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Unique Meeting In Capital

● From Our Special Correspondent

A UNIQUE and memorable public demonstration was witnessed on Sunday (February 19) in Delhi when different political parties, youth, trade union bodies and the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, came together to organise a public meeting to pay homage to the memory of Patrice Lumumba, the first Prime Minister of the Congo, murdered by the imperialists and their agents. For the first time after Independence the flags of the Congress, Communist Party and PSP flew together.

The meeting held at the Gandhi grounds attracted a big audience and was addressed, besides the leaders of India, by ambassadors of the United Arab Republic and Ghana, and representatives of several African countries. It was a mighty demonstration of the unity and solidarity of the peoples of India, Asia and Africa against imperialism and for the freedom of Africa and the whole world.

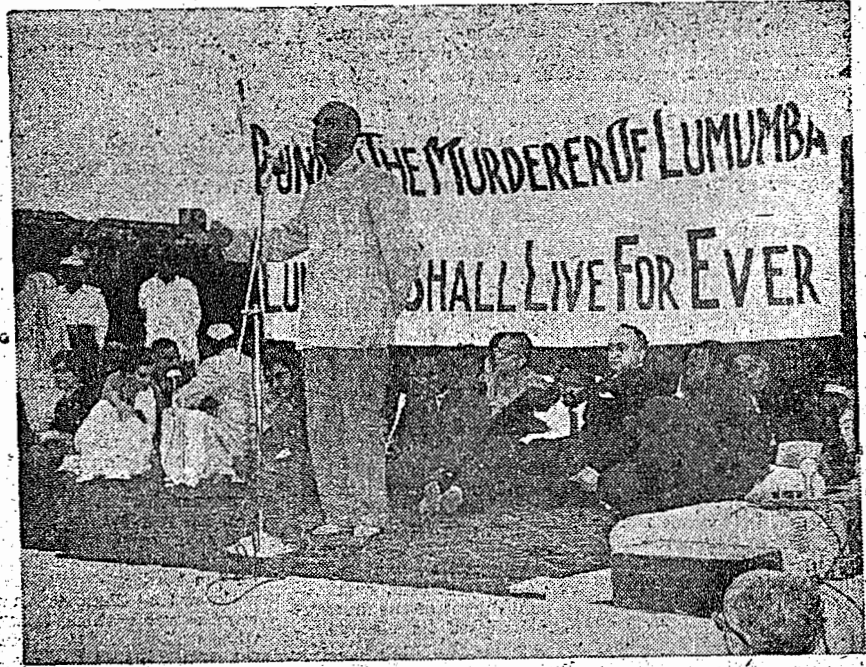
Those who addressed the meeting were Indira Gandhi, Ajoy Ghosh, Asoka Mehta, Aruna Asaf Ali, President of the African Students' Association in India Daniel Rasulo, General Secretary of Malawi National Congress of Nyasaland Chisiza, Representative of Provisional Government of Algeria in India Cheriff Guellal, Representative United Front of South African Parties Makiwane and Prof. Maksonid of Lebanon. The meeting was presided over by Sanjeeva Reddy, the Congress President. In his presidential remarks Sanjeeva Reddy used very strong words to condemn the imperialists and to assure support to the Congo. The huge audience warmly

cheered every denunciation of the Western Imperialism, especially the United States, for their responsibility in the murder of Lumumba. They responded with warm enthusiasm to the Hindi translation of a poem of the Congolese martyr.

A resolution was passed in the meeting with all standing which recorded grief at the brutal and pre-meditated murder of Lumumba and demanded that those responsible for this crime be apprehended and brought to justice. It also demanded that those conspiring against the independence and the integrity of Congo should be routed.

The African leaders in their speeches emphasised that mere moral support to Congo was not sufficient and demanded that the Government in Stanleyville be recognised by all the countries which stood for the freedom of Congo.

The Ambassador of Ghana concluding his powerful speech said, "we should demonstrate our sorrow more realistically by recognising the Government of Stanleyville as Ghana had already done". The sorrow and anger that imperialist action has given rise in the



Ajoy Ghosh addressing the February 19 rally in Delhi jointly organised by the Congress, CPI, PSP and various mass organisations.

hearts of Africans was best voiced in the speech made by the representative of Nyasaland. He said that this was no time for being diplomatic and prompt action was needed. He asked the independent African States, the United Arab Republic, Ghana and Guinea to march into Congo and end the gangster regime there.

He added that Africans did not regard the murder of Lumumba as something to moralise and philosophise about but they were determined to avenge the murder and would bitterly carry on the struggle against imperialism and colonialism till the latter were buried. He warned that Tshombe and other traitors would be "chewed alive" should they dare come to any other part of Africa.

