal of all cases. This campaign is to culminate in a mass march before the Bihar Legislature. (February 21, 1959)

It has also been proposed that legislation for licensing of bidi manufacturing establishments should be initiated in Mysore and Kerala. Madras has already enacted such a legislation.

This meeting and these decisions will be welcomed by all the trade unions. They mean better minimum wages in Mysore and Madras and more concerted efforts by the concerned Governments to prevent the employers from succeeding in their attempts to defeat the minimum wages fixed.

Jamshepur —New Tasks

THE very Tatas who earlier rejected all the demands of the Jamshepur Mazdoor Union for revision of wages and dearness allowance have now been forced to change their position.

They are reported to have agreed to raise the wage bill by one crore and two lakhs of rupees.

Sri Michael John, the INTUC leader, is reported to have demanded that it be

raised by three crores of rupees.

It is the united action of the workers that has forced the Tatas to make this move.

And it is a united stand that will win the demands for the workers.

Sri Sunil Mukherji, President of the JMU (AITUC), has, therefore, made a bold offer to the INTUC. Addressing the TISCO workers on February 1, 1959, he declared: "In order to achieve the demands of the TISCO workmen and to compel the Tatas to accede to the demands, let us bury our differences, formulate demands in common agreement and forge a united struggle."

Will the INTUC leadership respond to this offer?

It is the heroic struggle and the great sacrifice of the TISCO workers that forced the arrogant Tatas to shift from their earlier position.

But the INTUC refuses to see this.

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SCRAP-BOOK

RASHTRAPATI AND THE CANARA BANK

WHEN Rashtrapati Rajendra Prasad recently laid the foundation stone of the Canara Bank Administrative Building Hall in Bangalore, I was very much intrigued. Why did the President of the Republic associate himself with a private institution in this manner and allow it to utilise the occasion not only to boost itself up against its competitors, but also against its own employees.

This is precisely what the bank management did. In the address presented to the Rashtrapati it made plenty of claims for itself.

The President seems to have been very much impressed by these claims. He said "he had felt particularly drawn towards the bank's various activities."

"Your Book Bank Scheme, Jubilee Education Fund, the Housing Loan Scheme, the Jubilee Staff Welfare Fund, etc., symbolise activities aimed at the improvement of social conditions and bringing certain essential facilities within the reach of the lower middle classes."

I don't think the President would have lauded the bank management so much had he only known the truth about these schemes.

For instance, the Jubilee Education Fund for granting loan scholarships to deserving students for which the management claimed credit is actually established with money collected from the public.

As regards the Housing Loan Scheme, it seems it was enforced in 1956. In two years, twelve houses were constructed. By the lower middle classes as the President remarked? Not by a long shot. All the houses were built by officers and belong to them.

Why then did the President associate himself with the occasion?

A few names will perhaps throw some light on the incident. The all-powerful Supervising Director of the Canara Bank is Sri A. D. Pal. The General Manager of the Bank is Sri P. S. Naik. Both these gentlemen, I hear, are related to Sri A. V. Pai, Secretary to the Rashtrapati. And if that was not enough, Sri U. S. Mallayya, Congress M.P. and once General Secretary of that Party, is a Director of the Bank.

Has all this anything to do with the President lending his prestige to the bank and allowing it to boost itself up?

ANOTHER SET-UP OF RELATIVES

SRI GREWAL is a very important person, not only because he is India's Chief Inspector of Mines. On him and the Department of Mines of the Government of India depend the lives of our miners.

If something is wrong with the mine, if the mine-owners disregard safety regulations, the miners face

sure death underground. The Mines Department is supposed to prevent all this and ensure safety in mines.

Plenty can be heard about the Mines Department and the Chief Minister of Mines, specially from the trade unionists who work in the mine areas.

Recently when the enquiry report into the Chinakuri mine disaster came out, trade unionists had charged the Mines Department with every conceivable irregularity and crime.

The India Press Agency reports some interesting details about another set-up of relatives which perhaps has a lot to do with the situation.

