

Communist Candidate From Darjeeling — Life-Sketch by G. L. Subba

# GURKHA 'ROBINHOOD'

## Leader Of Tea-Plantation Workers

IN my school days stories of Robinhood used to fascinate me very much. At that time some senior students of Darjeeling used to tell me a very similar story, not of Robinhood, to be sure, it was about one RATANLAL, popularly known as "My-la Bajay" (My-la means second son or brother and Bajay literally means grandfather, but Gurkha Brahmans are called Bajay).

I heard about his courage, about his bravery, about his daring exploits—how he looted the rich and gave away the looted money to the poor. I had heard that the rich feared him like "Yama" (god of death) and the poor worshipped him. And, of course, many legends had also sprung up around him.

I was filled with an urge to know him, see him, talk to him. But this was not to be until six years later.

The first time I saw him was in a law-court. He was in the witness-box giving evidence for a woman in distress. From all I had heard about him I had imagined him to be a very strong and muscular man. And legend had it that he was powerfully built possessing a doublewrist! Tall, about six feet in height, so very unlike most Gurkhas, and slim, he was standing in the witness-box—smiling.

Was he the same Ratanlal about whom I had heard so much all these years? He looked very human just like any simple, unsophisticated Gurkha. But behind his smiling face, was not something strikingly observable?

A little more acquaintance with him convinced me that he was not merely a Robinhood, robbing the rich and helping the poor, a leader of outlaws, but something more—he was a born revolutionary and a leader of the masses.

### Toils As a Boy; Reformer In His Teens

To write the full story of Ratanlal would require a big volume. He was born in the year 1907 in Darjeeling. He lost his father in the early age of four. He passed his early life in his step-brother's house. Both he and his widowed mother had to work hard. They had to hew wood, cut grass and graze cattle in the jungle.

One day he was crossing a stream in flood with a load of grass on his back. He slipped and fell into the river. The angry torrent carried him some distance but his friends saved him. But the load of grass was lost for which his step-brother punished him!

Then both he and his mother served a Bihari milkman doing for him the same kind of work. As a cowherd in the jungle the young Ratanlal would learn fighting, lathi play, using the Khukri, etc. which proved so valuable later. He would arrange mock-fights and often he and his friends returned home full of bruises and bandaged heads.

### Fought Superstitions

From his boyhood he fought against silly superstitions. One common superstition among the people is that the graveyards are haunted by ghosts. Often Ratanlal, tired after the day's work, used to sleep upon fresh graves with the grass load on his back. Here he used to see the dead bodies of low-caste Gurkhas callously thrown about which later urged him to start the "Gurkha Dukha Niwahan Samaj" (the Association for removing the grievances of Gurkhas) which still exists. One of its aims is to give proper burial to the dead bodies of low-caste Gurkhas.

When twelve years old he lost his mother. The struggle for a

living grew harder. So he made up his mind to give up this life in the jungle. First he worked as a boy servant in a Bengali Babu's house. During his leisure hours he learnt reading and writing. He was very fond of two things, grazing cows and reading newspapers. He never forgot them through all the vicissitudes of life.

Next he went to a nearby tea garden (Tukvar tea estate) and worked here as an ordinary labourer breaking tea-leaves and carrying them to the factory for nearly two years. His wage was miserable.

### Meets Gandhiji, Hears Magic Word of Swaraj

He came back to Darjeeling and took the job of a "thakur"



Ratanlal Brahma

in a leading lawyer's house. Here also he continued reading and writing—all by himself. At this time Gandhiji came to Darjeeling and Ratanlal for the first time heard about Swaraj. The non-cooperation movement had spread even among the backward Gurkhas. Swaraj was in the air though few understood what it meant.

In the tea gardens the late Dalbahadur Giri, Gurkha Congress leader, popularised one slogan: "Uproot the tea plants and grow maize or paddy instead." Touching Gandhiji's feet or body was

the usual custom in those days. Ratanlal also touched Gandhiji's body struggling through the thick crowd which had gathered to hear him. Tea garden labourers at that time believed that the British were pecking up and the hated tea garden managers would also go. And so they measured up the tea gardens for division among themselves!

After this Ratanlal went to Ilam, the headquarters of Eastern Nepal, to work as a thakur in the durbar of the Rana. Here he was promoted from a thakur to a subedar for his honesty. But soon he was disgusted with the feudal atmosphere of the durbar and returned to Darjeeling.

He got the job of a road chowkidar under the municipality on a monthly pay of Rs. 15/- and he continued in this post for six years. In the meantime he had not forgotten his cows. After work he used to go to the jungle to fetch grass for them, milk them and sell the milk in the town—all by himself. Like this he made some money and when he gave up the job of chowkidar he had saved up Rs. 3,200/-!

