

Kashmir Stands Firm, United

SIGNIFICANCE OF KASHMIR'S FIGHT For INDIA'S LIBERATION STRUGGLE

PEOPLE'S AGE

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As. 3.

Kashmir is the storm-centre of the present Indian political situation. The entire British policy for maintaining British influence and domination in the coming phase in India is pivoted on the Princes and the States. This is equally clear in the constitutional plans and the machinery for the Constituent Assembly, in the economic field, and in their military preparations.

TO cover this policy and deceive popular opinion a facade of constitutional reforms is being prepared in the Chamber of Princes. No such facade will change the real situation so long as the Princes remain with Britain pulling the strings through the Resident and the Political Department.

Hence the slogan "Quit Kashmir" strikes at the very heart of the British imperialist policy in India.

If once the States' people refuse to be put off with sham constitutional reforms and demand the complete removal of the Princely dynasties and ending of the separation of the States from the rest of India, the British policy for manoeuvring through the Princes to defeat Indian independence is torpedoed.

British Policy

British policy has fully understood the significance of the fight in Kashmir. Hence the extraordinary measures which have been adopted—the arrest of Sheikh Abdulla and other popular leaders and the launching of a reign of terror in order to maintain the Princely rule in Kashmir.

In view of this situation I attached particular importance to visiting Kashmir in order to be able to see the position on the spot.

During my visit I have been enabled to obtain a full picture of the situation.

I was present at the opening of the trial of Sheikh Abdulla and although permission to visit Sheikh Abdulla was refused to me I was able, in practice, to have four conversations with him during the proceedings.

I have met the leaders of the popular movement now underground.

I had a three-hour interview with Maharaja Krishna Dar, the District Magistrate and Governor of Srinagar.

Premier Kak after many delays of the arrangements for a promised interview, finally pleaded illness.

Resident's Refusal

The British Resident after many similar delays finally refused point-blank to see me.

This refusal of the British Resident to meet a representative of the British Press throws a powerful light on his real role. I pointed out that he had previously received other Press representatives, including Norman Cliff of the News Chronicle.

The Assistant Resident replied on his behalf that they had seen what Norman Cliff had subsequently written and disapproved of it and that accordingly the Resident had decided to see no more Press representatives.

I pointed out that the British Resident was a public servant acting under the orders of the British Government in India and therefore responsible to the British Parliament and the British public and that therefore his refusal to meet me and answer my questions was indefensible and would give me the right to present unchallenged my interpretation of his role. He nevertheless persisted in his refusal.

It is evident that he fears the light of enquiry. I knew

that he would be unable to answer the questions which I would have put revealing the British complicity in the terror in Kashmir.

I was able to see in Kashmir the scenes of the reign of terror that had been established. I saw the bullet-ridden walls of Khanga-i-Mohalla mosque outside which the main firing had taken place on May 21.

The compound of the mosque where some 5,000 people were gathered on that day is an enclosed space from which there was no possible escape for the crowd under fire.

I have visited in hospitals the victims of the firing with terrible gun-shot wounds right through their bodies.

Police Harassment

I saw armed sentries posted on all bridges and strategic points. Hardev Singh, who accompanied me to Srinagar, was subjected to police raid at night by 10 C.I.D. men who made a complete search of his room as well as of the room of Mrs. Freda Bedi in the same hotel.

The driver of the car which I had used in Srinagar was, I learnt subsequently, arrested and beaten up in order to extract from him information as to my movements.

I was able to hear long accounts of the terrible outrages which are still going on especially in Bhatgam and Islamabad.

Unbreakable Spirit

Despite the terror there can be no question of the unbreakable spirit and determination of the people. The red flags with the plough, the emblem of the National Conference, were to be seen on all sides on the houses in Srinagar. No matter with whom one spoke in the streets, in the houses, to those serving in hotels or to taxi-drivers, the mere mention of the name of Sheikh Abdulla at once lit up their eyes with pride and devotion.

In the trial proceedings the public were kept away half a mile from the Court by armed guards who prevented any approach except for those with a pass personally signed by the Judge. Nevertheless, the sympathy also of the soldiers and guards for Sheikh Abdulla was visible.

I Meet Sheikh Abdulla

When Sheikh Abdulla entered the Court, the entire Court with the exception of the Judge stood up in his honour.

He saw me as he entered and moved away from his guards to shake me by the hand and we exchanged greetings and I publicly expressed to him the admiration and support for him for his stand. The proceedings were held up till we had completed these greetings.

This courageous action on his part thus made possible a public demonstration of the solidarity of the freedom-fighting Kashmir with the movement outside Kashmir.

The Governor of Srinagar in his interview with me made no concealment of his hostility to democracy. He took full responsibility for the arrest of Sheikh Abdulla and for all the military measures.