Chief Inspector of Mines Grewal's brother is the General Manager of a privately-owned colliery in Ranigunj. His brother-in-law is the welfare officer at Chinakuri itself. Another brother is the Mining Engineer of the British-owned Bird Company's Gua Mines. Yet another brother is the agent of a Shaw Wallace Colliery. And his son is a welfare officer in Bird Company's jute department.

Do violations by private managements tend to be overlooked because so many relatives are being given their bread, butter and jam by the private sector?

But why should our miners pay the price for it with their lives? Can't the Government of India do something about it?

RAILWAYS AND "MEENA BAZARS"

ONE would have thought that the days of "Meena Bazars" those glittering fancy fairs, associated with princes and feudal overlords, are over.

Not by any chance. A "Meena Bazar" quite on a lavish scale was held on February 13 and 14 at the important railway centre of Kharagpur in Midnapore District. It was organised by the local Mahila Samity, the mahilas being the wives of top officials of the South-Eastern Railway and those belonging to the aristocratic upper layer of the town.

Smt. Dogra, wife of the Chief Electrical Engineer, is the presiding goddess of this Samity.

The "Meena Bazar" they organised was inaugurated by the General Manager, South-East Railway, other high officials graced the occasion.

All this is o.k. as far as I am concerned. If a few well-to-do females want to entertain themselves it is their look-out how they do it.

What I am bothered about is something else: Why were the resources of the railway placed at the disposal of these "mahilas"?

They selected the Kharagpur Railway High School as the venue of their Bazar. The school was promptly closed down for a week. What happens to the schooling of 2,200 students of the institution? Who

cares when the ladies have to be entertained?

Innumerable coloured bulbs, fluorescent tube lamps, floodlights, hundreds of tarpaulins, thousands of feet of electric wire—all of it came out of the Stores Department of the Railway. A costly microphone set was lent by the Wireless Department. Electricity, of course, was supplied free of charge.

Is that all? No, Sir! A number of things for decorating the Bazar were specially manufactured at the railway workshop.

How very obliging of the railway bosses. Particularly so when only a couple of days earlier the employees' request for electric lights and tarpaulins for celebrating the Saraswati Puja had been curtly turned down.

The railways did not provide only the equipment. They provided the manpower, too. For nearly a week about 500 employees of the Railway's electrical, engineering, wireless and sanitary departments were busy constructing the Bazar—under the direct supervision of the officers. The Railway Protection Police and the Railway Fire Brigade were also pressed into service. Plenty of people have seen all this, but if you examine the records they will show that these employees and the officers were all at their usual places of duty on those days!

What happened in the Bazar has upset the people more. It was turned into a centre of wild revelry—the most important attractions, I am told, were wine and gambling. Drinking bouts, fashionable ladies indulging in gambling—what better attractions are needed for such a Bazar?

What has all this cost the railways? A friend says Rs. 50,000!

But our Railway Board never sees such criminal wastage, it wants to effect "economies" by retrenching railway employees and curtailing their existing privileges. Kharagpur itself has been a victim of this economy drive.

About 1,000 casual labourers have been retrenched.

A circular issued last September by the District Engineer, Kharagpur, promised wage increase to casual labourers from October 1, 1958. The Circular has now been withdrawn.

All promotions have been stopped, and permanent hands are now being reverted to lower designations on an increasing scale. About 200 employees of the Loco & Carriage Departments have been already demoted in this way.

The target fixed for the Second Plan period for the production and repair of locomotives at the Kharagpur workshop has been considerably reduced.

That is the price workers pay for the "Meena Bazar" of the "mahilas."

—DIARIST

C. E. C. RESOLUTION ON LAND REFORMS

* FROM PAGE 4

tenants who were dispossessed of their lands since 1952.

2) Full security to the tenants, subject to the limited right of resumption by small landowners, reduction of rent to one-sixth of the grain produce.

3) Issue ordinances in all States prohibiting forthwith all mala fide transfers and partitions and nullifying all such mala fide transfers and partitions effected by the landlords in the recent period with a view to evade ceiling.

