

IMPERIALISTS OUTMANOEUVRE CONGRESS-LEAGUE LEADERSHIPS

Inevitable Result Of Compromising Policies

PEOPLE'S AGE

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India is on fire. Communal riots are going the round of the country. India's premier cities, Bombay and Calcutta, have become storm-centres. And the riots are spreading to the countryside. Noakhali in the East is an example of what can and will happen in our villages, if the present state of affairs lasts.

Nothing is safe, neither woman's honour nor human life, nor the poor man's hut. The British police and military rule the day.

THEY are not communal riots of the old type. They are political riots—the direct result of Congress-League conflict. They have gone so far that everything is at stake—common life, common struggle and common freedom. Only the British Raj is safe.

It was in such a situation that the top-most leaders of the Congress and the League met. Despite strained feelings, both Muslims and Hindus looked to them for respite, to bring about a settlement and end the days when no Hindu feels safe in a Muslim area and no Muslim in a Hindu area.

They met, and they failed.

Not Hindu-Muslim settlement against British power but Hindu-Muslim conflict for permanent arbitration by British rulers, such is the political prospect now. Not neighbourly peace in our homes, but every city in danger of going the Calcutta way and every rural district the Noakhali way. So bankrupt and disastrous are the policies of the Congress and League leaderships today.

Quarrel Over Status

They started with admirable words:

"We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than that these two organisations should meet again as before as friends, having no mental reservations and bent on resolving all differences by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power". (Nehru to Jinnah, October 6).

Mr. Jinnah reciprocated these sentiments in his reply.

The Nawab of Bhopal had secured the following formula from Gandhiji:

"The Congress does not challenge and accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have today an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India".

The Congress leadership did not find the above formula "happily worded", they wanted "alone" dropped but were prepared to accept it.

"Provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction of limitation to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper from among the members of the Congress."

To the common man it would seem that what the League wanted said about itself was right, and also what the Congress claimed for itself. Why

did such big leaders indulge in the unseemly quarrel about mutual status?

The status of great popular organisations is rooted in the support they command among the people. Recognition of status was demanded on paper rather than mutual pledges made to prove it in the battle against imperialism, because the issue before the leaders was not the battle against the British rulers but how to get the better of each other, and yet keep British support to oneself against the other.

As long as Congress-League negotiations are carried on with an eye open towards British power they can never succeed. The spirit of litigants will per-

meate the negotiations and the hope of winning the presiding judge on one's own side will always lead to failure.

This is what the latest negotiations have proved, as similar negotiations have proved in the past.

Viceregal Veto

Gandhiji's formula had another part which Mr. Jinnah quietly dropped, and later asserted that it was only meant "for discussion". It was:

"All the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case."

A clear pledge to stand up to the Viceregal veto and function the Coalition as a Joint Front against Wavell could be the only patriotic basis for the Interim Government.

Mr. Jinnah made it conditional upon Congress acceptance of his nine points, and simultaneously carried on parallel negotiations with Lord Wavell.

He thus roused all the old suspicions of the Congress leadership that if they yielded to him even a bit, he would rush to the British and demand more as the price of not joining—with the Congress and get it, and finally, that this way they would not get unity against the British but only make the League stronger.

Mr. Jinnah all through was doing what the upper class leadership of any minority does, and the League under his leadership has done: play a balancing role between the Congress and the British Government, get for itself what it can from both and commit itself to nothing.

Mr. Jinnah made a Joint Front against Wavell conditional upon acceptance of the Muslim demands. It may look very reasonable to his followers. But let them examine the practical results of his tactics:

● The League has to go into the Interim Government on

Viceregal assurances alone, i.e., surrender to imperialism and swallow its own words!

● It has to seek the aid of the paid stooges of the Political Department to put up demonstrations against Nehru and set the stage for Pathan fighting Pathan, and this in the name of Muslim solidarity!

● Inflame the Muslim masses to loot, murder and rape the innocent Hindu minority as in Noakhali and call it the battle for Pakistan!

And this is yet the beginning, the first stage of the way things are going and will go if we all let them.

This is what must inevitably happen if no FUNDAMENTAL difference is made between the common foe (British imperialism) and the real friend (Congress, premier national organisation). The tactics of relying on the British rather than the Congress leads to surrendering to the British and provoking civil war, as is happening now.

Result Of League Tactics

The only patriotic course for the League was to take an unqualified anti-imperialist stand and first offer a Joint Front to

the Congress against Wavell's veto and then claim acceptance of its specific demands on democratic principles or to restore mutual confidence.

Mr. Jinnah did nothing of the sort.

What has been the actual result of the tactic of putting specific demands first and a common Joint Front next?

The strongly anti-League and pro-Hindu Sardar Patel and his group have triumphed over the "weak-kneed" Mahatma in the negotiations, "the League is irreconcilable" trend has grown stronger inside the Congress, and Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee has come out from his recent oblivion to "lead" Bengal.

In short, the League tactics have led not only to surrendering to the British but to strengthening the anti-League trend inside the Congress and in the country generally.

The way the League leaders have gone into the Interim Government only proves that they have greater faith in Lord Wavell than in Pandit Nehru and the official line of the League in the coming days will inevitably be that the Hindus are the immediate enemies and not the British! This can only help the British by setting Muslims against Hindus.

Why Congress Failed?

The responsibility of the Congress leadership in these negotiations was very great. They are the major party.

A Congress-League Cabinet smashing Wavell's veto and bursting the Imperialist Plan, functioning as a united Indian leadership in exclusively Indian interests and in a real Indian way could be a decisive force to lift our country out of the political and economic crisis in which it is today.

The Congress has every right to demand an unqualified Joint Front against Wavell. But then it made no declaration that if the stand against the veto was guaranteed by the League it was prepared to make further concessions to allay all reasonable

suspensions of the minority. This would have opened the path to a Joint Front against the Imperialist Plan as a whole.

The following are the points raised which kept the two divided, and on which the Congress stand was formally correct but led nowhere:

* (1) On the Vice-President. Mr. Jinnah demanded an alternate Vice-President but ultimate agreement was achieved on having a Muslim as the Leader of the Assembly.

* (2) On Muslim representation. Mr. Jinnah demanded that no Congress Muslim would be nominated. Pt. Nehru demanded the right to nominate one.

* (3) On Scheduled Caste representation. Mr. Jinnah declared that they were not responsible for its nomination and the ultimate responsibility was the Viceroy's. Pandit Nehru said that this representation had already been fixed.

* (4) Regarding future vacancies. Mr. Jinnah demanded it should be done in consultation among the major parties. Pandit Nehru suggested that the whole Cabinet should advise the Viceroy.

* (5) On major communal differences. Mr. Jinnah demanded that in case of disagreement they should go to the Imperialist Federal Court while Pandit Nehru suggested mutually agreed arbitration.

Basis For Joint Front

The first stage of the negotiations about the Interim Government was when the Congress thought it had outmanoeuvred the League by getting its own one-Party Government.

The second stage has been reached during these negotiations when the League thinks it has outmanoeuvred the Congress by getting into the Interim Government.

The real truth is that the British have outmanoeuvred both, they first got one party fight the other and give the country riots, and then got the Viceregal veto back by getting the second party in.

Functioning within the framework of the Imperialist Constitution, the negotiations could reach no other end, except in the triumph of the imperialists and greater disunity in the people's camp.

A Congress-League Joint Front can only come on the

basis of a complete break with the Cabinet Mission's Imperialist Plan and mutual pledge to fight together to frame a

Constitution based on complete independence, national self-determination and democracy, and not by twisting the Imperialist Plan itself, the Wavell-bossed Interim Government and the British-made Constitution-making Body against each other, which was sought to be done by the Congress-League leaders during these negotiations.

Prospects

What are the prospects that open out now?

● The League nomination of Mr. Mandal appears like cutting one's own nose to spite one's enemy. But it is not so simple as that. It is part of the League drive to make a bid for the minorities the same way as it tried at the Round Table Conference. It means only broadening out the Congress-League disruption.

It is not merely the Congress and the League continuing to fight among themselves but it will also mean each mobilising the rival leaders of other communities and interests to fling against each other.