He refused to answer the question whether it was a crime to express the view that the

form of the State be changed from Princely rule to popular sovereignty.

He sought to argue that the speeches of Sheikh Abdulla from May 9 to 16 were equivalent to an incitement to violence and this was proved by the disturbances of May 21.

No Violence Before May 20

Nevertheless, he admitted that there had been no violence or sabotage of any kind until after the arrests of May 20.

With regard to the firing he stuck to the official maximum figure of killed—of eight or nine—but at one point let drop a significant aside—"I would not care if more had been killed!"

He vehemently opposed any

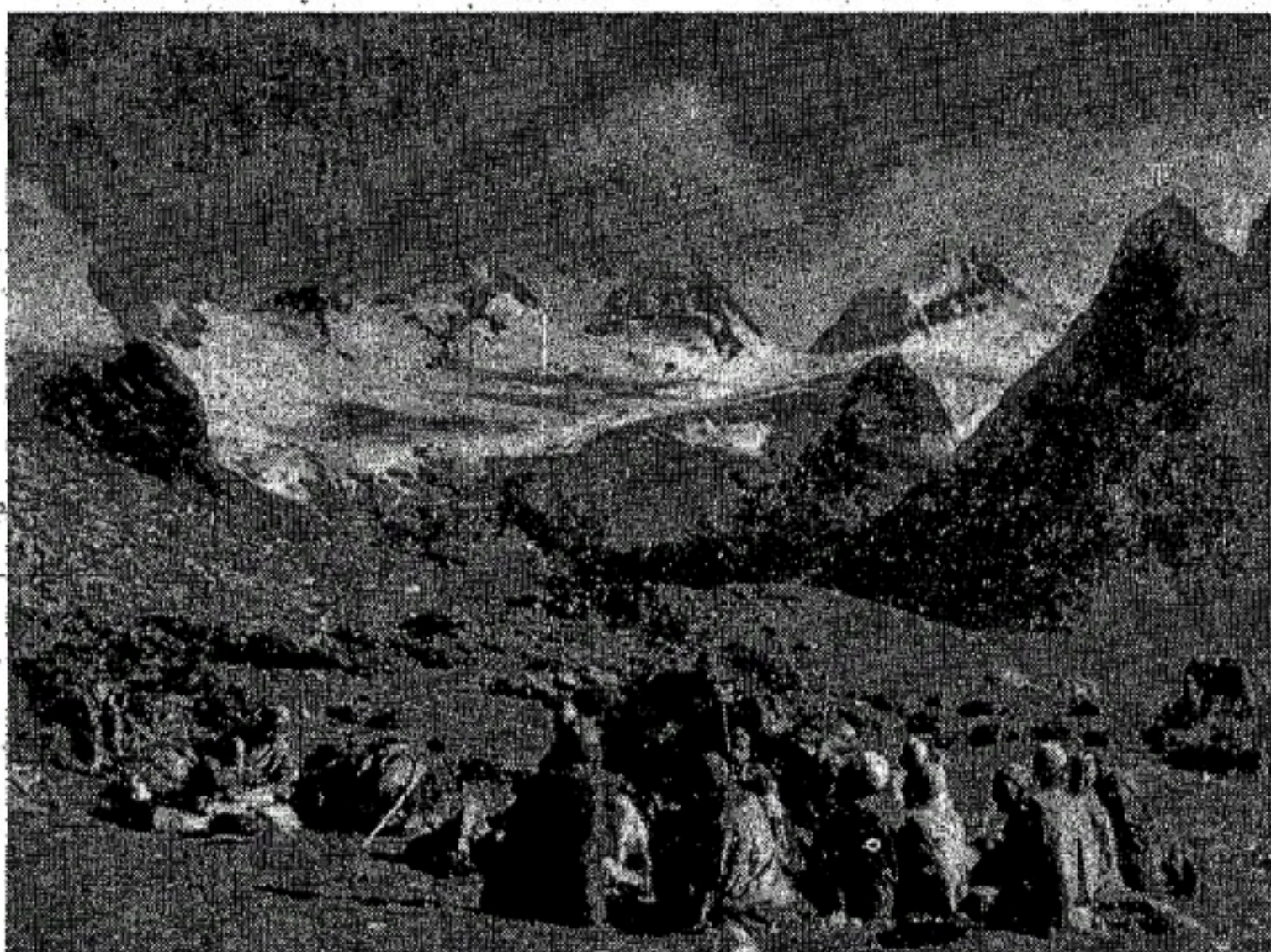
able to meet Nehru at the aerodrome on his journey to Srinagar and had a quarter of an hour's talk with him.

