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BHUPESH GUPTA
writes on
SWATANTRA PARTY'S POLICY STATEMENT

TESTAMENT OF EXTREME RIGHT

Even before its formal inauguration in Bombay last August, what the Swatantra Party really stands for had already been spelled out by its sponsors, C. Rajagopalachari, N. G. Ranga, K. M. Munshi and M. R. Masani. They were in full cry against India's foreign policy of peace and non-alignment and against the Five-Year Plans. Their first shots were also fired against land ceilings, cooperatives, State trading in foodgrains and the public sector. What is being built in India today is by no means Socialism but a capitalist economy. But even the talk of Socialism sounds highly sinful and blasphemous to the high priests of the Swatantra Party.

NO wonder, the coming of this new party was welcomed in the extreme reactionary circles not only in India but in the West as well. The first among the foreign admirers to acclaim it was, of course, the New York Times. This mouthpiece of the American ruling class wrote in its issue of June 8, 1959:

"What is now crystallising, apparently, is a solid conservative but completely secular party of the Right to oppose the Socialist tendencies of the Congress Party. The division should be healthy... It will be good for India to hear the case of private enterprise put with equal vigour."

The paper called it a "truly conservative party" and at once saw in it the coming together of friends "in one really strong group on the extreme Right..."

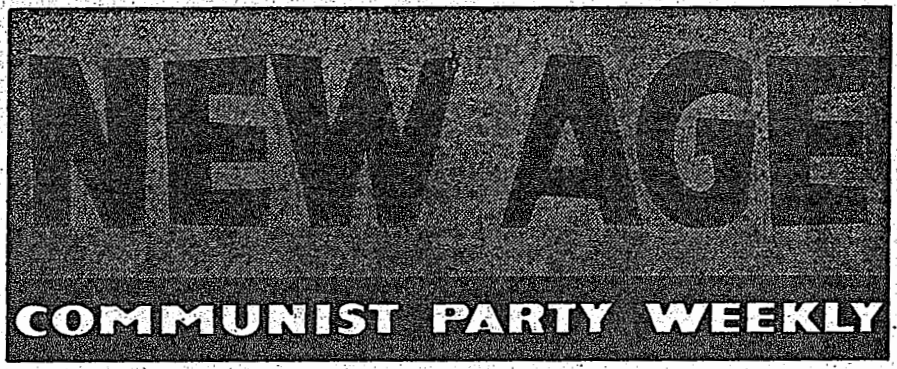
A month later, addressing his usual Press Conference in New Delhi on July 7, Prime

Minister Nehru characterised the Swatantra Party as "the political projection of the Forum of Free Enterprise." In a similar Press Conference next month, Pandit Nehru, however, added to his characterisation and called this party "reactionary, conservative and backward". He was, of course, dead right in so far as this assessment went and many in the country shared his views.

Backed by the millionaire Press, the Swatantra leaders have been running a campaign to popularise their objectives and policies and this has only confirmed the expectations of the West and apprehensions of all progressive-minded people at home. Here is an organised challenge of the extreme Right which has got to be reckoned with and met by democratic forces wherever they function.

The recently issued Statement of Policy of the Swatantra

*SEE OVERLEAF



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NEHRU-CHOU TALKS —LET THEM SUCCEED

THE ardent wish of men of goodwill all over the world is being fulfilled. Chinese Premier Chou En-lai is coming to India on April 19 on the invitation of our Prime Minister.

The outstanding disputes between the two countries will be discussed face to face, as between good neighbours and old friends. We have no doubt that the two great statesmen who gave Panch Sheel to the world will not

Editorial

fail their own ancient countries and the peace-hungry world.

There is every reason for optimism. Similar problems between China and Burma, as also between China and Nepal, have been successfully solved in the spirit of friendship, and on the basis of

Panch Sheel. These settlements have been rightly hailed as proud vindication and further consolidation of Afro-Asian solidarity. They constitute a big blow to the evil designs of the imperialists who had sought to exploit these differences to split Asian solidarity on the bankrupt basis of anti-Communism.

A peaceful and honourable settlement between the two greatest Asian nations will be a big carry-forward of this healthy and historic process, begun at Bandung, which the imperialists have been trying to disrupt but in vain.

India-China settlement is not only instinctively and passionately desired by our people but it opens wide the door to our own economic development, Asian and world peace and enables us to heighten our contribution all along the line.

We share and express the deep desire of our people for the success of the Chou-Nehru talks.

The only jarring note has been publicly expressed by the leaders of the Jan Sangh and the PSP. They talk a language that is alien to our national foreign policy; they call upon our people to act in a manner that is alien to our national tradition. They are in fitters and out for mischief, and they are not alone, though the most vocal. Imperialism is not without its allies in influential quarters and among powerful politicians right inside the ruling party.

India and China are not only neighbours with a great past but share a greater future ahead. With the two Prime Ministers meeting together, the clouds of misunderstanding and mistrust cannot but scatter and the dawn of understanding, friendship and cooperation emerge. Let us all rise to the great occasion and contribute our best.

(March 23)

A Maharaja Obligated

— AT WHAT COST TO THE NATION ?

● From Our Correspondent

WHAT happened recently in the workshop attached to the I.A.F. Training School at Jodhpur must make very Indian sit up and demand an immediate enquiry at the highest level.

It all started with the complicity and connivance of a Wing Commander who is in charge of the I.A.F. Training School at Jodhpur. This gentleman is a close relative of the Maharaja of Jaipur.

At his instance and with his connivance, a plane belonging to the Maharaja of Jaipur, V. T. AX S HARVARD, came to Jodhpur on November 30, 1959. The plane came for super-major overhaul.

About 15 employees of the H.A.L. worked on this job. They worked their normal hours, even overtime and Sundays. Work was completed on December 23, 1959.

On December 22 the Wing Commander himself

took the plane for a test flight. And the plane finally was handed over to the Jaipur Maharaja at Jaipur.

The total cost of this work of super-major overhauling would come to about Rs. 60,000. At least Rs. 20,000 worth of spare parts have been used in this plane.

This work was done under the direction of a Supervisor at the workshop under verbal instructions of the Wing Commander.

No bill for this work has been made out, not a pie has been charged to the Maharaja of Jaipur—all this work has been done just gratis.

That is not all. This plane needed lots of spares. It has not been repaired or overhauled for the last fourteen years.

The actual story in regard to this is much more sordid. This plane was kept as the personal property of the Maharaja at the time of integration in

1947. Ever since the Maharaja of Jaipur became the Rajpramukh in 1949, every year Rs. 2,000 have been paid to him by the Rajasthan Government ostensibly for maintenance of the plane. But nothing of this has been used for its repair or overhaul.

Now the Maharaja is said to be planning to palm off this plane to the Indian Airlines Corporation; and for that purpose he sent it here for the super-major overhaul.

The worst part of the affair is that the spares which have been used for this plane are from the stores meant for I.A.F. planes used for training purposes at this station. I learn that there is a great shortage of such spares in the country. As a matter of fact only eleven sets of such spares are available here. And at this critical moment, one of these precious sets has been used for this plane of the Maharaja. That is how those in charge treat with total un-

concern the defence needs of the country.

According to the rules and regulations, no private work can even be undertaken at this workshop, and to use the spares meant for I.A.F. planes for a private job means an act of unwitting sabotage.

All this has happened at Jodhpur. What is involved is not just the loss of about Rs. 60,000 to the State.

An immediate enquiry and drastic action are called for. If such things can happen in establishments which are most vital for the country, and if a Wing Commander can do such things then there is danger ahead.

This incident brings to the forefront the whole question of keeping such elements coming from the feudal and princely class in high positions in our armed forces. Their loyalty seems to be more to their class and their kith and kin than to the country.

SWATANTRA WANTS TO PUT THE CLOCK BACK

tra Party entitled "To Prosperity Through Freedom" underlines the need to face up to this rather common task.

When they jockey for a position and foothold in the national political life, even the reactionaries always pretend to speak in the name of the common man and wax eloquent about the sorrows and sufferings, ills and injustices to which he is subjected. To further their ends, they try to heavily cash in on popular discontent and inveigle the masses through sheer demagoguery and deception. Even Hitler and other Nazi leaders not only added the word "Socialist" to the nomenclature of their party, but they, before the putsch of 1933, used to sob before their audiences in the name of the suffering German people. And what happened to the Germans under Nazism we all know.

This technique of bluff and bluster may have become outmoded and left little room for a subtle performer like Rajaji, but the Swatantra leaders seem to have found nothing better than this for their melodrama on the Indian political stage.

Declaring in the very opening lines that in "twelve years of the achievement of national independence, the lot of the common man has scarcely improved," the Policy Statement rails at the Congress and the Government, speaks of "the failure of the Government's basic policies" and offers to the nation "a clear-cut alternative way of life and government."

These critical observations are, of course, materially true but then the Policy Statement does not stop at that. How could it, for the Swatantra Party has an alternative to offer alike in policies and in respect of the personnel of the nation's leadership! So, the Statement runs into thirteen sections in exposition of the party's platform. What emerges from all this is, however, a vicious, calculated bid to reverse the entire course of India's development, to put the clock back.

On Foreign Policy

India's policy of peace and non-alignment has not only been a magnificent achievement for our own people, it has been a mighty gain for all Afro-Asian nations and, indeed, all peace-loving humanity. This policy has raised the stature of our country and given it a place of honour in the comity of nations. It has immensely strengthened our national independence and given us vast opportunities to build the nation. Whatever the differences over domestic issues, the entire people stand today solidly by this policy so much that even M. R. Masani, with all his diatribes against it in the Lok Sabha, dare not record his opposition when it comes to actual voting in the House.

But the Swatantra Policy Statement says, "the concept of non-alignment has little meaning" and urges its abandonment.

document. It then goes on to suggest:

(1) the settlement of outstanding issues with Pakistan and serious consideration of the offer made by Pakistan for collaboration in the defence of the sub-continent; (2) collaboration with the countries of South and South-east Asia with a view to concerted measures for the security of the region; and (3) vigilance against infiltration and fifth column activities."

There is nothing novel whatsoever in these formulations. They are borrowed almost verbatim from the declarations and communiqués that used to emanate from the Baghdad Pact Council and its so-called "Counter-Subversion" Committee. This again is what SEATO advocates, sometimes almost in these very words.

Although the Policy Statement does not say it in so many words, M. R. Masani and others have been pleading for acceptance of American mili-

clap-trap, the Policy Statement, no doubt, refers to the "needs of food, clothing, housing and water in adequate measure" and complains about the "cutting down of the daily necessities of life", but when it comes to solutions the Statement mouths exactly what some sections of Big Business, the big landlords, hoarders, profiteers, and speculators have all along been saying.

Before elaborating and concretising the policies, the Statement, of course, makes some criticisms of the economic situation and of our public affairs. But the entire criticism is from the position of the extreme Right, based on the grounds and demands of the worst exploiters in society.

One need not have waited for a critique of this kind. For the Forum of Free Enterprise, in its numerous publications, had given it much earlier. However, planning, regulations and controls, import restrictions, State under-

While speaking loudly about the interests of the peasant proprietor, the Swatantra Party has really in mind the landlord and possibly some sections of rich peasants. After all, who else could be "equipped to obtain" the highest yield, while the landless and land-hungry remain what they are.

Fantastic Nonsense

The pro-landlord bias of the Swatantra policy would be still clearer when one recalls what Rajaji wrote in the Hindustan Times (October 16, 1959) in explaining the Swatantra programme. He made the startling observation: "They talk of feudalism. Where is feudalism in India now... The zamindari system of collecting land revenue has been abolished not by the new Socialist Congress but much before Socialism was adopted, perhaps more than twenty years back..." To him, "to talk of feudalism is to revive a ghost," as he himself puts it.

Factually, this statement is fantastic nonsense and one need not waste one's breath in joining issue with Rajaji over obvious facts.

party "will protect them (peasants) against any attempt to flich the land away from them under the beguiling slogan of Joint Co-operative Farming."

No one will, of course, support compulsion in co-operatives, much less any fliching. But by its sweeping opposition to co-operatives, the Swatantra Party, however, wants the peasants to remain in the clutches of the greedy landlord and the usurious moneylender. This is the reason why these elements first try to obstruct the growth of co-operation and then, if they fail, they go all out to capture them.

Whom the Swatantra Party wants to serve in our country-side should be plain enough for all to see.

Advocate Of Big Business

To put India economically on her feet, we need vigorous efforts for industrialisation, particularly heavy and machine-building industries. But the Swatantra Policy Statement cynically repudiates the whole approach.

While people's grievance is that the Government is proceeding inexcusably slow in this matter, the Swatantra, however, takes the exactly opposite position. Its statement says: "The Swatantra Party rejects the false and lopsided priority given to heavy industry to the neglect of cottage, organised and light industries producing consumer goods."

The Swatantra pundits would not admit that, if anything, the Second Plan targets of heavy industry have suffered cuts nor would they see that even for sustaining and promoting consumer goods industries, the country needs a rapidly expanding capital base, that is heavy and machine-building industries. The public sector has always been the eyesore of the Swatantra leaders. So, it is all in line when their Policy Statement demands "the restriction of the State enterprise to such heavy industries as are necessary to supplement private enterprise..." The State is thus asked to play second fiddle to the sacred interests of Big Business, while the latter has a free run. "The party," the Policy document goes on to say, "is opposed to the State entering the field of trade and disturbing free distribution..."

Whatever the speculation and price-rise or man-made scarcities in foodgrains and other necessities, there must be no interference with the freedom for committing these anti-social acts. This is how the Swatantra Party proposes to lead the people "to prosperity through freedom".

Finally, to crown this arch retrograde economic philosophy, the Swatantra testaments declare: "The business of the State is not business, but government." Industry, commerce and trade must remain within the grip of the money-grabbing exploiters and anti-social elements and the nation's future left to their tender mercies. This indeed is the Swatantra way—a veritable road to ruin.

It should not now surprise anybody if in the whole

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Rajaji In Calcutta In Bid To Win Mass Support To Swatantra

★ From J. B. MOITRA

C. Rajagopalachari thundered against the Communist Party as his "enemy No. 1" at a meeting in Calcutta on March 16. He regarded the Congress only as "enemy No. 2" and that, too, because it "has adopted Communist policies."

THIS was the first public meeting organised by the Swatantra Party in West Bengal. Strenuous efforts were being made to set up a unit of the party in this State since September last, a top official of the Tata's office in Calcutta and some leading businessmen taking the initiative in the matter. Certain sections of the monopolists, represented in this State by the Birlas, Goenkas, Kajitans, Thapars and Bajorjas, were willing to lend a helping hand, some were not even averse to joining the party openly.

But some groups of businessmen held they still stood to gain immensely from their alliance with the Congress. So they hastily requisitioned the service of a top-flight Congress industrialist from Gujarat, who happens to command a good deal of respect in business circles here.

A closed-door meeting was arranged in October last and this emissary from Gujarat advised the industrial and financial magnates to wait till the next General Elections and see how the position of the different political parties would crystallise.