● Inside the Interim Government, bigger differences are inevitable and all hope of Lord Wavell's veto becoming formal will disappear.

● Inside the Constitution-making Body much more than wordy fire works will take place. British intervention will be sought over and over again to save it from breaking up; and we ought to know what a British award each time will mean.

● Outside in the country, Hindus and Muslims will continue to stand ranged against each other, forgetting more and more their common enemy and thinking more of each other as the real enemy. The riot-wave may temporarily go down but a permanent riot situation will remain.

This is just what the British had designed to do through the Cabinet Mission Plan and it is they alone who are succeeding all along the road.

The first hideous features of the British Plan are already visible with the riots outside and the way the Interim Government has been formed, a Government based on Congress-League conflict and, therefore, safe under Wavell's overlordship.

Grim days are ahead so long as the policies of compromising with the British and fighting each other are pursued.

R.I.N. ENQUIRY REPORT

HEAR on good authority that the report of the R.I.N. Enquiry Committee (set up by Wavell Government last April to enquire into causes of the R.I.N. uprising) has now reached the War Department and is under consideration by the Commander-in-Chief. It runs into about 600 typed pages.

However, the Interim Government, I understand, has decided not to publish the entire report, but to prepare a very brief hand-out for the Press—about 45 printed pages. In this way substantial portions of the report, particularly relating to important evidence, will be cut out—evidently to save the imperialist British diehard naval officers from exposure.

The report has completely vindicated the stand of the R.I.N. boys, and nails down the causes of the uprising as bad food, provocative behaviour of British and Indian officers towards the ratings, and of the British officers towards their Indian counterparts.

The Officer-Commanding the R.I.N. (at the time of the uprising) has also been sharply criticised.

The Committee has debunked the imperialist propaganda story that political parties, and particularly the Communist Party, engineered the uprising.

It was beyond the scope of the Committee to make any recommendations. But it has been suggested to the authorities concerned that it would be advisable to employ some civilian cadre also in the Nava Headquarters. This will give it a better outlook.

(From Our Correspondent)

15,000 WARLI KISANS ON STRIKE

Bond Slaves Being Freed, Forced Labour Ended

A year ago, in October 1945, a lakh and a half Warli (aboriginal) peasants of Dahanu and Umbergaon Talukas of Maharashtra fought the biggest strike battle against their saukars' time honoured practice of forced labour. Despite police-firing and terror, despite extermination of their leaders, the peasants, for the first time awakened to consciousness under the Kisan Sabha's Red Flag, fought and won.

TODAY 15,000 of them have once again entered the arena against their saukars and contractors, this time on the issue of wage increase for timber-cutting.

The jungles of Dahanu and Umbergaon export huge quantities of timber. War prices have made this one of the most profitable trades. And yet, the Warli timber-cutters, who have to work in the jungles away from their homes, are paid a 'liberal' daily wage of twelve annas or, at a few places, fourteen annas.

A New Warli Today

But since last year, a new Warli has come into being. This September as soon as the work began, he demanded a uniform daily wage of Rs. 1-4. The saukars and contractors refused to accept their demand, and immediately the fifteen thousand Warlis came out on strike under the Red Flag. Even where work had already begun, the Warlis left their jobs and went back to their villages.

The saukars, many of them local Congress "leaders", now rushed to the District Collector. They even wired, it is reported, to Pandit Nehru and Premier Kher asking them to "control the Communists." Perhaps, they wanted Amalner to be repeated.

What did they do to settle the dispute? Leaders of Premier Kher's Adivasi (Aboriginal) Seva Mandal are openly supporting the saukars. Two months ago when the Kisan Sabha leaders tried to arrange a joint discussion between the saukars, the District Collector and the Kisan Sabha to settle the issue of wages for hay-cutting and timber-cutting, some Provincial leaders of the Congress torpedoed the move on the ground that it "would give recognition to the Communists."

Kisan Leaders Called

But now that the Warlis had actually gone on strike, the Collector was compelled to call in for consultation the Kisan Sabha leaders, Mrs. Godavari Parulekar and Ramakant Gupte. The latter firmly reiterated the Warlis' demand and also struck a note of warning.

Last year's agreement between the saukars and the Kisan Sabha fixed the rates for hay cutting (Rs. 2-8 for cutting a bale of hay in Dahanu and Umbergaon Talukas, Rs. 3 per bale in Palghar Taluka).

This agreement was not being honoured by the saukars. Continued failure to implement this agreement, the Kisan Sabha leaders warned, would lead to a general strike of all Warlis in all the three Talukas.

While these talks were going on, the saukars were, of course, not sitting idle. October 10 (the date when firing took place last year) was fast approaching. Rumours were again set afloat about the "violent intentions" of the Warlis.

Armed Police in Action

On September 28 and 29, armed police were rushed to Bhillad, a central place. That night at Dhanoli, a little distance away, seven shots were fired, accompanied by floodlights from electric torches coming from the house of Ardesir, the local saukar. As a result some Warlis rushed away to the jungles to escape the saukar's repression.

At some places, the saukars literally FORCED their Warlis to work at reduced wages keeping them as virtual prisoners. With the strike on, the simple weapon the Warlis used was that hundreds of them would march to these places and "release" their colleagues by taking them away from their "prison".

At Kainad the saukars had resorted to this horror trick. Two thousand Warlis from neighbouring villages marched and stopped the timber-cutting. The "captive" Warlis were only waiting for this help and together they marched away—the released "captives" and the "liberators."

But the saukar was wild with rage. At once he sent telegrams to Premier Kher and the DSP charging the Warlis with "hooliganism". Promptly policemen were rushed to his aid, but despite all their efforts they could find no trace of any trouble and had to come back empty-handed.

No Forced Timber-Cutting

At SHISNA, four thousand Warlis took out a morcha and put an end to the forced timber-cutting. The Mukadarn with his goondas were just helpless. Before the Warlis went back, the only punishment they awarded the Mukadarn was to make him do 100 'bathaks', "just to give him an idea of what it means to do forced labour."

These saukars have another outrageous and barbaric practice. In return for two or three hundred rupees borrowed for marriage expenses, the Warlis have to slave for life on the saukar's land or household. Against this system, the Warlis have battled for long. But at many places the practice is still continuing.

This year, the Warlis of Borlai liberated 40 such "marriage slaves" belonging to the notorious local Marwari, Jugal Kishore. They also stopped the saukar of Tumkh village from employing Warlis daily on forced labour to get his milk from a place 12 miles away.

'Marriage Slaves' Freed

On August 6, at Yasa, 1,000 Warlis held a meeting in front of Behram Saugar's house. He also had "marriage slaves". The coward threatened them with shooting if they stepped in. But the Warlis were not to be cowed down. They met a Warli cart-driver who was himself a "marriage slave," freed him and with him they marched into the guarded precincts of Behram's estate.

They liberated all the "marriage slaves" there and came out amidst deafening shouts of "Lal Bawta ki Jai". Where was Behram with his gun? As he saw this mighty force rushing through, he had swiftly taken to his heels through the back door.

At Sankas, Saugar Homi Deviyerwala is also an Hon. Magis-

trate. And yet no one in the neighbourhood sets the law more easily at naught than he in employing "marriage slaves". When the Warlis went to his house to liberate their colleagues, the armed police ready to protect him levelled their guns and started abusing the "liberators".

Police On The Run

The peasants wanted to do their job peacefully. They turned back. The armed police thought they had frightened the Warlis away and they began to follow them. But when the Warlis, a mile away from Homi's house, turned back to see the police on their track to a man they got ready to face these cowards.

The very sight of these infuriated peasants put the fear of God into the hearts of the armed police. With their rifles under their arms, they rushed back faster than they had come. Close on their heels rushed the 5,000 Warlis; on and on, right into Homi's compound.

Here, the police, who only a few minutes before had levelled their guns on the unarmed Warlis, now implored them "not to tell anyone that we gave you a chase with our guns". But the Warlis did not care to reply to this whining. They had gone there to release Homi's "marriage slaves." They released them all and marched out.