I was very concerned to report to him my impressions of the situation, that Sheikh Abdulla and the people stood absolutely firm behind the slogan "Quit Kashmir"; that it would be out of question to suggest to them to withdraw from the political stand they had taken up; and that it was of greatest importance to give them the fullest backing.

importance of Kashmir's fight in the struggle of the national movement in India as a whole to establish the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly and to defeat British plans for operating through the Princes to maintain British domination.

Princes, Residents Must Go

I said that so long as the Princes and Residents remained this British policy would be carried forward; but that if once the States' peoples with the full



Kashmiris resting on the way to Amarnath.

[Photo: Sunil Janahi]

suggestion of an independent enquiry declaring that this would be interference with the sovereignty of Kashmir.

"Russian Influence"

I further questioned him sharply on the stories of Russian influence and Russian agents in Kashmir. He admitted that he had no evidence whatever for any such stories.

Subsequently I saw the editor of the Kashmir Times, which has been publishing these stories, and demanded of him to present his evidence.

He tried to declare that he had no actual evidence to produce for a Court-of-Law but that it was "common talk". He said that it was known that Russians had crossed the border and come into Srinagar.

I demanded that he should produce for me a single case to substantiate this and he admitted that he could not produce any. He finally declared as his only defence that the reports had come to him from London.

I expressed to him my opinion that it was absolutely shameless and irresponsible action on his part to publish these stories without any foundation whatever and that it was his duty to publish an immediate withdrawal.

This interview took place in the Court in the presence of other journalists and I was told that the account of it was all over Srinagar the next morning.

Meeting With Nehru

On my return to Pindi I was

indicated the harm which had been done by Mr. Asaf Ali's interview in which he had declared that the "Quit Kashmir" slogan "was a cry of despair," and that "the slogan 'Quit Kashmir' has no significance other than the rectification of an untenable position and the establishment of a sound constitutional relationship between a constitutional monarch and the people from whom he should derive title and power."

This interview with its complete misrepresentation of the meaning of the "Quit Kashmir" slogan had been published with great prominence in the current issue of the Kashmir Times which came out while I was there.

Nehru And 'Quit Kashmir'

Nevertheless, I was considerably disturbed to find that Pandit Nehru appeared to be going to Kashmir with the same attitude as that which had been expressed by Mr. Asaf Ali; he declared that the slogan "Quit Kashmir" was not the policy of the States People's Conference and had not been endorsed by the Kashmir National Conference.

I pointed out that the Committee of the Kashmir National Conference had been due to meet on May 26 and had only been prevented by the arrest of the leaders so that the formal point of the absence of endorsement was only a consequence of the actions of the authorities. There was no question of the actual support for the slogan.

I further urged the great

backing of the national movement took up the demand for the complete removal of the Princes, this would defeat British plans and open the way to the achievement of the aims of the national movement.

He admitted that the Princes must go and the Residents must go. But argued that it was not tactical to raise the issue at the present time.

I urged that now is precisely the time when it should be raised, when everything was in the melting pot and when pressing decisions and actions could govern the whole development of the coming period in India.

Back Kashmir's Fight

I left this interview with a feeling of profound concern for the situation, that there would be the danger of the national movement failing to give the necessary backing to Kashmir's call.

It is most urgent and important that we should do all in our power to awaken the understanding of the entire national movement to the significance of the fight in Kashmir.

It would be shameful and suicidal for the national movement to fail to back this fight and to seek to damp it down instead of seeing here the trump card for defeating the plans of British imperialism.

It is of vital importance that the liberation movement of India should give fullest support to the fight in Kashmir and strive to see that it is extended to all the Indian States.

PUNJAB MINISTRY TOTTERING?

POLICE RAJ IN PUNJAB

Congress Masses Urge Break With Blackmailing Unionists And Akalis

On July 16, the Nawab of Mamdot, leader of the Muslim League Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, challenged the Punjab Coalition Ministry to take "a straight vote of the House on a motion of No-Confidence."

promptly ran back to the Coalition on both sides.

* The Indian Christians were disgruntled for none of them had been taken into the Constituent Assembly. They threatened to go over to the League. Promptly one of them, Mr. Fazal Elahi, was appointed Parliamentary Secretary.

Akalis Hold Balance

The Akalis, of course, as always, hold the balance. A strong group amongst them, led by Giani Kartar Singh, is anxious to break with the Congress and threatens to make the Constituent Assembly the issue for the break.

In fact, I reliably learnt that Mr. Sachchar was told by the Akali Party that if the Congress Sikhs did not follow their decision to boycott the Constituent Assembly, the Akalis "would not be bound to give support to the Coalition Government". And that decided it: the Congress Sikhs withdrew their nomination papers.