4) Ceiling on landholdings should be imposed at a level as recommended by the Panel on Land Reforms and no exemptions of agricultural land should be made except under tea, coffee, rubber and chincona cultivations.

5) Surplus land should be distributed among poor peasants and agricultural labourers through popular committees and they should be encouraged and aided to form co-ops.

6) Popular committees should be constituted consisting of all representatives of the kisans and the Government to implement land reforms.

7) Passing of the laws and their implementation should be completed in one year.

The Communist Party of

India calls upon all peasants and agricultural labourers to build-up a strong irresistible campaign that can unite all democratic forces and secure implementation of the land reforms.

The Communist Party of India appeals to all parties and progressive forces in India to work for such radical land reforms as will be the first and essential step for the reorganisation of agriculture and increase in production. All forces have to unite together to achieve full and faithful implementation of these reforms on the above lines. The landlord forces inside and outside the Congress have now come out more openly against land reforms and they are strongly entrenched in seats of power and in key positions. There are others in key positions who mouth land reforms but sabotage them in several ways. Their reactionary game has to be defeated by united action of the people and of the progressive forces.

This year should become a year of action and the Party hopes that with a ringing call from all patriotic forces for radical and not land reforms for name's sake, scores of millions of our peasants and agricultural labourers could be roused to come into the campaign for such land reforms.

[RESOLUTION ON FOOD: NEXT WEEK]

Parliament To Discuss Chinakuri Disaster

THE Chinakuri coal-mine disaster and the white-washing report of enquiry figured prominently in the proceedings when the Sixth Session of the Industrial Committee on Coal-Mining met in New Delhi on February 21.

Immediately after Labour Minister Nanda concluded his inaugural address, delegates of the AITUC and Hind Mazdoor Sabha (T. B. Vithal Rao and Kalyan Roy for the AITUC and Deven Sen and Mahesh Desai for the HMS) demanded an immediate re-enquiry into the Chinakuri disaster. They levelled serious charges against the Department of Mines, the Court of Enquiry and the owners of the mine, Andrew Yule Co.

Representatives of the mine-owners at the meeting tried to protest against the issue being raised in the Industrial Committee but Sri Nanda overruled the objection.

The AITUC and HMS delegates jointly submitted a memorandum to Sri Nanda pointing out how the Court of Enquiry into the Chinakuri disaster had shut its eyes to facts, falsified the number of casualties, relied on false documents, plans and records, misquoted evidence, suppressed vital evidence, ignored major violations of the Mines Act and rules by

the owners and the Department of Mines, etc. This memorandum was prepared on the basis of the book "White-Washing Enquiry at Chinakuri Coal-Mine".

Earlier the Chinakuri Disaster had been referred to in Parliament by Bhupesh Gupta and Renu Chakravarty and Mulka Govinda Reddy of the Socialist Party.

The demand for a fresh enquiry into the disaster and for nationalisation of the mine was becoming an all-party demand.

It is learnt that Parliament will discuss the issue some time next week.

JAMSHEDPUR AGREEMENT

After our Labour Notes page had gone to press, we have received the report that the Tatas and the INTUC union in Jamshepur have entered into a five-year agreement on revised wage-scales and dearness allowance that would come into force from April 1, 1959. We are awaiting details of the agreement.

—Editor.

IN PARLIAMENT

* FROM PAGE 5

judices and embarrases course of justice. Pray kindly draw Speaker's attention to that objectionable course. All cases reported to police; action taken. Interested versions and counter-versions prove little and hamper wholesome investigation. Aspersions on officers by Sri Mehta in Parliament unjust hitting below the belt unless actual facts and their explanations heard. Kerala Government's report shows Sri Mehta's charges a political propagandist hoax. Please appreciate Kerala Government's difficulty in being assailed without opportunity to explain and your stand critical of Kerala Government in view of Press reports of incidents. Hostile press reports are not evidence. Pray persuade Honourable Speaker that State subject may not fairly be discussed in Parliament without State getting opportunity because explanation of member becomes mere slander of State

Government. As you did in the case of Madras—Rannad riots—please defend the stand that Law and Order in a State should not be discussed in Parliament even if it is given the look of constitutional breakdown. I realise your embarrassment in presenting our case that Parliament has no jurisdiction since your party in Kerala is demanding the opposite. However, I request you to see that Kerala Government is not ex-parte when charges are made against it in Parliament."