### Drops Anti-Muslim Prejudices

With this money he purchased a motor car. He learnt motor-driving and drove for another six years. In 1934 he married Hari-maya who is also a Communist Party member and built a house

in Singamari where he still lives. The real life of Ratanlal, the leader of the Gurkhas, now began. He was a regular reader of Vandeematra and read in it stories of so-called Muslim atrocities against the Hindus. This made him intensely anti-Muslim and he organised the Gurkha youths to beat up Muslims wherever they could be found. The local loyalist Hindus, both Gurkhas and Bengalis, encouraged him in his anti-Muslim activities. But later they all turned against him when they saw him give them up—knowing how wrong and futile they were.

Ratanlal now began to see the hypocrisy of these self-constituted leaders and the bureaucracy. He saw the corrupt officials prosecuting the poor drivers on the slightest pretext and the poor kisans fleeced by the lawyers and their stooges. Their miserable condition aroused in him love and sympathy for them and intense hatred for the bureaucrats and exploiters.

So he made it a regular habit to visit the law-court to help the poor people with money and thus save them from the greed of the hungry lawyers and officials.

The bureaucracy detained him in jail several times. Once in a single day 28 cases were pending against him for trial! And annually no less than one hundred cases were brought against him on charges of murder, loot, assault, rash-driving, and what not! And yet he could be convicted only once—for rash-driving! The poor loved him, worshipped him (Continued on Page 2, Col. 1.)

## In The "Kingdom" Of White Tea-Garden Owners

# POLICE TERROR AGAINST COMMUNIST LEADERS

Darjeeling is famous for its tea and notorious for the tyranny of the white tea-plantation owners. On October 15, at an open meeting of the garden workers and the general public, it was announced that the popular Gurkha leader RATANLAL would stand as a Communist candidate for the tea garden Labour seat in the Provincial Assembly election.

On November 7, three weeks later, a posse of police, surrounded Ratanlal's home and arrested him on a charge of dacoity! The dacoity was said to have taken place in the Gymkhana Club, Darjeeling, and it was alleged that Rs. 19,500 had been stolen!

The Superintendent of Police (S.P.) while questioning Ratanlal called him a 'Dacoit Bardar'. Ratanlal called the S.P. a 'down-right liar'. There was not a shred of evidence against Ratanlal, nor could there be, to connect him with the dacoity, if dacoity there was.

The next day the Police had to let him go but it is learnt that they are still trying to get some evidence against him.

Behind these simple facts is hidden a conspiracy of the White bosses of the tea gardens, which we expose here.

### The Plotters Meet

For the first time in the long history of these White plantation kings' tyrannical rule over the workers, Communists had begun to awaken the tea garden labourers to a sense of their elementary human rights. At the meeting announcing Ratanlal's candidature, it was also announced that a Union would be formed. This was too dangerous for the white bosses.

So they rushed to the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police, and appealed for help. At a meeting held in the Deputy Commissioner's Office, it was decided that Ratanlal should be arrested on some pretext and kept in jail or confined on a framed up charge. The same evening, this news came to the

ears of the local Communist workers and they reported it to the Bengal Provincial Committee of the Communist Party.

### Police Threaten

On October 29, the District Intelligence Bureau Officer, S. K. Bhownick, sent for Sushil Chatterjee, District Communist leader in Darjeeling, and told him that arrests, extortions and even bullets would be used if Communists polled their noses into the tea-gardens for election work and did any 'gobal'. Actually so far election meetings have only been held on market days when the labourers come to town.

No wonder the trumped-up "charge" of dacoity and Ratanlal's arrest followed so soon after this. The white bosses and their bureaucratic friends are so afraid of Ratanlal and the Communist Party, because it is they who are for the first time rousing the garden labourers to stand up against the age-old tyranny of the plantation owners.

Here is the full story of the condition of these labourers—and of what the Communists are doing for them.

THE mass of tea garden workers are disfranchised. Though there are 100 tea gardens in all, only 10 of the smallest tea gardens are grouped together to make the Darjeeling tea garden constituency. These tea gardens have been a paradise for the bosses, hell for the workers. Workers were divided into four categories, Marad (male) Awar (female), Chakra (boy above ten) and

Lakra (child below ten) and their wages were five and a half and four annas, ten pice and six pice per day respectively. The tea garden manager was a "Chhoti Miller" in his own garden. He could, if he chose, throw out a worker and his family within 91 hours though the family might have been born and bred in this hell. This is called "Hata Baker"—meaning kick-out. Hundreds of families are turned out like this every year.

During the war, the wages did not increase despite the high cost of living. Instead, the bosses said they would supply rice at concession rates of five annas a rupee.

