

Bengal Election Campaign

**CHITTAGONIANS
MUSTER — Under The
Red Flag**

(Story: Pages 6-7)



Dais of the 30,000-strong rally at Chittagong. P. C. Joshi at the mike (left) speaking, Bhowani Sen, leader of Bengal Communists, translating.



A section of the rally—women in the foreground.



Kiron Sen, young Communist worker of Chittagong district.

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A bigger view of the same.

[Photos by: Ardhendu Guha]

FULL STORY OF ASSAULT ON PT. KARYANAND SHARMA

District Congress Leaders Break Up Election Meeting With Lathi Attack

Monghyr, February 6.

The first election meeting which was to have been addressed by P. C. JOSHI in Lakhisarai (Monghyr) on the fourth was broken up by an organised attack led by the thana Congress President, Rajeswari Singh and other Congress workers. About a dozen Communist workers were injured, five of whom are lying in hospital in a precarious condition. Communist candidate, KARYANAND SHARMA, was injured so seriously that he had to be removed to Patna General Hospital for special attention.

THE trouble started before the beginning of the meeting. About a thousand-strong black flag demonstration carrying the banner "P. C. Joshi Go Back" was organised from the local Congress headquarters and after parading through the bazar, it entered the maidan where people were collecting for the meeting. The processionists ran to an elevated space only ten yards to the left from our pandal and occupied it. Then they began throwing stones at our audience and attacking them with lathis and hockey sticks. Our volunteers had to use their lathis in self-defence. There was a free flight in which people on both sides were injured. They specially attacked and beat the people on the dais, injured about a dozen and ran away with the box of microphones instruments.

Rajeswari Singh, the local Congress leader, who was leading this gang received injuries on his head. Ramdhari, a Communist worker, received serious injuries while trying to protect him.

Karyanand Sharma and P. C. Joshi had not yet come to the meeting. Hearing the news of this organised attack on our meeting, Sharmaji rushed to the place and began to pacify the audience which was becoming infuriated. The District Congress Secretary, Nandkumar Singh, and the Provincial Working Committee member, Shyamapad Singh, also now appeared on the scene.

But instead of calling on Congress workers to desist from hooliganism, they began to inflame their lathials by spreading the shameful lie that "Communist goondas had brutally assaulted Rajeswari Babu" and asking the audience "to remember the blood of Rajeswari Babu" who had become a "martyr to the cause of truth and non-violence."

Cowardly Attack: Village Womenfolk Render Aid

To avoid further clash and the serious situation that would have ensued, Sharmaji dispersed the meeting, collected the volunteers and marched them out of the maidan towards the Communist Party office. But hardly had we come to the road when we were again attacked with stones and lathis from behind.

The attackers had by now been reinforced by fresh arrivals of lathials from the villages of certain responsible Congress leaders and they were now hurled against those who had already left the meeting.

To avoid all chances of further disturbances and clashes in the bazar, Sharmaji asked our volunteers to go home and himself marched to the village across the adjoining river. With him were left only ten of us who were carrying the microphone equipment and were entirely defenceless.

Seeing us alone, the band followed us to the village and attacked us even before we were able to put our microphone boxes in some house. We

defended ourselves with our bare hands as long as we could. When two or three of us fell down, they singled out Sharmaji and fell upon him.

Sharmaji was hurled to the ground; his head and hands were very badly bruised and were bleeding profusely but the lathials went on brutally beating him with their lathis. They took advantage of the fact that there were no menfolk in the village at that time to stand up against them, all of them having gone to the Kiul station where they work as coolies.

But the womenfolk now rushed out to defend Sharmaji about whom they had heard so much, but whom they

ment to the press in which he asked Congress workers not to "disturb meetings convened by others nor should they use any abusive language and assault their opponents under any circumstances."

Rajen Babu had made specific reference to Joshi's tour in Bihar. He had also called Geetaprasad Singh, Congress leader of Lakhisarai, to Patna just the day before Joshi's meeting.

District Congress Leaders Pre-Plan It

But in spite of these clear instructions from the most respected Congress leader of the Province, local Congressmen continued their assaults against our workers. At last when the news that they were preparing to break up the meeting to be addressed by Joshi reached Sharmaji, as a last step, he wrote a letter to Rajeswari Babu, the thana Congress President requesting him to come to our meeting and thus avoid unpleasant incidents.

In a written reply, Rajeswari Babu stated that he was unable to come to the meeting

by Indradeep Sinha

had never seen before. They fought heroically, hurled tiles and stones at the assailants and put them to flight. Sharmaji was aided to a house and his injuries attended to till he was removed to hospital with Halan, the local school-master.

"A Communist Does Not Die So Easily"

About two dozen more Communists received serious injuries in this second attack. Sukhdeo sustained a head fracture. Ramdhari remained unconscious for quite a long time and both the arms of Kisanra were broken.

The local doctor who examined them considered their cases serious and he wanted to record their death declarations! When he asked Sharmaji to make a declaration, pointing out the names of his assailants, Sharmaji replied:

"I won't name anybody. I will fight this goondaism not by taking recourse to the British courts but by rousing our people against it. Moreover, I am not going to die. A Communist does not die so easily."

This murderous attack had been planned by the local Congress leaders for the previous several days. Indications had not been wanting that they would do their best to break our meeting and prevent the people by physical violence from listening to Joshi. Communist propaganda squads had been beaten up in several Congress villages. Even the Lakhisarai Communist Party office had been raided on January 26.

Sharmaji had written a letter to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, and requested him to use his influence and authority for putting a stop to such methods. I had myself delivered this letter to Rajendra Babu and had acquainted him with further incidents of hooliganism organised by, or in the presence of, responsible Congress leaders in different parts of Monghyr district.

Rajen Babu had categorically assured me that he would not allow such things to continue in Bihar and had issued a state-

but he would do so if the need arose.

Then I myself went to the Congress headquarters where I met the District Congress Secretary, Nandkumar Sinha, and all local and thana leaders. I requested Nandkumar Babu to stop the black-flag demonstration which they were organising as it was undemocratic and against the clear instructions of Rajen Babu. But he refused to do so. Then I requested him at least not to enter the maidan where people were assembling for our meeting as this would surely lead to clashes.

Nandkumar Babu replied that they were determined to take out the procession and also to enter the maidan but that they would hold their meeting at a distance of a hundred yards. He said that what they were planning was only a "peaceful protest."

These facts are enough to show that the whole incident was deliberately planned, organised and carried out by the District Congress leaders themselves.

Police Join In

About three dozen people sustained injuries as a price for this "peaceful protest" by the Congress leaders. After the meeting had been dispersed and these assaults taken place, these same leaders sent a mob of about a thousand people to raid our Party office. They had heard that Joshi, who had not gone to the meeting, was waiting there.

There was no regret in Congress circles for this murderous attack. On the other hand, the same group of Congress leaders, led by Nandkumar Sinha and Shyamapad Singh, followed Joshi to Shalhpura and thence to Monghyr where his next two meetings were scheduled to be held. They took their lathials too with them to both the places and tried to organise similar attacks there.

In Shalhpura, however, 10,000 kisans rallied to our meeting addressed by Joshi. The Congress leaders and their hirelings could not break it up.

Their Tactics In Monghyr

In Monghyr all the important Congress leaders including the



Karyanand Sharma

VETERAN OF 25 YEARS OF CONGRESS-KISAN STRUGGLES

KARYANAND SHARMA, is the Bakasht Satyagraha of Bihar which lasted for nearly three years. The Congress Ministry, which had meanwhile come to power under Babu Sri Krishna Sinha as Premier (who is the Congress candidate opposing Sharmaji in the coming election), took the side of the zamindars and resorted to severe repression to crush the peasants.

More than 500 kisans were arrested and treated as criminals in jail. Sharmaji too was clapped into jail and had to go on hunger-strike for 49 days in defence of the peasants.

Within a year he was clapped into jail. After his release in 1922, he plunged into the work of organising the Congress in the district. A whole generation of Congress workers was trained up by him for this purpose. It was he who was the founder of the National School and of the famous Chittaranjan Ashram at Lakhisarai for training up whole-time Congress workers.

A Province dominated by the blackest and most oppressive big zamindars, Bihar is notorious for their zealotry against the kisans. Sharmaji is one of the pioneers of the kisan movement in Bihar and has been in the forefront of every kisan struggle since the famous Chanan struggle in 1928. Arrested twice during the Second Civil Disobedience movement, Sharmaji spent over three years in jail during that period. He was released only after the Bihar earthquake when there was a province-wide demand that he should be back among his people to help them. Sharmaji was the head of the Congress volunteers who did relief work in Monghyr. From then on, till 1940, Sharmaji was in the thick of the biggest kisan struggles in Bihar. The most famous of them, which he led personally,

class intellectuals turned up to attend our meeting, they collected near the gate with black flags and began to hoot and howl. They even organised a parallel meeting close by. But it failed to attract any audience. At length they came to our meeting and began making a terrific howl and disturbance. It was impossible for us to continue without forcibly ejecting them out of the meeting. This would have meant a sure clash and bloodshed which we did not want. So Joshi dissolved the meeting.

It is all this experience which brought Sharmaji into the Communist Party. In 1940, Sharmaji was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for leading another kisan struggle. Two months after his release, he was again detained under the Defence of India Act and came out only in 1942. Since then, he has been in the forefront of every struggle of his people, equally against police and official zealotry and against the terror of the zamindars and the blackmarketeers. From 1921 onwards, Sharmaji was a member of the Provincial Congress Committee and a member of the Executive of the District Congress and from 1936 to 1940 he represented Congress in Monghyr District Board also.

It is against such a man, whose whole life has been dedicated to building up the Congress and serving his people, that the present-day District Congress leadership of Monghyr organised this cowardly and brutal goonda attack.

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Honest People Disgusted

All honest and decent people of Monghyr including those who violently disagree with us (Continued on page 11, col. 1)

RED FLAG NOMINEE'S VICTORY OVER HUMAYUN KABIR

THE Red Flag has won a resounding success in the primary election for the Railway Labour seat in the Bengal Legislative Assembly. The procedure is that different Unions elect representatives to the Electoral College according to their respective strength; and this Electoral College finally elects the Railway M.L.A. In the newly elected Electoral College, Communist candidate JYOTI BASU has ninetythree supporters, while his opponent HUMAYUN KABIR, who is backed up by the full strength of the Congress-Labour leaders of Bengal, has seventyfive.

This has been possible because as many as thirtyfive out of the ninetyeight representatives of Kabir's Union, the Bengal and Assam Railway Employees' Association, support the Red Flag.

Jyoti Basu polled over 10,000 votes as against 9,000 for Kabir.

The Bengal and Assam Railway Workers' Union built up under the Red Flag is the strongest and most representative organisation of the actual workers on the Railway.

In 1942, a band of Communist organisers revived the old Union which had been started in 1931, but which had practically become extinct as the result of ruthless repression during the war. Under the Red Flag, the membership of the Union has gone up from 500 in 1942 to over 12,000 today.