Along with the assent to the amended Education Bill, this has been a great moral victory for the Kerala Government. But the struggle for a fair deal from the Centre has to go on. This was highlighted by Comrade K. K. Warior in his contribution to the debate on the President's Address. Rising prices in Kerala, Warior said, could be checked only if the attitude of the Central Government was helpful. He

pointed out that the Kerala Government had to have sufficient stocks in hand to run its fair-price shops and it was not possible for them to purchase at the price fixed by the Centre.

Andhra, he said, was the only State in the South Zone which was surplus, but Kerala had been debarred from purchasing surplus stocks even from there. In practice, thus, the zonal system had been scrapped. In the matter of industries, too, Warior said, the South was being neglected. The locational distribution suggested by the States Reorganisation Commission had been ignored completely as far as Kerala was concerned.

Lemon grass was grown in Kerala but the factory for lemon-grass oil was set up in Poona. The question of the ship-building yard was still hanging fire. So was the question of expansion of Travancore, Minerals and their getting the quota of ferrous and non-ferrous metals.

This meeting and these decisions will be welcomed by all the trade unions. They mean better minimum wages in Mysore and Madras and more concerted efforts by the concerned Governments to prevent the employers from succeeding in their attempts to defeat the minimum wages fixed.

They are reported to have agreed to raise the wage bill by one crore and two lakhs of rupees.

Sri Michael John, the INTUC leader, is reported to have demanded that it be



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RECENT COURT DECISIONS IN LABOUR DISPUTES SHOW ALARMING TRENDS

Workers' Hard-Won Gains Being Destroyed

The latest blow struck against the workers in the courts has been delivered on February 2, 1959 in the judgment of the Supreme Court in the appeal filed by Messrs Liptons against their employees.

THE Industrial Tribunal, Delhi, against whose award the appeal had been filed had taken into consideration the high salaries that have been paid to the superior executive officers when arriving at a decision regarding the quantum of bonus due to the employees.

It is common knowledge that in our country the disparity of wage is enormous. Big executive officers get anything from seven to ten thousand rupees a month apart from what they may earn on the side, whereas an ordinary clerk cannot aspire in his wildest dream to a higher salary than Rs. 200 or 250.

The unions have consistently raised the question of extravagance and unnecessary expenditure on the higher officials being one of the reasons for fall in profits and, therefore, fall in bonus but now all that is barred.

GREEN LIGHT TO EMPLOYERS

The Supreme Court in its judgment has decided that it is not the duty of a Labour Court or Labour Tribunal to dictate to an industrial concern what salary shall be paid to superior executive officers "who are not workmen".

Therefore, once more the green light is given to the employers. They are told, "you can pay as much as you like to the top officers; in fact it is better that you should pay ten times what they deserve and what you would ordinarily pay according to their market value, because the more you pay to the executive officers the less bonus you will have to pay to the workers".

And the highest Court in India has held that the Labour

tribunal or court cannot go into the question of the salaries to be paid to the executive officers.

These two decisions of the Madras High Court followed a decision of the Supreme Court in the Indian Iron case where again the court severely limited the jurisdiction of Tribunals to interfere with orders of management terminating the services of workers.

Under that decision, it is open to the Tribunal to interfere with the action of the management in terminating the services of workers only when there is want of good faith or victimisation or the management has been guilty of violation of principles of natural justice or on the materials the finding of the management given in the enquiry held by it is completely perverse.

BLOW TO SECURITY OF SERVICE

Most serious of the other decisions, perhaps are the court decisions which have struck heavy blows against the guarantee of security of service for the workers.

The position as it stood around the beginning of 1958 was that no management could get rid of any worker without charge-sheeting him and giving him an opportunity to defend himself in a properly conducted enquiry.