That is Warli under the Kisan Sabha.

by
Our Correspondent

Today about one hundred armed policemen have been brought to this area. And each of the particularly notorious saukars have a few of these posted on his estate. The Deputy Superintendent of Police has also established his temporary headquarters at Dahanu.

Goondas Let Loose

Simultaneously, the saukar's goondas are openly beating up Warli men and even women with the police lending a helping hand. This has happened at Borigaon, Untalwad, etc. At Untalwad, a Warli was kept in the lock-up for the whole night.

Some saukars are freely talking about "extermination of the Communists" and even of promulgation of Section 144 in the area.

Against all these tactics the Warlis are fighting without rest.



Preparations For War

ON July 20, 1946, the War Department (Army Branch) at New Delhi sent a special confidential memorandum to the War Transport Department on the subject of the development of Indian ports. A correspondent has sent me an important extract from this secret document. This is what it says:

"The Navy are primarily concerned with the future of the East Coast ports, in particular Vizagapatnam. In peace time, the practical support from the Navy will be in fact, very little, as the R.I.N. is likely to be a small service....

"In war time, a more extensive use of the East Coast ports, in particular Vizagapatnam, is visualised by the Navy, and from the naval point of view, the following would be considered valuable improvements to Vizagapatnam:

"(a) An overall increase in dispersing berthing capacity....

"(b) The addition of a Graving Dock. The particular war time importance of a graving dock at Vizagapatnam, lies in the fact that there is no other dry dock in the Bay of Bengal except in River Ports which are usually difficult of access to disabled ships....

"The Army consider that Vizagapatnam will be of use on a far greater scale than in the late war, if India is to take part in any future major overseas operation."

My correspondent writes that estimations have already been prepared by experts on how much it will cost to:

(a) deepen the entrance of the Vizagapatnam port to 33 feet to allow bigger ships to enter; and

(b) to make the harbour fit to take cruisers and eight to ten smaller vessels for several weeks each year.

Whose War?

WHAT is this WAR all about, for which such frantic preparations are being made? And WHO is going to use these im-

proved and developed ports?

OUR NAVY? But as the memorandum states: "The R.I.N. is likely to be a small service." In fact the R.I.N.'s target-expansion is THREE six-inch gun cruisers—far too small to make use of the new facilities planned for Vizagapatnam alone.

And do not forget, it is not only Vizag which is being developed. Five and a half crore rupees are being spent on developing Madras. And more important, the Ports Technical Committee, whose report has recently been released, has recommended that all sorts of small ports in the Indian States—such as Sika (in Jamnagar), Vetraval (in Junagadh), Cochín, Bhalkal (claimed by Mysore)—should be expanded, just as Vizag is.

Not Our Navy

It cannot be, and it will not be, our little Navy which will use all these ports.

Quite obviously all the "improvements" are being made so that Vizag and other ports can be used by the BRITISH Navy as its bases for ITS war operations.

Pandit Nehru, in his broadcast on our Foreign Policy, clearly declared that India would no longer be tied to the apron-strings of the Anglo-American bloc of Powers, that we would strike an independent path of our own in the interests of peace and freedom of all peoples.

The British imperialists are defiantly scouting Pandit Nehru.

What sort of "peace" is this building of a whole chain of military ports—a hundred times more elaborate than that which served during the Second World War? What sort of "neutrality" and "independence", which provides the British imperialist forces with bigger bases for THEIR war?

"Congress - League Unity"?

MR. V. S. Mohammad Ibrahim is President of the Trichinopoly Muslim League. He is also an M.L.A. In the Madras Assembly, recently, he joined Sjt. Prakasam in applauding the firing at Golden Rock. It was a strange alliance—for, seldom have the Congress and the League in Madras been so united as they were on this question.

I have just received a letter from Madras explaining this mysterious alliance and telling me all about Mr. Ibrahim and what he has been doing during the SIR strike.

Mr. Ibrahim is a big tannery merchant. One of his biggest friends—another tannery king—was recently compelled to grant his workers certain concessions, after they had organised themselves in a union under the Communist leadership.

Since then, Mr. Ibrahim has sworn war against Communists. In this war his masters, the imperialist bureaucrats have, of course, cheered him on.

Police Reports

September 5 was Ibrahim's first big opportunity. He had a "report" of the firing at Golden Rock (which was openly said to have been written by the police justifying the firing and condemning the workers) signed by Gani Sait, the Secretary of the Trichinopoly League. With this in his hands, Ibrahim rose to wax lyrical in praise of the Malabar Special Police for its crimes at Golden Rock, ditting every word of Premier Prakasam.

The next occasion on which Mr. Ibrahim could do his duty came on September 11, when all the trade unions in Trichinopoly town called for a hartal. The police prepared a draft appeal to the Muslims not to participate in the hartal. Ibrahim made Gani Sait sign it. The police printed thousands of handbills with the appeal on it.

Of course, there was a hitch. Many League volunteers refused to distribute the dirty handbill and eventually the police arranged for its distribution through non-Leagueurs.

Prakasam's Pride And Ours

I am told Sjt. Prakasam was very proud of the support he received from Ibrahim.

Prakasam is welcome to his pride. The common Muslims of Trichinopoly are planning to throw Ibrahim out of his high office in the coming League elections, because of the shameful role he played in connection with the SIR strike.

They may or may not succeed. But they know a cad when they see one. Sjt. Prakasam is, however, so blind with power that he does not see that it is no credit to be in the same boat with one who acts like a police tout, and is an enemy of the workers.

Sjt. Prakasam calls Ibrahim's support—"Congress-League unity". We call it plain and simple police work. The Congress-League unity the common people want will come only when both the Congress and the League are swept clean of Ibrahim and his like.

Obvious Moral

A CORRESPONDENT has sent me a copy of Indian Army Routine Order No. 442 of 1945. This is what it says:

"The latest figures show that, whereas 400,000 men who have been released have asked for jobs from the Employment Exchanges, only 4,000 have been provided with work. The obvious moral of this should be brought home to all ranks who are contemplating release."

British imperialist promises are like that. When they need your help, they promise you everything in the world—jobs, a secure future, heaven itself. When they have used you, down they come, leaving you just with the "obvious moral": "Don't trust imperialism, don't fall into its net."

The four lakh demobbed soldiers are learning the moral, through their experience. It is time the leaders who pin their hopes on the British Plan, learnt theirs too.

Ramesh Chandra

ANTI-NEHRU DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE FRONTIER

Imperialist Conspiracy To Retain Military Base, Split Fighting Pathans

Pandit Nehru's visit to the tribal territory has been one of the most alarming and yet revealing events since the Interim Government took office. Its importance is not merely confined to India. It has a vital bearing on international events. It was not without purpose that British Tory papers like the Times and the Daily Telegraph gleefully flashed the news of the "cold reception" given to Pandit Nehru by tribesmen.

INDIAN patriots were thrilled when the news first came that Pandit Nehru would himself visit the tribal territory. We have always looked on the tribal peoples as being of our own land, and every time news came of the bombing of the Frontier by British planes, a wave of anger and resentment swept through the country. It has always been clear to Indian patriots that the so-called "tribal problem" is an imperialist creation.

Pathan Unity —British Doom

The Pathans of the Frontier, having been for years in the vanguard of the freedom movement, it has been Imperialism's persistent effort to prevent the union of the tribal Pathans with their brothers in the settled areas. Such a unity would mean the drawing of the tribes into the national forces, which would spell disaster for Imperialism.

No longer could a mighty British force be kept stationed at the Frontier on the excuse of keeping people safe from hostile tribes, but in reality as an essential part of the machinery which keeps India in chains and as a vital expeditionary force, ready to invade our neighbours.

With the prospect of Pandit Nehru's visit to the tribal people, a new vista opened up, first, of blowing to smithereens once and for all, the imperialist occupation base on our frontiers; and, secondly, of reuniting with a brave and unconquerable section of our people, from whom the British have divided us long enough.

"Teaching Panditji A Lesson"

But if it was important for the Indian people, so was it for Imperialism acting through its Political Department.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan revealed at his Press conference at Peshawar, on October 17, that "the Political Department tried their best to prevent Pandit Nehru from undertaking the visit to the tribal area."