It appears that this advice was accepted, because not a single leading figure in the business world joined the Swatantra Party when the West Bengal unit was formed some time later with N. C. Chatterjee as its President.

But though it had the tacit support of the vested interests, the party could not make any headway

Khanna, In Jitters, Rushes To Pacify B. C. Roy & Co.

THE recent debate in the West Bengal Assembly by the Government's refugee rehabilitation policy seems to have thrown Mehr Chand Khanna, Union Rehabilitation Minister, in jitters.

The Opposition had indicted the Government for the utter failure of its refugee rehabilitation policy and Communist members had demanded the immediate resignation of the Union and the State Rehabilitation Ministers.

In order to cover up their own guilt, the spokesmen of the West Bengal Government attempted to shift the entire blame to the Centre.

These attacks from the Opposition as well as the Treasury Benches must have appeared to Khanna as a combined onslaught on him. Having been elected to the Rajya Sabha from West Bengal with the support of Congress members, he was naturally alarmed at this turn of events.

MARCH 27, 1960

SCRAP-BOOK

DELHI BOG

OUR capital flourishes with building contracts. Congress faction fights add to the wealth of Delhi—at least its underworld. And in the bog of these riches sinks the organisation which had led our fight for freedom.

An agitated young man had come round with a startling story about the stinking state of affairs in the Delhi Pradesh Congress (DPCC). It seemed too terrible to be true. But enquiries only brought more stories of horror and shame.

It appears that a good 60 of the 90 odd members of the Congress Mandal Committees have no open source of income. Most of them, so the story goes, are either professional witnesses or kept on the list of registered bad characters by the police, so that they can be at hand when needed.

Five Pradesh Committee office-bearers also have no recognised source of income but that is no bar to their pretty high living. One of them is an accused in an alleged case of embezzlement involving nearly a lakh of rupees.

Then take the 17 public relations sub-committees appointed by the Congress bosses. They were supposed to look into local worries and grievances. But for the public to get at

take assistance from the USA and other western countries and urged the formation of a united front in Southeast Asia.

Speaking at the public meeting next day, Rajaji said that the Communist Party was actually ruling India through Prime Minister Nehru. "Not that he wants it, but he is compelled to do it."

One of the firm's bosses, however, disliked the idea of bribery and spilled the beans to another Congress Councillor named Delhi Frosad Chatterji. But all went well despite this. The October 5 meeting of the Works Committee duly accepted the tender and the manager at once received a telephone call for Rs. 1,000 as two Congress Councillors needed the cash for an outing.

Then suddenly on October 6 the chief broker the bluff person called N. phones the manager, abuses him and says that as the firm had given out the facts to Delhi Frosad, he would see to it that the contract was cancelled.

And, true enough, the Works Committee meeting of October 7 dutifully cancels the contract on the ground that the firm has no factory of its own—despite the fact that this had been mentioned by the Superintendent of the Vehicles Department on October 5 when the contract had been assigned!

Such is the high-handed behaviour of Congressmen even in positions of petty power. I am sure the Mayor will look thoroughly into the whole affair, even if it means another rampus with Fuehrer Atulya Ghose.

NEW AGE

POLICE TRANSFERS

ANDHRA Congress bigwigs have special preference, it seems, for policemen with dacoity records. There is the case, for example, of a Sub-Inspector in Mahabubnagar District against whom there were 11 serious charges, including dacoity. He was suspended but on finding a powerful patron was just transferred to Khammam District. Chief Minister Sanjeeviah had to admit this charge was true, when a Communist M.L.A. brought it up in the Assembly.

Another Sub-Inspector, also involved in a dacoity case but in Karimnagar District this time, was lucky enough to get off with a transfer to Khammam—where the dacoity would do well to set up their headquarters and in the police stations, at that.

A Circle Inspector of Bhongir (Nalgonda District) was dismissed on grounds of moral turpitude. He did not feel over-anxious since he, too, had the ears of the powers—that is, sure enough he turned up as the Circle Inspector at Kamareddi, Medhak District.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a Sub-Inspector of Huzarabad (Karimnagar District) who was suspended on grounds of corruption found that life had not changed—his venue now is Nizamabad District at the same post.

When anxious Congressmen questioned their leaders whether all these doings were enhancing Congress prestige, pat came the answer that what mattered was not prestige but a satisfied police force to deal with the godless Reds!

ONE of the leading English dailies with British connections has found a bright West Asia Correspondent. He has lately been pouring out venom against the Iraqi Government and, of course, the Iraqi Communists. He has gone even so far as to hint that India's friendly relations with the new Iraq were against our principles, whatever these may be.

It was odd to find him bewailing the lack of democracy in Iraq and yet bringing in quite a lot of praise for Nasser's United Arab Republic; which does not even make any pretensions to democracy.

It is bad enough that such scurrilous stuff on a very friendly—and non-Communist—country should appear in our Press. But still the Government cannot be held responsible for that.

However, this particular West Asia Correspondent, I am reliably told, holds an important diplomatic post in the Indian legation at Beirut, which comes under our Cairo Embassy. This is scandalous and the Government should do something to apologise to Iraq and call this "journalist" to heel.

—OVILOOKER

MARCH 22, 1960.

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preaches abandonment of non-alignment in foreign policy

taking and capital investments in them are all denounced and described as the sources of our ills. The Swatantra testament wants all these things to go.

Against Ceilings

Dealing with agriculture, the Policy Statement says: "The paramount need for increasing food production can be best attained through the self-employed peasant proprietor who is interested in obtaining, and equipped to obtain, the highest yield from his land." This would have perhaps sounded somewhat innocent but for what the Swatantra Party deliberately omits.

In our country today, nineteen per cent of the agricultural families are landless and forty-eight per cent of the families have got less than five-acre holdings. The land remains concentrated in the hands of the few at the top. What is the Swatantra policy in regard to this multi-millioned peasantry without giving land and incentive to whom and without whose creative labour, production can hardly be expected to rise very high?

Their Policy Statement declares: "The problem of yield is not a problem to be solved by changing ownership..." Coming to ceilings which are considered so essential by all who wish well of our agrarian economy, the Statement bluntly says: "The Swatantra Party rejects the scheme of ceilings on land holdings..."

All the same, it must be noted that according to the Swatantra Party, nothing remained to be done by way of land reforms after what the British had done about a quarter century ago. It is no surprise that quite a good number of ex-Princes, Rajas and Maharajas have rallied to the new-fangled banner of Rajaji and his party and the Janata Party of the Bihar landlords has wholesale joined the Swatantra Party.

The Statement gloats over the sabotage of State trading in foodgrains and says: "The establishment of a State monopoly in the foodgrains trade would mean that the peasant will have no choice in regard to negotiating the price of his crop and will be forced to submit to the arbitrary fixing of prices by the government monopoly..."

It will be remembered this has been—and still is—the stock argument of the landlords in the countryside and big whole-salers and speculators in the food market. The truth, however, is that the absence of State trading has resulted in flooding of the peasant masses and the consumers by these anti-social elements. The Swatantra Party clearly wants this robbery and denial to continue.

We suffer from no illusion that cooperative farming, in the absence of real land reforms, can take our agrarian economy very far. Nevertheless, the right type of voluntary cooperatives cannot but prove beneficial. But the Policy Statement of the Swatantra Party declares that the

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All-India Kisan Sabha To Meet In May In Ghazipur

THE Central Kisan Council of the All-India Kisan Sabha met in New Delhi on March 16 and 17, A. K. Gopalan presiding.

The Council reviewed the new Land Reform Bills introduced by the various State Governments and firmly expressed the opinion that the provisions for the imposition of ceilings on agricultural land fixed them too high and were too full of loopholes for the fulfilment of the principal aims of land reform.

Representatives from various States exchanged views on the Third Five-Year Plan in relation to agriculture.

For most of the time of the meeting, the members discussed the organisational problems of the Sabha. The Council decided that the 17th session of the All-India Kisan Sabha should be held in Ghazipur (eastern U. P.) from May 17 to 19 and the Central Kisan Council would meet at the same place from May 14 to 16.

A drafting committee was appointed with five members for preparing draft resolutions for the Conference. It was decided that

only three resolutions would be officially placed before the delegates: on the Third Five-Year Plan and Agriculture; Land Reforms; and Organisation of the Kisan Sabha.

The final date for receiving the nomination for

Presidency at the Central Kisan Council office is fixed as April 10, 1960. Any delegate elected to a Provincial Conference is entitled to send the nomination.

Stop These Attacks In Kerala

THE Central Kisan Council has emphatically protested against the vindictive attacks on Agricultural workers and poor peasants by the landowners backed by the Congress, PSP and Muslim League in Kerala.

Thousands of workers, says the Council's resolution, are being terrorised and victimised, for no other offence than exercising their rights according to their free choice. These attacks ranging widely from excommunication by the church to evictions, murder and burning down of houses reveal the most anti-democratic violent trends in politics, introduced by the coalition of cer-

tain political parties and reactionary vested interests led by the Congress in Kerala.

The CKC deeply mourns the loss of life of five victims of these attacks and demands that the Government of Kerala should take prompt steps to restrain the parties that constitute the Coalition Government in Kerala and stop this violent offensive against the democratic rights of the people.

The CKC hopes that all genuine lovers of democracy will condemn these acts and raise their voice for the restoration of the principles of equality before law and democratic norms in Kerala.

WELCOME, PRESIDENT NASSER

Editorial

The people of India will accord a hearty welcome to President Nasser of the United Arab Republic when he arrives in our country next week.

Our people's sympathies have been with freedom battles wherever they are fought and the Arab people's glorious struggle in defence of their freedom has always had our support. Imperialism has hatched plot after plot against this region including the launching of aggression in the Suez, but the Arab peoples have crushingly defeated them all. The Suez adventures were brought to their knees, the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact were torn to pieces by the people, the mighty Iraq revolution stands as the powerful reply of the Arab peoples to the imperialists who would strangle Arab nationalism.

Imperialist tactics now is to set Arab nation against Arab nation. Welcoming Gamel Abdel Nasser, the one wish of the Indian people will be that the unity of the Arab peoples should grow stronger, withstanding all the stresses and strains.

Africa awake is a new powerful factor in the world situation. A whole continent is ablaze, the people have risen to win back from the colonialist usurpers their independence and the resources of their countries. The battles for freedom whether in Algeria or in Kenya or in the Cameroons and the heroism of the fighting African peoples have evoked our admiration, as much as our holy wrath has been roused by imperialist actions—from brutal terror against the freedom-fighters to atom bomb tests in the Sahara.

We have always extended our hand of solidarity and support to the people of Africa. The United Arab Republic today is more than a mere geographical link between Asia and Africa. President Nasser's present visit to our country, we are sure, will help advance our common support to these just and vitally important struggles.

It is the unity of Afro-Asian countries, their policy of non-alignment with and opposition to aggressive military blocs, their friendship with the Socialist world that has enabled them to weather all storms and enabled them to embark on the road of independent economic development and make their contribution to Asian and world peace. We are sure President Nasser's present visit to our country will further strengthen this trend of policy in all Afro-Asian countries.

Taking this opportunity to congratulate the Egyptian people on the beginning of the realisation of their cherished dream, the building of the High Aswan Dam, and wishing the people of the UAR ever-expanding success in the strengthening of their economic independence, we join our people in welcoming President Nasser to our country. May India-UAR friendship strengthen and prosper!

Long live Afro-Asian unity and world peace!

(March 23)

PUNJAB POLITICAL SCENE

Flushed with the resounding victory in the Gurdwara elections, Master Tara Singh and his Akali Party are again threatening to launch a morcha on the issue of "Punjabi Sooba" as the panacea for all the ills of the Sikh Panth. He won an unprecedented victory on the basis of intense and extensive propaganda regarding the imminent danger of Government getting absolute control of Sikh religious institutions and virtual annihilation of the Sikh community as an independent political entity.

"NOW you can save your Gurdwaras by simply casting your vote," chimed the Akali agitator into the ears of the simple Sikh voter, "but if you fail to do so, you will have later to sacrifice your head to win them back from the Government." The average Sikh peasant trekked to the polling booth to cast his vote for the Baiti, the electoral symbol of the Akali Party, in the belief that he was thereby guarding the sanctity of his place of worship.

But the forces behind the scene, a major chunk of Sikh capitalists, contractors and landlords were playing for high political stakes. Little wonder, therefore, that the Akali victory processions on the morrow of the announcement of election results were just converted into 'Punjabi Sooba' demonstrations. Soon thereafter newly elected Akali members of the SGPC met at Akal Takhat, Amritsar, and took the 'sacred' pledge to fight for 'Punjabi Sooba'. The first meeting of the SGPC which elected Master Tara Singh as the President passed a resolution in support of the demand for 'Punjabi Sooba'.

Soon after the Gurdwara elections it appeared at one stage that the Akali leadership was moving towards an immediate head-on clash with the Congress Government. But Master Tara Singh's chief counsellors behind the scene advised patience and tact.

Moreover, charge of the Gurdwara administration had yet to be taken over from the trounced rivals, the 'mess in the management' to be cleared up and accounts settled with the 'renegades'. The threatened storm was, therefore, averted.

Master Tara Singh now changed the tune of his pronouncements. He stated that he would for the present carry on constitutional agitation. At the same time, he declared his intention of launching a joint campaign to unseat the Kairon Ministry. At one time there was talk of a joint Akali-Jan Sangh-FSP demonstration at New Delhi. But soon the Jan Sangh backed out of any joint campaign with the Akali Party. The much-talked-of joint campaign, too, thus proved a flop.

Resignation From Congress

Now the Akali leadership has made yet another move. At a general body meeting of the Shromani Akali Dal held at Anandpur on the occasion of Hol on March 13, resolutions were passed abrogating the Akali-Congress agreement of 1956 on the basis of regional formula, declaring the Congress as an anti-Panthik organisation, calling upon the Akali-Congress legislators to withdraw from Congress legislative bodies and constitute themselves into Panthik groups sitting in

opposition, and appealing to Akali followers all over the State to resign from the Congress.

There have no doubt been some resignations by Akali followers from Congress committees at lower levels, but the mandate to the legislators has not evoked immediate response. Out of 22 Akali-Congress members of the Punjab Assembly, not more than seven are loyally allied to Master Tara Singh. Among three Akali-Congress members of the Lok Sabha, only one, Ajit Singh Sarhadi, is allied to Master Tara Singh.

But the Akali 'faithfuls' are hesitant to resign from the Congress Party. For in the system of joint electorates, the Akali ticket is at a heavy discount. In the 1952 General Elections to the pre-merger Punjab Assembly, the Akali Party inclusive of the Giani Kartar Singh group could not muster more than thirteen seats in a house of 128. So a proposal was made that Akali-Congress legislators

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Tara Singh On War Path Again

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Hobnobbing With Swatantra

This will also enable the Akali leaders to await the return from Europe of Sardar Baldev Singh, former Defence Minister and Congress M.P., and to take counsel with him, their most trusted adviser and unfailing friend. It is just possible that attempts will be made to negotiate some sort of a compromise between the Congress High Command and the Akali leaders.