During the last three years, it was the Red Flag Union which ceaselessly fought for dearness allowance and the other just demands of the workers. They had to work under conditions of frequent bombings and imminent Jap invasion. In Assam, the Red Flag Union organisers were subjected to severe repression; they were victimised and extorted wholesale.

Bogus Names

Humayun Kabir's "Employees' Association" which he claims to be "the largest union in India," is a paper organisation which has to its credit not a single campaign during these three years. Kabir had managed to enrol ten thousand names as members of his Association in the electoral rolls, but in the course of this election campaign hundreds of bogus names were found, some having been included thrice. Moreover, many who are not entitled to vote like the clerks and supervisors, (because it is a labour constituency), were found on Kabir's list.

Humayun Kabir and his men tried every trick to defeat the Red Flag candidate.

The procedure is that ballot papers are posted to the voters. In many cases, Kabir posted the papers to the heads of departments so that the workers' ballot papers might pass through

the babus and the superior staff who could thus influence voting.

Even after the publication of the electoral roll, addresses were mysteriously changed without the knowledge of voters themselves. For instance, the address of a hundred voters of the Signal Department, Calcutta (who are supporters of the Red Flag), was changed to "Care of South Sealdah Station Master."

Thus several ballot papers did not reach the voters at all, while the Red Flag Union lodged a complaint that the South Sealdah Station Master had handed over those ballot papers to one of Kabir's candidates!

Numerous cases of attempted intimidation are reported from Chittagong, Laksam, Chandpur and Calcutta where clerks and subordinate officers were found not only canvassing for Kabir but threatening to take away ballot papers from the voters, if they did not vote for Kabir and his colleagues. They even handed over one Red Flag Union organiser to the Police at Sealdah Station, for not having a platform ticket when he was watching the distribution of the ballot papers there.

Bureaucracy And Railway Authorities Aid Kabir

In his tireless efforts to prevent a democratic election, Kabir was generally helped by the bureaucracy and the Railway authorities. The Governor by special orders decreed that in the cases of illiterate or incapacitated voters, the vote could be registered in the presence of their Union official and not necessarily in the presence of a Magistrate, as had previously been the rule.

This goes against the principle of secret ballot as there is nothing to prevent intimidation or tampering with votes by Union Officials.

The new rule practically ensured that every Union could grab all the votes of its members for its own nominees. This was obviously done to prevent any section of Kabir's Employees' Association from voting for candidates other than himself.

The Railway authorities, nervous at the prospect of a vic-

tory for the Red Flag, particularly during the coming stormy period, helped Kabir in every way. Extra railway passes were given to organisers of the Employees' Association for travelling during the election campaign.

Kabir Sahab, the revolutionary that he claims to be, travelled in a special saloon, provided by the Railway authorities for his election tour—a thing unheard of in any labour election campaign till now!

Congress Backs Him Up

But Kabir still went on shamelessly attacking the Communists as "traitors," "Government Dalals" and so on—the usual stock-in-trade of him and his like. Everywhere his agents asked for votes in the name of the Congress, and the 'Labour leaders' of the Bengal Congress threw their full weight behind him. Shishnath Banerji, Congress Labour leader, campaigned for Kabir and so also did Niharendu Dutt Majumdar who gave Kabir a testimonial as "a (Continued on page 10, col. 3.)



Communist candidate for Bengal Rly. Labour seat, Jyoti Basu

Bengal Workers And Peasants Defend Their Red Flag

STORIES have come to me from Calcutta of how ordinary workers and kisans are themselves coming forward to defend the Red Flag and the Communist Party from hooligan attacks.

On January 25, while one of our Calcutta comrades was going through the bazar in Andul (Howrah) carrying a bundle of Swasthina (Bengali daily of our Party), a gang of 10 persons suddenly pounced on him, snatched away the papers and ran away with them.

Similar incidents had taken place once or twice before and the kisans in the villages round about Andul bazar had demanded that such things should stop, but to no effect. This time they decided to tolerate it no longer and as a protest against the incident of the 25th, they called a hartal in the Andul market on January 27 and 28.

Kisans' Protest Hartal At Andul

For these two days, there was complete stoppage of all supplies of milk, fish, vegetables, hay, cowdung-cakes, etc. to the market. So effective was the kisan hartal that even the maldservants who used to come to work in the town from the nearby villages stopped turning up!

The kisans firm stand was: "We cannot let you have supplies from our own homes and sit quiet when you attack our flag!"

For two days, the hartal continued, with kisan volunteers guarding all approaches to the bazar day and night. Ultimately, leaders of all parties and prominent non-Party citizens were made to promise that they would actively come forward and help in organising meetings in order to stop political hooliganism.

And the hartal was called off on the assurance that no vindictive reprisal would be attempted on the kisans.

The kisans of Andul have given a timely warning to anti-Communist hooligans all over the country and to their political patrons, to whichever party they may belong.

The bidi workers of Calcutta too have come forward in defence of our Bengali daily. When the news recently reached them that a gang had gone round Calcutta in a taxi, snatched away bundles of Swasthina at different street corners from the hawkers and torn them up, a number of bidi workers came forward and offered their small shops as Swasthina stalls.

They will sell the paper along with their normal business. If the goondas show their dirty faces at their shops, they will have a hot time!

Workers Organise Red Volunteer Corps

All over Calcutta, workers are or-

A Patriot's Notebook

ganising volunteer corps to defend the Red Flag and guard its honour. The pottery workers who only recently won a resounding victory against the Swasthina bosses, under the lead of the Red Flag, have formed a volunteer corps 1,000 strong, in the course of a fortnight. Every young worker in the factory is being organised in the corps to do his bit in stopping assaults on the Red Flag.

The first parade of the Entally (Calcutta) Red Flag Volunteer Corps took place on the Fire Brigade grounds on February 3. Workers of the Potteries, Paint Manufacturing Works, Jute Mills, Standard Pharmaceutical Works and other industries of Calcutta lined up in formation and paraded in a disciplined manner with the hammer and sickle insignia on their caps.

The entire working-class area all around was roused, hundreds came from all sides to watch the volunteers on drill.

What the leader of the pottery workers, Gulerlal, said was echoed by worker-leaders from all industries:

"This workers' volunteer corps of ours will fight every attack on the Red Flag. We are not against any other flag—except the flag of slavery. We will stop this war between brothers and see that all Indians fight together against the British."

Calcutta Port Trust Workers Reply To Anti-Communism

YOU will read elsewhere in this issue (see above) the news of the retreating which that great "revolutionary Labour-leader," Prof. Humayun Kabir, got at the hands of Jyoti Basu, the Communist candidate, in the primary election for the Bengal Railway Union Constituency. This however is not the end of the Professor's misfortunes.

About 20,000 workers are employed under the Calcutta Port Trust. For the last 25 years, a Red Flag Union has been functioning here as the undisputed leader of the Port Trust workers. Some years ago, the Bengal League leader, Mr. Suhrawardy, started a rival paper Union to fight the Communists.

That Union has recently passed into the hands of Prof. Humayun Kabir and his colleagues of the Hindustan Mazdur Sewak Sangh—and has been used for the same purpose.

The Port Trust Management were quite happy at Kabir's activities, and put forward the plea that "since there are two rival Unions, they could not recognise either of them." To foil this plea, the Port Trust workers put forward the demand that the workers themselves should decide by their democratic vote which Union had their confidence. After a good deal of agitation, the Management had to yield to this demand.

Kabir and his friends concentrated on the propaganda that a vote for his

Union is a vote for the Congress and against the Communists. The workers have now voted and here is the result:

	Votes of Babus (i.e. Higher clerical Staff)	Actual workers' votes	Total
For Kabir's Union	2,375	6,627	9,000
For the Red Flag Union	530	9,535	10,465

The Port Trust workers' answer to the anti-Communist Congressmen was as decisive as the answer of the railway workers.

Why This Suppression Of Truth In The Press?

ONE is amazed to see the way in which the Nationalist press and our news-distributing agencies suppress and distort the truth these days in their attempt to fight the Communists.

The defeat of Humayun Kabir by the Communist candidate in the Bengal Railway primary election has so far been mysteriously blacked out of almost the entire Nationalist press.

Recently, the A.P.I. splashed the message that in the primary elections for the Scheduled Castes seats in Bengal, "Congress candidates topped the polls in Chivsurah, Mymensingh, Dacca, Tangail, Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur" and this message appeared in all the papers. The truth is that Congress candidates did not top the polls in Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri.

In Dinajpur, it was the Communist candidate who topped the polls; he polled more votes than the two Congress candidates put together. In Jalpaiguri, there was no contest. The Communist candidate and his Congress rivals automatically came through.

Reporting the result of the voting of the Calcutta Port Trust workers, Bengali Nationalist papers like the Ananda Bazar Patrika and Krishak actually splashed prominently the "news" that Humayun Kabir's Union had defeated the Red Flag Union! The source of this "news" was the United Press of India!

The shameless way in which Bengali Nationalist papers like the Hindustan Standard and the Ananda Bazar Patrika, as well as sections of the Hindi Congress Press of the U.P., splashed cooked-up figures and stories of Communist defeats in the Assam elections is exposed by Arun Bose (See Supplement).

The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspapers' Editors' Conference is meeting shortly at Allahabad. In the interests of the great traditions and good name of our Nationalist press and the way it has served our freedom movement in the past, the first item the Standing Committee should put on their agenda is: The Fight for Truth.

— N. K. Krishnan

COMMUNIST CANDIDATE, JYOTI BASU'S PLEDGE TO WORKERS

EVER since the end of the war, the Bengal and Assam Railway workers, like other Railway workers throughout the country, have been putting up a stubborn fight against the move of the Railway Board to retrench more than three lakh workers and cut the wages and dearness allowance of the rest.

Against the predatory policy of the Railway Board, a country-wide General Strike on all the Railways involving their entire staff—workers, clerks, all, no less than eight lakh employees—is in the air.

It is in this background that the Bengal and Assam Railway workers went to the polls. Jyoti Basu in his Election Manifesto pledged to the B. & A. Railway workers to fight:

- *Against retrenchment, unemployment and reduction of wages.
- *For a basic living wage of Rs. 36 and adequate dearness allowances.
- *For Permanent Service and 42 hours' week.
- *For united action of all workers against every attack of the Railway Board.
- *For a united struggle of our people against British Imperialism for the final bid for power.

COMMUNIST CANDIDATE TOPS POLL

More Votes Than Both Congress Opponents Together

On January 28, the following results were announced of the primary election in the Dinajpur (Bengal) Scheduled Castes' constituency:

Rupnarayan Roy (Communist)	10,050
Haren Roy (Congress)	5,607
Bhabesh Sinha (Congress)	3,649

THE Communist victory represents the victory of awakened kisans and adhiars (landless share-croppers) who are on the march demanding land and freedom from corrupt zamindars, their hirelings, the Marwari merchant profiteers and rice-mill owners, who have taken up the Tricolour in order to hide their real motives from the common people.