AFRO-ASIA'S VOICE

In his rousing speech the UAR ambassador described Lumumba as "torchlight of freedom and hope" and declared "imperialism can prevent Lumumba's wife and children from giving him a decent burial but cannot prevent us from burying imperialism itself".

Special emphasis was laid by the African speakers on the rôle that India can play. All of them paid tributes to India and Prime Minister Nehru but said that they wanted from India not only moral support but also material support, and urged the Government of India to recognise the Government in Stanleyville forthwith.

Aruna Asaf Ali spoke with passion of the rapacious nature of imperialism. She compared Lumumba to our own freedom martyrs and recalled how at these very Gandhi Grounds some thirty years ago a meeting had been held to condemn the hanging of Bhaqat Singh. She welcomed the unity displayed today and appealed for material help to the Congo. Ajoy Ghosh in his speech

said that imperialism had not killed the patriots for the first time but the way Lumumba's murder had affected the world was something new. This was because of the conditions and circumstances of this murder, he pointed out. He recalled that it was Lumumba who had called for the United Nations' help because Belgium was attacking Congo's freedom and the United Nations thereupon intervened.

IMPERIALISM DESPERATE

But in the presence of the U.N., Belgium and its agents killed Lumumba and the United Nations failed to prevent the murder of the legally elected Prime Minister. Ajoy Ghosh emphasised that this happened not because Belgian imperialism was strong, and added that it is weak and afraid as is evident from the fact that they did not want to divulge where Lumumba and his colleagues were killed lest that place might become a place of pilgrimage.

He declared, "Lumumba's body can be hidden, but the spirit and cause he represented cannot be hidden". He said that he had not come to speak against Belgian imperialism but to point to the responsibility of the United Nations and other imperialist powers, particularly American imperialism. They helped and abetted crime because they were afraid that the developments in Congo would affect the whole of Africa, he said and added that Congo was a warning and challenge to all, particularly to the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa.

The peoples of Asia and Africa would undoubtedly accept the challenge hurled at them by imperialism. Ajoy Ghosh said. He added that the recognition of the Stanleyville Government by several States was one such stern rebuff to the imperialists.

He supported the statement made by the Prime

Minister in Parliament on Congo which he said stated clearly what the people and the Government of India think in this matter. Ajoy Ghosh emphasised that imperialism once it is forced out of a country does not go away for all times and tries to stage a come-back as is shown by the Congo events, and said that this should make us all very vigilant.

He supported the appeal by Aruna Asaf Ali that aid to Congo should be organised. He concluded his speech by saying that the peoples of India and the whole of Asia and Africa would fight along with Congo so long as the imperialism was not ended everywhere.

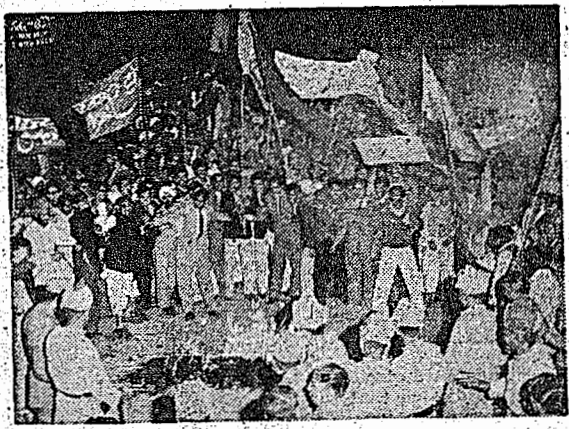
Indira Gandhi said that India too must share the responsibility for the murder of Lumumba, though indirectly. Our fault was, she said, that Indian people did not put sufficient pressure in time and allowed matters to drift. She urged that though Lumumba could not be brought back we should learn a lesson and act accordingly in future. She described in moving terms the torture to which the Congolese leader had been subjected, and said she felt his loss as that of "somebody very near".

DISCORDANT NOTE

The only discordant note was struck by PSP leader Asoka Mehta. He said he was saddened by Lumumba's death but added that grief should not become anger. He said that the assassination of Prime Ministers seemed to have become a tradition in the underdeveloped countries.

There were no words of wrath against the imperialists but only an insinuation that one "intervention" should not be replaced by another.

But the audience was in no mood to listen to this sort of nonsense. Nor could Asoka Mehta's discomfort at being present dampen the spirits of the people.