But they were such soulless profiteers that they cheated the poor workers even of this concession by the rule that a worker must have worked for 'four consecutive days' in a week to get the benefit of this concession. Since the work is seasonal and lasts only for six months, it was available only for that period.

Secondly, they always managed to distribute work in such a way that a large number of workers were not given work for four consecutive days!

No outsider is allowed to enter this owners' kingdom; the bosses' word is law inside it.

### Challenge To Tyranny

Under these conditions, suppressed and cut off from the outside world, the workers remained ignorant of their rights, only protesting against unbearable conditions through spontaneous strikes or sporadic assaults on corrupt managers and clerks. But the Police would ever then rush to the help of the bosses. For one man deposited, twenty would be arrested, humiliated and jailed.

The only man given a tea garden workers to ventilate their grievances in the Provincial Assembly also used

to be filled by the bosses' 'dala'. Anyone who entered the tea gardens would be held up for incitement to strike, riot and what not. The bosses would decide which workers should go on the electoral rolls and they chose only the 'reliable', those who could be tyrannised into voting for the dala.

Thus even for the forthcoming elections, there are only 2,000 of them registered as voters out of a total population in the constituency of 1,50,000. If the voters were honestly registered, there would be at least 4,000 on the rolls. Until nomination papers are filed (and this will come off in December only) even the candidates standing for this constituency cannot enter it.

In the speech of Ratanlal, (see above), you will read how he and the Communist Party have fought for the rights of these workers. Meetings were held on market days and the message of human rights was conveyed to them and they were roused to unite and stand up against the bosses' tyranny.

### Why This Conspiracy

The majority of tea garden workers are Gurkhas. Ratanlal is the most popular Gurkha leader. The Communist Party is the only Party that is fearlessly fighting for the rights of the tea garden workers. So the Police which is at the beck and call of the White bosses attack both. G. L. Subba, the young Gurkha Secretary of the Darjeeling District unit of the Party is being prosecuted on a charge of 'spreading disaffection among the Armed Forces of His Majesty' and all-citing 'military intelligence'.

What is the basis of these grave charges? Nothing more than the fact that Subba interviewed a Gurkha who had been to the Soviet Union and the Gurkha had told Subba how much he admired the Soviet land, how much better conditions in the Red Army were compared with those in the 'Armed Forces' of His Majesty!

That is how the White bosses and the local bureaucrats are conspiring to cheat the tea garden workers of their democratic rights and torpedo our Party which fights for these rights.

# “JATHAS” TOUR VILLAGES

★ 55,000 People Covered  
★ 35,000 At Mass Rallies

**I**N NOVEMBER 11 SIMULTANEOUSLY AT TEN CENTRES IN ALL THE TALUKS OF MALABAR, MASS RALLIES WERE HELD TO ANNOUNCE THE COMMUNIST PARTY CANDIDATES FROM THE DISTRICT TO THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

These rallies were preceded by an intensive campaign conducted throughout the taluks by jathas (squads) touring from village to village beginning from November 1.  
**In CHIRAKKAL Taluk** (the Party's strongest Kisan base) four jathas were organised; all together they held 100 meetings attended by 15,000 people—mainly kisans.  
**In KOTTAYAM Taluk**, two jathas held 30 meetings, covering 8,400 people.  
Four jathas in **KURUMBANAD Taluk** covered almost all the villages, held 64 meetings, spoke to 6,500 people.  
**In CALICUT Taluk**, there were two jathas. They covered 300 miles; addressed 70 meetings of 6,000 people—workers, peasants and village middle-class.  
**In ERNAD Taluk**, two jathas were organised. Ernad is the heart of the Moplah (Muslim) region in Malabar. This was the first time after the 1920 Moplah rebellion that political slogans and the message of freedom were taken to the heroic Moplah peasants and their response showed that the Moplahs still remain the same brave fighters for freedom as ever. Sixty seven meetings were held, 12,500 Moplahs, aged peasants battle-scarred in the old rebellion, attended the meetings.  
**In WALLUVANAD Taluk**, jathas toured 75 villages, held more than 25 meetings attended by 4,000 people.  
There was only one jatha in **PALGHAT Taluk**, which covered 50 villages, addressed nearly 3,000 people in 15 meetings.  
The two jathas of **PONNANI Taluk** held 40 meetings and spoke to more than 4,000 people.

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An old kisan, after attending one of our meetings in Kurumbanad Taluk asked the members of the jatha: "You three parties are quarrelling among yourselves. What are we, poor people to do then?" Our comrades replied: "You common people are the common masters of all of us; you must take the initiative to impress on your political parties the need to work together."

In Calicut Taluk, from the village of Nanmanda, a middle-aged Muslim peasant commented: "I have a vote. When I give my vote I will say Congress and League must unite. If they do not unite, there is no future for us."