AMENDMENTS NEEDED

In the early days of court decisions under the Industrial Disputes Act, there were many decisions that were comparatively progressive, notably the decision of the Federal Court in the Western India Automobile Association case, where the Federal Court held that the jurisdiction of a Tribunal to interfere in management-labour relations was very wide.

The trend of the last three or four years has been in the opposite direction and the lacunae in labour legislations have been taken advantage of at every stage by the employers to push back the workers from the positions that they had gained earlier.

Nobody of course, need be very surprised about this, considering the composition of the courts and their position in relation to the social set-up in our country. But the lesson to be drawn is that the working class can no longer afford to allow the Industrial Disputes Act to remain silent on many vital questions. We have to agitate to see that suitable legislative amendments are brought about in the Act, making quite explicit the width of the jurisdiction of the Labour Court or Industrial Tribunal to interfere in matters of management-labour relations. Everything that is necessary for the Tribunal to do in order to achieve industrial peace must be within its power. Nothing should be left outside.

Most important of all is the question of security of service and for that the immediate

need is an amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act providing for the opportunity for a worker whose services are terminated directly to go to the court and file an application for setting aside the order of dismissal or termination with the court having been given full powers to go into the merits of the management's action.

union concerned was affiliated to the INTUC.

The fight against the reactionary trends in the decisions of the courts, the fight for the introduction of suitable amendments in the Industrial Disputes Act in order to safeguard the rights of the workers must, therefore, be waged on a common platform uniting all sections of the trade union movement. It is a fight in which there is no reason why the widest unity of the trade union movement cannot be achieved to see that the hard won gains of the working class during the last decade are not allowed to be destroyed by the decisions of the Supreme Court and the High Courts.

INSIDE PAKISTAN

* FROM PAGE 3

the conference, George McGhee and Admiral Radford turned up ostensibly on a routine visit to discuss military and economic aid.

Following all these secret conclaves came the curious instance of Ayub's double-talk. In the first Press version of a fiery oration the Pakistan dictator referred to the Kashmir dispute and said there was a limit to Pakistan's patience. And as regards the canal water dispute he stated that there were "honourable ways of death open to Pakistanis than dying from hunger and thirst." In the second Press version of the same speech this section was just left out!

This seems to be in keeping with the new "Operation Lull." Protests of February 24, 1959

—M. S.

STATEMENT

about ownership and other particulars about newspaper NEW AGE (Weekly) to be published in the first issue, every year after the last day of February.

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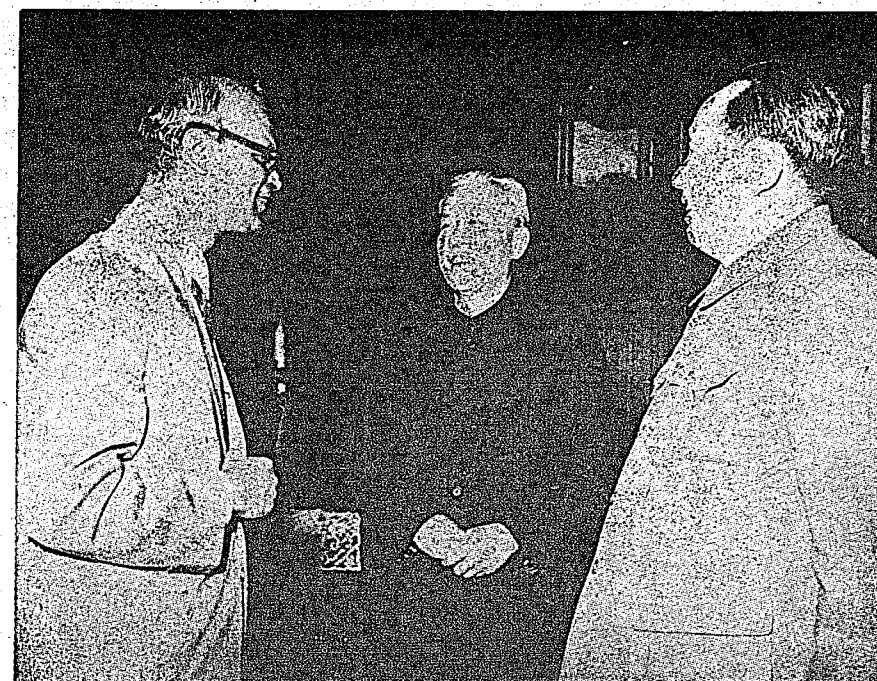
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MARCH 1, 1959