Master Tara Singh has all this while been hobnobbing with leaders of the Swatantra Party. He leaned heavily on many of the slogans of that party in the course of the Gurdwara elections. Many of his staunch supporters like former Judge Gurnam Singh are already members of that party. The Swatantra Party had lent all-out support to the Akali Dal in the Gurdwara elections. Now Master Tara Singh has announced support to the Swatantra Party leader Udham Singh Nagoke in the election to the Rajya Sabha. It is thought probable that loyal followers of Master Tara Singh, though yet in the Congress, will vote for him. Master

Tara Singh has also welcomed the coming visit of C. Rajagopalachari, top Swatantra leader, to the Punjab.

In a Press interview, he has stated that the Swatantra Party's leadership is sound and an identity of views between the Akali Dal and the Swatantra Party on many issues might bring them closer. He supported its programme of opposing ceiling on landholdings, the Hindu Succession Act and Co-operative farming. He will meet C. Rajagopalachari and try to enlist his support for 'Punjabi Sooba', but it is not sure whether he will secure it.

Weapon Of Disruption

The entire 'Hindu' Press—Pratap, Hind Samachar and the Congressite Millap—is vehemently opposing Master Tara Singh's demand for 'Punjabi Sooba' which they interpret as the demand for a Sikh State. Master Tara Singh and his followers in their speeches and pamphlets and articles in the Press provide them with enough material to agitate among the Hindu masses that what the Akali leaders want is not a Punjabi State, but a Sikh State after the pattern of Pakistan.

What should be a unifying slogan to inspire the Punjabis for a struggle for their own State has become in the hands of communalists a weapon of disruption.

Echoes of the controversy over the 'Punjabi Sooba' were heard on the floor of the Punjab Legislature in its budget session when a couple of Akali-Congress legislators put forth the demand for 'Punjabi Sooba' as the only solution of the language problem. Finance Minister Gopi Chand Bhargava declared that he would oppose partition of the existing Punjab till his last breath. Chief Minister Kairon stated that there would be no further division as long as the Congress continued to rule. Communist leader Dr. Bhag Singh, while sharply criticising the communal approach of Master Tara Singh, supported the principle of linguistic reorganisation and debunked the Congress challenge to its very basis.

Goodwill Report

Meanwhile, the State Government has set up a 26-member committee under the chairmanship of Governor Gadgil to consider the report of the Goodwill Committee and suggest a solution of the language problem. Both the Shromani Akali Dal and the SGPC have boycotted this committee. They have declared that nothing short of 'Punjabi Sooba' can become a solution to the language

problem.

Chief Khalsa Dewan and the Sikh Educational Conference have, however, sent their representatives to work on the committee. Hindu organisations invited to send their nominees are cooperating. The Punjabi Likhari Sabha, an organisation of Punjabi writers, which has done a lot over the past many years to develop Punjabi literature, has been ignored.

Valuable Pronouncements

These valuable pronouncements of the committee have given a blow to the dangerous theory of the Hindi Samiti diehards that even the Punjabi region is a bilingual State—the pernicious theory that the language of the Hindus is Hindi and that of the Sikhs Punjabi.

The committee has suggested two compromise formulas for the Punjabi region. According to the first formula, all students would study Punjabi as their first language and receive their education through the medium of Punjabi, but option would be given as to the choice of script, i.e. Gurmukhi or Devnagri. In the last class of the primary stage, those who have begun Punjabi in Devnagri should learn Gurmukhi and others will have to learn Devnagri script to begin Hindi.

Because all the various Sikh organisations vehemently opposed this formula, the committee itself has come to the conclusion that it has no chance of acceptance.

The Communist Party as well as the Punjabi Likhari Sabha, too, has opposed two scripts for Punjabi and has held that Gurmukhi is the only scientific script for it.

The second formula recommends that Punjabi (in Gurmukhi script) should be the medium of instruction at the primary stage. Hindi language in Devnagri script, too, should be taught from the very first class and after the primary stage, a student should have the option of selecting his first language and the medium of instruction, Punjabi or Hindi.

The Executive Committee of the State Council of the Communist Party which held a special meeting on March 18 to consider the Goodwill Committee report has adopted a resolution on the language problem. It has welcomed the progressive features of its recommendations. But it views even the second formula in relation to the Punjabi region as halting and unsatisfactory. The Executive, therefore, urged that Punjabi in Gurmukhi script be taught from the first standard as the language of the Punjabi region and also be declared as the medium of instruction. Hindi as the national language should be introduced from the fourth primary standard. The Executive, however, made it clear that it would support any compromise formula agreed to by the parties concerned as re-

gious faith. Just as no one can choose his mother, similarly no one can choose his mother-tongue.

The committee has further stated that to give option to a parent or guardian to 'choose the mother-tongue of the ward' was altogether wrong at its very inception and expressed the apprehension that if this option continued it would divide the Hindus and Sikhs into two different nations, both claiming to have different religions and different cultures.

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All-Party Criticism Of Food Policies

Two contradictory aspects manifested themselves in the debate on the Food Minister's demand. The sense of urgent concern expressed by participants from the Communist Party, Congress and PSP was matched by the cheerful complacency of the Food Minister and his Deputy. The concern shown, irrespective of party affiliations, can be translated into fruitful remedies only if mass action shatters the complacency.

SPEAKER after speaker dealt with question of how to increase food production. D. A. Katti (Independent), however, correctly pointed out how meagre the increase has been compared to the progress registered in other countries, while Sucheta Kripalani (Congress) pointed to the actual drop in productivity per acre.

But when it came to assess-

ing the reasons for this relatively slow growth, it was only the Communist M.P.s—Renu Chakravarty and D. Venkateswara Rao—who pointed to the basic factor, viz., lack of rapid and integrated land reforms. They backed up their case with quotations from the U.N. Evaluation Committee Report on the dismal record of the Government in this respect.

The big tussle in the debate came over the problem of price stabilisation. Renu Chakravarty produced an array of figures from government publications to show that danger signals were manifesting themselves of an unprecedented early upswing this year. She made the important point that the prices to be compared were not the pre-harvest and post-harvest ones but the actual rise in the early months of 1960.

While many other speakers supported her stand, Deputy Food Minister A. M. Thomas produced a jumble of figures, quite different from those produced in the report of his Ministry and other official publications. Quite rightly many members interrupted him at this stage and the only impression he created was of optimistic confusion.

In order to meet the problem of prices Renu Chakravarty strongly urged that the Food Minister must abandon his preference for laissez faire. She was all for a minimum price to ensure justice for the cultivator but, at the same time, demanded that a Price Stabilisation Board should be set up as had been recommended by the Asoka Mehta Committee to meet the fearful price-increase which had hit our economy and people.

She cogently argued that the area of socialisation of the food-grains trade should be steadily widened, with the Government making direct purchases in the mandis as well as giving every support to the extension of trading cooperatives. Unless this was done the zonal schemes themselves would not prove as beneficial as they should—she gave the sad experience of the Orissa-West Bengal zone.

It was most embarrassing for the Food Ministry that the Communist M.P.'s point was reiterated by Renuka Ray (Congress) who has always stood out against the Communist Party. She, too, warned against complacency and was bitter about lack of measures to tackle shooting prices.

She said: "It is no use waver- ing between policies of laissez faire and controls which are half-hearted controls, regulations which are no regulations and movement restrictions which are provocative and irritating and zonal systems which do not operate."

Rajendra Singh (PSP) gave strong support to Renu Chakravarty's suggestions about price stabilisation and State trading. He made a powerful indictment of the policy of laissez faire which was increasingly being adopted by the Government.

He suggested that Madhya Pradesh and Bombay should be formed into a common food zone. The only apprehension he expressed was that the common people feared that under the present dispensation the profits of any price-rise thereupon—which the Madhya Pradesh cultivators needed—would simply go to the trader.

A further point of common criticism made by members of all parties was the total lack of any integration between the Ministries concerned with food and agricultural production.

Of special interest was his criticism of the reliance which was sought to be placed on imports of American surplus food-stuffs—in this Ram Subhag Singh (Congress) was equally insistent in opposition. He pointed out that far from being helpful this was actually aiding disposal of surpluses, which had become quite a problem for the U.S. Government. If America was really a friend, it should extend credits so that we could build more fertiliser factories, he said.

V. C. Shukla (Congress) early in the debate narrated quite a tale of woe from Madhya Pradesh where falling prices was the problem. He gave the case of the Government agencies rejecting food-grains brought to the market by the producers and later buying that same grain from the traders!

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—M. S.

DEFAULTING M.P.s

Two Communist Members of Parliament have failed to clear up their dues of Party levies payable to the National Council. The arrears cover the years 1958 and 1959. They are Sarju Pandey (Rs. 1,150) N. C. Sekhar (Rs. 900). The Communist M.P.s also pay additional levies to their respective party organisations in the States. But these have not been taken into account in drawing up the list of defaulters.

Secretariat, of the National Council, Communist Party of India

BRUTAL FIRING ON REFUGEES

From ACHINTYA BHATTACHARYYA

Police firing on refugee satyagrahis at Borbil in the Mikir Hills District of Assam had lately been the subject of angrily moved adjournment motions both in Parliament and in the State Assembly. These motions were, as usual, disallowed—but this did not obliterate the facts about this sordid police action, which are but too damning for any civilised Government.

On March 8 last, a force of about a hundred armed policemen, accompanied by a few thousands tribal Mikir people, entered the refugee settlement at Borbil and set the elephant for demolishing and destroying the refugee homes and properties. The refugees, men and women, lay prostrate before the array of elephants—displaying a degree of courage which the people alone can show in defence of a just cause.

30 hours after the shooting, though the raiding police party had wireless transmitters with them.

THIRDLY, medical aid, ambulance, etc., were sent after almost a full day, though the place was approachable from the nearest town in jeep in half an hour.

FOURTHLY, even the official communique admitted rather obliquely, that along with the police there were other persons engaged in the evicting work. Who were these "other persons" and who engaged them and under what authority of the law?

The fact is that, these other persons had been a gathering of well over two thousand tribal people, whom the Government lea-

The history of the refugee settlement in the Mikir Hills is as old as the refugee problem itself. The main bulk of 3,000 families was settled in this place, which was waste land, before 1952. At that time, this area was a part of the Nowgong District. Refugees came with the consent of the authorities of Nowgong. The area was covered by thick jungle and was inaccessible and as such, none took any interest in the matter of rehabilitation of the refugee pioneers, who voluntarily chose to come to this area.

Without almost any State aid, they cleared and put under plough over 30,000 bighas of virgin soil. Within a few years, these sturdy peasants from East Bengal

lands of the tribal people has no foundation in reality. The refugees created this settlement breaking virgin land, before the area went to the Autonomous Mikir Hills in 1952.

The leaders of the District Council, all of whom are big landlords, had been demanding wholesale eviction of the refugees on the ground that in this tribal district, which has autonomous status under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, no outsiders can be allowed to occupy land.

But later, they agreed to allow 450 families to remain in about 3,000 bighas of land, out of 30,000 bighas cleared by them. Refugees and their organisation, the All-Assam Refugee Association thought this unacceptable and unjust and then began lengthy negotiations with the Government for a fair settlement.

The refugees, who from the beginning declared that they had no intention of harming the cause of the Mikirs, offered to give up up to 15,000 bighas of land for settlement of landless Mikirs and agreed to evacuate the whole area, if any alternative land, suitable for cultivation, was provided. Last year, a tripartite conference, sponsored by the State Government, of representatives of the District Council, the Government of Assam and the Refugee Association discussed these proposals.

The proposals themselves show that it is vile slander to accuse the refugees of lacking any desire to settle the problem and even move out if alternative land was available.

The conference broke down due to the insistence of the District Council leaders, who would not agree to any terms other than their own.

The State Government, then

* SEE PAGE 11

Not The First Experience

For the refugees, it had been neither a new experience nor something unexpected; last year, a similar savage attack was made to break up their hearth and home and the refugees offered passive resistance in a similar manner.

But this year, it was different; for, this time, the police mobilised and set thousands of Mikir tribals, collected from distant parts of the expansive Mikir Hills, against the refugees. This mob, incited by racial and communal propaganda, attacked the satyagrahis, especially the women with weapons—guns as well as bows, arrows and slings. The refugees, at first taken aback, began to muster in self-defence against this unprovoked and unlawful assault by private individuals who took the law in their own hands. But just then, the armed police, who were standing by, opened fire, killing some and wounding about a hundred.

The firing was vicious, directed against the upper parts of the body, as the medical report conclusively showed, and many of the deep wounds had been caused by deadly arrows.

But the shooting was but the beginning of this unlawful and inhuman campaign. An orgy of arson and naked violence followed—houses were looted, stocks of paddy were consigned to fire and the inmates of the houses were

beaten by the police and the mob hired by them, and scenes resembling those of a primitive tribal war were re-enacted.

This incident had some particularly notorious features which are as vicious as the attack itself.

FIRST, the number of refugees killed have not been announced finally by the Government so far and the official Press Communique cryptically mentioned the "recovery" of two bodies; later recovery of another dead body was reported in the Press. Thus, even the most elementary fact about this killing remains undisclosed, up-to-date.

SECONDLY, the official Press Communique was issued

They Made Hilly Tracts Into Cultivable Land But Are Being Evicted

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had wrought almost a miracle, and deep inside a hilly tract, a group of flourishing villages sprang up. While the Government of Assam abandoned land reclamation work finding the cost too high, these refugees reclaimed 30,000 bighas out of inaccessible hilly forest areas, with their bare hands and had made this place a real granary.

In the meantime, this manna was transferred to the newly formed autonomous Mikir Hills District in 1952 and since 1956, the threat of eviction has been hanging over this place of peaceful labour.

These dates, incidentally show that the charge of refugees encroaching upon the

SECONDLY, the official Press Communique was issued

COMMUNIST LEADER EXPLAINS

BACKGROUND TO POLICE FIRING

P HANI Bora, MLA, Secretary of the Assam State Council of the Communist Party of India, says in his statement, issued to the Press after the banning of the kisan conference in Borbil in the beginning of February:

"An amount of Press publicity has been given lately to the issue of eviction in the Mikir Hills.

"I went to the place on the invitation of the Mikir Hills District Kisan Sabha, a united organisation of the Assamese, tribal and Bengali peasants, to preside over a conference of the Sabha. But I was surprised to find that almost all the leaders of the Sabha were either arrested or warrants had been issued against them before the conference took place.

"This attack on the Kisan Sabha and the Communist workers was not-

ing but clear interference with the democratic rights of the people and this was done only in order to prevent public opinion from being roused against the undemocratic and brutal assault on human rights that has been taking place there.