**Don't Want Oppressors**  
In Ponnani Taluk, one of the most affected areas during the food scarcity and epidemics, where in one village the Party and Kisan Sabha had organised a big Grow-More-Food (GMF) campaign, a peasant said: "When small-pox came, it was the Sangham (Kisan Sangham) Sec-

retary who nursed my brother to life. I won't allow our Sangham to be split. There is something wrong with those who say that the Party under which Kamenkaval was cultivated (referring to the GMF campaign) are traitors."

From the landlord-ridden Walluvanad Taluk, peasants were talking among themselves after attending our meeting: "If the jennies (landlords) take all our votes, our fate is starvation and misery."

In Poyyannur Fiska (Chirakkal Taluk) one Muslim League bought four annas worth of literature and gave Rs. 1. When the jatha leader returned the balance, he asked us to keep the money as donation.

A grand old Moplah peasant from Eastern Ernad was enthusiastically listening to the speech of P. Ahmed Kutty. When the speaker said that only if the Congress and the League united, could we get food, sugar and kerosene, he clapped his hands and urged the audience: "Now is the time to clap your hands, boys. You don't even know when to clap."

**Don't Want Hooliganism**  
The anti-Communist Congressmen tried to break up our meetings; but they were not successful except in a few places.

In one village in Kottayam Taluk, the jatha was holding a

meeting. Fifteen urchins led by the assistant village Karam and another drunkard came to the meeting and began shouting. These same people acting as agents of the jennies, had formerly disturbed Congress meetings.

But the more the people hear the slogans of unity and the more they see how the anti-Communists are mobilising the most anti-social elements of the village, they themselves come forward to prevent the use of such rotten methods.

**Candidates Announced**  
That the ground was prepared for the big rallies of November 11. Rallies were held at Cannanore, Tellicherry, Vadakara, Calicut, Manjeri, Perintalmanna, Palghat, Ponnani, and Talikulam. Despite heavy rains 35,000 people attended the rallies altogether to hear the statement of E. M. S. Nambudripad, leader of the Communists, announcing the Party candidates for the provincial elections, which was received with great ovation.

In Cannanore town (textile and handloom centre), 3,000 people marched through the streets in pouring rain before the rally, which was attended by more than 13,000. K. P. Gopalan, the veteran Congress and Trade Union leader of the taluk, is the Party candidate from this constituency. Jathas came from different parts

of the taluk to take part in the rally.

It is significant that this time there was no disturbance in the meeting whereas during the last few months anti-Communists (inspired by Samuel Aaron, most reactionary millowner Congressman of the town) used to break up every Communist meeting here. It was the strength of the audience that held them back.

The Calicut rally was attended by 5,000; rain had prevented as many from coming to the rally. When it was announced that A. K. Gopalan was standing as the Party candidate from the Calicut constituency, the entire audience rose to its feet and demanded the withdrawal of the warrant still pending against him.

**Common Man Pays**  
After announcing the names of the Party candidates, K. Darnodaran appealed for funds. A Muslim League who wanted to remain anonymous gave 100 rupees; two others gave Rs. 5 each. A young Muslim student sang two songs saying that he had nothing to give to the Party except the songs. The audience readily responded and collected Rs. 6-8 on his behalf. About Rs. 200 were collected from the rally.

In Manjeri, the Party held its biggest rally among Moplahs. 2,500 old and young peasants and middle-class came to the meeting. Mohammed Ishaq is the Communist candidate for one of the two Muslim seats here.

Mohammed Koya addressed the gathering explaining the election programme of the Party and pointing out the grim prospect before us if we did not unite.

"That young man is talking sense. He has correctly pictured what will happen when our soldiers are demobilised and return to our villages. I have decided whom to give my vote," commented a middle-aged Moplah after hearing Koya.

**Underground Leader Appears**  
In Perintalmanna, the Taluk Headquarters of Walluvanad Taluk where E. M. S. Nambudripad is contesting the general seat, the rally turned out to be an historical one. A. K. Gopalan (who had been underground till then) suddenly appeared at the rally. The police had been hunting for him for the last four and a half years after his escape from the Vellore jail in September 1941. The common people had protected him all these years.

Introducing himself as A. K. Gopalan he spoke for about ten minutes when the police came and arrested him; standing between the policemen who had arrested him, he appealed to the 1,000 and odd people gathered there:  
"Let those who say that Communists are agents of imperialism, that we have gone to the other side, witness this scene. The people will decide on which side we have been and are now. No one can root out the Communist Party from this country by stunts. As long as there is misery in the land, as long as there are starving stomachs in the land, so long will our Party remain and continue to grow stronger."  
"Let Congressmen and Leaguers not waste their energy in trying to wipe us out; let them unite to wipe out the scourge of British Imperialism from our Motherland."