A Free Press of India message from New Delhi says that Sir Olaf Caroe, the Frontier Governor, specially came to the capital "to dissuade Pandit Nehru from making a trip to the tribal areas."

Panditji rightly refused to accept the "advice" of these imperialist satraps, and went ahead with his plans.

But, as Badshah Khan has declared, "Since Pandit Nehru had the audacity to disobey their wishes and he was going in spite of them, they wished to teach Pandit Nehru a lesson."

Of course, it was not just spite, as perhaps would appear from this statement of Badshah Khan. It was much more than that.

It was essential for the imperialists that Panditji's visit should be a fiasco, that it should NOT result in the unity of the Pathans, in the creation of more direct and permanent contact between the Red Shirts and the tribes. It was essential to prove in practice the "urgent need" for British troops in the Frontier, to prove that the tribes are wild and unmanageable.

This was NOT a difficult task.

for the White sahibs. For Panditji trustfully left all arrangements for his tour to the Political Department.

In his latest statement, Panditji says: "We left the arrangements to those whose duty it was to make the arrangements."

White political officers accompanied Panditji. White political officers went ahead of him. Panditji became just a tourist on an arranged "Thomas Cook" week-end—everything planned for him to a syllable.

We have seen the shameful stage-show put up for Panditji: the bogus tutored jirgas, the stone throwing, the shooting.

New Tactics —Bigger Aims

The directors of this performance were clever. There had always been a division among the tribal peoples, between the

fisher morally responsible for the attempt on our lives."

On October 18, Dr. Khan Sahib refused to address a jirga at Razmak, because he believed that they had been tutored. The Political officers protested and assured the Khan brothers that this was not the case. Pandit Nehru was heard to remark: "If there is a frame-up, it must certainly be investigated."

Irrefutable Evidence

It is surprising that Panditji should have still been doubtful about the frame-up. If the evidence of the Khan brothers was not sufficient, Panditji would do well to consider the following facts:

● The really genuine anti-British tribesmen, whose sympathies and friendship have always been with the Red Shirts, were never present in the arranged jirgas.

It is interesting to note that the people of the Shabl Jekhel villages, recently bombed by the R.A.F., wrote to Pandit Nehru expressing a wish to meet him but declaring that "for obvious reasons" they could not. They welcomed Panditji and thanked him for his sympathy.

It was the same with other

by Romesh Chandra

small minority of toadies and the vast majority of anti-British fighters, who were sympathisers of the Red Shirt movement. The Political Department calculated that an exhibition of this division would scarcely serve their purpose.

Instead, they decided to convert their toadies overnight into devout supporters of the League and Pakistan, and thus give the patriotic-toady conflict the mask of a Congress-League conflict.

"Give us Jinnah", their paid demonstrators would shout.

"We are all for Pakistan"—toady Malik, all their lives mercenaries of the British, would yell this at their master's orders.

In this way, as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan rightly points out, the Political Department began a conspiracy to "incite a civil war" among the Pathans."

The bureaucrats calculate also that the new League flag in the hands of those toadies will help to take the public eye, in the rest of India, off the real battle in the Frontier between the imperialists and the national forces, and confuse the people into believing that the Frontier problem is the same Congress-League problem which exists in the rest of India.

Manoeuvres, Tutoring, Frame-Up

With these diabolical plans in their heads, every single detail for Pandit Nehru's tour was worked out.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whose knowledge of the Political Department's nefarious activities among the Pathans during all these years cannot be questioned, declared categorically that all the demonstrations, the hostile reception by jirgas, the shooting and stone-throwing were "engineered and manoeuvred by the Political Department."

Badshah Khan goes further and accuses the Political officers of plans to murder the leaders:

"They wanted to kill us. I have seen through the whole game....I hold every Bri-

tribes, some of whom actually invited Panditji to visit them, but without the officers of the Political Department, and the hated British army.

● Specially coloured anti-Nehru Press reports were being continually sent out by A.P.I.—at least one of which had to be cancelled after it had gone out on the teleprinters.

● Elaborate Press arrangements were made and notorious reactionary foreign correspondents (like Ralph Izzard of the Daily Mail) were specially taken on the tour.

● British officials in New Delhi immediately started giving interviews to correspondents saying that "the events (in the Frontier) show that the Political Department's existing Frontier policy is the right one and the tribesmen are incapable of being befriended." (Free Press Journal, October 21).

League Support —A Mirage

The frame-up is clear. Muslim Leaguers who fondly imagine that they can capitalise on this British-enacted drama are living in a fool's paradise. In the N.W.F.P. Imperialism has thrown all its most loyal agents into the League—those who have always fought the popular freedom movement of the Pathans.

If any Leaguers are now happy that the opposite numbers of these toadies in the tribal areas—the bribed and paid British fifth column—have begun to shout "Pakistan" at their master's behest, they are welcome to their pride. But they can take it, that these new recruits will not endear the fighting Pathans to the League cause.

Congressmen all over India must learn from this chapter the reality behind the "power" handed over to the Interim Government and the tall talk of the imperialists about their intentions to quit.

They must also learn that far more concrete steps will have to be taken than mere expressions of affection and goodwill, to win over the tribal peoples, to give them the necessary strength and courage to break through the grip of the Political Department and join the national movement.

Editorial

LABOUR POLICY OF THE INTERIM GOVT.

THE speech of Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member of the Interim Government, at the Conference of Provincial Labour Ministers held in Delhi on October 14, will disappoint and shock all those who expected Pandit Nehru's Government to follow a policy of social justice and radical reforms towards Labour.

In outlining the immediate tasks for the Central and Provincial Governments, Mr. Jagjivan Ram has chosen to forget every promise made by the Congress in the past and fastened his chariot to the reactionary wordy programme of the previous Government.

"Our immediate tasks", he said, "will relate to the promotion (?) of fair wage agreements, standardisation of wages, rationalisation of the rates of Dearness Allowance, organisation of industrial training and apprenticeship schemes with a view to improving the productive and earning capacity of workers, regulation and improvement of working condition in factories, mines, transport services and shops, elimination of contract labour, provision of medical and monetary relief to workers during sickness and provision of housing."

This is an exact copy of what the previous Labour Member and his Department said and Mr. Jagjivan Ram seems to have borrowed it from the same source.

Minimum Duty of A Popular Govt.

What is the minimum duty of a democratic and popular Government in face of the starvation wages in India? Where must it break with old policies and embark on new ones?

Only when such a Government declares its intention to put on the Statute Book a law guaranteeing a minimum living-wage and takes immediate steps to implement it, then alone can it be said to have discharged its elementary responsibility towards Labour and made an honest beginning towards tackling the fundamental problem of working-class poverty.

Only when the State guarantees legal protection to the workers to earn a decent livelihood and strikes at the autocratic rule of capital, will there be a break with imperialist policies of cheating the workers and the people with false promises and in practice sanctioning the worst exploitation and leaving the worker defenceless before the power of capital.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram's programme does not even mention legislation for a minimum living-wage, which at one time did figure on the Congress election programme. The Interim Government does not promise a minimum living-wage to the starving workers. Its wage policy does not recognise the necessity of such a law.

In place of a living-wage it puts forward the false substitute of fair wage agreement—a phrase introduced under the regime of the previous Executive Council to avoid all talk about a living-wage. This fair wage agreement in practice means at best stabilisation of existing conditions and nothing more.

In place of the fundamental demands for a law guaranteeing a minimum living-wage, Mr. Jagjivan Ram promises "promotion of fair wage agreements." The fair wage itself will not be guaranteed, but only "promoted" if the capitalists are willing.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member of the Interim Government, does not promise to limit profits as part of his programme. No limitation of profits, no minimum living-wage.

Nor does he promise that the real wage of the workers will not fall as a result of rise in the cost of living. He does not at all hold out the hope that under the Interim Government every rise in the cost of living will be fully neutralised for the workers.

He only talks about "rationalisation of Dearness Allowance," which certainly is a very dangerous phrase. At present various scales of Dearness Allowances are operating. The workers are getting more or less according to their strength. This so-called rationalisation, since it does not accept full compensation as its principle, might actually result in stabilising Dearness Allowances at lower rates in the name of evolving a new system or order.