C. P. I. GENERAL SECRETARY IN CHINA



COMRADE Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, in a statement at Peking Airport after his five-day visit to China, said:

"I was in Peking for too short a time—only five days. But what I have seen, I shall ever remember. It was the spectacle of a great people, throbbing with new life, bubbling with vitality, working as one man with one single aim—the Socialist rebuilding of China. Their enthusiasm moves mountains, their confidence in themselves, in the destiny of their great country, in the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Chairman Mao Tse-tung is unbounded. Changes that would normally take years and even decades have been effected in the course of days and months.

"Words cannot describe how happy I was and how honoured I felt by meeting Comrade Mao Tse-tung and Comrade Liu Shao-chi and by hearing from them the magnificent plans for the Socialist construction of China.

"To all, friends and comrades, whom I met during these brief days and through them to the Communist Party and the entire people of China, I convey my thanks as well as good wishes on behalf of our Party, our toiling masses and our people. I have no doubt that the bond of friendship that has grown between our two peoples will become ever stronger in the coming days and be a powerful factor for peace in Asia and the world."

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh with Comrades Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi in Peking during his five-day visit to China after the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

London Agreement Keeps Cyprus As War Base Real Freedom Yet To Be Won

WITH the signing of the Cyprus Agreement in London recently, another chapter begins in the struggle of the Cypriot people for their national independence.

The rocky island of Cyprus, strategically situated in the Mediterranean—40 miles south of Turkey, 65 miles west of Syria, 240 miles north of Egypt and about 500 miles east of Greece—has been a convenient stepping-stone for many an aggressor in the past. As a crown colony in the British empire, it served twice in recent times, as a convenient jumping-ground for British aggression—against Egypt and against Lebanon.

The recent Cyprus Agreement, by trying to hoodwink the national independence movement in Cyprus, attempts at perpetuating the British occupation of this strategically-situated island, and furthermore places it at the disposal of NATO forces as well. The Agreement, therefore, not only goes against the interests of the Cypriot people, it goes against the interest of peace and international security.

For nearly four years, a storm has been raging over Cyprus. The British imperialists spent about £30 million to suppress the struggle of the Cypriots. They succeeded in killing over 500 and injuring over a thousand—and fanning the flames further.

In June, last year, the so-called Macmillan Plan for Cyprus was announced. It aimed at making the division between the two communities—the Turks and the Greeks—a permanent one, by partitioning the country, while maintaining the "British sovereignty" over the island, at least for "seven years". The plan was, of course, rejected by the Cypriots.

Later on, in December, the U.N. debate on Cyprus revealed still more clearly imperialism's intrigues against Cyprus. In the Political Committee, a U.S. and U.K.-backed Iranian resolution bringing Cyprus under NATO patronage, was pushed through. Finally, however, the General Assembly could pass only a tame resolution, pleading for "continued efforts" to reach a "just solution" in accordance with the U.N. Charter.

Meanwhile, the Cypriots con-

tinued their struggle with increasing vigour. The democratic opinion in Greece rallied to the Cypriots with increasing solidarity. The position of NATO's eastern wing was "near collapse" (Time) and another "jewel of the empire" (Daily Express) was about to get lost—and that, too, at a time when the growth and the consolidation of the national independence movements in West Asia and North Africa, were reaching new heights.

The Cyprus dispute intimately affects Western security in the eastern Mediterranean and its settlement would represent a major diplomatic victory for the NATO alliance—admits the New York Herald Tribune. "The Turks, now threatened on their southern flank by Nasser's annexation of Syria, by Communist infiltration in Iraq, needed friendship with Greece in order to secure their western flank"—while—"every day that the Cyprus quarrel dragged on

ference and control by Britain, Turkey and Greece. Even the Constitution is to be imposed on the Cypriot people, by the foreign countries.