"I want to clearly state that we boldly stand against eviction of real cultivators without a planned programme of rehabilitation. This is not a racial question but a national economic and human question. The Mikir Hills District Council leaders have resorted to a kind of propaganda among the Mikir people against the non-Mikirs which amounts to nothing but incitement right up to every village and are trying to organise the Mikir people to do the job of the police. This unfortunate and in fact dangerous attempt to set one group of people against another group of our countrymen, in the name of a

lawful authority, is an extremely pernicious tendency.

"On my on-the-spot enquiry, I found that the people who are evicted and against whom ruthless repression is now let loose are quite peaceful and calm, and allegation of violence against the peasants there is totally false. On the contrary, I found women with faces swollen due to police atrocities, men even of sixty years of age with police lathi or rifle butt wounds. I also found a few houses burnt along with paddy and other belongings. Tear-gassing is usually used to disperse crowds, but here it is resorted to to force the women and children to vacate the houses where they live.

"It is a fact that the refugee peasants, the number of whom according to an official figure, is about 3,000 families, sought to be evicted, have offered satyagraha by remaining in the

houses when police came with elephants to destroy their hearth and homes. The fact is that this kind of resistance was offered in 1959 also, in face of which the eviction was abandoned. That the Communist Party unit here has been formed only this year is a clear exposure of the false allegation that is levelled against it.

"I also found that it is not only the refugee peasants who are sought to be evicted by force but thousands of others, including Assamese and non-Mikir tribal and Muslim peasants who are now under notice of eviction from the same area.

"I consider this policy of eviction quite unjustified and unreasonable and the police repression that is let loose is inhuman which only reminds me of the British days.

"I would request the Government and the Mikir Hills District Council lea-

ders to stop this ruthless campaign and come to a settlement of the problem in a peaceful and just manner with a plan of rehabilitation: both of the Mikir and non-Mikir peasants who are now actual cultivators of lands reclaimed by their own hands, in this area.

"Let not anybody forget the fact that the area in question was within the district of Nowgong till 1952 and the non-Mikir people living there were settled there before the area was transferred to the Mikir Hills District.

"It is my firm conviction that, in the present case, a policy of force will not only fail to solve the problem but will create further complications for all.

"In the end, I want to add that the allegations that have been made in the local Press against our Party in this connection, are completely fictitious and motivated."

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Kerala tapper's co-ops won't participate in toddy auction

A joint meeting of the Councils of the Kerala State Toddy-Tappers' Federation and the Kerala Chamber of Toddy-Tappers' Cooperative Societies, held at Alleppey on March 7 last, has unanimously decided not to participate in the public auction of toddy shops as "graciously" allowed by the Congress-PSP Government and requested the Government to reconsider its decision to take away the toddy shops from the cooperatives.

THE meeting adopted a lengthy statement refuting the arguments put forward in the official Press-Note for the Government's decision and explaining why the societies have decided not to participate in the public auction.

The Congress-PSP Government's decision, according to the statement, questioned all the basic principles of the cooperative movement, it was aimed at strangling the toddy-tappers' cooperatives and throwing the tappers at the mercy of private contractors. Behind this decision can be seen the vindictiveness which was so evident at the time of the "liberation struggle" when the shops and other properties of the societies were made the special targets of goonda attacks.

The Press and its scribes who, from the day the Communist Government had decided to hand over the shops to the cooperative societies, had run a shameless and lying campaign against the societies, are now propagating another slander.

Their tune now is that the tappers are getting ready to shed blood to prevent the public auction of toddy shops. They have never proved or even tried to prove a single one of the innumerable charges they have flung so freely.

The statement says that the present charge is equally baseless and a lie. At the same time the statement has warned the tappers and the people that this is intended to prepare the ground for the attacks which the contractors are planning against the workers.

Benefits Taken Away

Explaining in detail how the provisions made in the Government Press-Note for "safeguarding the interests of the tappers" really take away the benefits at present enjoyed by them, the statement says:

"The Government's decision has come as actual encouragement to the contractors to throw the tappers who are now working with the societies out of employment, to reduce the number of trees they tap, and reduce the benefits they enjoy. The workers will protest against this and it is to drown this protest in blood that the ground is already being prepared with the latest slander of workers preparing for blood-shed."

It may be asked whether all this cannot be avoided by the societies successfully bidding for the shops in public auction.

It is impossible to avoid competition with the contractors if the societies do not get whole industrial areas covering both tapping areas and sales areas. The previous Government had, on this basis, decided that shops should be given to the societies on the basis of taluks or ranges and the Adviser's regime had also accepted this.

But when public auction takes place, the bidding will be for each shop. Thus, in the same range, the private contractors

that while for the last eight months such charges of irregularities had been levelled, not one of the many enquiries has been able to substantiate this charge. And that is why the Adviser regime itself had agreed to continue the previous Government's policy of handing over the toddy shops to the cooperative societies after imposing some new conditions.

The societies agreed to these new conditions for increasing

ernment should have given them a trial to see whether they would fulfil them.

Instead, the Government reversed the decision of the Adviser saying it was a policy matter. Obviously, the Government itself is not convinced about the so-called irregularities.

The statement then points out that as a result of this decision, nearly two thousand non-tapper employees working in the establishments of the societies will become unemployed and will be

THE REASONS WHY

will get hold of some shops and the societies will get some others and the bids will go very high.

In such a situation the societies will find it impossible to continue the benefits they give to their workers and as such will lose the right to demand that the private contractors give these benefits to their workers. This can only lead to the destruction of the movement.

No Charge Proved

The reasons the Government puts forward for its decision, continues the statement, are loss of revenue for the State and irregularities in the running of the societies.

It has to be remembered

the kist amount by five per cent and for depositing with the Government 50 per cent of the profits of the societies. They also agreed to pay the entire tree-tax for all the trees they tap. There can no better terms to protect the revenue of the State.

The societies also agreed to have Government-appointed officials as their secretaries and to have concurrent auditing of accounts by the Cooperative Department, and also that only those societies would be given shops which had fitness certificates from the Registrar of Cooperatives. All this was to guarantee against irregularities in the running of the societies. There could not have been more stringent restrictions than these and since the societies had agreed to all of them, the Gov-

thrown on the streets. The Government has also given no assurance that the tappers now working with the societies will be given work under the contractors.

The societies have invested Rs. ten lakhs in the industry and they will practically lose this amount. The investment is mainly in shop buildings, shop equipment, vehicles, etc. Once the industry is taken away from the societies, all this will fetch no price. This money has come from the blood and sweat of the workers and how can any Government passively look on when all their savings are thus going to be lost?

The statement, in conclusion, has appealed to the toddy-tappers to strengthen their organisation to meet any situation that arises.

WHAT TAPPERS ARE LOSING BY GOVERNMENT DECISION

MEANWHILE, the Managing Committee of the Sherthallai Taluk Toddy-Tappers' Society has, through a resolution, answered the Government's charge that apart from losses incurred by the State, tappers had also not been benefited by the societies.

The resolution pointed out that so far as the Sherthallai Society was concerned it could be proved by placing facts and figures conclusively prove that the procedure adopted by the previous Government in 1958-59 and 1959-60 had substantially benefited the tappers in the matter of wages, bonus, leave, overtime wages, unemployment compensation, etc. It has also resulted in greater production of toddy and enabled the supply of unadulterated stuff to the public.

The society was formed after a protracted struggle by the workers for security of work and the society was able, owing to the sympathetic attitude of the Communist Government, to run the shops in Sherthallai Range in 1958-59 and in Sherthallai and Veluthully ranges in 1959-1960.

During the year 1958-59, the society had to remit to the treasury Rs. 9,165 less than the amount remitted by the contractors in 1957-58 and Rs. 6,012 less during the year 1959-60. The society was not informed that sales-tax was to be collected in 1959-60. The society felt that collecting sales-tax from consumers was not advisable

and so the Society remitted about Rs. 29,000 as sales-tax. Taking this amount which the society remitted into consideration, the society had to remit Rs. 22,988 more than that remitted by the contractors.

The society had not received any financial assistance from the Government and it had depended solely upon the capital deposits, security deposits and loan from the Chethu Thozhialali Union to meet its commitments. This should disprove the allegations of interested parties that the society derived finan-

cial assistance from the Government.

The working of the society helped the workers to gain valuable experience in the fields of production and business organisation. Over 300 workers derived material financial benefits and they were saved from legal harassment which was a regular feature under contractors who forced them to resort to practices contrary to the excise regulations and face the consequences themselves. The society has paid about Rs. 2,000 as medical aid and helped those who suffered from accidents in

the course of their work. Workers have been provided with financial assistance for constructing houses. About 180 educated young men have been provided with employment and about Rs. 90,000 has been spent on this score. The society has been able to avoid trade disputes as the workers were paid all their dues on the due dates.

The following table shows the difference in the average earnings of workers before and after the society assumed the responsibility of running the toddy shops.

Benefits given to workers by private contractors and the cooperative society in Sherthallai

Items.	Private Contractors in 1957-58	Cooperative Society in 1958-59	Cooperative Society in 1959-60
Wages (per bottle)	14 n.p.	15 n.p.	15 n.p.
Preparation charges (per tree)	Rs. 3	Rs. 4	Rs. 4
Double wages (in an year)	3 to 5 days	5 days	7 days
Casual leave (in an year)	5 days	7 "	15 "
Bonus	Rs. 10	Rs. 30 per worker	8-13% of total wages (Budget estimate)
Ghee for tapping	Irregular Payment	Rs. 10 per worker	Rs. 10
Measuring vessel	Varies from 26 Oz. to 32 Ozs.	24 Oz. Rs. 182/50.	24 Oz. Rs. 182/50.

NEW AGE

MARCH 27, 1960

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MARCH 27, 1960

NEW AGE

De Gaulle's "France will stay in Algeria" challenge makes peaceful settlement impossible

ALGERIA'S FREEDOM WAR IN NEW STAGE



FERHAT ABBAS

The new declaration of policy towards Algeria that French President de Gaulle made in the course of his three-day tour of that country at the beginning of this month has dashed all hopes of a negotiated peaceful settlement of the Algerian problem.

It was only last September that de Gaulle had issued a declaration to the effect that after the "restoration of peace" in Algeria the Algerian people could freely choose independence, union with France or integration. As an offer to open negotiations to bring to an end the five-year long genocidal war against the Algerian people and as embodying a recognition of Algeria's right to self-determination, the September declaration of de Gaulle was universally acclaimed and roused great hopes.

Move Of Expediency

Now it turns out that the gesture of peace made by de Gaulle six months ago was only a move of expediency aimed at relieving France of the terrible dilemma it then faced in Algeria. France suffered one military defeat after another in Algeria, and had no hope of winning a military victory nor did it have the

resources to enlarge the war. At the same time, the policy of military suppression in Algeria was becoming increasingly unpopular at home and was being condemned by world public opinion. The universal pressure for the recognition of Algeria's independence was so great on the eve of the United Nations General Assembly session that France found herself in an extremely isolated position.

It was precisely in these circumstances that de Gaulle was compelled to change his tactics. The obvious game was to persuade the Algerian people to lay down arms and thus secure for France by deception what she had so long failed to achieve by force—namely the maintenance of French colonial rule in Algeria, relief from world public opinion's pressure and the bypassing of U. N. condemnation.

The Algerian Provisional Government, prompted as it was by the desire to bring about a peaceful settlement

of the Algerian problem, had responded to de Gaulle's September declaration by expressing its willingness to negotiate with France on the conditions and guarantees for the implementations of self-determination in order to lead to the "realisation of a ceasefire". It had appointed as long ago as November 20, 1959, its five imprisoned leaders to negotiate on its behalf. This was made a pretext by de Gaulle to refuse to open negotiations.

Premier Abbas had also made conciliatory approaches to the French settlers in Algeria. He had assured them of a future in the country.

Still the French Government made no positive move to pursue de Gaulle's proposal. This led to a sharpening of contradictions within the French ruling class, bringing about the January rebellion of ultra-colonialists in Algiers. While the working class and the ordinary people of France magnificently rallied and brought about the defeat of the Rightists' rebellion, it is clear that de Gaulle has now finally succumbed to their pressure.

Atom Blast In Sahara

Crazy over the pursuit of an elusive and illusory greatness for France de Gaulle went ahead to explode France's first atom bomb in the Algerian territory of Sahara, thus flagrantly outraging sentiment all over Africa and the world. And he has gone ahead now to openly reverse his September declaration on Algeria.

In the speeches he made before the French Army Officers in course of his recent tour of Algeria, de Gaulle declared that "the rebels of the FLN must be defeated before the Algerian problem can be settled." "There will be no Die Bien Phu in Algeria." The Algerian problem, he said, could not be settled for a long time and settlement would come only after the French army achieved victory.

France must stay in Algeria, he repeatedly declared. Only the form in which France was to stay in Algeria was to be decided and this would be done after peace was "established through force".

What Abbas—the Algerian Provisional Government Pre-

mier—calls "independence", de Gaulle told the French army officers was "nonsense". This was so because there were one million Frenchmen permanently settled in Algeria. Among the 12 million natives, Algerian Moslems, there were also Moslems who did not wish to be separated from France and there were four lakh Algerian workers in France who supported their families in Algeria. Hence de Gaulle said what Abbas calls independence "is nothing more than poverty and catastrophe" for Algeria.

Of the three alternatives—secession (independence) and "French fiction" (integration with metropolitan France) were ruled out. "The other certitude", de Gaulle declared, "is that Algeria must not be separated from France. It is in the nature of things that Algeria should be linked with France", he said thus indicating his preference for the third alternative namely "association".

Plan For Partition

Above all "our arms must conclusively carry the day," and then "a long period" would elapse between the end of military operations and a reference to the people on the various alternatives.

He also indicated that the final solution might take the form of partition of Algeria on the lines of Palestine into three parts—European, Berber and Arab—each and all closely "associated" with France.

These declarations have had the effect of "a bomb-shell" in French political cir-

cles according to Hindu Correspondent Shelvankar, "causing astonishment and jubilation on the Right and bewilderment and dismay among liberals and progressives".

In a signed editorial in L'Humanite, March 11, General Secretary of the Communist Party of France Maurice Thorez condemned de Gaulle's statements as denying the principle of self-determination itself. He reiterated that "the Algerian nation has the right to full independence."

De Gaulle's statement, Thorez said, stripped self-determination of its meaning, apart from attaching reservations and conditions to the recognition of the Algerian people's right of self-determination. Such reservations and conditions had till now made the exercise of the right of self-determination impossible.

"To refuse to negotiate, to spread lies again on so-called pacification are beneficial neither to France, nor to Algeria." "This," said Thorez, "is contrary to the wish of the millions of strikers of February 1, who resolutely demanded punishment for the fascist rioters in Algeria and a speedy and sincere application of self-determination."

Authoritatively replying to de Gaulle's statements, Premier of the Provisional Government of Algeria Ferhat Abbas said in a speech over Radio Tunis on March 14: Since de Gaulle had closed the door to negotiation and peace in Algeria, the Algerian people and Government would continue the war of national liberation until independence was achieved. The responsibility for continuing the Algerian war was



Strength of the Liberation Army—close links with the people.

squarely placed on France by Abbas.