Workers' Fundamental Demands Ignored

Mr. Jagjivan Ram's declaration further does not promise legislation guaranteeing trade union recognition. It deliberately ignores every fundamental demand of the worker accepted in the past by the Congress.

The other things that it promises—like standardisation, etc., were also promised in the past by Congress Ministries and never implemented for the simple reason that the Ministers dared not embark upon a bold wage policy of attacking the vested interests.

One thing Mr. Jagjivan Ram does promise and that is legislation to regulate industrial relations—which, of course, in the name of conciliation, etc., will only attack the workers' right to strike.

No living wage, no trade union recognition, no full compensation for rise in the cost of living, no limiting of profits, but legislation curtailing workers' fighting capacity to secure these—such is the Labour programme of Mr. Jagjivan Ram.

In face of the seething discontent among the workers, such a policy will lead only to one result—repressing the workers more and more and crushing their struggles. It will be a policy of helping the vested interests openly and shamelessly.

Let all rise to the danger, protest against this surrender to the vested interests and press upon the Interim Government for a policy of social justice to the workers and save the shame of a Congress Government shedding workers' blood to protect capitalists' profits.

As long as Pandit Nehru people hesitate to throw in and other Congress leaders their lot with the Congress, go to them under the shadow Break with their enemies, of British bombers and bayonets, under the auspices of and these brave, unvanquished, the hated White murderers, sons of India will join the battle-ranks and destroy for ever who have kept them ever on the brink of starvation—so the imperialist base in the long will the fighting tribal Frontier.

FOR IMPARTIAL ENQUIRY INTO AMALNER FIRING

Maharashtra Congress President

AT a Kisan Conference organised by the Poona District Congress, Sjt. Keshavrao Jadhve, President of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, demanded an inquiry into the Amalner firing. A resolution deploring the firing and supporting the demand for an inquiry was unanimously passed.

Dhulia Mourns Martyrs

NOT one worker in Dhulia celebrated Dasha this year. No new clothes, no sweets, no decoration of their houses. Dhulia was in mourning for the Amalner martyrs.

In the evening, though the ban under Section 144 prevented the holding of a big public meeting, every ward held its own meeting, where the workers demanded an inquiry into the Amalner firing.

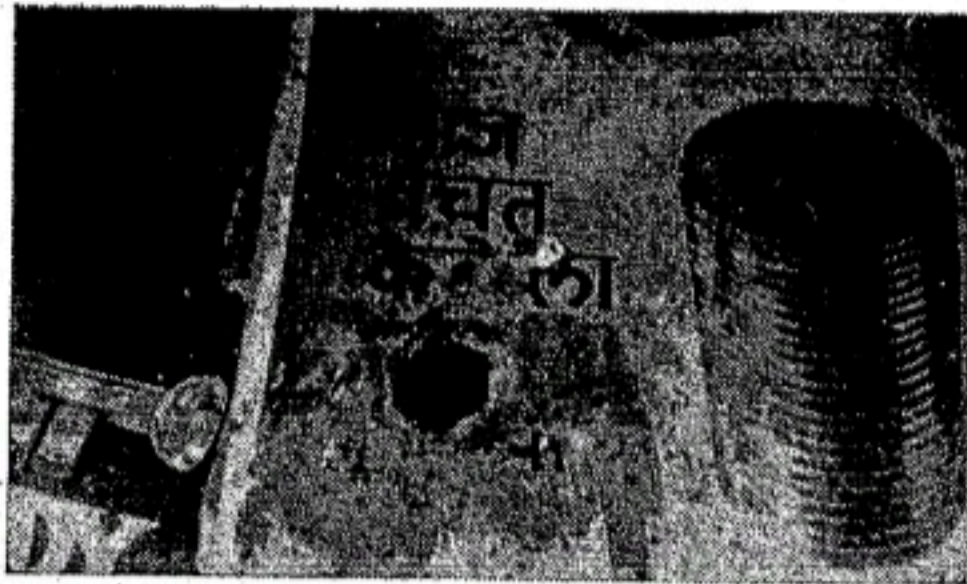
* GUTHALE (Wai Taluka)—September 17: Militant local peasants held a mass meeting to condemn the firing.

* September 19: Mass meeting in Karhad Taluka—condemned firing amidst shouts of "Shripat Patil Zindabad," "Amalner Martyrs Zindabad!"

* BADNERA (C.P.)—September 31: The Executive Committee of the Mill Mazdoor Sangh passed a resolution condemning the firing and demanding inquiry into the firing.

* ANDORI (Dist. Satara)—September 27: In response to the call of the Amalner G.K.U. peasants of Andori held a big mass meeting to observe the "Amalner Martyrs' Day." The meeting unanimously condemned the firing and demanded inquiry into the firing.

* PACHORA (Khandesh)—September



This is a picture of one of the bullet-holes left as permanent evidence in Amalner of the brutality of the police. Why was this bullet fired? This is the question which the common people all over India demand must be answered, and the guilty men brought to book.

AMALNER RELIEF FUND

* Bombay Race Course Workers' Union—Rs. 25.

* Gujarat Trade Union Council and Ahmedabad Mill Kamdar Union (Red Flag), etc.—Rs. 50.

* Navsari (Baroda) — Lal Bawts Girmi Kamdar Union—Rs. 21. A worker has offered in addition his watch.

* Yeola (District Nasik)—Working-class leaders collected Rs. 39 from the local Hindu and Muslim citizens for relief to Amalner martyrs' families.

ber 27: Workers held a huge meeting in observance of the 'Amalner Martyrs' Day'. Many peasants from the surrounding villages also attended this meeting. A resolution was passed demanding inquiry into the firing and withdrawal of cases against Amalner's leaders like Narwane, Mrs. Vijaya Bhagwat and others. It also demanded immediate withdrawal of Section 144 from Amalner and Jalgaon.

* FAIZPUR: The Executive Committee of the Weavers' Union passed a resolution condemning the firing and demanding inquiry.

Both Hindus & Muslims

* YAWAL: 909 citizens, Hindus and Muslims, Touchables and Untouchables, met under the auspices of the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party to condemn the firing. Local branches of the Muslim League, Scheduled Castes Federation and Hindu Sabha had supported the meeting.

In Bombay

WHITE CUSTOMS OFFICERS HARASS INDIAN GIRL STUDENT

★ Search For Five Hours; Socialist Books Seized

Five hours' detention at the Customs at Bombay for a young Indian student while all Englishmen were passed through without a moment's delay—this is how the Bombay Customs Office behaves, even with a Popular Government in Delhi.

THE young student was the New Customs House. Miss Nazimunnissa Ahmed, Thanks to the bureaucratic methods of the White Customs officers, Miss Ahmed was unnecessarily delayed in Bombay, while she naturally was anxious to meet her parents in Calcutta.

Only On Paper

On the 21st, a friend, who visited the New Customs House, Bombay, was politely told that though the Customs ban on Socialist books had been removed since 1943, they still had instructions to go through all such books. And this two months after the existence of a Congress-managed Interim Government at the Centre!

Therefore, said the officer, he could not tell when these books would be returned.

Miss Ahmed was rather surprised and annoyed. During her tour in Europe she had been treated with great respect and courtesy, both as a student and as an Indian. She was puzzled how under a government led by her own national leaders, on the soil of her own native land, the White officers could harass Indian students in this manner.

This is a first-rate scandal. It is not an accident that White bureaucrats, in the name of 'enforcing law', are harassing and attacking the ordinary civil liberties of our people. The Interim Government must come heavily down on all such officials who by harassing Indians blacken the name of the Popular Government.

She had a very warm welcome from the Customs authorities. One Mr. Hudson threw the contents of her boxes on the ground and minutely searched every fold of her saris and every single clothing, as if she was a criminal. He looked through all her personal letters, files, notes and photographs.

All her books and pamphlets, all of them legal and consisting mainly of educational pamphlets from European countries and socialist classics by Marx, Lenin and Stalin, as could be found in any well-equipped library, were seized.

Cheeky Reply

When she protested, Mr. Hudson had the cheek to say, "Now that you have cut your cloth, you have to bear the consequences."