Poor Punjab

Poor Mr. Sachchar. He is certainly having a hard time of it keeping the Punjab Government in his pocket: every little MLA can get whatever he wants simply by threatening to leave the Coalition: the Akalis can even succeed in making Congress Sikhs go against Congress discipline and policy by exactly the same threat.

The Nawab of Mamdot is of course in exactly the same plight. Sachchar has to feed his birds to keep them in his net. Mamdot had to feed them to entice them into HIS net.

Poor Sachchar! Poor Mamdot! And poor Punjab... which continues under Police Raj despite the fact that it voted by an overwhelming majority for the two parties—the Congress and the League—which swore to end Police Raj.

From Our Correspondent

Congress work among the masses."

This is the open, avowed policy of the Satyapal group. And they are canvassing fairly vigorously for it.

Blackmail Or Diplomacy?

The last straw came during the elections to the Constituent Assembly:

The Congress Minister, Mr. Sachchar, was compelled at the very last minute to drop the name of the Congress candidate, Professor K. T. Shah, and take in instead a Unionist Harijan M.L.A., one Harbhajram. This gentleman calmly blackmailed Sachchar Sahib: "Elect me or the Unionist Harijans will walk over to the League."

Mr. Sachchar, anxious at all costs to keep the Coalition intact, capitulated. For, every single vote counts when the forces are so evenly balanced as they are in the Punjab: Mr. Harbhajram ran into the Constituent Assembly.

But this was not enough. There were other blackmailers:

* One Mr. Bagh Ali, a Muslim Unionist M.L.A., walked over to the League on the eve of the election. He was made a Parliamentary Secretary and he

Resign, Sachchar

A wave of indignation swept through the Congress MLAs. A motion of No-Confidence in Mr. Sachchar was moved and though this was dropped after many hours of discussion, the crisis was scarcely over.

Sachchar telephoned immediately to Sardar Patel in Bombay, asking to be allowed to resign:

"I cannot go on like this without the support of my Party."

The Sardar curtly told Sachchar to consult Maulana Azad, who was responsible for the entire Punjab affair.

But by this time Mr. Sachchar had cooled off, and he decided to continue to hang on to his office.

But it is a precarious position. Any moment the balance can turn. It takes only four or five to swing the scales. Already Maulana Daud Ghaznavi has found the League's offers—whatever they were—more tempting. Others may do so too. Vigorous canvassing continues.

THE League was pretty sure of itself on that day. And yet three days later, on July 19, when a vote WAS taken on a procedure motion, which was in reality a trial of strength, the Ministry defeated the League by 87 votes to 80.

The Ministry has survived. Minister Baldev Singh boasts that "the League may try a hundred times more but they shall never be able to dislodge the Coalition Ministry."

And yet everybody in the Punjab knows that a serious Ministerial crisis has been brewing for the last two months. And every day it grows more intense.

Congress Discontent

Behind this crisis, the one overall reason is the deepening discontent of the Congress masses against the repressive policy of the Coalition Ministry (see column 5).

● Representations have come from SIX districts signed by more than SIX HUNDRED Congressmen demanding the withdrawal of the Congress from the Coalition Ministry, if they cannot change the present policy of the Government.

● Meetings have been held throughout the Province—in Jhelum, Gujranwala, Lyallpur, Sialkot and other districts—by local Congressmen condemning the Ministry's attack on civil liberties and asking the Congress to assert itself inside the Legislature.

● Chaudhri Ranjit Singh, a Congress M.L.A., has given notice of a motion of No-Confidence in the Congress Ministers for the next meeting of the Congress Assembly Party.

Quit Ministry

The entire Satyapal group (one of the two main traditional factions in the Punjab Congress) is disgusted with the Ministry, partly, of course, because it has little "power" in it, but mainly because it has found that the old Unionist Party holds the reins in every single sphere—and the Congress Ministers are mere dummies.

The Satyapalites' advice, in the words of one of their leaders, Lala Kedar Nath Sehgal, is this:

"It was stupid on our part to join hands with Khizar and Baldev Singh. The whole Province knows them to be toadies. We can never improve the administration with these people at the top. But the League is equally reactionary and we cannot join with it either. So the best thing will be to allow the League to form the Cabinet. Thus we shall have no responsibility and will be free to carry on

SIDELIGHTS FROM CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

MADRAS

THE only thing that seemed to matter most in the Madras elections was: Will Sundarayya, the Communist candidate, get elected or not? Premier Prakasam, at a meeting of the Congress Assembly Party, held immediately before the elections, declared that if Sundarayya were elected, it would mean "the greatest danger" for the Congress!

"If Sundarayya succeeds, he will put every obstacle in the way of the Constituent Assembly, which is going to frame the constitution of a Free India. I hear that some Congressmen are thinking of voting for Sundarayya. If there is any such Congressman, we will find him out and deal with him properly."