The fields belonging to them. Wanton beatings locking them up without food, employing Pathans against the men, thefts of even the petty belongings of the Warlis, etc. were common occurrences.  
The Sahukars certainly did not lack ingenuity.  
● At Dhandolwada, some Warlis were made to hold their toes and then beaten on the spine. They also adopted the method of heating their on-the-chest-with-singes tied up inside a piece of cloth. It leaves no tell-tale marks, but affects the lungs.  
● At Harsona, the police arrested Deviya Vavhya, took him to a Sahukar's place at Zari. There a police officer threw him down, kicked him in the neck and beat him on the back with the knob of his cane.

**Burning Him Alive**  
But by far the most harrowing tale comes from Vhanu Benda; Gharat, dwelling in his jungle hut he told his story:  
"I was locked up in a room in the Sahukar's house. Two policemen held me tight. And then the beating started. They beat me on the back,

## Maharashtrian Peasant-Aborigines' Struggle

# Police Atrocities Kisan Sabha Moves For Justice

Warli (aboriginal) peasants—70,000 of them—from the Umbergaon and Dahanu Taluks in Maharashtra have successfully ended their one month old strike. The issue was a simple one. They demanded a wage-increase for harvesting the crop. They also fought against the age-old 'rights' of the Sahukars (landlords) to exact forced serf-labour from them. To-day they have won their wage increase. They have ended forced serf-labour.

**THE** struggle was fought against the worst repression of the police, who promptly came to the help of the local Sahukars.

It was distorted and falsified in the nationalist press because the Kisan Sabha (organised by the Communists) led it, and because the local Congress organisation "Adivasi Seva Mandal" with B. G. Kher, ex-Premier of Bombay, as its President, was more keen on backing the Sahukars than defending the down-trodden Warlis.

Kisan Sabha workers were entrusted for a time, the police even resorted to firing against the Warlis. Yet against all odds, the Warlis fought and won.

### They Shall Answer For It

The battle has been won but the last act in the drama is yet to be performed. Here the leading role will be played by the Kisan Sabha which will drag the Sahukars and their police accomplices to court to answer for their excesses.

On October 10, Warlis from a number of places were tricked by the Sahukars' men into gathering at Talawada. They were told "to attend a meeting of the Kisan Sabha" there. Instead of the meeting, the police opened fire on them. The Government brass-hats said the police had opened fire "in the air and in self-defence." But it could not stand the test of facts. The Warlis had all received their wounds below the chest. Five of them were killed, over 25 wounded. The police did not even care to ascertain the number of casualties.

But what followed the firing was far worse. A reign of unchecked repression was set loose against the men. To quote just a few cases:

### Arresting Even The Wounded

● A boy, Ramiya Janiya, was arrested and locked up because he had accompanied his father to the meeting that night. About 90 warlis were arrested and locked up.



Vhanu Bendu Gharat, whose story of police torture on him appears in this article.

Even the wounded were not spared. Dhakiya Sambhaya, aged 12, had two bullet wounds near the hips. He had to be carried home. But neither his age nor his bleeding wounds could save this boy from the lock-up.

● Jamna Chandru is 55. He got a bullet on the shin bone, from which he fainted through loss of blood. He too was taken to the lock-up.

● Chaitya Sukhis, aged 60, was ill. But he shared the same as the other Warlis: the lock-up and beating.

Of the 90 arrested, after great efforts 21 were released on bail, but not Davli, the leader of the Kisan Sabha, nor the other Warli leaders. It is worth noting here that Mr. Dave, the

learned First Class Magistrate of Umbergaon, would not at first grant the bail application of any. He wanted "to consult the police." The police were not sure what charge to frame against Davli. First it was for 'dacoity'! Then they changed it into 'Waging War against the King-Emperor' and finally thought it best to revert to the safer old one of 'dacoity.'

### Sadistic Technique

● The police, of course, would not spare the women. At Amboli, they caught hold of Thoni, a Warli girl of 12. They beat her up saying, "You helped your father to escape." The girl refused to admit the charge. So they made her naked and threatened to push a rifle barrel into her private parts and also to commit rape. She shouted for help and they took to their heels.

● The same method of beating and threats of rape was used in the case of Lohani, a Warli woman of 21. Eight times they lifted her off the ground and flung her to the ground as if she was a sack. Then they caned her. She cried herself only by shouting for help.

All this was done under the excuse of 'finding out hidden weapons from the Warlis.' And in all this, the police was only using the Sahukars. For the latter, this was a common practice. An entire section of Warlis has come to be known as 'India Just' (converted section). Thanks to this practice of the Sahukars for the last 150 years.

### An Unholy Alliance

The police let the Sahukars run riot and do what they like with the Warlis. Here are a few instances of the police working hand in glove with the Sahukars.