Sinha got the Congress ticket. Here is their record. Haren Roy was a Government nominee in the District Board elections held not long ago. Bhabesh Sinha is a notoriously ambitious, 'rising' small landlord—a wine vendor who has made himself one of the most hated men in Dinajpur by mismanaging the affairs of the local Food Committee.

A Slave Society

To understand the real significance of this election fight, it is necessary to know the whole social set-up in Dinajpur and other North Bengal districts, where members of the Scheduled Castes live in the largest numbers.

Whoever goes there carries back the impression with him that he has taken a journey into a slave society.

At the top are the powerful zamindars and jotedars who own huge tracts of land and live in mansions stocked with huge grain stores and, staffed by slaves. The kisans not only have no rights over the land even as share-croppers, they do not even get one-third of what they produce.

The zamindars control the whole network of officials (fed on bribes), rice-mill owners and profiteering merchants. In recent years of famine and wartime scarcity, there has been a tightening of the screws all round on the adhiars.

The great thing about North Bengal adhiars is that while their status is that of bond slaves of the zamindars and jotedars—they are slaves in revolt. Already before the war, there was a strong movement among the land-hungry adhiars. Today, there is a powerful movement to win one-third of the produce as the first step in the fight for land and freedom.

Slaves In Revolt

When the elections came close, the adhiars made up their minds to fight for their own man. RUPNARAYAN, the builder of their Kisan Samity, and give the slave-owners the shake-up of their lives.

The handful of zamindars and jotedars belonging to the Scheduled Castes also had to make rapid calculations and choose new weapons for fighting the adhiars who were on the march.

Traditionally, they have been the most notorious political turncoats in Bengal. They always kept close to the I.O.S. and after bullying the adhiars into electing them, have always been ready to join any party in the Bengal Assembly which gave them a big enough bribe and made them Ministers.

They realised they had a poor chance against the adhiars this time by standing on their old labels. So the 'shrewd' ones among them decided to get the Congress ticket. The plan was to use both the whip and the Tricolour to get enough Scheduled Caste votes to scrape through the primary elections and then rely upon the middle-class Caste Hindu votes to win in the final elections.

As a result of such intrigues, Messrs. Haren Roy and Bhabesh

When this did not impress, they tried to sneer: "The Communists shout about 'land to the adhiar'. How will they get you the land?"

To round it all off, there was, of course, the usual propaganda against the 'morals' and 'integrity' of the Communists.

But the much-despised 'uneducated' adhiars, young and old, routed these finished 'educated' propagandists on their own.

Challenge Met

The reply to the attack on price-controls was sharp and to the point:

"If the control goes, YOU will be able to buy dhooties at Rs. 22 each. But where shall we get so much cash? YOU may be 'forced' to buy more than you need in the black-market to-day. But we have no money to go anywhere near it!"

At other places, the adhiars put straight questions to Presidents of the Food Committees: "You want our votes? Why do we not get cloth or oil from you?"

They gave a withering reply when they were told that voting Communist will not get them land:

"Who told you we shall put Rupnarayan into the Assembly and then sit back and wait for him to give us land?"

"We shall fight right here and he will fight there and we shall win 15 bighas each by our own strength."

They kept their heads cool when they heard the old song about Communists being in Government pay and gave the sober reply:

"Rupnarayan braved British jails for freedom. Have Bhabesh Sinha or Haren Roy ever been anywhere near prison? When did you fellows turn Congressmen, anyway? We never saw you doing anything for the Congress before."

The Dinajpur adhiar has a clear head. He knows what he wants, knows his facts and knows his friend from his enemy. No amount of wordy gymnastics can make him disbelieve his eyes.

Threats Fail

But as far as the zamindars are concerned, the attempted attack on the Communist Party's policy was only a side-show. They really banked upon threats and the use of force to frighten the most down-and-out adhiars and kisans. They used the same old methods they had used in the past as loyalist oppressors—even though they had now turned Congressmen.

All the men feared most by the poor were thrown into the fight, to use their power of blackmail to the utmost.

The notorious zamindar-Congress leader of Durgapur, Sjt. Bhupal Choudhury, for instance, sent his chowkidars round with a mandate to his tenants to vote against the Kisan Samiti candidate.

In Kaharal, all the local Congress leaders went to the 'Maharaja' and begged him to give them all his clerks and agents to work in the Congress electoral machine.

In Birganj, the local zamindar made a speech before his tenants and warned them that all his lathials, chowkidars and his 'bodyguard' force will work for the Congress.

Against this was pitched the self-sacrificing devotion and

For Land And Freedom!

Call To Scheduled Caste Kisans

"The Communist Party appeals to all peasants and agricultural labourers for support as organisers of their own Kisan Sabhas, in the name of their own Red Flag, for an unending round of new and great battles against the enemies of their own village and for building up a new and happy life in the very village of their forefathers.

"Workers and peasant elders! Only your Party is putting forward the best sons of your own class as its candidates and they are the majority among Communist candidates; among them are Hindu, Muslim, Touchable and Untouchable, Sikh, Gurkha, Garhwali, Manipuri, Bengali, Malayali, Andhra, Tamil, Karnadiga and Maratha.

"To Untouchable humanity! The Communist Party appeals to millions of Untouchables wherever they live that through the battle of our Party for new villages and new towns, they will gain the most as the most oppressed section of our people.

"The Communist Party assures them that it shall always fight against every form of social oppression, from which they suffer and for securing equal economic and political status for them in the government of the country.

"In implementing the programme for settling landless labourers on fallow land, the Communist Party shall insist that Untouchables, who form the large bulk of landless labourers, be given first and special attention."

(From the Election Manifesto of the Communist Party of India).

grim determination of the kisans and adhiars.

In Dinajpur, not many from the educated classes have joined the Communist Party. So all the electoral work had to be done by the kisans themselves. The amount of trouble they took to understand and work out all the unfamiliar details of electoral work was amazing.

The elections came in the harvesting season, but whole batches of kisans kept away from the fields, busy on election work, going from hat (market) to hat, village to village. The best-educated among them are barely literate. But they spotted out all the names on the voters' lists, slowly and deliberately spelling out the names and repeating aloud to themselves.

Nor did they take any chances with likely goondalism by zamindars' agents. In Birganj, Lahria and many other places, there were strong rumours that the Samiti's enemies would start clashes. Batches of kisans patrolled the area all night—singing songs to the beat of kholis, kartals and other musical instruments.

So the zamindars got some votes by blackmail but could not bring about a major swing.

Polling Day Scenes

On polling day, the scenes at the booths were symbolic and unforgettable.

On one side, all the aristocrats of the countryside were stretched out on their carpets. They rode up in their bullock carts, had their carpets spread out and 'rested' themselves after the 'journey' in right royal style. 'Pan-biri' vendors hovered round them continuously. Some of the sons of money-lenders, vakils, and doctors—who have as yet only learnt to despise the men of the soil and not join hands with them—shouted themselves hoarse in their excitement.

Congress leaders were trying to make speeches in polished Bengali, putting across far-fetched and highly complicated ideas. When their speeches fell flat on the 'ignorant' kisans and adhiars, they threw up their hands in despair and asked the boys to go full steam ahead—to make as much noise as they could and to pour out insults by the bucket-full.

In Birganj, Thakurgaon, Kallagan, Durgapur, Itahar etc., hordes of them did their best to harass the kisans and adhiars who did not want a fight but would not stand any nonsense. They tried to bar the way to the booths, threw clouds of dust at the voters and tried to snatch away the precious pieces of cloth the adhiars had wrapped round their bodies.

There was none of this meanness

and panic on our side. The Red Flag was planted on good earth. There were no carpets and 'refreshments', no lofty speeches coupled with the vilest abuse. An unending stream of half-naked, 'uneducated', humble yet determined kisans and adhiars from every section of suppressed Scheduled Caste humanity flocked to the Red Flag.

There were Rajbansis, the Pallas, batches of Santals with their bows and arrows. Batches of women too came to vote—for the first time in history in any noticeable strength.

"Slowly, the small bands swelled into a sea of humanity. They walked all the way from villages 12, 14 or even 18 miles away. They had no food and no money, yet they stuck on to the polling booths all day. Large numbers who had come to vote had to go back disappointed because their names were not on the electoral rolls.

The crowd was so big and the arrangements at the booths so inadequate that many voters waited right up to midnight and still did not get the chance to vote.

The Next Round

In the next round, at the general elections, there will, of course, be a tough fight. Rupnarayan's opponents hope to swamp his clear majority among the Scheduled Caste kisans and adhiars with rural middle-class and well-off kisans' votes.

They are also out to use to the full the weapon of blackmail against the most down-trodden Scheduled Caste kisans and adhiars.

Already by the time the primary election results were announced, it was reported that the Food Committee (controlled by profiteers) in Union No. 2 of the Kothali thana had stopped giving cloth, sugar and kerosene to the kisans. One can rest assured that any and every method will be tried out in the month before the general election to put the fear of God into the adhiars.

But Rupnarayan's victory has put heart into the fighting adhiars and kisans too and they have pledged themselves to rouse the whole countryside in the fight for land and freedom.

Already in the Scheduled Caste elections, there were signs that Caste Hindu kisans are no less eager than their Scheduled Caste brothers to join the fight. There was such a stir among them, in fact, that it is known that in No. 4 Aloakhoa Union, a batch of Caste Hindu voters turned up and insisted on being allowed to vote for Rupnarayan.

Even the Muslims, in fact, are being swept by the general current. An old Muslim kisan, Ajimudin, caught hold of Communists at the Habra booth, with a group of Muslim voters behind him. He was very angry when he was told they could not vote. He has put up candidates of the Samiti among Hindus. Why have you not put up candidates among Muslims as well?—was his demand.

Old Jan Mohammed of the Mangalpur village in Biral thana came all alone early in the morning and started working as a volunteer—trying to recruit other volunteers for the Samiti's election.

Yes, Dinajpur kisans and adhiars have a fighting chance of winning the next round.

COMMUNIST PAMPHLET YOU MUST GET AT ONCE!

FOOD FOR ALL

by G. Adhikari

As. 4.

You have read the article on page 5 on the serious food crisis facing our entire people today. This pamphlet will help you to understand the situation better; it will show the people's way out of it, to ensure food for all.

Please write to Sales Dept.—

PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,
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For Hindu - Muslim Unity To Fight New British Partition Plan

Stop Slander And Lathi Warfare Among Brothers

On January 31, P. C. JOSHI, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, addressed a large meeting of nearly 80,000 at Chittagong town, in course of which he explained the Communist stand in the coming elections, and the bases on which the Communist Party is basing its campaign.

The meeting was attended by all sections of people—workers, students, businessmen, lawyers, doctors, teachers, girls, women,—belonging to all political parties, including Congresses and Leagues.

The following is the text of his speech:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:
To speak in freedom before the people of Chittagong is a privilege for there is hardly a place in India which has an experience with Chittagong in the contribution to freedom's cause.

In our country has been a freedom in a very old time, as old as the coming of the British, for it began on the very day the British set foot on our soil. But today it is time to understand the Congress consequences of continued slavery, and also why freedom has not yet come.