For more than five hours Miss Ahmed was harassed by the Customs officials, who even refused to give her a detailed receipt of the books that they were keeping. It was after angry protests that she finally managed to get the receipt and was asked to enquire about the fate of her books on the 21st at

An Editorial

JUSTICE FOR RIN HEROES

EIGHT months ago, sons of India serving in the Royal Indian Navy, by their historic naval uprising wrote a glorious chapter in the history of our people's fight for freedom.

The diehard British naval officers, backed by their imperialist masters in Delhi, and the entire power of their puppet Press, tried to put across the slander that the uprising was the work of a few 'agitators' and 'mischief-makers'. According to them the administration of the navy was totally blameless, conditions were ideal, racial discrimination a myth.

But the country-wide protest demonstrations in support of the just demands of the RIN men forced even Wavell's imperialist Executive Council to appoint an Enquiry Commission to investigate conditions inside the RIN and the causes of the uprising.

The Commission, after a detailed enquiry, has submitted its report, proving to the hilt that the uprising sprang out of the determined refusal of the young Indian naval rating to tolerate any more the conditions of life and work and the humiliating discrimination imposed by an outmoded imperialist naval administration.

Thus the claim that the uprising was an integral part of the post-war awakening of our people and our freedom movement stands vindicated.

The report has been submitted to the Interim Government in which are present the leaders of our major popular parties—and we would expect them eagerly to welcome it and publish it for all to read.

Yet it is reported that the Interim Government is going to allow the White Admirals and Generals, who still lord it in New Delhi, to suppress the report and instead issue a pale summary of it which will virtually exonerate them, the truly guilty men.

If this happens, a great injustice will have been done to the heroes of the naval uprising.

And worse still, by doing this, instead of strengthening in the Indian navy the proud spirit of freedom that inspired the uprising, the Interim Government will only stiffen the conceit and arrogance which characterises the imperialist administration which still rules the RIN.

All freedom-loving Indians must demand the publication of the full report so that it is clear to our country and all the world how justified was the action of our brothers in the navy.

And more, they must demand also that the British officers responsible for the inhuman conditions, the brutal treatment and the widespread racial discrimination, be brought to book, thrown out of the service and severely punished according to their deserts.

Insolent foreigners have no place in India's navy. They must go.

This way India can pay back her debt to her great sons, and pave the way for the establishment of a real INDIAN PEOPLE'S NAVY, inspired by the same freedom ideals as these lads.

In Chittagong

CONGRESSMEN, LEAGUERS BOTH GREET RELEASED HEROES

On the 'Direct Action' day, as already reported in People's Age, Chittagong saw large-scale attacks by Leaguers upon the Communist Party, 'egged on by the District Magistrate. Since then, the Communist Party office has been occupied by the local branch of the Muslim Students' League.

BUT on October 9, something quite different happened. Maulana Manuruzzaman Islamabadi spoke:

"I bless you from the bottom of my heart. May you live long. I shall not hesitate to follow the path that you will lead us along in the battle for freedom."

Next morning, when they met Mr. Sagir Ahmed, a noted League leader and Secretary of the Peace Committee, he said:

"With your cooperation, we shall be able to bring back normal life in the town."

In the afternoon, they were given a reception in the Congress office and Shri Jafindra Kumar Rakshit, greeting them on behalf of the assembled Congressmen, said: "Under your leadership, we shall once again go on to a great struggle."

The students also accorded a great reception to them.

ANTI-REPRESSION DAY IN HYDERABAD

(Continued from page 2.) The police arrested Sambamurthi and P. V. Raman Rao, Secretary of the Hyderabad City Students' Union, but dared not arrest Yasoda Ben. They kept her in custody for one hour. All through, the workers stood and did not disperse. Finally, police let her off and arrested her again at the Communist Party Office.

On that day even the workers of the Government P.W.D. held a demonstration breaking section 145. A similar demonstration was held by workers of the Maulali Vegetable Oil Mill.

These events stirred the people of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The bold stand of workers against police zoom, on the one hand, and arrests of popular leaders, on the other, shook the two cities as never before.

The students were equally excited. They are preparing for a general strike. The middle classes are also coming out of their homes and gathering in hundreds at all important centres. Hyderabad is in the midst of a mass movement.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY IN CHITTAGONG

The Hindu inhabitants of Baskhal village, Anwara Thana (Chittagong District) gave away their quota of sugar and cloth rations to their Muslim neighbours on the occasion of the Id festival. Similarly during the Puja, the Muslims too gave their cloth and sugar rations to the Hindus.

In contrast to the flames of Noakhali, such bastions as this village stand out—resisting the fire—teaching the whole country an unforgettable lesson.

- **Greeks Rebel Against British Occupation**
- **Set-Back To Iranian Democracy**
- **Issues In French Elections**

THE situation today (in Greece) is much as it was during the Axis occupation, when the Germans at one time employed as many as seven divisions in fruitless attempts to crush the guerrillas," wrote the Special Correspondent of *Tory London Times* on October 14.

The only difference is that while at that time Greece was a German colony, today it has become virtually a British colony.

Then it was the German 'Ambassador' and Commander-in-Chief who decided Greece's fate; today the British do it in their place.

Foreign Control

Even the plebiscite put through to arrange the return of Britain's puppet, King George, was organised under the inspiration and instructions of the British Embassy. This fact was revealed by the Centrist newspaper *Vima*.

So also the punitive warfare against the guerrillas is being supervised by British Generals; in August the Right-wing (pro-Government and pro-British) newspaper, *Vradini*, describing the expedition of the Greek IXth Division in the Mount Olympus area, indiscreetly revealed that "the Minister of Public Order and a British Officer, Deputy Chief of the British Military Mission, supervise operations."

Vradini on August 6 published an interview with this British Officer, warmly commending these operations.

The Greek police and jail staff are under the real control of Sir Charles Wickham, head of the British Mission sent to 'train' Greece's police.

Greece's economy is also supervised by a Britisher—one Clark—who heads the British Economic Mission. Any key decision about Greek currency are only taken through unanimous decisions of the Currency Commission, consisting of one Britisher, one American and two Greeks.

And so on; innumerable facts can be marshalled showing that Greece today is not an independent country, but a British colony.

Greek Resistance

The Greeks did not fight Hitler in order to fall under British rule, in order to have inflicted upon them King George of Greece, the man most responsible for Hitler's easy conquest of their country. And all over Greece resistance to this new Fascist-enslaver is growing.

Particularly in Greek Macedonia and Northern Greece, this has reached the highest pitch. The *Times* Correspondent in the dispatch quoted above admitted that "Greek forces" are using the same tactics against the guerrillas as the Germans did—and with as little success."

In addition there have been growing defections even in this British-trained, handpicked Greek army itself (*Reuters*, October 20), revealing how unpopular is the present regime.

The result of all this has been that Greece's Auchinleck, General Crawford (Commander of British forces in Greece), flew to London last week to inform the British Government "of the latest developments in Greece" and "the Greek (!) request for a further supply of arms." (*London Observer*, October 13).

After discussions in London, Lieutenant-General Simpson, Vice-Chief of the General Staff (No. 2 in the British Army), has flown to Greece for "important talks," particularly as the

Greek Government has "the view that the situation calls for strengthening rather than withdrawal of the British forces in the country." (*Reuters*, October 20).

Widespread Opposition

Thus, today the Greek people are faced with a hard and difficult situation.

But as British intervention increases, so also to the same degree does Greek resistance.

In the hills in the interior, the guerrillas, vanguard of Greek democracy, continue their heroic battle.

And over all Greece, even Centrist and Right-wing leaders are increasingly coming out into opposition to British rule.

Ex-Premier Tsouderos has condemned the Greek Government's policy; with him are ex-Premier Sofoulis (Premier at the time of the election in April 1946) and General Plastiras (Premier, when Britain first intervened in Greece in December 1944).