No Other Way Out

The National Liberation Army, he said, had fully demonstrated since November 1, 1954 that the French colonialist were nurturing vain hopes when they believed that they could overcome by force the heroic resistance of the Algerian people and their determination for independence."

"As for the threat of partitioning and dividing Algeria into ethnic and religious communities, as for regional elections and the plan to grant a statute to Algeria with the complicity of prefabricated elected officials, this," Abbas said, "will only result in perpetuating war."

"By accepting the principle of self-determination as the basis for a solution of the Algerian problem, we insisted on the need to ensure its loyal and sincere application. We have no doubt," declared the Algerian Premier, "about what will be the Algerian people's free choice, providing this choice is accompanied by the indispensable guarantees."

"Through the use of apparently new formulas, General de Gaulle wants to perpetuate colonial domination," said Ferhat Abbas. "As far as the Algerian people and Government are concerned we shall continue the war of national liberation until independence is achieved. Colonialism leaves us no other way out," he declared in conclusion.

Independence which is nonsense for de Gaulle was firmly declared to be Algeria's goal.

specialised schools of the French Army."

It had particularly "denounced the regroupment" (of the Algerian population) in so-called camps of "hibernation" (lodging) of millions of men, women and children reduced to a state of famine, misery and death."

Pointedly it had stated: "The CNRA stresses that such practices could only be developed thanks to the complicity of certain Western Governments which continue to lend their support to the French Government in its imperialist policy."

"These States continue to support the war policy of France materially and diplomatically. In particular, the Government of the United States, contrary to the anti-colonial traditions of the American people, furnishes France with the means necessary for the pursuit of the war and uses all its authority to mobilise the apparatus of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) against the Algerian people. This organisation has thus become an instrument in the service of French colonialism."

Intensify Support

Expressing its "gratitude to the Arab, African and Asian countries for the material aid and the constant support they have always given to the Algerian people" and attaching "great value to the moral support given to its cause by certain Governments and by the peoples of Latin America, heirs to great traditions of liberty", the CNRA communique placed on record its appreciation of "the constant support given to the cause of the Algerian Revolution by the Socialist countries" and expressed its "warmest gratitude."

"The CNRA extends an appeal," the communique said in conclusion, "to all the anti-colonialist peoples and Governments to intensify their support of the Algerian people's struggle and to impose peace upon the French Government now, at this moment of relaxation of international tension and on the eve of the Summit Conference."

Despite all the steps taken by de Gaulle—securing the passage of a law in the French Parliament granting

him "special powers", the creation of an all-powerful "Algerian Affairs Committee" directly under his control, promulgation of a new decree to expand the armed forces and proclaiming a new "doctrine of persistence", threatening Algeria's neighbours with reprisals—despite all this the military situation for France in Algeria remains as difficult as ever.

A military communique of the Algerian Liberation Army covering the period March 5 to 7, for instance, reports that during three days Algerian forces killed 473 French soldiers, wounded 211 and captured eight. They had launched heavy attacks on 49 French positions and army barracks, laid ten ambushes for enemy convoys, destroyed 32 French armoured vehicles and encountered French forces in eleven battles. The Algerian sabotage units had in this period launched extensive raids against enemy establishments inflicting big losses on them, while the Algerian anti-aircraft guns had shot down one plane, the communique said.

It further claimed that the Algerian forces had seized 203 pieces of arms and a large quantity of ammunition. Fifteen enemy soldiers with their full equipment had crossed over to the Algerian Army, said the communique.

Karim Belkassim, Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government, Chairman of the Algerian Ministerial Defence Committee in an exclusive interview to Hsinhua recently dwelt on the military situation and said that the Algerian Army had successfully crushed the Challe Plan of the French.

The plan had provided for the use of all the strategic reserves—about 100,000 men—all at once, against the territory liberated by the Algerian Liberation Army (about two-thirds of Algeria). In so doing they had hoped to destroy the units of the Algerian Army and its political and logistic structure.

To cope with this offensive, Belkassim explained, the Liberation Army had divided its big formations into smaller units—more mobile and less vulnerable—and had thus succeeded in averting encirclement by the enemy. This defensive strategy was accompanied at the same time by swift

counter-attacks and ambushes directed against the vulnerable French positions. This way, the ambitions and costly plans of Challe, the C-in-C of the French imperialist army in Algeria, were beaten back both militarily and politically and the French Army was compelled in the end to withdraw and the Algerian Liberation Army regained control over the once occupied areas.

In spite of this failure and evidently in the absence of an alternative, Belkassim said, the French army seemed to be still clinging to the Challe plan. But being aware of the enemy tactics and always holding the initiative in fighting, the Liberation Army was capable, as it had done so far, of foiling all manoeuvres of the French Command.

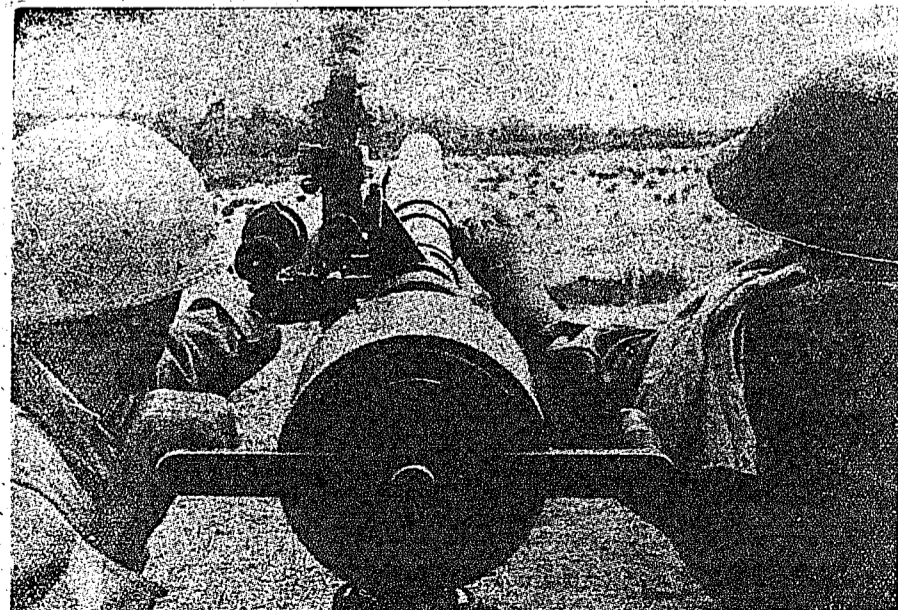
Belkassim said the French Army was constantly getting weaker and the Liberation Army was getting stronger. He pointed as signs of the weakening of the French Army, first of all, the constant call for new reinforcements and urgent requests for replacements of material and equipment in recent months.

Algeria Will Win

As for the Algerians, their units had the advantage of mobility and lightness which made the heavy equipment of the enemy useless. Their arms were improving, their fighters possessed rich experience and a thorough knowledge of the territory. Besides, schools and training centres were now turning out officers and men who were young, dynamic and well-trained in methods of revolutionary war. Belkassim disclosed that Algeria had on its borders fresh trained troops ready to go into action at any time.

The secret of the strength of the Algerian army lies in the fact that it is an army of patriotic volunteers, of a people animated by a lofty objective—their national independence. Hence, said Belkassim, he had full faith in the National Liberation Army, in the Algerian people and in their final victory.

—ZIAUL HAQ (March 19).



A 75-mm recoilless gun captured by the Algerian Liberation Army.



Liberation Army units ambush a French convoy.

INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS DOMINATE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEBATE

The Lok Sabha debate on the grants demanded by the External Affairs Ministry was rather a tame affair. It had its significance but it lacked drama. The winds that blow in the world at large did not sweep in, as is usually the case, but came in somewhat languid puffs.

THE cause of the slowness of tempo was, perhaps, the fact that the dominating problem—India-China relations—had exerted its power quite amply during the debate in both Houses on the President's Address. Still it was this issue, above all, that exercised the members and drew forth some passion.

Only Sensible Way Out

Mention must be made here, first and foremost, that there was near unanimity of view that the Nehru-Chou talks were necessary and represented the only sensible way out of the impasse reached in the relations between the two countries.

Hiren Mukerjee set the tone by stating: "I would like to begin, in the first place, by saying how very much we on this side of the House wish for a successful outcome of the meeting which is going to take place in the near future between our Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of China."

"We know very well that certain clouds appeared on the horizon and a jolt had been given to the historic friendship between our countries.... We are all very happy that the signs now are that the clouds would break and we shall have a settlement which would redound to the happiness and the advance of our two countries."

N. C. Kasiwal (Congress) full-throatedly welcomed the meeting, wished it success and hit hard at PSPer S. N. Dwivedy who had made a vicious speech earlier. Another Congress M.P., Jagannath Rao, not only hailed the forthcoming meeting but wisely pleaded, "let us create a congenial atmosphere and climate to enable them to come to a peaceful settlement."

Settlement Now

Joachim Alva forcefully argued that the India-China conflict must be settled through negotiations at the Prime Ministers' level and in the present generation—in the life-time of Nehru and Mao, as he put it. We must not leave an unhappy and bitter legacy to the coming generation.

D. C. Sharma (Congress) pointedly asked the critics of the suggested meeting what their alternative was—"Do they want that there should be an armed conflict between India and China?... in international affairs these days people are pursuing the path of negotiations."

Similar sentiments were expressed by another Congress M. P. Dinesh Singh.

The anti-Panchsheel lobby was clearly on the defensive. S. N. Dwivedy (PSP), Surendra Mahanty (Ganatantra Pari-

shad) and Vajpayee (Jan Sangh) found that the sun no longer shone for them. So they tried a flanking movement. They were all protestation that a Nehru-Chou meeting in itself was not bad or undesirable.

But there were dangers to avoid and our Prime Minister must give certain public guarantees—"vacation of aggression by China", "no change in the borders", "no negotiations about territory", and the like. Naturally enough they also shed their tears for Tibet, called for "considerate" treatment of the Dalai Lama and a buffer State between us and China.

Crusade Against Neighbours

S. N. Dwivedy went the full course with the suggestion that we should throw our weight about and "influence" through Political Advisers and the rest Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim—a

Discordant Voices Were Heard, But Overwhelming Support To Nehru-Chou Talks

crusade against these neighbouring States, in short.

In his reply to the debate Pandit Nehru emphasised that the issue of frontiers was an important one and the most vital issue of our foreign affairs. He coupled this with a customary flippant dig at the Communist Party, or some among them who were lost in "vague internationalism."

He rightly reiterated that he could not go to the meeting with Chou En-lai bound hand and foot with all manner of commitments. "Some members have pressed me to say how these discussions will take place, what are the particular subjects of discussion and allied matters."

"Now I would venture to say that it is hardly possible for me to speak in this House or anywhere in public about the manner of talks or the manner of carrying on talks that we might adopt. That is not the way that diplomatic conversations or any like talks take place."

The Only Guarantee

In these words Nehru summarised in the feelings of the vast majority in the Lok Sabha who wanted only one guarantee—that the talks should end in a blaze of honour and success. It was equally a demonstration of

the unchallenged sway that the Prime Minister wields over the Congress Party and the manner in which he is able to shape the mood and contours of its attitude.

The second big theme of the debate was the unusually large number of references to Africa. One Congress M.P. after the other went on to speak of the African awakening. Joachim Alva stated, "unless we Indians pull ourselves with the Africans themselves we have no future in Africa."

D. C. Sharma spoke with anger of the shameful episodes that keep occurring in South Africa while Dinesh Singh said, "it is amazing how little attention we all pay to Africa." He made the eminently sensible and practical proposal that the best way we could aid Algeria was by recognising its Government. In this he was strongly backed by R. K. Khadilkar (Independent), who also was sad at the indifference towards Africa.

Nehru eloquently took up the problem. He referred to the forces and urges moving millions of people as well as leadership in the African countries. The whole structure of the

Government. He had not a word to say about the actions of his Government vis-a-vis the Cameroons which had elicited a volume of African criticism.

But something is afoot. This sudden vocal interest in Africa is a carry-over of the speeches on the same subject in the Bangalore Session of the Congress. Perhaps, a healthy awareness is developing in the ruling party that our tepid stand on colonial struggles—the sharpest expression of which is in Africa—is not enhancing our reputation among the peoples emerging to freedom.

Chastening Fact

It is a chastening fact, that very little mention was made in the debate about the momentous international meetings that are proceeding or soon to begin—disarmament and Summit. N. C. Kasiwal was the only speaker who briefly dwelt on these problems and was savagely critical of the French atom bomb tests.

threatened and a new test had been perpetrated by the Western bloc Powers. The danger signs of neo-Nazi moods and actions also cropped up in that part of Germany which was in the Western armed camp.

Yet for all Nehru's worry, he did not even verbally respond to Hiren Mukerjee's suggestion that we follow up our good relations with the German Democratic Republic by the act of diplomatic recognition. Where Guinea had dared why should India draw back? Here precisely was an action that would throw the great weight of India more fully on the side of peace.

Apart from the problems of the passport racket, the dismal state of External Affairs, publicity, the unsatisfactory state of affairs at the London High Commission and Indo-Pak relations, the final point needing notice was the problem of the de jure transfer of power in Pondicherry. Hiren Mukerjee had forcibly raised the issue and called upon the Government to end the present anomaly, especially in the field of justice.

No Progress On Pondicherry

To this Nehru's reply was that he could report "no progress". The fact that the de jure transfer had not yet been effected "had come in our way." The taking of appeals from Pondicherry to courts in Paris was "very odd and undesirable." He hoped that even before the de jure transfer took place, the Government would be able to put an end to the question of taking appeals to Paris and bring the Supreme Court into the picture.

And that was the only concrete step forward in an unexciting debate which, however, saw no retreat and was to the advantage of the progressive forces in the country.

—MOHIT SEN



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MARCH 27, 1960

An appeal from the National Front of Jordan to all political parties, organisations, newspapers, forces of peace and democracy and all honest people in the world, reads:

EVER since the imperialist-reactionary coup d'etat, which took place in Jordan approximately three years ago overthrowing the national regime and robbing the Jordanian people of their independence and all their national and democratic gains, the Jordanian people have been living under a reign of black terror.

From the very first moment of the coup, which was engineered by the Anglo-American imperialists in collaboration with the reactionary forces within Jordan and the Arab elements of reaction outside it in application of the "Eisenhower-Dulles Doctrine", martial law was declared throughout the country. The Parliament was suspended, and all patriotic Deputies elected by the people were expelled from it.

Some of these were put in jail, such as Dr. Yacoub Ziadine, Deputy of Jerusalem, Fayek Warrad, Deputy of Ramallah, Abdul Khalik Yaghmour, Deputy of Hebron and Sheikh Ahmad Ed-Daur, Deputy of Qalqilya. Military courts passed cruel sentences on them ranging from life to four-year imprisonment. Other Ministers, Deputies and prominent patriotic figures had to leave the country in order to escape persecution and torture. Mr. Suleiman Nabulsi, head of the National Socialist Party and of the National Government, is still under house arrest since the first day of the coup.