● At Anand village, police and Sahukars' goondas broke into the house of one Kahu Kokna. Beating him all the way, they dragged him to an open field. Since then Kahu has not been heard of.

Similar stories of 'co-operation' between the police and the Sahukars have come from the villages of Nazri, Dhannari, etc.

● A Fitzkar arrested a number of Warlis, took them to a Sahukar's place and had them mercilessly beaten up. They were all charged with 'assaulting' one Rama of Nazri.

● At Wanikar, Dabhari and other places, the Sahukars' men threatened the Warlis with murder, shooting, etc. if they 'did not work'. When the Warlis escaped into the jungles they let loose their cattle on

GURKHA SOLDIERS OF FREEDOM



Wangdi Lama

DAY LABOURER'S SON

In 1942, during the days of the Bengal famine...

He was no politician, but he was a social reformer...

Ratanlal Brahman

MISSIONARY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

(Continued from page 1.)

Against Caste

The story of the help he rendered to the poor...

In 1928 Gorkha & Co. the biggest commercial firm...

Tyrants Humiliated

Last year a similar incident occurred in another...

Champion of Oppressed

The two parties of Darjeeling District...

at the moment? He was no rich peasant...

WANGDI LAMA was born in 1913 in Jalpaiguri...

Next he got the job of a military store-keeper...

He was much impressed by our campaign and began to read...

Organises Carters

Then he began to work among the carters...

Karnataka oil had disappeared from the open market...

Next he got the job of a military store-keeper...

He was much impressed by our campaign and began to read...

but he was forced to sell his land...

Wangdi was in the forefront of all these campaigns...

Wangdi's friends call him a 'socialist'...

He gave his own to the office carter...

Rhojman Thakuri

STURDY FIGHTER AT 65

In early 1944, about 140 peasant families...

Yally years ago there was a thick forest...

He was much impressed by our campaign and began to read...

Whole Family-Communist

Today our lady Ratanlal has 10 children...

Fighting Zoolam

Never before had there been a mass movement...

He had heard about Socialism even before...

I have encouraged him to do the work...

Early Struggle For Bread

RHOJMAN THAKURI was born in Rongpoong...

is an exception and in unusual cases...

Once a carter came from a distance...

"Comrade, it seems to be in the month...

Why He Joined Party

Though engaged in Party work...

Thrashes White Boss

Rhojman Thakuri worked under one such European manager...

Thakuri gave evidence in his behalf...

Do you think Rhojman was provoked...

The manager treated it him with the lowest...

Wipe Out Scum

And that throughout the whole world...

Expose Corruption

Rhojman is very honest and upright...

Medieval feudal - imperial rule...

He is hardly ever mentioned...

"Why is it not mentioned in the Party...

"Our Party work is being a new world...

It was found that in one month...

No Vote For His Justice!

The year the bourgeoisie led out...

We asked Rhojman to have the application...

Do you think Rhojman was provoked...

The manager treated it him with the lowest...

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Rhojman Thakuri

WITHDRAW ALL GURKHA TROOPS FROM S.E. ASIA

Joint Demand Of All-Party Gurkhas in Darjeeling

Below is the joint statement issued by the representatives...

Joint meetings and rallies are being held all over the District...

It is Italian and the other Gurkha workers of our own Party...

We have seen with great sorrow...

We demand the immediate withdrawal of all Gurkha troops...

In December last year, the British Government...

We are launching the "Wipe Out Scum" campaign...

And that throughout the whole world...

Do you think Rhojman was provoked...

The manager treated it him with the lowest...

Wipe Out Scum

Expose Corruption

Medieval feudal - imperial rule

MASS UPSURGE OF MUSLIM PEOPLE

But Leadership Still Goes In For Opportunist Toadies : --Choice Of Central Assembly Candidates

During the last two weeks I have attended a great many League meetings in the Punjab, and talked to a number of League leaders, ordinary League workers and Muslims.

The picture that emerges in my mind is one of startling contradictions.

On the one hand there is immense enthusiasm for Pakistan and for the Muslim League.

Huge mass meetings are being held and it is quite clear that an overwhelming majority of the Muslims are with the Muslim League and that with adult franchise the League could sweep the polls.

Delhi, once a stronghold of Muslim Nationalists and the Ulama is no longer so. On November 4 here, 30,000 came to Mian Hafeezullah's meeting.

Primary League Committees in Lahore mohallas hold meetings, exhorting people to vote for the League. In the working-class suburb of Lahore, Moghalpura, 2,000 attended a well-organised League Conference.