Even stronger has been the indictment of John Sofianopoulos, former Foreign Minister and head of the Greek delegation to the San Francisco Conference of UNO, who declared in London:

"Regarding the immediate effect, the plebiscite (on the monarchy) had inside the country, it is to be noted that quite small guerrilla units have since increased their numbers to hundreds and thousands... And one must ask: Can the Government still

call bandits all these thousands of people in arms, who in certain areas fight hard battles to retain the districts they rule, who occupy towns and who are firmly convinced that by defending their sacred rights of life and liberty, they will ultimately prevail?"

The Greek people are fighting for their freedom. And just as in Hitler's days, so today, no punitive measure of a foreign conqueror will ever crush them.

British-Khan Conspiracy

THE last week has seen a sudden change in the situation in Iran.

by Mohan Kumaramangalam

It will be remembered that a month ago (September 20) the Kashgai tribal leaders in Fars Province in Southern Iran organised a rebellion against the Central Government.

Five days later the Minister for Propaganda, Prince Firouz, broadcast that this rebellion was a part of the conspiracy recently exposed in Isfahan. This conspiracy, it had been earlier revealed (on September 13) by Prince Firouz, was organised by certain "foreign representatives". According to Firouz, the Government had numerous documents exposing the conspiracy.

In fact, it is well-known that behind this conspiracy was the hand of the British—

through their Consul-General in Ahwaz, Trott, and their Consul in Isfahan, Gault.

These men linked up the traditional reactionary Sheikhs of the South, particularly of the Bakhtiari and Kashgai tribes and planned a widespread revolt.

This way they hoped to bring pressure on the Iranian Government to renounce its progressive internal policy (of dividing up the land among the peasants, thus breaking the back of feudal reaction) and its foreign policy of friendship with the Soviet and opposition to British intrigues against Iran's independence.

Premier Ghavam Retreats

And it is clear now that they have succeeded in their aim. Premier Ghavam Sultaneh, faced with this threat, vacillated; he took no decisive steps to rouse the people to fight these intrigues against Iranian independence because he was afraid this would lead to a rapid growth of the militant anti-British forces, particularly the Tudeh (People's) Party and the trade union movement.

On the other hand, in an attempt to safeguard and streng-

British statement that these men were "innocent."

After this he came to "terms" with the rebels, accepting all their demands, including the dismissal of the three representatives of the Tudeh (People's) Party from the Government.

By thus surrendering to these British-inspired conspirators, Premier Ghavam has turned his back on the progressive movement in Iran and crossed over to the camp of reaction; and there is no doubt, therefore, that the immediate future, particularly when elections are held for Majlis (Parliament), will see a determined battle between the progressives led by the Tudeh Party on the one side and the reactionaries headed by Ghavam on the other.

M. R. P. Joins Reaction

THE draft French Constitution, backed by the three biggest parties in the country, the Socialists, Communists and M.R.P., was accepted last week by nine million to 7-3/4 million votes.

The most important feature of the voting, however, was the very high percentage of voters who did not come to the polls, nearly 30 per cent of the total electorate. And it is clear that a large number abstained from voting because General de Gaulle's opposition to the draft constitution confused the Centrist supporters of the M.R.P.

The immediate result of this voting has been to make the M.R.P. swing sharply to the Right; elections to the new National Assembly (which will be elected for five years) are to be held on November 10; the M.R.P. has already stated that it no longer stands for a progressive coalition of the three parties (M.R.P., Socialist and Communist) but for a reactionary single-party M.R.P. Government.

In addition, its appeal for a "union of democrats" is widely interpreted as "a move against the Communists" (*Free Press*, October 18); one of its foremost leaders has openly pledged the M.R.P. to support General de Gaulle's candidature for Presidency, should he stand for that office, while declaring that "the direction of public affairs could not be given to the Communists". (*Free Press*, October 21).

Bitter Struggle Ahead

The election battle is, therefore, likely to be one where the entire Right, headed by de Gaulle and the M.R.P., will concentrate their fire on the Communists.

Much, therefore, will depend on the Socialists, if, as in June last, they again join in the anti-Communist campaign, they are likely to confuse their own supporters and once more to lose heavily, while the Communists, as before, will hold their own. This will, however, lead to a Right "majority" and Government and thus a lining-up of France with the Anglo-American bloc.

In contrast, if the Socialists refuse to join the anti-Communist crusade and concentrate their fire on the reactionary Right, the two working-class parties will command enough strength to fight reaction in France in the coming critical period.

21-10-46.

★ INSIDE THE FORCES ★

Response To Baldev Singh

BALDEV Singh's fervent appeals to his White masters have not fallen on deaf ears. They have suddenly turned patriotic. They starve their men on the plea of helping the National Government to solve the food problem.

Ratings of HMS Bahadur and Himalaya, at Karachi, had been complaining about bad food for some time. Finally, by their united pressure, they forced the White bosses to agree to the election of a mess committee.

Food naturally improved, but the quantity of rice became less. The rations had been reduced to nearly starvation level. Once more the ratings started complaining to the authorities. They were told:

"You have a National Government and they want us to save food for the starving people. So your rations have been cut down to feed your people."

The ratings were surprised. Their rations had been cut as early as November last to enable more rice to go to the civilian people. The new cuts had been made without their consent and they did not even know how much was being handed over to the civilians, if any at all.

Moreover, they are of opinion that they could best help their civilian brothers, not by starving, but by preventing wastage, through their own control of messing arrangements.

Rejected Love

A BRITISH Sergeant in the RAF Marine Drive Camp is in a very bad state. His Indian comrades have rejected his offerings of love and affection.

He had put some Indian airmen on a charge for not observing anti-malaria rules. While they waited in front of the Guard Room they saw quite a number of British airmen, who could also have been accused of

the same crime, pass unmolested.

This rightly annoyed the Indians. They gathered round the little White sahib and demanded an explanation.

The Sergeant was cowed down. He squeaked:

"I am not putting you on a charge. I only warned you because I am concerned about your health."

Pat came the reply: "You had better show more concern for your own countrymen first!"

The Sergeant decided that discretion was better part of valour and beat a hasty retreat.

A Sahib Apologises

IN a recent issue of the *People's Age* we reported the story of a Subedar who was dismissed for so-called political activities. Here are some stories of conditions in his Division, the 2nd Indian Airborne Division, at Karachi. It was against such injustice that he had led a consistent and determined struggle till he was thrown out.

A sepoy, while loading ammunition, was slapped by Capt. Smith, Staff Captain Ordnance, for not handling the ammunition boxes properly. When the Subedar heard of this he drafted an application for him asking for an interview with the Brigade Commander.

The brave Captain, realising that he had committed a serious offence, decided to get rid of the man before anything serious happened. He promptly issued posting orders and asked him to leave early next morning.

The Subedar detained him on his own authority and took him to his Commanding Officer. Finally, an interview was arranged with the Brigade Commander, who referred the matter to the General. As a result of all this agitation the Captain had to apologise to the sepoy.

Barrack-Room Lawyers

After this incident all the 20 sepoys who worked in the ammunition store were considered indisciplined. To teach them a lesson, a British Conductor and a loyal Havildar were put in charge of them.

Between them they made the lives of these poor boys miserable. Matters came to a head when the Conductor put a sepoy on a charge for refusing to lift a box which was too heavy for him. The VCO who was officially in charge of the section was not referred to. The poor boy was sentenced to 21 days' R.I.

This was the last straw. All the 20 sepoys now started a slow-down strike and refused to obey the Conductor. The Brigadier wrote a confidential letter to the Assistant Director of Ordnance Services, asking for the transfer of the "indisciplined" men to different places, as they had come under the influence of some "barrack-room lawyers."

Transferred

They were all transferred by the end of the month. The batch included two VCOs, the so-called "barrack-room lawyers", who had helped these unfortunate boys in the difficult situation.

They were given their free warrants and only five rupees. It was the end of the month and they were entitled to their advance of pay. In a body they decided to remain in the camp till they were paid their dues in full.

Before their determination and united stand the authorities had to yield.

The Indian Airborne Division is the youngest branch of the Indian Army. If Baldev Singh really means business when he talks big about building up a national army, he had better start by cleaning up the headquarters of the 2nd Airborne Division at Karachi.

(Our Forces Correspondent)

Soviet Number

The next issue of *People's Age* will be a special 16-page November Day number, priced at As. 4.