Demonstrators in Delhi burn the effigy of Belgian imperialism. (All photos—Robinson)

ROUSING CALL TO AVENGE LUMUMBA

LUMUMBA'S MURDER STIRS WRATH OF INDIAN PEOPLE

● From Our Correspondents

TRULY speaking, it was after many years that the capital of India witnessed militant anti-imperialist demonstrations. On successive occasions last week the citizens of Delhi came out against the cold-blooded murder of the hero of resurgent Africa and all freedom loving people, Patrice Lumumba.

Militant Demonstrations

The martyrdom of Lumumba and those of his associates was the theme of a number of meetings, resolutions and speeches. These made it clear that the Indian people stand shoulder to shoulder with their brothers in the Congo in their hour of peril, when the imperialists of the world are trying their level best to drown in blood their independence struggle.

On February 14 more than 70 African students, members of the African Students Association of India, entered the Belgian Embassy during lunch hour carrying placards denouncing the Belgian imperialists. Their slogans rent the air and hatred for imperialism was writ large on their faces. They declared at the top of their voices: "No rest till Africa avenges Lumumba". No wonder in such a mood they destroyed some property of the Belgian Embassy.

Later they marched to the U.S. Embassy and were met by a strong contingent of police. Expressing their hatred against American imperialism they threw rotten eggs and rotten tomatoes at the building. It was a difficult job for the capital's police to control them. They left the spot only after handing over to one of the officials of the American Embassy a memorandum condemning the "cold-blooded assassination" of Lumumba.

This was followed the next day by a 2,000 strong demonstration organised jointly by the Delhi Branch of the Communist Party of India, Delhi Trade Union Congress, Peace Council, Delhi Youth Federation, Students Federation and several other workers'

unions. For full two hours from 4 to 6 p.m. they demonstrated outside the residence of the Belgian Ambassador near Hardinge Bridge carrying the flags of their respective organisations and with black bands on their arms. They shouted: "Death to the Murderers of Lumumba", "Hammarckjoeld is responsible for Lumumba's murder", "Imperialists Quit Africa" and "Long Live Martyr Lumumba". They were joined by hundreds of passers-by and the traffic on this busy thoroughfare had ultimately to be diverted by another route.

Later the demonstrators burnt an effigy of Belgian imperialism. A resolution condemning the murder of Congo's Premier and demanding punishment for the guilty was passed unanimously amidst the lusty shouting of slogans. The demonstration then marched to the United Nation's Information Centre at Curzon Road and dispersed after parading round Can-naught Place.

Last Sunday's (February 19)

meeting held at the Gandhi Ground was not the last in the series. On February 20 the Janvadi Mahila Samaj organised a women's demonstration outside the residence of the Belgian Ambassador. Hundreds of women carrying black flags and shouting slogans paraded the streets. Dignity, sorrow and anger emanated from their faces and their very gait.

The Delhi University Students' Union held a largely-attended meeting on February 21 and passed a strong resolution condemning the murderers of Lumumba.

Calcutta Protests

WHEN the news of Lumumba's murder became known, there was anger on every face and in offices and factories, in shops and restaurants, in

clubs and mohallas, this was the only topic of agitated discussions.

The Communist Party, Forward Bloc, RSP, Marxist Forward Bloc, Socialist Unity Centre, Bolshevik Party, Workers' Party of India and the RCPI decided to give organised expression to the hatred and anger of the people.

People's Anger

A statement by these parties called for the observance of two minutes' silence at 11-30 a.m. on February 15 and for mustering strong at the protest rally on Calcutta Maidan and mass demonstration to the Belgian and U.S. Consulates in the afternoon.

Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the BPTUC, called on workers and office employees, irrespective of their organisational affiliations, to observe the two minutes' silence and participate in the

protest rally and demonstration.

Promode Das Gupta, Secretary of the West Bengal State Council of the Communist Party, called on all Party members to organise protest demonstrations all over the State.

Bijoyananda Chatterjee, General Secretary of the Pradesh Congress Committee, said there should be all-out protest against the crime.

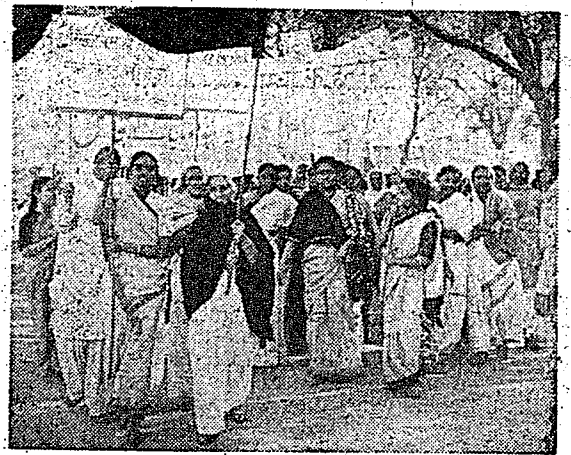
Prominent personalities like Hemanta Basu, MLA (F.B.); Amar Basu, MLA (Marxist F.B.); Vivekananda Mukherjee, Editor of Jugantar; Dr. P. C. Chandra, leader of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and Dr. Triguna Sen, Rector of Jadavpur University condemned the dastardly crime and demanded punishment of the guilty.