In the countryside also there is very great stir. Muslim peasants, labourers, landlords and in many

astros effect of British Imperialism on India, with special emphasis on the ruin of industries run by Muslims and impoverishment of Muslim agriculturists (e.g. in Bengal); the patriotic movement of the Muslims against British Imperialism since the 19th Century up to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's time; the freedom movement among Hindu peoples under the Congress leadership; the Khilafat movement and the growth and development of the Muslim League and the Pakistan demand; finally the nature of Unionist reaction in the Punjab and the League struggle against it. Organizational problems of the League and the forthcoming election campaign were also dealt with.

Another school is due to start from November 25.

Munir Daultana (General Secretary of the Provincial League) and Atullah Jullana (a rising young League agitator and organiser) gave me graphic accounts of the great awakening that is taking place in the great Muslim belt of the Western Punjab, in the Multan and Rawalpindi divisions. Here the League is for the first time carrying the message of freedom and Pakistan.

Peasants oppressed and terrified by landlord-zoolum come to League meetings; there they see in many cases their landlords and oppressors also sitting. They are exhorted to come under the banner of the League and not to be afraid of Police and landlord-terrorist, but face it bravely.

Landlords are asked to give up their ancient clan and tribal fights, give up selfishness and subordinate their personal interests to the interests of the Muslim Qaum.

There is a split in the ranks of the landlords; only a small section is left with the Unionists and their Zamindara League.

But what of the League, the main political force which is today arrayed against the Unionists?

A responsible League leader told me that if the League had six months more to campaign, no Muslim seat would be won by the Unionists, except the three or four of the Landholders' Constituencies. But the position at the moment is that, of 80 odd Muslim seats, the League hopes to win only between 50 to 60.

Weakness Of League Leadership

Why this weakness? First and foremost is the fact that the League leadership in the Punjab has been unable to organise and develop the great upsurge which is moving the Muslim masses to-day in the Punjab. One and all, they complain of lack of good organisers, workers and agitators in the Muslim League.

It seems paradoxical that, with the entire Muslim educated middle-class of the towns and villages with the League, and with the support of the largest sections of Muslim peasants, zamindars and town poor, not enough or-

(Continued on page 9, Col. 2.)

IN BOMBAY

BIGGER ASSAULT ON COMMUNIST PHQ

by A. S. R. Chari

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, A CROWD OF 200 led by the same goondas who had led the three previous raids on our Party headquarters came straight from the meeting at Chowpatty addressed by Sardar Patel and laid siege to it.

ONE OF OUR COMRADES WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING telephoned to us that the crowd was being mobilised at Chowpatty for the raid. The question arose: should we defend ourselves and disperse them? We decided that we should not. Countywide Police repression and firing on student demonstrators clearly showed that the Police would only take advantage of any disturbance to open fire. We decided to lock ourselves in, and let the raiders shout on.

The Attack

The rowdies found the entrance door locked, they tried to force it open but were not able to do so. Then they began to throw mud, stones, chappals etc. at our Office. They smashed window-panes and kept up their frenzied shouting. This went on for over half an hour.

The Police then came upon the scene and the crowd began to move away from the door. I opened the gate and came out. The goonda-leader whom I described in my report of the previous raid came up to where I was talking with two spectators and began to abuse me furiously saying I was responsible for the trouble. I caught and gave him a couple of sound smacks. He boiled.

The crowd that had moved away formed itself into a procession and went away shouting "Vote for Congress." I could not help feeling what a shame it was that the scum of our city should disgrace the fair name of the Congress with such foul words and deeds. The crowd consisted of Congress Socialist gomasthas, some suttorias from the Share Bazar and Students' Congress boys.

Police Arrest Us

While the main crowd of raiders moved away, a small group went

The crowd now stationed itself in the adjoining lanes and started hurling bricks and soda-water bottles on us. Ten of our comrades were hit: Bhagwat our Treasurer got a deep cut in the head which had to be stitched. The attack with soda-water bottles and stones went on for 15 to 20 minutes. People in a passing tram were also hurt. The whole area was strewn with glass, stones etc. The police then came again and the goondas went away.

Such is the story of the raids on our Office. Let us see now how the Press played it up.

Congress Press

Concoctions

The Navakal, the well-known Marathi Congress daily, served up the news thus:

"COMMUNISTS GO MAD"—"INNOCENT PASSERS-BY BEATEN."

"Bombay—Saturday—Tonight, near the Communist Head Office, innocent passers by on the road were set upon by some Communists and beaten with lathis and sticks. It is understood that some people who were returning after the Chowpatty meeting were passing by this road shouting slogans of victory to the Congress. Their slogans of victory to the Congress maddened the Communists in their Head Office and some of them rushed out with sticks etc. But since the crowd had meanwhile gone away a good distance, these Communists vented their wrath on those who were passing to and fro and quite unprepared for this assault."