The have been known to every home in Chittagong, but have not been known to the dark shadow of famine and epidemics.

Here in Chittagong, Sufiya Khan and his band, by their brutal sacrifices raised this city in the esteem of the whole of India. Fifteen years ago it was only the youth that responded to their call, but today it is not only the youth but even the old Chittagonians who come to the British and want to be free.

This is because our whole people, every section of it, belonging to every generation, has suffered under the rule and rule of the British, and we are not content with freedom.

If now, anybody says—some behind me and I shall say—some freedom is not a thing that is in the hands of the British (Communism) of freedom. Therefore, as you know, no matter whether of rice, cloth or freedom, it is a bad thing, and cannot bring us freedom.

Justice For All Then Along United Struggle Possible
Since the day the British set foot on our soil, our people have fought them again and again. And we have fought and fought largely in nothing new. Today from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, from Khasi to Chittagong, everywhere in India, there is a cry for freedom. We, why should our country still remain in chains?

It is because while some of our people have gone ahead, others have lagged behind and it is only by taking all these forward and back that we can break our chains and be free.

But to do this it is necessary to win the confidence of those that have to be taken forward. It is necessary to guarantee that in the free India, of tomorrow every people shall be free.

We shall therefore recognize the freedom of every province. Here the Bengalis, Assamese, Sindhis, Marathas, Gujaratis, Pathans, Sindhis and others.

It is necessary that we should draw the pattern of a Free India on a family of free provinces—and that every province of our people shall have freedom which alone can bring mutual confidence. Just as in a family, when brothers recognize each other's just demands, they make the whole family happy and prosperous, so our India must grow up to be a great family of nations, based on the

Therefore they attack us as Congress 'dolls', but we consider it an abuse but a matter of pride to be attacked for having raised the intense hatred of the Muslim masses against British rule, which the Khan Bahadur has completely ignored.

Our Appeal To Both
We respect both the Congress and the League, because they have raised in our people the spirit of freedom. They may be fighting among themselves today, but in the matter of freedom, mutual differences in a small matter; the great thing is to connect unity among them all.

We respect the Congress because they are the people who are fighting among themselves today, but in the matter of freedom, mutual differences in a small matter; the great thing is to connect unity among them all.

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to happen then? But those are going to happen soon. After the election when the Congress and the League go to the Viceroy, he will deal them both as the quarrelling cats were chased by the monkey of their father in the hills. Thus, not only they themselves but the whole country will have to face a greater shame than it did at Delhi, thereby weakening each other.

The Shila Conference lasted only for a month, the new Congress-making body, as has been announced by the Viceroy himself, will last for two years. And two years is a long period in which to learn from similar experience.

Landmarks Of Unity In The Past
I come from a mountainous country, where cattle grazed scattered among the hills. When the winter thunders came, they all come together with their horns pointed towards the sky. When our big leaders do what even the animals do, animals believe only by instinct, but man acts by intelligence born out of experience.

We say that even today getting through lathi charges, before we can get to the enemy, before being shown his face, let us come together. There are not only two ways—either to get lathi charges (physical) ourselves by bowing down to the Viceroy, or stand against him in our mind against the common enemy of all. We have faith in both the Congress and the League that they will finally take the right course.

We say our mutual differences are not religious, unimportant, but they are real. The common enemy of all, and the war for unity against that common enemy, it is to try that today things have come to

Red Flag Preserves That Heritage
After the collapse of the 1939 movement, the Hindu-Muslim unity movement was shattered. At the same time a new thing has happened; Our Party was born and has grown, and under the Lal Jhanda, Hindus and Muslims fight together and together fight for the common cause as well. Thus the unity that was broken at the top was not wiped out among the common people. We

We Fought For Unity In Chittagong: Example Of Khasiarpur
In Chittagong, the Communists have fought for unity and recently after the Khasiarpur atrocities they brought the Congress and the League to-

gether. All over the country, Chittagong was a proud hero, as proud as the flag of the Liberty Bell, which was raised in 1776.

When the Viceroy was reduced to ashes, we Communists stood there without blinking whether it was a Hindu village or a Muslim village; what mattered to us was that our brothers and sisters were the victims. When a lakh of people came to the meeting here with them came together Congressmen, Leaguers and the Communists.

Both Hindus and Muslims came to our meetings because we do not consider religion as a barrier. We are against the other. But we go to each other, carrying the message of freedom and justice.

Unless the Hindu and Muslim workers stand together, not a single strike can be successful against the capitalists. The lathi has taught the workers this and the Muslim workers have learned it from the bitter experience of life.

And so, in our national life against the British capitalist and feudal class, we are united against the foreign ruler—Hindu and Muslim stand together, we can never win. That is why our Party today gives the call to both to stand together, to approach each other with justice and to fight shoulder to shoulder for freedom.

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Apply Justice And Reason To Win Common Freedom

and we stand thereby started the freedom movement in Chittagong. It is for you to keep up the struggle and unite to fight against the new partition, and thereby win freedom itself.

Congress And Communists
Let us have some to a very interesting topic, namely the Congress and the Communists. How the Indians of the Congress leadership, there is not a single one of them who is not a man who has been in some way or other, either before or after, in the struggle for freedom.

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Indian Air Force Strike-Wave

FOR BETTER CONDITIONS AND RESETTLEMENT

Demand For Non-Official Enquiry

HR last month has seen a number of strikes among Indian Air Force personnel all over India. In Calcutta, Yelahanka (Bangalore), Lahore, Karachi and lately in Bombay these strikes have taken place.

The widespread nature of these strikes shows clearly enough that they are not due to some local conditions but are a result of the general conditions of the Air Force, which have come up in every one of the recent waves of strikes.

Demands Granted
The strikes in British India continued till Saturday when Air Commodore Chatterjee from the R.Q. and the local Air Commodore arrived on the scene and were greeted with a warm and friendly "Go back to India".

Finally they spoke and arranged the strikers that as far as local amenities and material were concerned, their demands would be met immediately; the demand for war gratuity, resettlement and higher pay, they were not competent to grant but the Air Commodore would recommend them for consideration by the Government of India, the final authority.

Meanwhile on Friday, 300 airmen in Bombay, hearing of the strike in British India, came out on strike with similar demands except for three additional ones.

First that non-official committee of Bombay of the Communist Party should be set up to investigate the conditions in the I.A.F.

Secondly that all Indian airmen should be re-settled in India.

Thirdly that the Government should take steps to improve the conditions of the I.A.F. airmen.

It is interesting to note that the I.A.F. airmen are not only fighting for their own interests but also for the interests of the Indian people.

Communists Fight For Freedom For All

Our Party stands for freedom for all, not only for the Indian people but for the people of the whole world. We are not a party of the Indian people alone, we are a party of the world's people.

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MASS STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS

REACTIONS OF LEADERS AND PRESS

THE sentence of seven years on Captain Rashid of the Indian National Army has brought about the biggest anti-British demonstrations by Muslim students and youth.

News keeps pouring in of demonstrations—so far primarily of students—from the U.P., Bihar and elsewhere, including Delhi.

The peak was reached—as is only to be expected nowadays—in Calcutta. After a meeting at Wellington Square, a big students' procession marched to Dalhousie Square—the goal of the students in the upheaval last November.

On that occasion, Muslim League students went away disappointed from the students' meeting held to condemn the Police firing.

This time, Muslim League, Congress and Communist students marched with their banners and were lathi-charged together near Dalhousie Square. "Down with British Imperialism" was the battle-cry in all the demonstrations—from Calcutta to Delhi.

In November, the Bengal Muslim League leadership was nowhere in sight. The Calcutta Muslim League asked Muslims to keep out of the whole affair.

This time, the Bengal League leader, Mr. Suhrawardy, addressed the meeting, accompanied to have "praised the students for joining the demonstration under the Congress and Muslim League flags. He said there was no difference between the ideals of the Congress and the League. If there was any it was in the method of approach towards the goal of Independence of India."

"Jail All Or Free All!"

But if the Muslim youth is getting its first baptism of fire in recent times in clashes with Imperialism—no thanks are due to their elders in the Muslim League for it.

As soon as the sentence was announced, Muslim League students went on the war-path in a body. But the Muslim League papers only complained that the British had 'let them down'. They think the Muslim League has not been properly 'rewarded' for not making enough 'noise' over the Rashid case!

The Asre Jaded of Calcutta, for instance, writing on the 6th

of February, only crawled on its belly and pleaded with the British that the INA men 'deserve mercy more than justice.'

It then built its case on the assumption that the British are very anxious not to give anybody the impression that "those in authority listen only to the voice of the Congress and pay no heed to the voice of others." It expected the British to be very upset because "everybody will consider the Commander-in-Chief's attitude to be one of support for the Congress and enmity towards the League"!

The Inquilab of Bombay, on the 11th of February, almost said that either Shah Nawaz too should have been jailed with Rashid or both have been let off!

After attacking the 'mean-ness' and the 'Hindu mentality of the Congress leaders', it said:

"The Muslims do not want to trouble the Government or any other party. They do not want undeserved leniency. But they cannot tolerate Schgal and Shah Nawaz being released while Capt. Rashid is sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for the same crime. This is not justice."

And after this call to the Government to "jail all or release all," it makes an appeal for hartal in Bombay in its issue of February 12.

"Struggle" Against Whom?

The Manshoor of Delhi (where the biggest anti-Imperialist demonstration has taken place—see elsewhere on this page) took the same milk-and-water legalistic line and ended with a feeble threat: "The C-in-C should realise that there is great unrest among Muslims."

The Bombay daily Iqbal, in its issue of the 9th, concentrates its main fire against the silence of the Congress leadership and press over Capt. Rashid's conviction "as if Capt. Rashid had nothing to do with the INA and no injustice has been done to him."

Mr. Hosain Imam, member of the Muslim League Working

Committee, summed up this whole line of thought in his statement at Calcutta wherein he 'threatened'—not to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Congress in a joint movement—but to 'out do' the Congress in 'creating trouble.'

"Mr. Hosain Imam added that if any proof was required of the fact that the Government of India was intimidated by the Congress, this glaring instance of discriminating treatment proved to the hilt that Muslim opinion was not given any weight by the Government of India, which seemed to think only the Congress could create trouble for them."

Sneers From The Congress!

The worst of it is that Congress opinion has, on the whole, so far practically ignored the whole affair. The reason is that the Congress leaders have been thinking along the same lines as the Muslim League elders.

The only Congress leader of repute who has commented on Capt. Rashid's conviction at all is Pandit Nehru. But his statement, instead of making a straight firm demand for Capt. Rashid's release, brings in arguments which will only encourage Congress ranks to make it an issue of party poli-

tics. His statement, in fact, is on the same level as Hosain Imam's. He says:

"I do not admire or appreciate in the least the stand taken or the statement made by Capt. Rashid in the course of the trial. That was something not in keeping with the dignity of an individual or group or INA or the nation."

"Nor can we have any sympathy with any acts of cruelty indulged in by anyone against officers and soldiers of the Indian Army. But it must be borne in mind that the circumstances were very special and extraordinary and the normal standard cannot be applied to these cases."