Tortured And Killed

The Government which came to power following the coup dissolved political parties, trade unions, peasant societies and mass organisations of students, women and government employees, and liquidated patriotic officers of the army. It closed down all cultural and social clubs, and suppressed all patriotic newspapers.

It launched a hysterical

Jordan's Struggle Against Imperialism And Its Lackeys

APPEAL FOR SOLIDARITY

amendment in the "Anti-Communist Act", according to which anyone suspected of being a member of the Communist Party, or of having any relation with Communists, has become liable to life imprisonment.

New military courts, called "State Security Courts", have been set up in various parts of the country with the sole task of trying patriots. The verdicts of these courts are final and innumerable patriots, both civilian and military, are constantly brought before them, where they receive most severe sentences.

Constitution Amendment

To complete its wanton interference with the rights of the people, the Jordanian Government has, in January 1960, introduced an amendment in the Constitution whereby the king has been empowered to prolong the term of Parliament, for a period of one to two years, to evade holding general elections lest the people give an expression of their will, despite the reign of black terror prevailing in the country.

In one word, the Anglo-American imperialists and their agents have turned Jordan into a large prison dominated by terror, torture, vagrancy and total economic destruction. All this is being done with the aim of suppressing the national liberation movement and keeping Jordan in the grip of imperialism and turning it into a base for

aggression against the Arab liberation movement, particularly against the Iraqi Republic which enrages the imperialists and all the black reactionary forces in the area with its firm national policy and democratic trend.

Hussein, king of Jordan, his Prime Minister Sazza Al-Majall, and the clique in power, do not conceal their attempts to tie up Jordan to the Central Treaty Organisation, ignoring the terrific defeat inflicted upon them by the people in 1955 when they tried to tie up Jordan to the Baghdad Pact.

They do not also conceal their open intrigues against the Arab liberation movement, and particularly against the Iraqi Republic.

The repeatedly made declarations by King Hussein and members of his Government confirm that they are not apart from the plots hatched against the national regime in Iraq. The king of Jordan makes no secret of his intentions to restore the extinguished monarchy in Iraq and enthroned himself there, considering that he is the legitimate heir to the extinct throne. All this is taking place at the instigation and with the support of the American and British troops of the Lebanon and Jordan, and on other occasions, when they realised the effect of international solidarity on the achievement of victory for the causes of Arab liberation.

The Jordanian National Front appeals to all parties, organisations, newspapers, democratic forces and to all honest people throughout the world to declare their solidarity with our brave people and their national forces, and to raise their voices loudly in protest against the flagrant atrocities and acts of repression perpetrated by the Anglo-American imperialists and their agents against the people of Jordan and their national and democratic forces.

We appeal to you all to send petitions and telegrams to the Jordanian Government in Amman and to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations demanding the cessation of the campaigns of terror, repression and torture, the restoration of democratic liberties, and the release of the hundreds of political prisoners and detainees. This appeal, issued on February 8, 1960, was signed for the National Front of Jordan by Dr. Abdul Rahman Shukair, Yabha Hammoudeh, Salwa Ziadine, and addresses to which protest telegrams and petitions are to be sent are: King Hussein, Amman, Jordan; Jordanian Prime Minister, Amman, Jordan; and Human Rights Commission, United Nations, New York, U. S. A.

Assam Firing On Refugees

* FROM PAGE 7

promised to find suitable alternative land for the recognised 1,400 refugee families.

A year rolled by and the Government of Assam could only offer land of uncertain quality for 290 families and that, too, in isolated places and in a very vague manner. This shows that Union Rehabilitation Minister Khanna made another baseless charge when he said the refugees were not willing to move to alternative lands provided by the Government.

While the Government pledged to keep eviction operations in abeyance till land was provided elsewhere, the District Council went ahead with its bellicose agitation and police preparations for a violent re-uprooting of the 3,000 families of peasants who had been uprooted once just a decade ago.

Then came the Borbil evictions, with shootings, arrests, arson and looting, while the pledge of the Government of Assam remained a sheer trick

to lull the resistance of the refugee masses.

The Government, faced with strong opposition, had been slandering the refugees, their leaders and strangely enough the Communist Party. Khanna sought to make much of the number of refugees—irresponsible gentlemen were only 750 families at the beginning—but had swelled into their present number by unauthorised infiltration into the tribal areas.

But here also, facts belie Khanna's defence of the sanguinary eviction drive. The Government took the first census of the refugees and found the number to be 750 only, but faced with irrefutable facts, it itself had to admit that the number of bona fide refugee families was 1,800.

The fact stands out that while the refugees were lulled by promises and assurances, a planned drive had been organised by the Government behind the scenes. This was preceded

whole game and accusing the police of organising the tribals for a racial riot at Borbil.

The leaders of the All-Assam Refugee Association also visited the area and raised the same alarm.

But, in spite of everything, the mad caravan went its way.

The refugees, faced with this destructive operation, showed great courage and the fortitude, maintained a high degree of discipline and remained peaceful. They resisted offering their lives. Women came out and lay on the ground before the elephants. After the shooting and killing of their fellowmen, none left the area, all have been waiting for a belated but just solution with patience.

Whether the hopes of these toiling humanity, uprooted twice within a decade from the soil of their toil, will be fulfilled now depends on our people, who are strong enough to force the hands of the Union and the State Governments.

MARCH 27, 1960

NEW AGE

PAGE ELEVEN

Socialist nationalisation or its betrayal

THE debate inside the Labour Party on the fundamental objectives it espouses has been followed with keen interest by political circles all over the world. In our country, the Swatantraites and others are making much of the "retreat" from Socialism to press home their own panacea of a planless Indian economy.

What is usually overlooked, however, is the determined resistance being put up against this latest attempt by the Right wing to water down the already weak brew of Labourite Socialism. This has been demonstratively manifested itself in the climb-down by the Gaitskell group on their amendment to Clause Four of the Labour Party Constitution.

Clause Four contains the famous proclamation of the aim of the common ownership of the means of production. It was against Clause Four that the "new thinkers" headed by Gaitskell had concentrated their ideological offensive. It was the nucleus of their attempt to make the Labour Party not a fighter for Socialism but an "up-to-date" and "efficient" manager of capitalism.

Against this Right-wing of-

FIGHT CONTINUES IN BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

...fensive there was a determined and growing opposition. A "Victory for Socialism" group was formed, consisting of a number of prominent Labour M.P.s. From the constituency branch level, a stream of protest letters and petitions began to pour in. Above all, powerful sections of the trade union movement — with Frank Cousins, of the Transport and General Workers' Union in the van — vigorously protested.

This had its impact. Gaitskell had to withdraw his proposal to entirely delete the clause. He had to go further and agree that there was to be no modification of the original phrasing, either. He has, however, succeeded in introducing a declaration of aims, to explain what the Constitution means.

The declaration, as it emerged from the Executive Committee, recognises the need to extend common ownership to give the

community power over the "commanding heights" of the economy. But it also accepts the need for a mixed economy.

Gaitskell has had to accept that one aim of the party is to give the nation power over the main sectors of the economy. He has also got agreement that a Labour Government will give State aid to private industry.

It was on this last point that a fierce and prolonged fight took place with the weary opponents of the Gaitskell policy retiring after registering a considerable minority vote.

Far from deciding the controversy which has raged since Gaitskell raised the issue at the Blackpool Conference in November, the argument will go on. The next stage is for the Labour Executive to publish the draft which will have to be discussed at the party's annual conference in October. Many M.P.s and the Labour rank-and-file will consider the addition

unnecessary and confusing and will work to reject it.

The Political Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain has issued a statement on the new compromise declaration extracts from which follow:

"This compromise declaration can only lead to confusion. On the basis of this confusion attempts will be made to proclaim a spurious 'unity' which leaves the vital issue unsettled.

"Under cover of this confusion, the Right-wing policy of Gaitskell, the policy of the betrayal of Socialism and surrender to monopoly capitalism, will be pressed forward in practice.

"But the fight goes on. The strength of the campaign of the widest sections of the

Labour movement against the offensive of Gaitskell and his Right-wing associates, to delete the aim of common ownership was shown on the executive by the role of the representatives of major trade unions.

"It is essential that any declaration of aims in the constitution shall not only reaffirm the aim of common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, but shall make absolutely clear and beyond question the necessity to carry through Socialist nationalisation of the large-scale industries of the country and the big monopolies.

"Every effort needs to be directed to ensure the victory of this objective at the annual conference."

PARTY NEWS

Punjab Resolution On Language Question

THE Executive Committee of the Punjab State Council of the Communist Party of India which met at its Jullundur Headquarters on March 18 in an emergency session to consider the recommendations of the Language Goodwill Committee, besides adopting a resolution on the language question, also adopted resolutions on the struggle of P.W.D. workers of Punjab-Himachal Pradesh, the unemployment caused by textile units in Ludhiana, doubling of house-tax in Patiala, the India-wide struggle of bank employees and famine conditions in certain places of Ambala Division.

The Executive Committee considered the report of the Language Goodwill Committee appointed by the Punjab Government to suggest a solution of the language problem.

The Executive welcomed the recognition by the Committee that there cannot be one uniform formula for both the regions and its suggestion that compulsion on the teaching of Punjabi in Hindi region be lifted. It is exactly the proposal which the Communist Party has been canvassing for the past many years. But the Executive urged that full facilities for the teaching of Punjabi be provided in that region, too, for those who so desire.

The Executive further welcomed the statement of the Goodwill Committee that the Sachar Formula tends to perpetuate the communal division between Hindus and Sikhs and further that Punjabi is the mother-tongue of the people of the Punjabi region and that no

one can choose his mother-tongue just as no one can choose his mother.

The Executive, therefore, demanded that the Sachar Formula be scrapped and in its place a language solution be applied to the Punjabi region which gives due status to Punjabi as a regional language both in the field of education and administration, like the status accorded to regional languages elsewhere.

The Executive holds the Congress Government responsible for complicating the language problem by its deliberate failure to implement the regional formula. It has followed temporising policies of compromising now with this and then with that section of the communists with the sordid, narrow aim of keeping itself in power.

The two formulas recommended by the Goodwill Committee will not achieve solution of the language problem in the Punjab region.

The Executive Committee in relation to Punjabi urged the following suggestion:

1. Punjabi in Gurmukhi script be introduced as the first language from the infant class.
2. Punjabi be made the medium of instruction in the field of education.
3. Hindi as national language be taught from fourth primary class.

The Executive, however, will support any compromise formula agreed to by various interests concerned as regards the stage of introduction of Hindi.

The Executive forcefully urged the State Government to take immediate steps to implement the provisions in the regional formula about the use of Punjabi as court language and language of administration in the Punjab region.

TWO PLANS AT GENEVA —THE CONTRAST

IN conditions of a thawing cold war, Western, especially U.S. policy, is inevitably caught on the horns of a terrible dilemma.

While the possibility of ridding mankind from the threat of nuclear suicide has become real and its urgency more pressing than ever, the establishment clings doggedly to its old ways devising ever new illusory threats to persist in and intensify the arms race, sometimes on the plea of keeping up the lead, at other times on the plea of making up the leeway.

In the process it cannot help adopting stupid postures and making itself look ridiculous.

The Ten-Nation Disarmament Conference—the first such conference after 1957—which opened in the Palais de Nations at Geneva on March 15—has by now brought forth ample demonstration of this situation.

That the people's desire for disarmament had by now become a factor to be reckoned with was the one reason why when Khrushchov placed before the U.N. General Assembly last September the Soviet proposal for general and complete disarmament in four years the chorus cry of "propaganda" was so subdued and hesitant in going up. It was again a tribute to this popular demand that the U.S. agreed to resume disarmament negotiations and resume them on a parity basis with the East, with five countries participating on either side.

The Soviet plan submitted to the U.N. by Khrushchov visualised achievement of complete disarmament in three stages in four years. It is this same plan that chief Soviet delegate Deputy Foreign Minister V. A. Zorin placed before the Geneva Conference.

"The Soviet plan thus set the objective clearly as complete and all-sided disarmament, defined the stages in which it was to be achieved and provided for an international control agency empowered to take adequate and appropriate measures at every stage.

As against this, the Western plan, published on March 15 by the U.S. Department of State, and presented to the Geneva meeting next day by chief British delegate Orby-Gore scrupulously avoided mentioning "complete disarmament" as the objective.

The accompanying message from President Eisenhower addressed to the Chief U.S. delegate which was read out at the conference was also very chary on this point. Cautioning against pessimism but trying, mainly to dampen popular enthusiasm about the conference ("Nor should we necessarily expect immediate, dramatic far-reaching strides) Eisenhower said:

"Rather, it should be our objective in these negotiations to contribute by carefully balanced, phased, and safeguarded arms control agreement to the ultimate objective of a secure, free and peaceful world in which international disputes will be settled in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter."

Securing arms control and not liquidation of arms is thus defined as the U.S. objective "in these negotiations," while the "ultimate objective"—without any indication as to how and when that is to be achieved—is defined in the most nebulous platitudes for which nobody has any use anywhere in the world.

The Western plan speaking of "general" disarmament stipulated that it should be "attained" in three stages.

stage. These will relate to numerous questions including so-called measures to assure compliance with an agreement that no nation should place into orbit or station in outer space weapons of mass destruction, measures to assure compliance with an agreement on prior notification of missile launchings and on declarations of locations of launching sites and places of manufacture of such missiles, and so on.

Specified as ceiling for Soviet figure of 2,500,000 with and U.S. armed forces is the levels for other States not named. (Soviet forces at the end of the carrying out of the latest unilateral cut will stand at 2,423,000.)

Thus, amazing though it may appear, it is a fact for all to see that in this Western plan there is not one single measure of practical disarmament. The present negotiations thus turn out to be negotiations for setting up an International Disarmament Organisation to "collect information" and to undertake "joint studies" of a large number of questions, all related to "control."

In its SECOND stage, the Western plan provides that measures would be taken for "the successful completion" of the joint study of questions outlined in the first stage. The main items provided for seek to put into effect measures of "control" after the "joint studies" are over, to put the force level ceilings of the Soviet Union and the USA at 2.1 million men each and to initiate "establishment of the international organisation to 'preserve world peace,'" and so on.

The "ultimate goal," in the THIRD stage, is "reduction of national armed forces and ar-

derground tests, the U.S. announced last week its plans to hold one next January. A ten kiloton bomb, half the size of the Hiroshima bomb which killed 250,000 people, is planned to be exploded.

The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission said in a statement that it was going ahead with the job of digging the underground cavity for the new test. The Chairman of the AEC claimed that the test would "greatly advance the prospects of agreement between members of the nuclear club!"