The British military control of the island is guaranteed under the Agreement. In the words of the British Prime Minister, uttered in the House of Commons, the Greek and Turkish Governments had taken the "premise that the United Kingdom would retain, under British sovereignty, such areas

as the stationing of British, Greek and Turkish armed forces on Cypriot territory, as provided under the agreement, point to the aggressive designs of the imperialist Powers and would contribute only to keeping up tension in this part of the world.

Hardly had the agreement been signed than the talk of reviving the aggressive Balkan Pact was already in the air. In a Press Conference, following the conclusion of the Cyprus

the Communist Party of Greece, in a statement on the Karamanlis-Menderes Agreement, signed in Zurich, has characterised it as an affront to the national desires, feelings and sacrifices of the people of Cyprus and Greece.

Referring to the fact that the Greek Government accepted the British bases on the island intact and permitted the establishment of Turkish bases, the statement said that Cyprus with foreign bases would be used against the nearby Arab countries and the Socialist countries. This would "deprive us of the worthy allies in the struggle for achieving and consolidating the independence of Cyprus."

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

added to the strength of the Communist-lining opposition to Karamanlis within Greece"—explains the Time.

So, Uncle Sam stepped up pressure. And after nearly six weeks of negotiations between Athens and Ankara, the two Prime Ministers met in a secluded hotel, overlooking Zurich. Within 55 hours, the deed was done. They came out "beaming at each other like a couple of old school chums" (Time reports), forgetting conveniently the abuses which their Governments' representatives had hurled at each other in the U.N. debate, only very recently.

The British political control in Cyprus is also safeguarded under the Agreement. In Parliament, Tory M.P. Nigel Fisher had asked Macmillan whether there were provisions in the agreement for any future right of British entry in the event of the so-called "civil disturbances in the island which might be prejudicial to the British bases," and "would there be any form of tripartite control by Britain, Greece and Turkey on foreign and defence policy to prevent Cyprus going Communist in the future." Macmillan's reply was that the broad mutual guarantees which each of the four Governments would give to each other would be built into their treaties and would cover most of the points that Fisher had in mind.

If this means granting of independence to Cyprus, we have yet to learn what "independ-

agreement, the Greek Premier, Karamanlis, openly came out with the idea, "the agreement on Cyprus should revive the Balkan Pact."

And the London Times, in an editorial (February 17) significantly entitled "Repairing A Breach," urged Yugoslavia's President Tito to revive the Pact with the advice, "the time seems ripe to put new life in the alliance."

The Times suggestion was; "the Balkan Pact is unlikely to be resurrected in its original form as an arrangement primarily for ensuring mutual defence"—adding, however, "military information can still be usefully exchanged within the framework of the pact, the alliance can still be valuable, both to Yugoslavia and to its two NATO partners." The Cyprus agreement is, hence, hinged to the aggressive plans of the imperialist Powers in the Mediterranean region.

This agreement, concluded over the heads of the Cypriot people, far from solving the Cyprus problem, has given it yet another twist.

The Central Committee of

—RAZA ALI

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**KERALA
OPPOSITION'S
NEW STUNT**

● **FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT**

TRIVANDRUM

A section of the Press, reflecting the views of the Opposition in Kerala, has started a big campaign against the Communist Ministry on the basis of speculations about the findings of the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the State Government to go into the allegations regarding the "Andhra Rice Deal."

EVEN though it is only a week since Justice Sri P. T. Raman Nair of the Kerala High Court has submitted his report to the Government on the enquiry and the Government is still studying the report, Opposition circles and papers have already started speculations suggesting resignation by Food Minister K. C. George.

RSP daily *Kaunudi* has come out with the headline, "Food Minister K. C. George will Resign". *Dinamani*, edited by R. Shankar, an aspirant to Kerala Congress Presidentship, has reported that there is a quarrel inside the Communist Party on the question of resignation of the Food Minister. Pattom Thanu Pillai's *Kerala Janatha* says that there are two trends inside the ruling party, one demanding the resignation of the Food Minister alone, and the other of the entire Ministry. These papers also declare that the entire question is being considered by the Central Executive of the Communist Party.