"The Commander-in-Chief acted wisely and with far-seeing statesmanship in the first INA trial. That wisdom and foresight are needed for other cases also."

Mr. Jinnah's Warning

These outpourings from the League and the Congress sides show clearly that they have made Capt. Rashid a pawn in a triangular game of power-politics. Each side wants the Government to be tough with the other. The League at best threatens to out do the Congress in making trouble. The Congress leaders want to hold their hands—teach the Muslims a lesson—that the Government is with the Congress and no one else can 'deliver the goods'.

The INA release campaign, therefore, threatens to lead to countryside

Congress-League and Hindu-Muslim bitterness instead of cementing unity. The only hopeful sign is the students' united stand at Calcutta which forced even Mr. Suhrawardy to hail Congress-League unity on the issue. It is now reported that the Nagpur Congressmen have also made an unqualified demand for Rashid's release—the only one by Congressmen so far.

The best news of all has come from Delhi. The 2,000-strong anti-Imperialist demonstration in front of the Central Assembly took the sting out of the speeches by the Congress and Muslim League leaders and led to a united front.

Mr. Jinnah's speech was free from any anti-Hindu or anti-Congress bias and a straight demand for the release of all INA men and not to 'jail all or free all.' He referred to the 'revolt' in the country which forced the Government to give in—

"because you felt . . . that it will help a political settlement and there was such an upsurge of agitation and revolt throughout the country against your policy of putting them on trial, that you funked and you were stampeded into taking this action and re-nounced the entire sentence. Having done this, you find now that the agitation has cooled down, but you find there are severe comments on this 'face'."

He made it very clear that he wanted all to be released: "I don't say you were wrong in releasing them, but you should never have put them on trial at all."

A Pointer

What should be very clear to all is that Capt. Rashid's conviction is a pointer not only to those with pro-British illusions inside the League, but also in the Congress. The united demand of all parties unleashed the mighty movement which won back the first three INA men. The anti-League capital that was made out of that victory and the failure of the Muslim League to launch a mass movement to win Rashid's release cooled off the INA release campaign.

But as Mr. Jinnah rightly pointed out, there are many more INA trials being planned by the British. They will be defended both by the Congress and the Muslim League. If Rashid's conviction goes through, the Government will become bolder and the story of the first trial is not likely to be repeated again.

You want to find a scapegoat? Mr. Jinnah said, "and Rashid is No. 1, BUT IT IS NOT GOING TO STOP THERE, YOU WILL GET A FEW MORE."

There is time yet to heed this warning.

Rashid Day In Delhi

MUSLIM HARTAL, MEETINGS

Procession In Defiance Of Police Ban

By wire from Y. D. Sharma

DELHI, Feb. 11.

TODAY Delhi saw one of the biggest anti-Imperialist demonstrations of Muslims in recent years. The Provincial Muslim League and the Muslim Students' Federation gave a call to observe Monday as 'Captain ABDUL RASHID DAY' to protest against his conviction and sentence of seven years imprisonment by the Commander-in-Chief.

The Communist Party, the Congress Leftist group, the Provincial Students' Federation and several other non-Muslim organisations extended their support to the observance of the day.

There has been great resentment among Muslims here since the Commander-in-Chief announced the decision on Capt. Rashid and spontaneous students' strikes in Muslim institutions took place on Thursday. Muslim students demonstrated before the Central Assembly demanding his immediate release.

To give organised shape to people's indignation, the Provincial Muslim League fixed Monday as Protest Day.

Govt. Condemned

There was hartal in the city; all Muslim shops were closed including meat, vegetable and fruit shops and restaurants. Many Hindus also closed their shops. All Muslim students observed hartal and some Hindu students also joined, but there was incomplete strike in the colleges because the Students' Congress declined co-operation.

From 10 o'clock, batches of students carrying League flags marched in a procession towards the Urdu Park and held a mass rally under the auspices of the Muslim Students' Federation. Over 2,000 attended the meeting and passed a resolution condemning the Government action in sentencing Abdul Rashid.

The Police ban on processions continues, but despite the ban, the students formed into a pro-

cession after the meeting and marched towards the Central Assembly where a debate on the resolution for the release of the INA personnel was on. Passing through the bazars of Old Delhi and Connaught Place, Parliament Street and shouting anti-British, anti-Wavell, anti-Auchinleck slogans, the demonstrators reached the Assembly at 2 P.M.

Before Central Assembly

The procession which had grown several thousand strong demonstrated before the Assembly for one hour, shouting slogans demanding Abdul Rashid's release and condemning Government action. It was the biggest demonstration staged before the Assembly in recent years, and was very impressive.

The demonstrators cheered the Assembly members and attempts by mischief-mongers to turn it into an anti-Congress demonstration failed. One Congress MLA addressed the demonstrators.

Ayub Ahmed Kirmani, an enthusiastic League worker, addressing the demonstrators said: "The Union Jack flying on the Assembly is the symbol of our slavery. We, Muslims, shall not rest till the Union Jack disappears from here."

Students enthusiastically cheered him. The demonstrators returned in procession formation shouting slogans through New Delhi streets.

Muslim girl students also held a separate meeting at 11 a.m. At 2 o'clock the League flag was hoisted in the Urdu Park before

the Jumma Masjid. From the same place a procession of 10,000 Muslims started, defying the Police ban and shouting slogans, "British Imperialism Murdabad," "Muslim League Zindabad," "Release INA Prisoners."

Imperialist Effigy Burnt

At 7 p.m. students took out a torchlight procession, carrying an effigy of British Imperialism which was burnt later in the Urdu Park.

Nearly 30,000 gathered in a mass meeting held at 8 p.m. under the auspices of the Provincial Muslim League in front of the Jumma Masjid.

Anis Hashmi, General Secretary of the Provincial League, moved a resolution condemning the Commander-in-Chief's action and demanding the release of all INA prisoners and the dissolution of the courts martial.

The resolution declared that the foreign Government had no right to try Indians whom it betrayed and handed over to the Japs. It appealed to all parties that they should unitedly demand Abdul Rashid's release, otherwise the Government would sentence more INA prisoners.

Hashmi deplored the silence of the Congress leaders and press on this issue and referred to Nehru's statement as weak.

Qazi Mohammad Isa, member of the League Working Committee, made a strong indictment of the British Government and its colonial policy, and its brutalities against the people of Chittagong. He called the Government action a challenge to 10 crores of Muslims who must get ready to fight the British for India's freedom and free Pakistan. He congratulated the people of Delhi on the splendid demonstration of their indignation against Government action.

Abdur Rehman Siddiq, M.L.A. (Central) and Shaikh Abdus Salam also addressed the meeting.

THE FAMINE CRISIS

(Continued from Page 5.)

production in the country reaches the people.

They must declare ruthless war on the hoarders and profiteers; they must open it by carrying out a drastic anti-hoarding drive and unearthing every grain of hoarded stocks already gone into the black-market. Their policy must be to purchase all surplus stocks direct from the peasant with the aid of peasants' Committees and guaranteeing the peasant a fair price.

With the monopoly of all available stocks in their hand, the Ministries must extend rationing to all cities and open control-price grain shops throughout the rural areas. Only thus can they squeeze the food-producers out of existence.

The next step they will have to take is to increase our food production to the maximum extent possible. They must take over all fallow land available in the country, kept idle by the landlord or under the Government, and distribute it to landless peasants for foodgrain cultivation.

The peasants must be given full State assistance to enable them carry on their cultivation.

The popular Ministries must concentrate on straightening the back of the peasant who is the backbone of food production in our land.

In order to encourage the Indian peasant to produce his maximum, the load of rent, debt and serfdom under which he is ground down today, must be lifted.

Popular Ministries must quickly enact legislation to ensure that the landlord cannot eject the peasant from his land at his sweet will.

Rents must be scaled down and debts cancelled of all peasants who cannot make enough of their land. Serfdom must be abolished; all illegal exactions of the landlord must be banned.

All this can be done by making the big landlord pay out of his ill-gotten wealth. Popular Ministries must levy from them, over and above land revenue, a steeply-graded tax

and see that the wealth of the rich is used in feeding the common people.

These are steps which need the utmost co-operation and support of the people. A people's Ministry CAN carry them through.

Every section of our people and the organised kisan movement should immediately begin fighting for these demands here and now. They should be inscribed on the banner of a United People's Food Movement and should be echoed from every people's demonstration.

The food profiteers are already getting active, trying to repeat the story of 1941, taking advantage of people's dire need and whisking away all stocks into the black-market even before popular Ministries get into the saddle.

The strength of a united people's will, and of our main patriotic parties, alone can cry a halt to this.

Such a people's movement alone, to be started here and now, can enable the coming popular Ministries to overcome the opposition and sabotage of the profiteers, and the vested interests in land, to the above measures.

Such a movement alone will isolate and hamstring the friends of anti-social elements inside the patriotic parties and put behind the popular Ministries, when they take charge, the strength and drive to fight the land monopolist and the hoarder and carry the above measures through.

Through such interim measures we shall have to pass on to making a final clean sweep of parasitic landlordism, usurious moneylenders and the greedy hoarder-merchants.

Only with their abolition, the nationalisation of land and the taking over of the foodgrain trade and distribution by People's Sales-Purchase Co-operatives under State control—can the Imperialist era of chronic famine be ended and food for all ensured in a Free Democratic India.

● **Indian Press Reactions To UNO**
● **Battleground For Anglo-Soviet Rivalry?**
● **Forum To Aid World Democratic Forces**

THE discussions on the main issues before the first meeting of the UNO Security Council are nearing their end. Iran, Greece and Indonesia—on each issue the battle has raged. And on each issue were seen two sides clearly ranged, on the one, British reaction's mouth-piece, Bevin, in the lead, on the other, the Soviet Union sharply exposing and indicting the British Imperialists, expressing the sentiments and aspirations of the world-wide democratic movement.

In India however this has not been the reaction of our Nationalist press.

The Birla-owned Hindustan Times has summed up the entire proceedings in the heading of its editorial—"Anglo-Soviet Rivalries."

The sober Madras Hindu echoes the same idea by referring to the discussion on Greece as an event in which "Russia has succeeded in embarrassing Britain," but, it continues, "the Greek problem remains."

Most crude of all, as usual, is the Bombay Free Press Journal, which wrote:

"As for M. Vyshinsky, his interest in Greece was not because it was Greece. He has picked on a counter-irritant to ruffle the British skin." (February 8).

And it concludes:

"The proceedings of the UNO, both on the Iran and the Greek issues, are calculated to shake public faith in the organisation. So far as small nations are concerned, it is better if their condition is not brought up at the sessions of the UNO."

Swallowing Tory Propaganda

All that happened at the UNO Sessions, therefore,—as far as our Nationalist press was concerned—were merely battles between rival Big Powers, rival Imperialist powers, the British and—the Soviet!; and that the raising of the Indonesian and Greek issues by the Soviet was merely an attempt to make 'trouble' for Britain, because the raising of the Iranian question had made 'trouble' for the Soviet.