In this background Tsarapkin, Soviet delegate to the Test Ban Conference proposed on March 19:

"The conclusion of a treaty on the cessation of all tests of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, in the oceans, in outer space, and of all underground tests producing seismic shocks with a magnitude of 4.75 conventional units and more."

Very soon we might once again see a repetition of the familiar Western performance—going back on their own proposals once the Soviet Union accepts them. (March 22)

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

maments by progressive, safeguarded steps to levels required by internal security and fulfilment of obligations under the U.N. Charter."

The third stage provides also for "completion of the establishment of international organisations and arrangements to preserve world peace."

There is no time limit provided for any of the stages and for the plan as a whole, aiming as it does only on the reduction and not liquidation of arms. It avoids mentioning disarmament measures that could be taken straightaway. In the whole long programme, no reference is made to the suspension of nuclear weapon tests.

Nor is there anything about abolition of military bases abroad and about withdrawal of troops from foreign soil. Highly revealing of Western

mind is the eventual evolution of the International Disarmament Organisation. It is visualised as gradually evolving into a super-U.N. with international police force. One does not know what such an international police force would do, if nations are eventually to disarm—keep the colonies in subjugation for the Western Powers, perhaps!

Once again the whole Western plan for so-called general disarmament turns out to be an utter eyewash and a terrible hoax played on a peace-hungry world.

In fact, it seeks to kill several birds with one stone — avoid disarmament, collect all the necessary military information about the other side, replace the U.N. with the more malleable instrument of IDO and provide it with a police force which the U.N. was never able to get. A brilliant idea, indeed.

HOW TO DISARM—IN 3 STAGES.

PHASE 1: A year to 18 months for reduction of forces of the USA, the Soviet Union and China to 1,700,000 each and those of Britain and France to 650,000 each. Conventional arms to be correspondingly cut.

PHASE 2: 18 months to two years for disbanding remaining forces, dismantling of foreign

bases and disbanding all troops on foreign territories.

PHASE 3: One year, in which all nuclear weapons would be destroyed.

International controllers to be sent to foreign military bases to supervise their dismantling.

Mr. Zorin told the Geneva Ten-Nation Conference that the Soviet Union was proceeding from the point that agreement on ending nuclear weapon tests would be reached before complete disarmament measures were begun.

Soviet Compromise Proposal Of Great Significance

AT the three-Power nuclear test ban talks going on concurrently in Geneva where on the pretext of an alleged impossibility of detection of underground tests the U.S. and Britain had for months stalled an agreement, the Soviet Union has made a compromise proposal of a very far-reaching significance.

On February 29, the U.S. delegate had confronted the conference with the threat that unless the Soviet Union accepted the U.S. proposal for a threshold—exempting underground tests of less than a certain velocity (4.75 units in this instance)—the conference could make no headway.

The Soviet Union took the stand that accepting the U.S.-British position would amount to a legalised invitation to resumption of tests and insisted on "an all-embracing treaty, without any exceptions and reservations whatsoever." The Soviet Union wanted the alleged difficulties about detection of underground tests to be found out and overcome in practice after the signing of the comprehensive test ban treaty.

Not only did the West refuse to accept this practical approach, not only did the U.S. announce its threat to scuttle the talks but under cover of this disagreement over the detectability or otherwise of un-

derground tests, the U.S. announced last week its plans to hold one next January. A ten kiloton bomb, half the size of the Hiroshima bomb which killed 250,000 people, is planned to be exploded.

The official Western reaction to this Soviet proposal so far has been that it is "very important" and "should be studied carefully."

Reporting from Washington, a New York Times despatch, however, says that while some American officials are inclined to treat the Soviet proposal favourably, the Defence department and the AEC believe that the U.S. must resume the nuclear weapon tests.

Defence Under Secretary Douglas was reported to have made it plain, according to the New York Times, that the exemption of small explosions from the agreement is explained not merely by the difficulty of detecting them but also by the fact that the U.S. wants to continue developing "cleaner" nuclear weapons.

Policy Statement, there is not a word of criticism about Big Business or its malpractices and manipulations. The Congress Government is assailed not for helping these but for not giving still greater help and encouragement. "Where market is dominated by individuals and groups," urges the Policy Statement, "all manner of steps must be taken to protect freedom in the economic sphere." The above motto is, of course, taken from the manifesto of the Gerran Social Democratic Party which obediently toes the Adenauer line.

After lacing the boots of Big Business and the vested interests, the Swatantra Policy Statement has the temerity to speak on labour and, indeed, devotes a separate section to it.

The Statement is discreetly silent on the concrete proposals for wage-increase for industrial workers and office employees or on the problems posed by the Second Pay Commission; it completely ignores that the real earnings of the workers and employees have remained more or less static, while the productivity of labour has been systematically rising—a sure index of intensified exploitation. All this simply escapes the notice of the Swatantra path-finders.

As for unemployment, the Swatantra Party promises solution "in agriculture and light industries in both of which vast scope for expansion exists..." to quote the Statement's own words. But the line the Swatantra Party has prescribed for these two sectors, as has already been explained, can only be expected to further shrink the present hopelessly inadequate employment opportunities under the Congress regime. If the existing land relations continue, as the Swatantra Party so vehemently desires, and industry follows the party's chartered course, the army of the unemployed is bound to swell as never before.

The Swatantra Statement dishes out another false promise when it says: "Maximisation of output would overcome poverty and unemployment simultaneously." This is what the boss class has always been telling but what is the actual experience? Owing to the policies of the Government and the capitalist class, the masses of people have become poorer and unemployment has enormously grown despite production spurts. And far from seeking to correct these policies, the Swatantra Party demands their further stiffening along the "Free Enterprise" line!

On Trade Unions

"The Swatantra Party," the Statement goes on, "is not satisfied with the present position of trade unions." It raises the bogey of "outsiders" being in the unions and espouses what, in effect, would amount to company unions.

According to the Policy Statement, all that is necessary for "consultation and closer association between the workers and the management" is just "the spirit of mutual trust and cooperation and not any particular

machinery." The whole thing must wait on the pleasure of the employer.

What all this would mean in the present order of industrial relations where the employers violate with impunity even the agreed codes of conduct and other tripartite (labour, employer and Government) agreements is not hard to see. The Swatantra policy on labour is thus viciously anti-labour.

Freedom For Bureaucracy

The Policy Statement talks a great deal about "clean and good government" which it promises to bring. In the name of opposing undue political pressure on the administration which, of course, no right-minded person can tolerate, what the Swatantra proposes is, however, complete freedom for the top bureaucracy. Democratisation of the administration has no place at all in its scheme of things. Speaking at a Press Conference in New Delhi on March 4, K. M. Munshi declared C. D. Deshmukh's demand for an independent tribunal to probe into the charges of corruption against Ministers and high officials.

And its whole perverse outlook and approach would be clearer still when it blames the common run of government employees. "The Con-

gress Government's indiscriminate recruitment of a horde of six million government servants has resulted," says the Policy Statement, "in debasing the value of the official, lowering his status and increasing public expenditure."

Apart from its obvious absurdity, this is an open incitement to the Government to go ahead with mass retrenchment which already hangs like Damocles' sword over the heads of tens of thousands of employees. The education policy of the party offers nothing but curbs on the rights of the students. The students should, says the Statement, "while engaged in college life, abstain from active participation in the furtherance of any political party." The urgent problems of education such as expansion of facilities especially in the field of scientific and technical education, reduction of tuition fees and improvement of pay and conditions of service of teachers, the speedy implementation of the constitutional guarantees about primary education, do not at all seem to worry the Swatantra policy-makers.

Speaking in Madras on June 4 last year, Rajaji gave the slogan of "restoration of the 1950 Constitution". K. M. Munshi who, apart from being spiritually inspired, has also immensely materially benefited by interpreting the Constitution in favour of the vested interests in the courts of law, speaks in the same strain. "Return to the 1950 Constitution" is his slogan. What does all this clever manoeuvre mean?

Nobody would quarrel with them if they demanded the deletion of that amendment to the Constitution which enabled the Government to pass the Preventive Detention Act and detain citizens without trial. No, that is not their worry. They want that such modifications as the Third and Fourth Amendments which have hit the big landlords and Big Business and are in the interests of the community be scrapped. These changes in the Constitution, according to them, have resulted in "an unconscionable use of its

power to destroy or cripple property rights..." They want that Parliament and State Legislatures be divested of their powers to finally determine the quantum of compensation to be paid to the landlord or the capitalist in the case of State acquisition of land or industrial concerns. It will be recalled these were not there in the original Constitution but had to be incorporated through some amendments. So, one can now also understand what the Swatantra leaders really mean when they shed tears over the narrow State autonomy. To enlarge it—which is unquestionably very essential—one must seek still more radical amendments to the Constitution and not go back to 1950.

In the name of State autonomy, what is the Swatantra Party aims at is to take away the powers which the Centre has assumed for the purpose of nationalisation and some measure of control and regulation over industry, trade and commerce. Their fig leaf about State autonomy should deceive none.

In the same breath, the Policy Statement, however, talks of the supremacy of people and Parliament to urge—believe it or not—the disbanding of the Planning Commission.

The Swatantra pontiffs bandy a lot of phrases about the Constitution and the Rule of Law but what they state in their Policy Statement

in his Presidential Address at the party's preparatory convention in Bombay, N. G. Ranga, bluntly proclaimed on August 1, 1959: "The Swatantra Party is placing itself in the vanguard of growing revolt of the masses against these plans." On the question of planning, the Swatantra Party has indeed surpassed itself.

On Democratic Rights

As is to be expected, the Policy Statement has not a word for the democratic rights and civil liberties of the masses which are under constant attacks. On the contrary, Swatantra leader A. D. Shroff, who is also the Chairman of the Forum of Free Enterprise, has publicly ridiculed universal adult franchise and this, no other than Prime Minister Nehru, at once sharply nailed down as "a beginning of fascist approach."

One need not take it as a sign of political senility when Rajaji declared that democracy and Socialism cannot exist side by side or fix the Communist Party as enemy No. 1, and the Congress as enemy No. 2.

Declarations such as these give out the reactionary and anti-people ideological posture of this party of the extreme Right. The Swa-

any standing in the nation. On the contrary, the Swatantra leadership represents a motley crowd of forgotten Rajas and Maharajas, ambitious moneybags, worn-out bureaucrats, and contact-men, frustrated and discredited politicians, renegades and reactionary dissidents from the Congress and other parties and birds of passage of all sorts.

No one believes, least of all perhaps the Swatantra leaders themselves, that a party led by such people and with a programme such as their Policy Statement is the stuff that, by itself, can overthrow the Congress and capture power. But their capacity to re-grade and vitiate the country's political and public life and do mischief must not be under-rated.

Wherein Its Danger

In the first place, the Swatantra Party, as has already been seen, is enthusiastically backed by the Press controlled by the Hirlas, Goenkas and others of Big Business. One has only to look at the Hindustan Times (Delhi) and the Searlight (Patna) of the Birlas, the Indian Express of the Goenkas, the Times of India of Dalmia-Jain, the Indian Nation (Patna) of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, the Hindu of Madras. Day in and day out these and their associates in the Indian languages and similar other papers beat the drums of the Swatantra Party.

Secondly, there are many in the upper layers of the Congress, especially in the Congress Parliamentary and Legislature Parties, who are in sympathy with the Swatantra Party and some of them, in fact, function in liaison with the latter. This liaison was demonstrated when M. R. Masani made his bid to drive out Defence Minister V. K. Krishna Menon over the Thimaya affair last year. It looked as though the leadership of a number of Congress M.P.s had passed on to Swatantra spokesman Masani.

Similar has been the experience at times over the India-China border issue. There does exist a powerful Swatantra lobby within the Congress and it is just not empty bragging on their part when N. G. Ranga and M. R. Masani go round the country saying that they have many supporters among Congressmen including M.P.s. The Swatantra's close contacts with the most reactionary elements in the official hierarchy must also be taken into account.

Wooling Of Communalism

Even secularism of the State is sought to be undermined. Speaking at a public meeting in Calcutta on March 16, Rajaji said he "wanted a State based on dharma and did not believe in this so-called secularism" (Amrita Bazar Patrika, March 17). It will be noted here that the former leader of the communal Hindu Mahasabha, N. C. Chatterjee, is now in the Swatantra fold as the Chairman of the party's West Bengal unit.

New Courage To Right In Congress

Apart from Jal Prakash Narain's public blessing of the Swatantra Party, there are "the bonds of shared ideals" of anti-Communism and in certain other respects between the Swatantra and PSP leaderships and the entente cordiale between M. R. Masani and the PSP Chairman, Asoka Mehta, is too notorious a fact to need any mention here.

The emergence of the Swatantra Party has given new courage to Right reaction within the Congress

* SEE FACING PAGE

IMPLEMENT TRIPARTITE DECISIONS

All the affiliated trade unions of the AITUC will conduct a protest campaign from April 3 to 10, by holding meetings and demonstrations against the efforts of the employers and the Government to avoid, ignore and violate the various decisions unanimously arrived at the various Tripartite Labour Conferences.

The Tripartite Agreements of the 15th Indian Labour Conference in 1957 and the 18th Indian Labour Conference in 1958 and of the various Standing Labour Committees and Industrial Committees concerning wage policy and wage norms, closures and rationalisation, industrial housing and expansion of Employees' State Insurance facilities, recognition of unions and institution of grievances procedure, democratisation of industrial administration and workers' participation in management—all this represents integrated components of an entire labour policy during the period of planned economic development of our country.

Labour had accepted the code of discipline which virtually meant a voluntary curb on the trade union right to strike because it was promised a "need-based" wage, rationalisation without retrenchment and a proper share in the prosperity of a rationalised undertaking, recognition of unions commanding the majority of workers, better social security and a grievances machinery without recourse to lengthy litigation.

Background Of Strikes

During the entire First Plan period, Government and the employers desperately struggled for wage freeze and increase in work-load. And the workers were fighting with increasing tenacity for a wage-rise and against brute work-load, rationalisation and retrenchment. Industrial disputes were growing and the number of workers involved and the man-days lost were increasing. The Severity Rate (man-days lost as per cent of man-days available for work) rose from 0.310 in 1952 to 0.597 in 1958.

Labour accepted all this because economic growth in an

Swatantra Manifesto

* FROM FACING PAGE

itself to raise its voice louder and press on with its tricks and manoeuvres. It has, of course, provided an independent political platform for the extreme Right to intervene in our political life. The immediate objective of the Swatantra Party is evidently to create pressures within the Congress and upon the Government so that the latter which is continually yielding to Big Business and other vested interests, yields still further. The Swatantra Party wants to distort and retard progressive trends in our economic and political life and reverse their course in a reactionary direction.

Commenting as early as June 11, last year, on the formation of the Swatantra Party, Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of our Party, drew the country's pointed attention precisely to this danger.

It is now for all democratic-minded people, both within the Congress and outside to exercise the utmost vigilance. The Policy Statement of the Swatantra Party and all its misleading demagoguery and misadventures must be thoroughly exposed and rebuffed. The political and organisational defeat of the extreme Right which the Swatantra Party represents is called for in the vital interests of the masses as for the sake of the country's democratic advance.