Calcutta Corporation Councilors observed two minutes' silence when the Corporation met in the afternoon of February 14, and the meeting adjourned after a resolution had been adopted paying homage to the memory of Lumumba.

Four central organisations of students, including the one controlled by the Congress, issued a statement calling on students throughout West Bengal to go on a general strike on February 15 and hold protest meetings and demonstrations.

The African Students' Association in Calcutta decided to boycott the functions in connection with Queen Elizabeth's visit to Calcutta and also "all functions to which we are invited in honour of such personalities representing these murderers' governments of Europe and America".

In response to the call of the Left parties, two minutes'



Women's demonstration in Delhi on February 20.

silence was observed on February 15 in many offices, factories, educational institutions, etc.

Students all over the State went on a general strike. In Calcutta, they brought out a huge protest demonstration which was held up by the police near the Belgian Consulate. The students then squatted on the road and burnt effigies of Mobutu and colonialism. A deputation of the demonstrators later met a representative of the Consulate and conveyed to him the students' protest.

The demonstration then marched to the U.S. Consulate where again they were stop-

ped on the Chowpatty sands and then marched to the Belgian Consulate. As soon as the demonstration was stopped by the police, permission was asked to paste a copy of the memorandum on the Consulate gates.

When this permission was granted, S. S. Mirajkar, P. B. Vaidya and K. N. Joglekar, leaders of the demonstration, asked the people to wait peacefully and entered the police cordon. Before they had taken even a couple of steps, the police began an indiscriminate lathi charge.

Members of the State Assembly and the Municipal

Corporation and trade union leaders were made the special targets of attack. Tambitkar, M.L.A., P. K. Kurne, Municipal Corporation, G. L. Reddy and Vithal Choudhary were among the injured and even former Mayor Mirajkar was not spared by the police.

To add insult to injury, the portrait of Lumumba and the flags which the demonstrators were carrying were torn by the police. The police had earlier lathi-charged a demonstration of African Students, and one police officer is reported to have insultingly told them, "You go back to Africa to fight your battle".

Earlier in the morning angry African students, demonstrating before the Belgian and U.S. Consulates, had smashed some furniture and office equipment in the Belgian Consulate.

After the protest rally organised by the Left parties in the afternoon, a big demonstration marched towards the Belgian and U.S. consulates. Among the demonstrators were workers, office employees, students, youth, women, teachers and professors, writers and artists, opposition members of the State Assembly and the Calcutta Corporation. And as the demonstration marched, people on both sides of the road and on balconies raised anti-imperialist slogans.

In front of both the Belgian and U.S. Consulates the demonstration was held up by the police. Leftist leaders went up to the Consulates and handed over memorandum.

Reports received in Calcutta from the districts of West Bengal show that protest rallies and demonstrations are being held in different parts of the State and that scores of organisations have issued statements condemning the imperialist crime.

Bombay Lathi-Charge

Both in Bombay and Hyderabad the occasion of the national protest was marred by police lathi-charges.

In Bombay, the demonstration organised by the Communist Party had assembled

in front of the office of the United States Information Service. Among those injured were Kolla Venkayya, Deputy leader of Communist Opposition in the Andhra Legislative Council, and K. L. Mahendra member of the Secretariat of the Hyderabad City Council of the Communist Party. Earlier the demonstrators burnt an effigy of Dag Hammarckjoeld.

In Madras, over a thousand students had assembled in front of the Government Arts College and marched to the American Consulate-General's office and the Belgian Consulate.

Hyderabad's Action

In Hyderabad, the police lathi-charged demonstrators in front of the office of the United States Information Service. Among those injured were Kolla Venkayya, Deputy leader of Communist Opposition in the Andhra Legislative Council, and K. L. Mahendra member of the Secretariat of the Hyderabad City Council of the Communist Party. Earlier the demonstrators burnt an effigy of Dag Hammarckjoeld.

In Madras, over a thousand students had assembled in front of the Government Arts College and marched to the American Consulate-General's office and the Belgian Consulate.

In Vijayawada, shops remained closed.

As we go to press, reports are pouring in of statements, resolutions and demonstrations from various parts of the country which for lack of space we have to keep back.