There were many Congress MLAs who were amazed at this strange situation—when Sjis. Prakasam and Rajagopalachari united all their forces to see that notorious enemies of the people like the Raja of Bobbili and Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar were elected, and a patriot of the eminence of Sundarayya kept out.

Expulsion Threat

There were Congressmen who openly came and told the Communists that they wanted to vote for Sundarayya, and keep out people like Bobbili. There were others who promised their second votes to Sundarayya, because they said, "it was only right that the voice of the workers and kisans, whom the Communists represent, should be heard in the Constituent Assembly."

But each and every one of them was approached separately by the Congress leaders and threatened with expulsion from the Congress if he dared to vote for Sundarayya.

The Independent Christian Wilson, who was elected to the Legislative Assembly mainly because of Communist support was given a seat in the Constituent Assembly in the Con-

gress list, in order to prevent him from voting for Sundarayya.

The Rajaji-Prakasam combine won. Sundarayya was defeated. Bobbili, Muthiah Chettiar and their kind were elected.

The Congress leaders may look on this as a great victory. They live in a fool's paradise. If they wanted fighters, nobody would have been better than Sundarayya. If they wanted Wavell's own boys, they could not have done much better than Bobbili and Chettiar.

UNITED PROVINCES

SIR Padampat Singhania's election to the Constituent Assembly has caused a sensation. Mr. F. J. Fathom, the Anglo-Indian M.L.A., has made an open allegation that his signature on Sir Padampat's nomination papers was taken under false pretences!

Mr. Fathom's assertion is that as he entered the Assembly Hall on the election day, he met Mr. Prathinath Bhargava (an Independent) who asked him to sign on a nomination paper, telling him that it was his own nomination paper.

Only the next day Mr. Fathom realised that he had been duped into proposing Singhania's name.

Whatever be the true facts, it is a dirty tale. That it centres round Padampat is no surprise. He has been in shady deals before, and will be again. Sometimes Padampat's dirty deals are in iron, sometimes in coal—and now it is politics... all the same thing.

Padampat's Big Business blood brothers—in other provinces—such as Khaitan in Bengal, Muthiah Chettiar in Madras—have come in on the Congress ticket. Padampat has come in on his own. Makes no difference. They will get together—against the toiling masses. There will be many more dirty deals yet.

BENGAL

ELECTIONS to the Constituent Assembly revealed the stink of factionalism which has which today pervades the Bengal Congress by the throat.

—Three August prisoners are still in jail. They were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in connection with the Gujranwala burning case. Numerous representations have been made by the District Congress Committee for their release but the Government refuse to recognise them even as political prisoners.

Mr. Sachchar, the Congress Minister, frankly admits that the Premier "is against their release as they were sentenced on 'charge of violence'". In the records they are not regarded as "political prisoners and hence the Congress Party in the Government "technically cannot demand their release" (sic)!

—About six people are still being prosecuted on charge of making "violent" speeches. They took part in the I.N.A. release agitation, and Government is not withdrawing cases against them though I.N.A. personnel have now all been released.

Ban On Meetings And Processions

—In 22 towns of the Province there is a ban on processions. This ban under the D.I.R. was imposed just after the war began by the Unionist Government. Though the war has now ended, and the Congress came to power the ban on processions still continues.

—In several important cities like Lahore, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozapore, Multan, Ambala, and Amritsar, there is an order under 144 Cr. P. C. prohibiting holding of public meetings. The ban on meetings in Lahore was promulgated two days after the formation of the new Ministry. Since then it has continued, and the District Magistrate extends it every month.

Arrests Continue -- No Party Escapes

—About 800 people have been arrested in the Punjab since the formation of the Ministry. They include Communist and Socialist workers, some Congressmen, students and Kisan Sabha workers.

—About 850 of them are trade union workers: 300 from Amritsar, 255 from Lahore, 72 from Okara. Cases against 105 are still going on and they were released on bail after 35 days. All these arrests—in connection with strikes. Though strikes have been called off in many places, the cases have not been withdrawn. All are kept in jail as ordinary C Class prisoners.

Strike-Breaking: Lathi-Charges On Workers

—Whenever there is a strike the Government lends its police to the employers to beat up the workers. There have been lathi-charges on workers at Okara, Lyallpur, Bahawalpur, Lahore railway and in the General Steel Mills. More than 300 people have been injured in these lathi-charges. In the General Steel Mills women-police was brought, to lathi-charge not only workers but hundreds of women who came forward in defence of the workers on strike.

—Balraj Mehta, Students' Federation leader, has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment and put in C Class. One Yusuf at Gujranwala has been sentenced for making a speech.

What About Freedom Of Speech?