Thus right from the start our Nationalist press swallows the Imperialist propaganda. The Hindustan Times' special correspondent revealed last week that when Britain found that she would have to face up to the Soviet charges, she "began a systematic campaign to write down the Russian move by describing it as a step taken by the Soviet Union to offset a complaint made by Persia regarding Russian interference in her internal affairs."

This systematic propaganda of Imperialism certainly found very fertile ground among our Nationalist newspapers.

But that too is not all. It is also necessary to see just what issues were before the Security Council.

Real Issue

Our Indian contemporaries say that what Britain is doing in Greece and Indonesia, the Soviet is doing in Iran.

In fact, the truth is that what Britain is doing in Greece and Indonesia, she is also doing in Iran!

In Greece, the British are backing the Monarchist reactionaries, the former friends of Hitler, the magnates of big business—in an effort to destroy the EAM, the core of Greece's democratic movement, and make Greece safe for anti-Soviet strategy and economic domination.

In Indonesia, the British are backing the Dutch Imperialists, the oil-magnates, in an effort to destroy the Indonesian democratic forces, which have set up the Republic.

In Iran too, the British are

backing the 2,000 wealthy families who "own the land, they are the cabinet, they are the mejlis (Parliament), they control finances and the army." (Reuter, December 27, 1945).

It was these 2,000 "propertied families..." Reuter continues, which "turned to a conservative Britain for solace" and "British influence again became paramount, particularly after the elimination of the pro-Germans."

Again, it was these 'British-influenced' 2,000 families which terrorised the people in N. Iran and when the democratic movement refused to keep quiet, wanted to send more troops to N. Iran to crush it.

And just as the Soviet has protested against British troops in Greece crushing the Greek democratic movement and British troops in Indonesia crushing the Indonesian movement, here also the Soviet protested AND because her troops are on the spot, refused to allow 'British-influenced' troops to crush the Iranian democratic movement.

What therefore has to be seen is that it is not a question of Britain and the Soviet "irritating" (Hindu) each other; it is a real struggle the world over, as in Indonesia so in Iran, between democracy and reaction that expressed itself in UNO, with Vyshinsky leading democracy and Bevin leading reaction.

On Trusteeship Too

THIS also emerged in the other discussions at UNO.

It was the Soviet that demanded permission for the six crores strong World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) to participate in UNO; the British and the U.S. objected.

It was the Soviet that demanded that the setting-up of the Trusteeship Council should be effected without delay, while the British and U.S. delegates tried delaying tactics which however, finally failed. (Hindu, February 8).

Again, when the Hindu reported that it was likely that the issue of British and French troops in Syria and the Lebanon would be raised before UNO, it also reported that "it is considered highly probable that the Levant States would also receive support from the Soviet Union" (February 6).

UNO—Its Scope

But the fact is that while inside UNO the Soviet is pressing hard the key democratic issues, outside UNO the democratic movement has yet not rallied strongly enough to back the Soviet demand and to effect a real change. And it is to this that our press should direct its attention.

The Soviet can force a decision on Greece if, and only if, the peoples of the countries composing UNO, force their

Governments to support the Soviet. So also with Indonesia, the WFTU, and the rest.

But if the peoples are not strong enough, the Soviet too can do no more than utilise the forum of the Security Council to speak out its views—thus focussing world attention on issues of key importance, showing clearly where its own sympathies lie, and strengthening the world democratic movement everywhere.

The discussion on the Greek issue, for instance, showing that the Soviet would stand for justice—even in complete isolation—encouraged the Syrian and Lebanese Governments also to raise the question of the withdrawal of the British and French troops, today in the Levant.

But UNO is no finished product out of which can be expected neatly-adjusted ideal solutions to remedy all the evils of today's world. It is a battleground where Imperialism can only be defeated if the democratic forces are strong and fight hard—as over the Trusteeship Council and the admission of the WFTU.

Shed 19th Century Illusions

It is easy enough—as many of our contemporaries do—to act as our liberal forefathers did and give high-sounding sermons to the British to shed their Imperialism. But we ought to know today that advice means nothing, the Imperialists have never listened to advice!

It is action that they understand—only action of a united Indian people, as of other peoples, can smash British Imperialism and thus can strengthen the democratic forces inside UNO and see that issues like Greece are not shelved.

Thinly Disguised Imperialist Domination

THE new Dutch proposals to the Indonesian people amount to far less than the most miserable type of dominion status.

It is boosted as a "Dutch offer of partnership in the New Kingdom." But look at the terms of this partnership.

(1) It is not the Indonesian people's elected representatives who will draft their new Constitution but a body of "authoritative representatives of Indonesia, selected from the large (my emphasis—M.K.) variety of groups"; this gives the Dutch Imperialists plenty of room to play off one 'group' against another and achieve what they like.

(2) The Commonwealth of Indonesia will have a representative body with a substantial Indonesian majority—i.e. something like the present Indian Central Legislature, where clearly there is a substantial Indian majority, and everyone knows the bogus nature of this majority.

(3) The cabinet formed will be in harmony with this representative body but a representative of the Crown will be the head of the Government's executive; this smells very like the Vavell offer of last July. But the Dutch Imperialists should realise that today with the end of the war, like India, it is full independence that Indonesia wants.

(4) This Crown Representative will have a veto—"to guarantee the fundamental rights of efficient and sound financial agreement"—the old old Viceroy's veto that requires no comment, no explanation for any Indian.

(5) And if after a given period of time (not specified but rumoured to be twenty-five years), the Indonesians are not satisfied with this very generous offer, they can quit the Commonwealth!

Of course, there are other clauses—equality between Indonesians and Dutch, fundamental rights, etc., but they mean nothing when considered along with the five clauses enumerated above, which amount to nothing else than a form of modified slavery,—but in essence, still slavery; in the words of the British Communist paper, the "Daily Worker":

"This appears to be nothing less than the old imperialist domination thinly disguised."



EGYPT'S FIGHT AGAINST BRITISH DOMINATION

EGYPT is a member of the UNO; it has won a place on the Security Council.

We are told that it is an "independent" state, has full freedom to govern its own affairs.

Economic Grip

Yet the truth is that Egypt is even today no more than a British colony, virtually a part of the British Empire. And last week's mighty student demonstrations at Alexandria—which have been met with the usual iron repression that is a feature of colonial rule—have brought to the forefront the problem of Egyptian independence.

The demonstrators were demanding the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt—and no wonder!

For these British troops are today the armed guard of Egyptian reaction and its British 'advisers' and financial bosses.

Egypt's finances are yet controlled by a British bank; her Police in all important centres are commanded by British officers; the censorship is by British officials;—in a sentence, everything important in Egypt is decided not by Egyptians but by the British.

Who Really Rules.

Of course, on the surface, the Egyptians rule themselves.

The Premier, Nokrashy Pasha, is an Egyptian; and so is the King; there is a Parliament with two houses and a cabinet. But it is the British Imperialists who decide everything.

"The King, his Ministers, and the two Houses of Parliament," wrote Mr. A. R. Siddiqui, Muslim League M.L.A. (Central), last year, "dare not go against

the wishes of His Excellency the British Ambassador. Cabinets come and go as he desires and Prime Ministers hold office at the will and pleasure of this dignitary."

Role Of Pro-British Landlords

Twenty-seven years ago, in 1918, the British had the idea of making Egypt a colony. But the nationalist risings of 1919 (part of the post-war revolutionary upsurge) forced them to give up this idea. They therefore recognised Egypt's formal independence but in fact continued their rule through the reactionary landlord class (according to Siddiqui, "300 Pashas and landlords" are Egypt's rulers in Britain's interest). The interests of the landlord class have been carefully tied up with the British banks.

This class framed the Egyptian constitution in 1923—a constitution which gives the King power to dissolve the Parliament whenever he wishes; and it is by use of this power that the landlord class (and through it the British) have successfully carried through their intrigues to rule Egypt.

The WAFD Nationalists

Against them has been the WAFD, the most progressive nationalist-minded political force in Egypt. The tragedy however has been that the Wafd has—ever since 1923—more and more been used as a safety valve; when nationalist agitation becomes too great, the British and the King instal the Wafd in power; then when the agitation dies down, they kick the Wafd out!

The events since 1942 are an example of how this game is

played by the British.

In 1942, Egypt was in danger of Fascist attack, and the once pro-British Government of Egyptian landlords began flirting with the Nazis. Promptly the British forced King Farouk to turn it out and new elections were held, giving the Wafd a big victory.

Some important reforms were instituted—laws on trade unions, workers' contracts, minimum wages, etc. were passed; taxes of small landowners were reduced; a big literacy campaign launched; diplomatic relations with the USSR established.

But by 1944, the Hitler menace was gone, the Wafd ceased to be of use to the British. So the Wafdist Government was dismissed and the Parliament dissolved. Since October 1944, one of the most reactionary governments Egypt has known, has been in power, which has systematically destroyed the effects of the democratic reforms carried out by the Wafd.

Today a new upsurge—again part of the world-wide post-war upsurge—is taking place in Egypt. The militant student demonstrations of last week show clearly enough that Egypt's people are once more on the march.

M. Riaz Is Ramaswami Mudaliar Of Egypt

But the road before them will not be easy.

They are "independent"—Bevin will surely argue. And the measure of their independence can be seen from the speech of the Egyptian delegate to the UNO Security Council, M. Riaz, on the issue of Indonesia.

"The presence of British troops," said M. Riaz, "did not constitute any kind of violation

and they were there in accordance with the direction of the Allies and the Allied Commander-in-Chief in the Pacific!"

Exactly dittoing the ludicrous excuse Bevin has given for the presence of British troops in Indonesia, to which no one in his senses attaches any importance! It is the Egyptian Police that is preserving internal order by firing on students—and that is a matter solely concerning the Egyptians—so Bevin will argue.

But the odd thing is that the Police Chief in Cairo carries the name of Fitz Patrick Pasha, a very un-Egyptian name!

The fact is that the Egyptian Government is a satellite of the British Government. Farouk is no more independent than the Nizam, M. Riaz is only the Egyptian Ramaswami Mudaliar.

What We Must Understand

And it is important for us to remember this. Big things are happening in the Middle and Near East, and the British Imperialists have big plans for keeping their own power intact through backing the most reactionary feudal landlords of every Arab country.

Everyone knows that for British Imperialism, the Middle and Near East are important. Lying athwart their land link to India, valuable as a potential anti-Soviet base, this area is a 'must-be-under-control area'—an objective which the Imperialists can only achieve by keeping these countries in the same backward semi-colonial state in which they have been the last fifty years.

Thus, if we are to understand anything about things in this area—in Iran, Egypt, the Levant, Palestine, Iraq, Transjordan and today even Turkey—we must keep a sharp look out for the evil hand of British Imperialism—and not be tricked by sugar-sweet talk about "independence" and "democracy"! —Mohan Kumaramangalam

WE WANT ALL YOUR HELP TO FIGHT BACK

Editor's Appeal For Cash

DEAR FRIENDS,

YOU will have all read the full account of our losses due to the hooligan attack on our press on January 23; the total loss suffered is Rs. 72,847—a big amount for us.