Special articles by R. Palme Dutt, S. A. Dange, and others.

World Women's Organisation To Study Colonial Problem

By Hajrah Begum

The end of the last war saw a grim determination on the part of the people, who had suffered and fought, never again to let such disaster threaten the world.

To put this resolve into practice, from every country ravaged by Fascism came the demand for forming anti-Fascist democratic organisations of the people for safeguarding the peace. One of the organisations which thus came into being was the Women's International Democratic Federation which represents today women of 23 countries.

The Federation was the outcome of a Conference held in December 1945, called on the initiative of the Union of French women at Paris, to which came 400 delegates from 39 countries. Seventy-two organisations, who were unable to send delegates sent messages and greetings.

Demands Of New Woman

This Conference was in fact a conference of those who had either fought side by side with their menfolk in the trenches or in the underground resistance movements during the war; or those who had worked on the production, food and other fronts; or helped, as in India, to tackle the problems of famine and destitution.

The Conference demanded the right of women to fully participate in the new governments coming into being after the war, and the right also to share equally with the men the burden of post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation. It demanded also the right of vote, the right for equal work and better

There is a lot of confused talk nowadays about the 'glorious traditions' of the Indian Army. All India is proud, and rightly so, of the fighting capacity of our India's soldier-sons, of their individual bravery and heroism—despite the fact that they were serving under foreign officers who often treated them worse than animals.

But there is another 'tradition' that is not so 'glorious'—the imperialist tradition of using the Indian Army to suppress and enslave other peoples. We should remember this 'tradition' too—remember it with shame so as to fight against it and wipe it out.

And it is an example of just this type of action that a correspondent in England has brought to my notice. He writes that a booklet is being widely circulated in England at present.

Neatly and attractively got-up, it is entitled 'The Tiger Triumphs', and is published 'by H. M. Stationary Office for the Government of India, 1946.' It gives the story of the Indian Divisions which fought in Italy.

Campaign In N. Greece

At the end, there is a very objectionable section dealing with the 4th Indian Division's campaign in Northern Greece.

This campaign, as everyone knows, was directed against the Greek National Liberation Forces, led by ELAS. It was the beginning of British military intervention which has today culminated in the imposition of a Royalist-dictatorial regime in Greece.

And the author of the booklet abuses the soldiers of the Greek People's Army, shamelessly excuses the quislings who joined Hitler's Security Battalions (puppet police) as 'wretched impressesces.'

Violent handling by a British senior officer of an ELAS prisoner is described, and we are informed in the usual imperial jargon that this 'demonstrated in no uncertain fashion that the time for nonsense was over.'

Journals which supported ELAS are called 'blatant, windy, inflammatory broadsheets which passed for newspapers', and which 'gave themselves over to scurrilous abuse of Mr. Churchill.' (The author would, I suppose, also place our Nationalist papers in this category; for which of them has not severely castigated Mr.

finally passed, the right of self-determination of the peoples of the world was supported and armed intervention against any people fighting for its liberation was condemned.

A second resolution demanded support for the struggle of colonial women for their social and political rights.

The British and American delegates demanded international control of the atomic energy.

This was the Conference which led to the formation of the Women's International Democratic Federation whose first President was Madame Cotton, and amongst whose Vice-Presidents were women of Russia, Spain, the U.S.A. and China.

Decisions Implemented

The Federation did not rest content with merely passing resolutions but every mass organisation of women which had joined it, set out to implement its decisions.

In the monthly Information Bulletin brought out by the organisation in English, French and Russian, mention is made of the work being done in France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Norway, Sweden, Korea, China, Tunisia, South America and the U.S.S.R., etc.

Reports show that women the world over are successfully tackling the problems of housing, finding jobs for women formerly employed in war work; fighting hoarding and black-marketing, and reducing illiteracy.

At the same time, they are concentrating on obtaining civic rights for women and seeing to it that more and more are

legislation for safeguarding the rights of wifehood and motherhood.

But the outstanding achievement of this Conference as compared to the work of older organisations such as the International Alliance for Suffrage and Equal Rights—was the fact that it unequivocally condemned Fascism and racial discrimination and all such acts whereby one nation subjugates another. Further, the Conference pledged itself to work for the development of democracy and the consolidation of peace.

Leading women from the Soviet Union, like Madame Papova, Madame Kochalakev, women of international fame, like Dolores Ibarruri; members of the new Democratic Governments of Europe like the Finance Minister of Yugoslavia, Madame Buro, put up a passionate plea to crush Fascism, the greatest enemy of women's freedom, and to oppose the Franco regime—a hotbed of Fascist intrigue.

Imperialism Condemned

Indian delegates, amongst whom were two representatives of the All-India Women's Conference, speaking about the position of colonial women drew attention to the need for condemning imperialism as one of the causes of the growth of Fascism.

In the resolution which was

lected to the legislatures and the new governments are induced to take up the question of work and wages as well as of enacting social laws more in conformity with the present day requirements.

Regarding the colonies, the Federation has made their question one of the points for its agenda for the coming period.

At the last Executive meeting held at Paris in June 1946, which was attended by women of 22 countries, the following resolution was passed.

Resolution Passed

"Whereas the colonial peoples have undergone a long and ceaseless exploitation and are still suffering terrible oppression; and these facts have affected particularly the lives of millions and millions of women and children, who because of the oppression are deprived of facilities for protecting their health, education and well-being in general; and great numbers of women and children are thrown into prison, tortured, and executed because they fight for liberty, while all activity of democratic and progressive organisations are forbidden in these countries; the Executive Committee thinks it necessary to carry out an enquiry into the colonial countries to gather complete information on the social and economic position of women and children, to come to the aid of our sisters in colonial countries, and to raise the question at the next meeting of the Council of the Federation to get really effective action on the part of the national and international organisations interested.

"To study this question the Executive Committee thinks it necessary to send commissions, one of which, composed of representatives of the U.S.A., Britain, France, U.S.S.R. and Algeria, will visit the African colonies, and the other, composed of representatives of Britain, U.S.A., France, U.S.S.R., Australia and China, will visit the Asiatic colonies."

It was at the meeting of the Executive Committee to be held from the 15th of October at Moscow that the question of these Commissions was to be decided. It is a pity, however, that permission was refused by the AIWC to its representative, Mrs. Handoo, who had been elected to the Executive, to attend this very important meeting.

This refusal will mean that India, the biggest colony of the British Empire, will be represented only by the British delegates and not by those who can truly speak for Indian women.

this, however, is only a part of the Yugoslav people's campaign to clean out traitors to their country; it is NOT persecution of the Church, for as Marshal Tito has clearly stated:

"There will be no persecution of the Church, but every person will be held responsible for his deeds. We know that religion cannot be removed from human hearts by either decrees or by force... We demand, however, that the priests fulfil only their religious functions and nothing else." (In an interview to a Foreign Youth Delegation).

'Truthful News'

ANOTHER bit of recent news has been used for further mud-slinging at the Yugoslav Government, viz., the arrest of Reuters correspondent, Milivoje Naumovich, some time ago by the Yugoslav security authorities.

Reuters has condemned this as an obstacle to "a free and untrammelled flow of truthful news in the Balkans."

"This," The Week reports, "has provoked a good many belly laughs in knowledgeable Belgrade circles. For the last thing that anyone working as Reuters works in collaboration with the British Government, wants is an untrammelled flow of truthful news, some of which would be a good deal too hot to handle."

But who is this Naumovich, and why was he arrested? He had been a Chetnik Commander, (i.e., traitor to his own people who collaborated with Hitler's Army), was arrested as such and engaged by Reuters on his release—an ideal correspondent for Reuters' purposes—a proven anti-democrat! And even after his release, Naumovich carried forward his old work of fighting against his own people—this time, on the news front!

In conformity with the very high standards of "objective" and "correct" news supplied by "impartial" Reuters, this ex-Chetnik was faithfully carrying out his duties of concealing, suppressing and distorting news, when his promising career was rudely cut short by the inconsiderate Yugoslav Government by arresting him! A most unpardonable crime indeed to punish a man whose life has been spent in acting the traitor to his own country!

—V. M. KAUL

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