—For a speech delivered at Wazirabad, S. Joginder Singh Puri, Socialist worker, was arrested at Gujranwala on June 29. A public meeting was held in the evening to protest against this. Dharampal (General Secretary, Gujranwala CSP) and Muralidhar spoke. Dharampal was arrested next day. The Congress Committee announced a meeting. The announcer who was going in tonga was put under arrest, the tongawala challenged. Another Socialist worker, Joginder Singh Joshi, has also been arrested at Gujranwala. Another Socialist arrested is Desraj Bhatia. They are all being tried under various charges.

—Khalifa Jankidas, leader of the Quomi-Khidmatgar, has also been arrested in connection with a speech at Sialkot.

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PUNJAB KISANS LAUNCH FIRST POST-WAR BATTLE

United Morcha Against Irrigation Dept.

The 16th of July was a red letter day in the history of Punjab kisans. At village Chhina in Amritsar district the kisans started their first post-war struggle. It was a fight for their very existence, a fight against the corrupt Irrigation Department which denied supply of water to their fields. A *morcha* was launched today by a batch of 15 kisans led by Achhar Singh Chhina, Vice-President of the Punjab Kisan Sabha, by widening the *moghas* (canal outlets).

LONG before the scheduled time, came batches of kisans from neighbouring villages. They came in processions, playing bands and carrying their own flags. They owed allegiance to different political parties—Congress, Communists and Akalis—but that could not stop the kisans from coming together to fight their common battle.

Kisan Processions

The Kisans came carrying their flags—it was a blending of the Congress Tricolour, the Red banner and the flag of the Akali Party. "Down with Irrigation Department"—"We shall have the due share of water"—came deafening slogans from a distance. People gazed with pride. A mile-long procession of old and young came from Chhina, Congressmen, Communists and Akalis were marching side by side, raising the same slogans. About one-third of the procession consisted of women, who were singing in chorus: "Not a step shall we retreat, never shall we falter." There came another gaily decorated procession from Sehansra.

Both the processions met at the historic spot where 26 years ago the united struggle of Guruka-Bagh (a famous incident in the Akali struggles of 1922-24), was fought and won. Ujagar Singh Lat (Communist) and Sardar Bur Singh (Akali) came forward and embraced each other. The crowd shouted: "Unitedly shall we smash the Government scheme." Two other processions came from Bagha and Tolenangal. These two villages had witnessed bitterness during the last elections. Bagha was behind the Communist leader Sohan Singh Josh and Tolenangal with Akali leader Ishar Singh Majhail. But today it was an entirely different picture. Both the villages have united. They were marching together with the common objective in view, raising the same slogans and burning with the same passion: the battle is one and is to be fought as such.

The Crowd Swells

The crowd had already swelled to about 10,000. The *morcha* was soon to be launched. An enthusiasm unprecedented for a long time was there. Everyone was beaming with joy. Everyone was envying those who had been selected by the Mogha Committee.

The women were the most enthusiastic. They were singing in chorus:

"We sold our ear-rings to pay the water tax and still our fields are dry. We shall now fight back and never stop till we get sufficient water supply." And again an appeal to the Congress Minister, Lala Bhim Sen Sachchar:

"Oh Sachchar, please do not befriend the toady Ministers Khizar and Baldev Singh. They will land you into trouble. Give up their company and honour the pledge of the Congress."

While the kisans were ready for the march to assert their rights against the most corrupt Department of the Government, there were standing at a distance Khizar's watch-dogs in full strength. Headed by a Magistrate, the D.S.P., a White sergeant and two Sub-Inspectors of police, there were 24 constables with loaded guns and a posse of constables armed with lathis. Tear gas equipments

were ready and they were just waiting for the final order.

Ignore these loathsome people and look at the kisan masses who are now ready for the march.

All Parties Represented

Farewell is being given to the first jatha. Sardar Bur Singh, a local Akali leader, presides over the meeting. On the dais you will find representatives of all parties—Congress, Muslim League, Communists, and Akalis. They all pledge their support to the *morcha*.

Achhar Singh Chhina, the leader of the jatha, is speaking:

"If a single kisan is lathi-charged today or anybody arrested, the responsibility will be of the Congress and the Akali leaders who form the overwhelming majority of the Coalition Party."

Suddenly the huge gathering is told that Dr. Gopichand Bhargava (important Congress leader) had yesterday sent a message asking the Mogha Committee to postpone the *morcha* by another 15 days. But for what?

Ishar Singh Majhail, the Akali M.L.A. argues:

"Gopichand holds a Key-position in the Punjab. Don't start the *morcha* and give him a chance. Once you take the action, it will be very difficult for us to do anything. The Government will then stand by prestige and nothing will be done."