People's Age—as you know well—is not run for profit. We give you 12 pages—full of news, for 3 annas, which just covers the cost of production. We take no advertisements because we do not want to waste any space—but utilise all to give the truth about what is happening in our country and in the world and to tell you what we think about what is happening.

In the issue we brought out immediately after the attack, we made an appeal for donations to meet our losses and in the three weeks that have passed, Rs. 10,000 has reached us. We have yet to collect another Rs. 60,000—if we are to cover our losses, and that excludes any cash for our 5 Lac Fund, launched both to meet our election expenses and to provide for expansion of our press.

This is why we are making another appeal to you today.

We make this appeal at a very critical time in the life of our country.

Organised Attempt To Stifle Our Voice

Over all India, an organised attempt is being made by enemies of our Party to smash physically the premises of our various offices, the persons of the leaders of the Party and the newspapers—the voice of the Party.

The attack on our PEHQ was followed by an attack on our office in South Calcutta. A new climax was reached with the murderous assault on Karyanand Sharma at Lakhisera.

Simultaneously, attacks have also increased on the sellers of our papers. Worst of all has been the organised all-Calcutta attacks on the hawkers of Swadhinata, our Bengali daily.

The objective is simply this: having failed to destroy our support among the people, reactionary anti-Communist groups are attempting to break our links with our people—by destroying the Party leadership and our means of propaganda. In every country—Germany, China, France, Iran—reaction has always resorted to this tactic—when it has found that the progressive movement is growing fast, threatening its privileged positions.

If we are to fight this back, we need your help, the help of everyone of you, badly.

But They Shall Not Succeed

More than ever in this crisis in our country's life, People's Age today must live, must speak out its mind and give out the facts, must go on with its task of uniting all freedom-loving Indians for the common task

of winning India's independence. You must help us to do this and you can help best by sending in more and more cash, to make up for the big loss we have suffered.

MIDDLE-CLASS READERS! You are the majority of the readers of our English edition. We know life is hard for you, but we ask you to sacrifice so that we can do the job you want

Account Of Losses

WE are giving below for the information of our readers, the total loss suffered by us on account of the hooligan attack on our press on the evening of January 23. This loss does not include the loss suffered by us in our bookshop and Party headquarters, which is over Rs. 1,000.

• DESTRUCTION OF MATERIALS IN PRESS OFFICE (paint, typewriter, cash, books, stationery)	Rs. 2,345-8-0
• DAMAGE TO AND DESTRUCTION OF MATERIAL IN LINOTYPE ROOM (the damage to the Linotype machine alone is Rs. 15,000)	23,517-0-0
• DAMAGE TO AND DESTRUCTION OF MATERIAL IN PRINTSHOP (this includes damage to printing machines, electrical installations)	12,430-0-0
• DESTRUCTION OF BOOKS & PAPER IN BINDING ROOM (this covers the loss incurred by burning of unbound books, printed pages of unfinished books, paper stocks)	30,906-8-0
• DESTRUCTION OF EQUIPMENT OF BINDING ROOM (this covers damage to machinery, destruction of furniture, etc.)	3,649-0-0
TOTAL	72,847-0-0

Send All Contributions To:

B. G. Bhagwat, Communist Party of India, Raj Bhawan, Sandhurst Road, BOMBAY 4.

All cheques or postal orders should be crossed and made out only in the name of B. G. Bhagwat. All money orders should also be sent in his name.

Of course, all cheques, etc., of People's Age and P.P.H. agents in respect of their agencies should, as before, be made out in the name of Kantilal J. Shah and addressed to:

People's Age Office, Raj Bhawan, Sandhurst Road, BOMBAY 4.

PLEASE NOTE THIS CAREFULLY; IT WILL SAVE US CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE IF THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE CARRIED OUT.

done; and more—among your friends, in your offices—collect all you can and send it in straight to us!

The last three weeks have shown that many who have political differences with us yet are prepared to help us—because they feel that discussion and not breaking heads and throwing stones, is the way to solve differences between brothers.

Talk to them too, appeal to them in the name of our democratic heritage and they too will give. You must become not just readers but ambassadors of People's Age.

INTELLECTUALS! Read the appeal on this page by some of the most eminent Professors of Bombay and get the Professors, leading doctors, lawyers of your city and town to issue a similar appeal, to give themselves and get cash from others too.

SOLDIER-READERS! Many of you have responded but many more have yet to send in your donations. Collect from your friends too, show them how People's Age is the best defender of their interests too—as of every section of our people.

We are appealing to you to send your cash quick—because we need it urgently. You, our readers alone, must fulfil the objective of making up at least the Rs. 60,000 that yet must be made up, if the goondas are to get the reply they deserve—are to be taught that they can never destroy us, because our people are behind us and the people are immortal.

G. Adhikari
February 10, 1946.

Bombay Educationists Condemn Attack On Communist PHQ

“Irrespective Of Party Allegiance Help To Make Good The Loss”

(We give below two statements of well-known Professors and educationists of Bombay colleges on the recent attack on our press and headquarters and express our confidence that these statements will inspire Professors and teachers in other universities to come forward and give their contribution—as a protest against an action which goes directly against the entire democratic heritage of our National Movement—Editor.)

“I deplore the recent attack on the Communist Party Headquarters and the burning down of its press. We feel that in a country already divided in so many ways, such incidents are likely to divide us still further and create a sense of bitterness between parties which are equally earnest and ready to sacrifice in the cause of Indian Independence.

“No genuine lover of Indian freedom will ever approve of such misconceived attempts at fighting a brother political party and we hope that the entire Indian community who have the interests of their country at heart, irrespective of all political allegiances, will help by their contribution in making good the loss so unnecessarily incurred by the Communist Party.”

This statement was signed by:

- Prof. P. A. WADIA of Khalsa College, the well-known Economist.
- Dr. E. R. RAHMAN, Principal of Ismail College.
- Dr. J. M. KUMARAPPA, Director of Tata Institute of Social Sciences.
- Prof. TEJA SINGH, Principal of Khalsa College.
- Prof. CHOKSI, Professor of English Wilson College.
- Prof. MACLEAN, Professor of Mathematics, Wilson College.
- Prof. V. M. KANTAK, Professor of English, Wilson College and six other

Professors and teachers. Altogether they have contributed Rs. 268 for the press fund. Three of them had already earlier given contributions to the Five Lac Fighting Fund.

“I deplore the recent attack made upon the Communist Headquarters in Bombay. When I read details of it, I had to blush for shame that such things have been possible. I know intimately and personally many of the Communist leaders and workers and from what I know, I can say that such a band of selfless and heroic patriots it is hard to find elsewhere.

“If there are men in this land who do not agree with the ideals for which the Communists stand, there is a legitimate way of expressing their dissent. They injure the cause for which they stand by sinking to cowardly hooligan methods. My admiration and regard for my Communist friends, I need not add, have greatly been enhanced by the epic character of their defence on the fateful Subhas Day.

(Sd.) Prof. PRATAPAGIRI RAMAMURTI.
Professor of History & Politics in Wilson College.
(Professor Pratapagiri enclosed a donation of Rs. 30.)

VICTORY OF RED FLAG NOMINEE

(Continued from Page 3.) supporter of the Quit India Resolution.”

Superior Railway officials, all the notorious babus and Railway foremen—known to the workers for years for their corrupt practices, overnight became ardent Congressmen shouting ‘Jai Hind,’ and bullying workers to vote for Kabir.

Among the Muslim workers, Kabir's men sang a different tune because they sensed that these workers are sympathetic to the Muslim League. For instance, from Narkeldanga Loco Section came reports of propaganda among the Muslim workers by Kabir's agents in which they said: “Kabir being a Muslim might one day join the League; but there is no chance of Jyoti Basu joining the League any time”!

Red Flag Union's Work

Against this maze of deceit and unscrupulous opportunism, the Red Flag has aroused, during this election campaign, a remarkable awakening among the Railway workers in Bengal. All over the Bengal and Assam Railway, among all sections of the workers, there raged during the last three weeks a veritable battle for ballot papers.

During the last election, most workers did not know anything about their right to vote. This time the main work of the Red Flag Union was to carry on an intensive campaign for rousing the workers to a sense of this democratic right—the very thing that Kabir snirked and feared most.

The Government announced January 24th as the last day for issuing the ballot papers. They were sent by post but did not reach the voters till the 31st in many places, while February 4th had been fixed as the last

date for receiving the ballot papers, thus practically making it impossible for many to vote.

The workers themselves took the initiative to see that through these rash tactics they were not robbed of their vote. Ectic enquiries were made at post-offices even by ordinary workers. At some places, like Chitragong, the Employees' Association tried to wangle ballot papers from peons, but vigilant workers foiled such plans by approaching the Postmaster straight.

During this period, I had been touring East Bengal with P. O. Joshi and at every important Railway station, whether among postmen, guards, booking-clerks, ticket collectors, or sweepers, I could see that the election was the most hotly debated issue. Everywhere I found the feeling that the Lal Jhanda had awakened them to their right to vote.

Workers Go On Strike For Ballot Papers

At Sealdah station on January 21, the workers of the Carriage Department went on a token strike demanding ballot papers. Only one hundred had got them out of seven hundred. The strike with lightning speed spread to Sealdah Main Station and the Surma Valley Mail was delayed for sometime. All the top Railway bosses rushed to the spot and promised to distribute the ballot papers at once.

At Chitpore, one worker received only an empty cover, while the ballot-paper had obviously been stolen by the babus. At once three hundred workers went on strike. The Public Works Inspector admitted the lapse and the ballot paper was immediately given.

Such was the unprecedented

upsurge among the workers for asserting their democratic right.

It is not without reason, therefore, that the workers voted solidly for the Red Flag, because it was the Red Flag that had made them conscious of their right.

Final Position In Electoral College

The final position inside the Electoral College is that there are 93 representatives who support the Red Flag of whom 35 are from Kabir's own Association, while Kabir's supporters number 75. The Red Flag supporters consist mostly of actual workers—including even sweepers and women from Kharagpur.

Now, of course, Kabir's game will be to try to win over some of the Red Flag supporters by any means, to his side but judging from the margin of the difference, it will be a tough job for him even if he employs all means.

It is a great victory for the Red Flag. Batches of workers at different centres themselves took leave to campaign for Jyoti Basu. Their enthusiasm and the tremendous support they mobilised from masses of the workers completely gave the lie to all the slanders of the anti-Communists.

The Communist policy for production and defence during the period of the Fascist aggression stands vindicated today by the verdict of Bengal's Railway workers, hardest hit of all by war. With it has been vindicated also the faith of the Red Flag and the Communist Party that the working-class will itself recognise and throw out the careerists and opportunists, even when they wear the Congress mask.

—Nikhil Chakravarty

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60 LACS FACE STARVATION

Shall We All Be Able To Fight It Together?