**Opposition's
Hopes**

Careful observers have noticed in this campaign a fresh attempt to mobilise opinion for the demand to be raised by the Opposition parties soon in the Assembly session that the Ministry or at least the Food Minister should resign in view of the findings of the Enquiry Commission.

There are not a few leaders among the Opposition who today fervently look forward to the downfall of the Communist Ministry on this issue just as many of them thought that the Ministry would fall at the time of the Devicolum-by-election. Observers suggest that Justice Raman Nair's report has come in time to rescue the weak and frustrated Opposition and present it with a weapon to use against the Communist Ministry.

However, the basis for presuming resignation by the Food Minister is totally absent as yet. It is learnt that the Government will publish the report and place it before the Assembly. The Assembly will have the chance to debate the report and the Government will state its case probably by a resolution to be moved in the Assembly. Such a procedure can have no valid objections from the Opposition and if the Opposition demands resignation, constitutional experts suggest the

Government can ask for a confidence vote.

Regarding the as yet undisclosed contents of Sri Raman Nair's report, it is understood that the Judge has remarked that there was avoidable loss to the State in the transaction which was the subject of enquiry, namely the purchase of 5,000 tons of rice from Andhra by the Kerala Government through Messrs. Suryanarayana, S. Sreeramulu and Co. of Madras. It is learnt that according to the Judge, this avoidable loss was the result of the procedure adopted by the State Government in this transaction, namely entering into a negotiated contract with the Madras firm instead of inviting tenders and accepting the lowest tender.

The Judge seems to have taken objection to this procedure and observed that the Government should make its purchases only through normal trade channels. It is learnt that he has even objected to the initiative taken by the Food Minister to call a conference of rice merchants to explore the possibilities of getting rice from Andhra.

**Question Of
Policy**

According to informed circles, this, however, is a question of policy which has to be decided by the Government in various situations. For instance, it is pointed out that if it is accepted that the Government should always rely on the normal trade channels it will automatically prevent State trading in foodgrains, a policy now accepted by both the Centre and the States.

Similarly, it will also create difficulties for the Kerala Government's recent attempts to push through development programmes by suspending and revising many existing rules in order to give advance, grants and other help to panchayats, labour contract societies, etc., who undertake development works. The Government has been entrusting many such workers to labour contract societies and panchayats without inviting tenders and applications. Justice Raman Nair's opinion will make all this irregular. Observers do not think that the Government can agree to such a position.

It is also reported that while pointing out that there was

**SOVIET LEADERS'
ARRIVAL**



AT THE AIRPORT : Central Deputy Minister Mrs. Violet Alva, leader of the Soviet Government Delegation A. A. Andreyev, Vice-President Radhakrishnan and N. A. Mukhitdinov.



Left: The two Soviet leaders with the Vice-President driving from the airport to Rashtrapati Bhavan. **(Right):** The Vice-President greets A. A. Andreyev as he steps off the plane. **(Below):** The Soviet Government Delegates meet Pressmen at the airport.



avoidable loss in the transaction, the Judge has not given any definite finding on the question whether there was any emergency in the State requiring purchase of 5,000 tons of rice from Andhra in this manner, even though this was one of the terms of reference to the enquiry.

In this connection, it will be recalled that the State Government had repeatedly declared

that the transaction was effected as there was acute shortage of rice in Kerala at that time and all the political parties had demanded that rice should be bought "at any loss." In fact, members of all parties in the Legislature had made this demand at that time during the special debate on the food situation in the State. The transaction was effected in the middle of 1957.

It is further understood that

the Commission of Enquiry has stated that it believed the dispositions made by the Food Minister in this enquiry and that allegations by the Congress MLA, T. O. Bava, main spokesman of the Opposition in this affair, are not proved. Bava and other Congress leaders had alleged from public platforms that the Communist Party in Andhra and Kerala had gained large sums of money from this deal.