From all directions people shouted, "We cannot change our decision at the last moment." The kisans were in an angry mood.

Achhar Singh Chhina got up and replied to Sardar Ishar Singh Majhail:

"Let the *morcha* start and at the same time Dr. Gopichand and Majhail Saheb carry on the negotiations with the Government. In 15 days some 300 kisans will be arrested. If the water is restored to the peasants we shall not grudge spending our terms in jail. We shall not hamper the prestige of Majhail Saheb's Government by pressing for our release."

The Morcha Starts

At the call of the Akali leader, BUR SINGH, who is President of the Mogha Committee, the *morcha* started at 4-45 p.m.

Profusely garlanded, 15 kisans belonging to all parties marched towards the *mogha* carrying the three flags of the Congress, the Communist Party and of the Akalis. Ten thousand people followed them. It was the biggest festival the-people of the

BACKGROUND TO PUNJAB KISANS' STRUGGLE

Take a look at the figures in the box and you will know how the Canal Department has robbed the Punjab's peasants all these years, and how that plunder reached a new height with the war.

THE supply of water has remained exactly the same while the land under irrigation has increased. Thus the total water tax grew, the costs remained constant—and the profits soared.

More For The Rich

The Unionists—landlords as they were—used their powers in the Ministry from 1937 to 1946 to get the *moghas* (canal outlets) modelled in such a way as to draw more water for the lands of the big zamindars while cutting down the supply of the poor and middle peasants.

The advent of the new Coalition Ministry with a Congress majority was expected to put a stop to this scandalous process.

Quite the contrary has happened. The remodelling of outlets has continued on the old basis—more water for the rich, less and less for the poor.

Loss Of 50,000 Mds. Rice

Threatened with the complete failure of their crops due to the latest remodelling of outlets, the kisans of a number of villages in Amritsar who draw their water from the Majithia Division Canal, have begun a heroic battle for an adequate supply of water.

Rice producing villages these—the Ministry's insistence on cutting down their quantity of water has already resulted in the loss of 50,000 maunds of rice.

Repeated representations to the Ministry and to leading Congressmen of the Province having produced no result—the villages gave notice that they would launch a new *morcha* (struggle) for forcibly widening the remodelled canal outlets.

Volunteers, Cash

In one village—Harsa Chhina—alone, four thousand rupees were collected for the movement and 500 persons including 100 women offered themselves as volunteers who

Canal Dept.'s Profits Upto 1942-43

	Crores
Total capital invested in Canals up to 1942-43	Rs. 30
Return by way of water tax up to 1942-43	Rs. 184
NET PROFITS up to 1942-43 (after deducting amount spent on maintenance of canals)	Rs. 111
Rapid Rise In Profits	
Return on capital for year 1887-1888	4 p.c.
Return on capital for year 1942-1943	17 p.c.

War Increase In Water Tax

	Crores
Water tax in 1939-40	Rs. 5.09
Water tax in 1945-46	Rs. 6.03

were prepared to court arrest in the *morcha*. Altogether in three days, July 7, 8 and 9, 700 volunteers were enrolled, 5,000 rupees were collected.

Every village household contributed its quota of grain for the general store. From all over the Punjab contributions in cash and grain came for the striking villages.

A *Morcha* Committee, led by the local Kisan Sabha, by local Congressmen, Communists, Muslim Leaguers and Akalis, was formed which undertook to lead and direct the struggle.

● Sikh and Muslim peasants stood together ignoring party differences.

● Middle peasants who had leased a portion of their lands out to poor peasants agreed to waive all claims for rent stipulated in their contracts, and take a share only if any crops were raised.

Amritsar's kisan was ready for the struggle.

Bagha had seen for a long time.

The police stopped them on the way and put them under arrest. Slogans came from ten thousand throats: "Down with Irrigation Department"; "Kisan

Morcha Zindabad."

But where is Majhail Saheb? When the kisans are on the march, he is shaking hands with the D.S.P. He has rushed to (Continued on page 6.)

A PATRIOT'S NOTEBOOK

"Speaks For India"

* "Postal strike is unique in the recent history of labour unrest in India. Here personal issues transcend national considerations."

* "For decades together the majority of railwaymen have exploited the poor public. Corruption and bribery are rules of their lives... Civility and courtesy are rare qualities, generally unknown among railwaymen... These were the men who relied on public support to fight their employers."

* "Prima facie, no government worth its name can haul down its flag every time it were faced with labour unrest."

Whose words are these? The most laudatory of the Caretaker Government's prize specimens?

Sir Eric Conran Smith? Krishna Prasad? Benthall, come back to power?

No, it is the nationalist Bombay Chronicle, in its Sunday weekly of July 21—the Bombay Chronicle which advertises itself up and down as the newspaper which "speaks for India."