Subsequent developments indicate that while the workers took all these decisions seriously and sincerely, the Government and employers systematically ignored and violated these unanimous conclusions. The Government claimed that disputes and strikes showed a decline. The employers enjoyed a rise in production and a boom in profits. Workers were denied the benefits of these decisions and the enhanced prosperity of the industry.

The 15th Tripartite (1957) laid down a national wage policy, a "need-based" minimum wage norm" as a guide for all wage-fixing authorities, including minimum wage committees, wage boards, adjudicators, etc.

To translate this into action, the Government was asked to set up central wage boards for 12 sectors of employment, excluding the cotton textiles for which one was appointed in March 1957. But what was the result?

The Central Pay Commission has sought to blow up the very norms laid down by the Tripartite and has blatantly reduced the food and calorific requirements of the employee. And the Labour Ministry does not even mourn the sad burial of its commitments at the hands of the Pay Commission and the Finance Ministry!

Only two wage boards for the cement and sugar industries were appointed since this decision was taken. Decision has been taken to constitute wage boards for the jute and plantation industry. But they are being delayed. The intention was announced to constitute wage boards for the chemical and iron and steel industries. But nothing is being done to put them up.

The engineering industry is in boom. The index of production in this industry has shot up from 151.9 in 1954 (Base 1951:100) to 287.1 in June 1959. But it presents a sad picture of complete anarchy in wage norms and job standards. A central wage board is a crying need of the industry. Yet the Government seems unmoved.

Underdeveloped country required the least possible interruption in the production processes.

But were the Government and the employers guided by the same motives? Evidently not. Government only wanted uninterrupted production. The employers wanted uninterrupted production only when it guaranteed uninterrupted rise in profits.

During the entire First Plan period, Government and the employers desperately struggled for wage freeze and increase in work-load. And the workers were fighting with increasing tenacity for a wage-rise and against brute work-load, rationalisation and retrenchment. Industrial disputes were growing and the number of workers involved and the man-days lost were increasing. The Severity Rate (man-days lost as per cent of man-days available for work) rose from 0.310 in 1952 to 0.597 in 1958.

The great textile strike in Kanpur and Amritsar, Rangaj strike of 50,000 coal-miners, strikes in Singareni collieries and Hatti gold mines, tramway workers' strike in Calcutta, jute workers' strikes against work-loads in the 24-Parganas, Hooghly and Garden Reach, Calcutta. textile strike for Pujya bonus, engineering workers' strikes in various parts of the country, Hyderabad State general strike for wage boards and so on are some of the glorious strike actions of this period, representative of the mood of the workers.

It was this rising graph that frightened the capitalists and unnerved the Government. Such was the background to the 1957 Tripartite Labour Conferences. The growing actions and the angry mood of the textile workers in Coimbatore, Bombay, Indore and Kanpur, the Hindustan Airliner strike in Bangalore and above all, the historic steel strike of Jamshedpur provided the immediate background for the Nainital Indian Labour Conference in 1958.

Such were the compulsions under which the employers and Government agreed to a positive policy and for a policy of protecting the workers' emoluments and employment when faced with rationalisation.

That meant that along with profits for the capitalists, workers would get better wages and consumers would have to pay less. But nowhere has this been adhered to. Cotton textiles, woolen textiles, jute textiles, engineering industry are all classic examples of violation of this agreement.

The 16th Tripartite conclusions included recommendations concerning closures. Standing orders had to be modified to

give two months' notice for closure and meanwhile, steps were to be taken by the Government, the employers and the unions to avoid closures.

Nothing of the sort was done. Closures have taken place without any steps being taken and the workers were forced to suffer misery.

It was agreed that Employees' State Insurance should be expanded to include workers' families and that hospitals would be constructed, better medicines would be guaranteed and bureaucratic delays avoided. We know the result. Delay continues. Families even where they are covered, get only nominal out-patient aid. Hospitals have not yet come up. Things, if at all, are moving at a snail's pace when the money available with the corporation is mounting. The workers are contributing for medical aid but are being denied proper aid.

Decisions were taken to expedite industrial housing. State Governments were asked to acquire land and provide it to employees' and workers' cooperatives. Rents of quarters were to be reduced and facilities were to be provided at these quarters. Nothing is done to implement all this.

And there was the code of discipline based on the twin principles of recognition of unions and grievances procedure. But in practice, these principles are being denied and workers are asked to adhere to the "code of discipline."

The textile workers' unions in Amritsar, affiliated to the AITUC and enjoying an overwhelming majority of verified

membership, are denied recognition.

The Suti Mill Mazdoor Sabha of Kanpur is not recognised.

Any number of instances can be cited.

The code of discipline is sought to be enforced unilaterally only against the workers and is a dead letter even in the public sector where the Government itself is the employer.

The Bombay Government refuses to have even an Evaluation and Implementation Committee. The Madhya Pradesh Government wants the Labour Advisory Board itself to do evaluation and implementation work. The Bihar Government refuses a ballot in Jamshedpur, even though an earlier decision of their Labour Advisory Board provided for such a step.

The code of discipline enjoins on the employers not to interfere in trade unions, but the engineering employers in Bombay will have only unions of their choice and do everything to disrupt unions of the workers' choice. Ministers do everything to boost up rival unions against existing majority and even recognised unions.

Workers' participation in management is a dead letter. The Joint Management Council in the Hindustan Machine-Tools is denied functioning while efforts are made to bolster up rival unions.

Such is the horrible picture of violations of the tripartite agreements by the Government and the employers. It is against this that trade unions will campaign. It is to restore the gains of the Tripartite Conferences that the workers will agitate.

The textile workers' unions in Amritsar, affiliated to the AITUC and enjoying an overwhelming majority of verified

LABOUR NOTES

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

DEVELOPMENT OF EACH PERSONALITY



is one of the basic tasks of the Soviet State. One of the ways of achieving this is to reduce the hours devoted to production and to leave more time for relaxation for family life, for studies and amusements. So Soviet Seven Year Plan guaranteeing the highest standard of living envisages a transition to decreased working hours this year. How Soviet people spend their leisure hours? What are their cultural pursuits? What are their literary achievements? For a comprehensive knowledge of life in the Soviet Union

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NEW AGE

PAGE FIFTEEN

CPI DEMANDS SANCTIONS AGAINST S. AFRICA

Blood-Bath Condemned

HUMAN conscience will be shocked at the news of the barbarous police firings on March 21, 1960, on some crowds of Africans in Langa near Cape Town, South Africa, says a statement issued by the Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party, in New Delhi on March 23.

The statement adds: Even according to the official version, 66 persons have been killed and over 200 injured. Actual figures must have been higher.

This terrible blood-bath is yet another demonstration of the length to which the South African Government can go in their racial fanaticism and racial persecution. Here is yet another proof that their policy of apartheid spells not

only limitless violence and mass murder but also constitutes a foul challenge to human dignity.

By crimes such as these, the South African Government has long put itself outside the pale of civilised Governments. They have violated every elementary civilised code and are trying to drown in the blood of the Africans the very Human Rights under the U.N. Charter.

Nothing short of the most effective sanctions of world public opinion as well as of the United Nations can restrain the South African Government and make them adhere to the ways of civilisation.

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India urges

upon Prime Minister Nehru to take all necessary initiative in creating these sanctions through appropriate means, both political and diplomatic. South Africa happens to be a member of the Commonwealth of which India too is a member. India's special obligations towards African people and indeed, all those who stand for human rights, follow from this position.

The Secretariat strongly condemns this latest crime of the South African Government and appeals to all political parties and other popular organisations and people to immediately raise their voice of protest against it throughout the country. Let India speak with one voice against racialism and its crimes.

CONFERENCE FOR PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

— NEW DELHI, MARCH 27 TO 29

THE Indian Conference for Peace and Disarmament will be held in New Delhi from March 27 to 29. The Conference has been convened by the Committee of Indian Parliamentarians for Peace.

The Committee in an appeal has said that "in the new period of relaxation of international tension great hopes rest on the coming Summit meeting at Paris of the heads of the Governments of the USA, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France. We trust that initial agreement will be reached at this meeting, taking mankind towards total and universal disarmament, with suitable measures for inspection and control. This is the desire of all peoples."

The Indian Conference is being convened "to declare the united demand of all sections of the Indian people for the success of the Summit Conference and for general and complete controlled Disarmament, and to give whole-hearted support to the peace policy of Prime Minister Nehru and of the Government of India based on the pursuit of friendship among all nations, on non-alignment and opposition to military pacts and alliances and on the peaceful settlement by negotiations of all international disputes and the outlawing of war and aggression."

The Conference enjoys the support of over 250 Members of Parliament from all parts of the country, who are members of the Committee.

Delegates are expected from all States—legislators and other leaders and workers represent-

our information is correct, would recommend that constitutional methods be used to settle the dispute,

b) calling a further conference perhaps at the instigation of the Cabinet, and perhaps without inviting the employees to persuade us to depart from the firm stand we have taken,

c) appoint a conciliation officer and inviting both the parties,....

"As we see it there are only two courses open to the conciliation officer:

i) to recommend that there are no grounds for dispute, which of course would not be possible,

ii) to recommend that the matter be put before a national tribunal, which is what we wish and the union fears."

That showed, Prabhat Kar told me, that the bankers had previous knowledge of how the Cabinet would behave if the issue was brought before it. Obviously when the Finance Ministry did not agree to voluntary arbitration, the desired decision was declared.

However, now it is being said, as the Prime Minister said at this monthly Press conference,

ing different organisations which support the aims of the Conference.

In Delhi, a Reception Committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Ch. Brahm Perakash, M.P., and meetings to support the Conference have been held in different parts of the city, with small preparatory committees set up in half a dozen local districts of the Capital.

Foreign guest observers have been invited from all over the world to participate in the Conference and inform the delegates regarding the work for peace and disarmament being carried on in their countries. Among those who have already informed the Committee of their participation are: Mr. D. N. Pritt, Mr. Horace Alexander, Mrs. Dorothy Woodman from Britain; Members of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Mirza Ibrahimov, Victor Blazhenov and Pigm Azimov; Bishop Laszlo Dozseri of Hungary; Mr. Lucio Luzzatto, M.P. of Italy; Dr. R. W. C. Thambiah of Ceylon and others.

Eight Commissions will work on the following subjects, each of which will be led by a team of experts:

1. On Nuclear Weapons and Tests;
2. On Total Disarmament;
3. On Disarmament and Economic Development;
4. National Independence;
5. On Gandhian Approaches to Peace;
6. On Non-Alignment;
7. On problems of the Cold War;
8. On Peace and the Role of Artists and Writers.

A cultural programme and an international cultural evening are arranged in connection with the Conference.

that he had never heard of voluntary arbitration in connection with the dispute of the State Bank. But it need not be pointed out that the resolution asking for voluntary arbitration adopted by the bank employees' organisations had been forwarded to the respective authorities and even to the Prime Minister.

To say that the tribunal has been appointed because of the strike in the State Bank of India is also an argument without any weight; for, had the Government decided to appoint a wage board or an enquiry commission it could have done so any time between the expiry of the Bank Award Act on March 31, 1959, to the date when strike began i.e. March 4, 1960.

What is obvious is the fact that the Government has surrendered to the pressure of bankers and gone back on its own commitment. The bankers are happy and the bankmen angry.

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ANGRY BANKMEN RISE IN PROTEST

FROM O. P. MEHROTRA

Banking operations all over the country were paralysed on March 19. Angry bankmen observed a day's token strike on that day to protest against the Labour Ministry's surrender to the bank barons and express their solidarity with the striking employees of the State Bank of India.

THE call for observing a token strike on March 19 was given by the All-India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) to all its constituent units throughout India against the action of the Union Labour Ministry in going back on its "commitments to the AIBEA to settle the dispute in the banking industry through a machinery other than a tribunal." It was also to support the demands of the State Bank of India employees who are on strike since March 4.

Hundreds of telegrams supporting the call of the AIBEA and reporting the action on it poured into the office of the employees' association in Delhi. Prabhat Kar, M.P., General Secretary of the AIBEA, showed these when New Age called on him on March 20.

Successful Strike

The reports of the strike, meetings and demonstrations in different cities show how angry the bankmen are with the action of the Labour Ministry.

In the Capital, bank employees peacefully demonstrated before the New Delhi branch of the State Bank of India. Business in most of the 136 banks was affected. The strike was peaceful.

In the Reserve Bank of India, even the supervisory staff joined the strike. Clearing of cheques between the banks had to be suspended.

Reports from Calcutta show that the strike was successfully organised throughout West Ben-

gal as a result of which business came to a standstill on March 19.

Earlier on March 14, about 7,000 employees of 29 banks in Calcutta had held protest demonstrations before their respective offices. Next day, a huge demonstration was taken out by all the banks of the city. Later, a protest meeting was held.

In Bombay, Madras and many other cities, the strike was accompanied by meetings and demonstrations.

The leadership of the AIBEA was satisfied with the response. Prabhat Kar, M.P., General Secretary of the AIBEA, in a statement issued to the Press congratulated the workers "for the magnificent manifestation of their solidarity to their organisation."

The appointment of the tribunal for bank disputes has chagrined the workers. Their leadership is, however, seriously considering further steps to face the situation created by the abject surrender of the Government to the bankers who refused to accept even the decision of the tripartite conference.

Prabhat Kar told me that the attitude of the Government vis-a-vis the bank disputes has completely out of tune with its proclaimed labour policy of encouraging collective bargaining.

The anti-labour policy of the bankers has ultimately found support in the Government. It is time that the bank employees in all the sectors—Reserve Bank, the State Bank and other commercial and exchange banks unitedly faced the situation.

Bank employees, Prabhat Kar pointed out, had been demanding a negotiated settlement in the industry for the last one year. But the bank managements opposed it. The AIBEA demanded settlement of disputes through voluntary arbitration but the banks opposed it all along. The Government knew the stand of the employees.

At a tripartite conference, held in August last, the Union Labour Minister had expressed himself in favour of voluntary arbitration. But the bank managements did not agree to it. They insisted on the appointment of a tribunal.

Prabhat Kar disclosed that the Union Labour Minister had at one stage agreed to refer the disputes in the banking industry to an Enquiry Commission for arbitration. But the Finance Minister came in the way. This Ministry felt that the bank disputes should be referred to a tribunal under the Industrial Dispute Act. Thus the bankers' view has found favour and the Government has gone back on its promise for settling the disputes "with a machinery other than a tribunal."

Bankers' Letters

Prabhat Kar showed me some copies of letters written by bankers and one of these sent on August 18 from the office of the Calcutta Exchange Banks Association to the Chairman of the Bombay Exchange Banks candidly pointed out that the Labour Minister would have no other way but to appoint a Tribunal.

The letter said, "We can envisage the Labour Minister having these courses open to him:

a) bring the matter to the attention of the Cabinet, who, if