Every word of it is false. It was the same old trick that anti-Communist Congress leaders had used in Andhra, the same game that we had anticipated and written about in our own report of the last raid. The Navakal was once a paper with clean traditions and when it kills the truth like this at the bidding of the anti-Communist Congress leaders of Bombay one can only fear for the future of Indian democracy.

The Vishwamitra, a Congress Hindi daily, gave the headline: "THEY CAME OUT WITH LATHIS." It put out the same story that the Communists were enraged by Congress slogans but improved on the Navakal by saying that later on there was a clash between "Communists and the people." It said, "Communists rushed out with lathis, stones, bottles and bricks began to rain." It did not say who threw them, obviously the people could not have done it!

But you cannot conceal the truth and in the Congress press itself there could not but be a division. Even the Lokmatya, the pro-Congress, anti-Communist Marathi daily, edited by F. V. Gadgil, gave a seven column headline to the story thus:

"GOONDAS TWICE RAID COMMUNIST PARTY'S HEAD OFFICE—STRONG ASSAULT WITH STONES, BRICKS AND SODA-WATER BOTTLES. 10 COMMUNISTS INJURED, 3 SERIOUSLY—POLICE ARREST 2 COMMUNISTS ONLY."

It gave a story which was substantially true. The Prabhat, a pro-Nahabhai Marathi daily gave an anti-Congress twist and headlined it:

"ANOTHER INSTANCE OF CONGRESS GOONDAGIRI IN BOMBAY. STONE THROWING ON COMMUNIST OFFICE—TEN PERSONS INJURED."

The Gujarati Congress daily Janmabhoomi, tried to effect a compromise between truth and falsehood and reported:

"It is said that stones were thrown from the Office of the Communists at the crowd which was shouting slogans, and it is said that one important leader of the Communist Party opening the door of the Communist Party Office attacked the crowd of the people. So the people got excited. And after that there was a free fight." Regarding the arrest of the two Communists it wrote:

"After this, a crowd had collected again. The crowd again tried to enter the Communist office from the rear lane. Two Communists who were standing there as guards started maramari after some discussion." The Janmabhoomi reporter certainly has a peculiar idea of political discussions. Reading his report, one would think that the goondas had rushed into our rear gate at 10 p.m. to carry on a political discussion in the darkness!

He used his powers of imagination even more and wrote:

"10 Communists were injured. Three received serious injuries. Many, many from the crowd had received injuries." (Pravartak—Sunday Edition of Janmabhoomi—Nov. 25)

Evidently the Janmabhoomi office like every other patriotic daily had received a "direction" how to report the incident.

APPS False Version

The Associated Press of India, which claims to be only a news-agency, and impartial, is the Indian branch of Reuters. The APPS knows which way its bread is buttered. So it gives currency both to semi-official Government propaganda and official Congress propaganda thus keeping on the right side of the Government that is and

the Government that is to be.

The APPS put across the same patently false version of the Navakal. The APPS Office did not care to ring up our office as many other newspapers had done. It was not necessary. Because it had obviously been told what had to be said, irrespective of what might actually have happened. I came to know of the APPS version only when a member of the Times of India staff rang us up and read out the APPS story and asked me what I had to say about it. I told him, "Every word is a shameless lie."

But though the Bombay papers may not play up this false story, it would gain country-wide currency through the APPS.

All the Bombay English dailies, the Free Press Journal gave a correct account though not prominently. The Times of India published both the APPS and the true version but the Bombay Chronicle could not make up its mind either way and blacked out the whole incident.

This is the ugly way in which things are going even before Sardar Patel and S. K. Patil have become the power behind the Government in Bombay. The appeal that we sent to S. K. Patil, the President of the Bombay P.C.C. on the 15th November asking him to issue a press statement condemning goonda methods against us, has been unanswered. Even our comrade was ignored.

A Fateful Choice

Evidently, the Bombay Congress leaders do not want this goondagiri to stop, nor will they own up responsibility for it. The goondas must be let alone to physically crush us if possible and the Press in being told to lie for the sake of the Congress, and suppress truth. Communists are traitors, enemies of the Congress and, therefore, should be physically exterminated.

Let the anti-Communist Congress leaders know that we Communists cannot be terrorised or crushed. If British repression and terror could not wipe us out in the last 15 years, we will not go under the threat of their goonda gangs. But—worse—than the lives of Communists are involved, the entire future of our great country is in danger. Until all decent and honest men, who love democracy and hate tyranny and oppression raise their voice and condemn such gutterism, far worse days are ahead for our country. Once the goonda is glorified into a Congress approver, things will not rest with goonda raids on offices of other parties with the Press lying to hide them. It is easy for the goonda to pass from sticks to knives. Murderous assaults and goonda terrorism will become normal in our political life. Only the British rulers will be happy for that will enable them to continue here to "hold the balance."