AT LAST the true facts about the food situation in the south have been revealed. We have been told that a terrible famine threatens the entire province—and this information has been given just when the main crops of the coming year are being harvested! The Central Government, we are further told, is to hold a conference of representatives of the Governments of Madras, Bombay and the South India States.

Two months ago the Communist Party's weekly, Janashakti, warned of the seriousness of the impending food crisis. But the Government dismissed this as exaggeration—and their communique of early December stated that the shortage would not be more than 8%—four lakh tons out of the 50 lakh tons of rice that the province normally produces (according to the Gregory Report).

Further communiques slowly raised the shortage expected—until in the last meeting of the Provincial Food Council, the expected shortage of all food grains was announced to be 10 lakh tons (including eight lakh tons of rice). Since the total requirements of the province in foodgrains according to the Government figures for 1943-44, are 79 lakh tons, this means that one-eighth of the total population—60 lakh people—is faced with starvation this year.

Bureaucratic Excuses

The Governor's Adviser in charge of the Food Department, Mr. S. V. Ramamurti, of course, has given plenty of facile excuses for this; he argued that five years of war and the procurement policy of the Government have left the province with no reserves—an admission that reveals the total bankruptcy of this Adviser's raj.

And in fact the procurement and rationing policy of the Government—of which the Adviser seems so proud—has left two-fifths of the entire population untouched; and the granary of Tamilnad, the deltaic district of Tanjore, which produces a big surplus above its needs, has become notorious as the centre of blackmarket operations in the south, operations which the Government's schemes and plans have done little to end.

The reality, however, seems much worse than the Government yet dares to admit. From Pennagaram village in Salem district, a correspondent writes that even peasants who own land very often don't get a full meal every day. The control measures here are so unsatisfactory that although the controlled price for rice is two-and-a-quarter measures per rupee, the actual rate at which rice is available is only one measure

by
A.S.K. Ayyangar

per rupee.

During the difficult last three years, many peasants mortgaged their lands in order to get money with which to buy rice; today they have begun to sell their cattle—and even if there is rain, there will be no cattle with which to plough.

Not Food For A Day

In the far south, in Tinnevely district, conditions are equally bad. A.S. Kuppaswamy a member of the Food Council writes:

"A person gets hardly three-eighths of a measure per week, while his daily requirement even according to the existing low standards of the Government, is 3/8 of a measure. Rice is sold at one measure per rupee in the blackmarket" (as in Salem).

From the adjoining district of Ramnad, proverbially a distress area, another correspondent writes that already conditions are so bad that famine relief work has been started.

All this shows that we are only at the beginning of the crisis. And the Provincial Food Council (a non-official body) has severely warned that without imports from abroad, very acute scarcity is inevitable.

The Government, however, pleads helplessness. MacArthur and Mountbatten have secured a million tons of foodgrains for their occupation troops—but India has got nothing, even three ships sent to Siam to get rice, returned empty, with sand as ballast, as they could get no rice!

The Adviser complains that at the Washington Food Board, India—with a fifth of the world's population—has no representative, and, if it wishes to get anything done, has to appeal to

the British representative! This is what Imperialist rule of India—of which the Adviser himself is a symbol, means for our people.

Congress Inactive

Inside the Congress itself little notice is being taken of all this. The rival factions are busy quarrelling about nominations for the Assembly; when we wanted to see Gandhi about this important problem, we were sent away by Pyarelal with the statement that he was too busy!

In Ramnad district, Kisan Sabha agitation for remission of the kist has been opposed by local Congressmen—because they say the Kisan Sabha is led by the Communists. In Tanjore, big landholders who are the most notorious blackmarketeers of Tamilnad pose as Congressmen and popularise such slogans as: "Wipe out the Communists!", "Destroy the Communist-organised Kisan Sabha!"

The Communists have asked for a total ban on private trade in food-grains which alone, combined with total procurement and rationing, can wipe out the blackmarket. Only by rallying the entire people behind these demands, they say, is it possible to fight and defeat the blackmarketeers and corrupt officials.

They have appealed to the Congress and League leaders to come forward and join in the campaign to save sixty lakh lives facing starvation through the maladministration and stupidity of an alien bureaucracy.

BIG PEOPLE'S UPSURGE

Workers' Strikes And United Mass Rallies

By wire from Unniraja.

Calicut Feb. 4.

THIS year's Independence Week in Kerala saw a new upsurge among the people. The response of the workers and peasants, and even of the middle-class was tremendous.

Thirty thousand coir workers of Aleppey, the big working-class centre of the Travancore State, struck work on Jan. 26. "Down with the Diwan's Raj," "We want a Constituent Assembly," "Boycott the Wavell Plan," and such other slogans rent the air. Elsewhere in the State, 5,000 workers of Arur, Shertally and Mohamma, 2,500 of Quilon and 1,000 of Vaikom struck work.

By these strikes in the Travancore State to protest against the present Diwan's Raj, against Police Repression and for Civil Liberties, a new chapter has been opened in the history of the people's struggle in the State.

In Calicut and Cannanore (Malabar), the Communist Party called for a one-day strike and 3,000 workers of each centre downed tools. Demonstrations came out in all important towns with the slogans: "Boycott the Wavell Plan," "Make Britain Quit," "Down with Police Raj," "Unite for the Final Struggle."

The participation of hundreds of women workers in these strikes was a new feature for our Province. Two hundred and fifty women marched through the streets of Calicut along with their sons and brothers. The militancy and determination of 70-year old men and young kids instilled inspiration and enthusiasm in the people.

Mass rallies and meetings were held all over Kerala. Thou-

sands of workers and kisans, and middle-class people participated in these rallies.

The Congress Labour leaders, whose only job had been to slander and fight the Red Flag and the Communist Party, were surprised at this united demonstration of workers. They tried to break it by appealing to their followers to step out, but they did not succeed. Despite their intrigues, the Congress-minded section of the workers joined the procession.

In Calicut, the workers under Congress influence joined the procession with Tricolours. The joint demonstration with the Red Flag as well as the Tricolour and the united slogans created an inspiring impression among the general public. One man exclaimed: "So, at last they are united." Another replied, "Our country is on the right track."

The militancy and tenacity of the workers amazed the public and when someone asked them, "Don't you want to go for your wages?", quick came the reply "Oh, that can wait. Now let us carry on this procession."

Scandal In Orissa Labour Constituency

CONSPIRACY TO PREVENT ELECTION OF GENUINE WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVE

By Wire from Gangadhar Rath

IN the British House of Commons, William Gallacher, the Communist M.P., had sharply drawn attention to the conduct of the Orissa Government in entrusting the job of preparing the electoral roll for the Trade Union Constituency to the factory bosses themselves. The Treasury Bench escaped the problem by saying that though this was so, the Government supervised the whole thing to see that no injustice was done. But these were just words.

In fact, the bosses with the connivance of the Government are having a free hand to deprive the workers of their right to vote and elect their own genuine representative.

Biggest T. U. Refused Recognition

For example, the oldest and biggest Labour Union in the Province, namely, the Orient Paper Mill Workers' Union, has not yet been recognised with the result that literally hundreds of workers and Trade Unionists have been deprived of their vote. This is in flagrant violation of the rules.

According to the rules, members of a recognised Trade Union which has been functioning for over a year are eligible to be voters. Though the Sambalpur Union fulfils every condition for recognition, the Government officials have been putting off recognition since June 1945, on one pretext or another.

The officials of the Election Department have even the audacity to suggest that even if they recognised the Union, the members will not have the right to vote and put forward a number of technical arguments. In fact, in the neighbouring Province of Ben-

gal, recognition of Trade Unions for the purpose of elections for the Trade Union constituencies is given as a matter of course.

Factory Bosses' Game

This conduct of the Government officials helps only the bosses headed by Birla. Many of these bosses have the support of the Provincial Congress. So the Orissa Government officials commit all these injustices with perfect impunity. The Nationalist press ignores the just demands of the workers.

The results of such a policy have been that:

(1) In the Birla-owned Orient Paper Mills, the bosses have deprived no less than 500 permanently employed workers of the vote by technically describing them as 'contract labour.'

(2) The foremost labour leader of the Province, and the Union nominee, Sindh Kuntia, is debarred from seeking election.

(3) Since the preparation of the rolls was left in the hands of the bosses, they included no less than 50 names of persons who were not workers at all and bogus entries were made in the muster roll.

(4) The list they submitted also dropped 45% of those who had the right to vote. The bosses chose only those workers

Congress Leaders' Unfair Methods

One would have expected the Congress leaders to fight such conspiracies against the democratic right of the workers. But quite a few of them are themselves bosses who resort to similar tricks to strengthen their own position in the elections. For example:

● The list submitted by the Naba Bharat Press of Pandit Nilakanta Das included ex-Senate members of the University and ex-Presidents of the District Boards as compositors!

● The list sent from the rice-mill owned by the Congress leader and Vice-Chairman of the Balasore District Board, showed the Chairman of the District Board, Mr. Mohammed Hanif, as a wage labourer on six annas a day!

The reason for this is that the Congress leaders want Mr. Hanif as a Minister. They dare not make him stand for a Muslim seat. They, therefore, resorted to this method to get him in as a labour candidate!

Such is the real picture in Orissa. The bosses have the muster rolls with bogus entries, they get the support of the Government officials and even of Congress leaders.

It is a huge conspiracy against the workers and their right to elect a genuine representative of their own. To cover up this fraud, the Orissa Government has announced that the Electoral List will not be published till the last week of February. There will hardly be a month left between then and the day of polling.

REACTIONS TO ASSAULTS ON BIHAR COMMUNISTS

(Continued from page 2.) politically felt thoroughly disgusted. Important League leaders like Messrs. Yusuf, Shah, Razaque and Qayyam had come to our meeting. Trade Union leaders like Surendranath Mukherji (Vice-President of the Monghyr Tobacco Factory Union) and Muhammad Ismail (Assistant Secretary of the Jamalpur East Indian Railwaymen's Union) were also present. Even Congressmen like Abdul Sattar had come to hear Joshi's speech.

But because the local Congress leaders were determined on precipitating a clash and we did not want a fratricidal war, the whole audience had to go away disappointed.

One and all, they condemned the tactics of the local Congress leaders.

An ordinary League worker declared: "The Communists are strange people. Had these Congressmen dared to disturb our meeting, not one of them would have returned alive."

Honest Congressmen said: "It is an exposure of the present-

day Congress leaders' pretensions of non-violence and democracy."

Even an anti-Communist declared in disgust: "It was pure rowdiness which has to be stopped."

What shocked all honest people most was to see the way in which the Police and the Congress leaders joined hands in dogging Joshi from place to place in Bihar. The Police party was led by the Magistrate and was composed of Government reporters and C.I.D. men. The Congress group was led by the Secretary of the District Congress Committee, Nandkumar Sinha and included other leaders like Shyama Babu and Kishori Babu.

And the slogans of the Congressmen were: "P. C. Joshi Murdabad" and "Police Hamara Bhal Hai" ("Down with P. C. Joshi" and "Police are our Brothers")!

This is the shameful culmination brought about by the anti-Communism of the top Congress leadership.