Is slandering the railwaymen and the postmen, taking up cudgels for imperialism and its rapacious corrupt Government of India the "nationalism" of the Chronicle? Is this the "voice of India"?

Or is the "voice of India" and its patriotism the voice of the lakhs of workers who have come out on strike in militant support of the postal workers all over the country? There can be no two answers.

Seizure Of Power

But the Chronicle's "Special Correspondent" who spits out this poisonous "Caretaker" propaganda against the battling workers has more to say.

He whispers, as though he is letting out a whole of secret that there are people "who seek to create conditions" for "the seizure of power." And what are these conditions? Our brilliant fellow tells us (Look out, he is exposing the tricks of the revolutionaries!)

"The armed forces disloyal... normal machinery in confusion... strikes, riots and demonstrations... a well organised revolutionary party."

But then he consoles himself and his masters that seizure of power is not on the agenda in India, because:

"There is discontent, but no disloyalty in the armed forces." (Rule Britannia!)

"There is confusion but no demoralisation in the Government." (Three Cheers for the Caretakers!)

"There is unrest but no class-feeling in labour." (Birlaji Zindabad!)

Sorry, Blimps

How comforting for our Blimps! The world is still safe, the seizure of power is still far away—or so, at least, says the bright news boy of the Bombay Chronicle—and, after all, HE should know, he is representative of a paper which "speaks for India!"

But, listen, Blimps—a warning, quite free of charge. Your fawning, hireling-correspondent has got his eyes in the wrong place in his head. He has got things all wrong.

The army? Yes, it is not "disloyal." But it is getting loyal TO INDIA—and that is what matters. Don't forget the R.I.N. Don't forget how scared you are to use Indian troops to shoot at popular demonstrations.

Government? No demoralisation? Ask Conran Smith and Krishna Prasad.

No "class-feeling" in labour? Then what have been these mighty general strikes in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta all about? Why did the entire working masses come out in support of the postal workers? Just "unrest"—or, that terrible, terrible, horror: "class-feeling"?

Sorry, Blimps. The facts are all against you. And you know it.

You know it and are preparing for it, feverishly, desperately.

What are all the military plans and exercises in "Aid of the Civil Power," which I have been able to put out in this column? Admissions of your realisation that yes, our land is smouldering with a fire which knows no quenching till you have quit! And all the military plans and exercises are aimed at putting down this mighty tide which threatens to drive you back to the rat-holes, from which you have emerged.

Stinking Corpse

Our friend—the Special Correspondent of the Chronicle—has not finished "speaking for India." He has a crowning piece for his glittering nonsense:

"Communist Plan To Foment Labour Trouble" he shrieks in a banner headline right across a whole page of the 'weekly'.

"Fomenting labour unrest, culminating in strike is their principal tactics... The Communists look for and seek to create conditions under which power may be successfully seized by them."

How original! It is Churchill and his gang of exploiters talking through the columns of the Chronicle. There is nothing the British would like more than to dismiss the present strike wave as "fomented from outside" by "agitators." And the Chronicle—RESPONSIBLE, NATIONALIST Chronicle—does it for them, gratis.

Of course, if the Chronicle imagines that by dishing out the stinking Tory-created corpse of anti-Communism in this way, it is helping to "isolate" the Communists, then it just doesn't understand the Indian people.

For we, despite all the tremendous hardships caused by the postal strike, back the postmen, because we know that their battle is part of the battle for the very "seizure of power," of which the Chronicle is so scared.

And to tell the Indian people that the Communists support the postmen, fight for their rights, help to bring them—who were till now just one of the backward sections of India's working-class—right into the forefront of the Anti-Imperialist Revolution—is not the way to make the people anti-Communist, but, on the contrary, to make them devotees of the Red flag.

"Socialism"—Birbal Brand

THERE is a gentleman who calls himself "BIRBAL" and writes a syndicated column "Attitudes and Latitudes". The Bombay Chronicle regularly publishes this column. This week, "Birbal" applauds as "examples to follow" the "drastic steps" taken by Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Saudi Arabia to counter-

act "the menace of a Communist fifth-column in their midst."

"Birbal" is sufficiently well-informed to know that the arrests being made in these countries in the name of erasing Communism are of every single anti-British fighter.

Leaders of workers, students, citizens who have fought British troops everyday on the streets of Cairo and led some of the biggest anti-imperialist demonstrations, are being thrown into the dungeons as "Communists" at the direct orders of the British, who have the real control of these countries, as everybody knows perfectly well.

And "Birbal" unashamedly calls on the Government here to follow this example and put the Communists into jail "for the freedom and purity of Indian political life."

It is well known that the "Birbal" column is written and syndicated by the all-India leaders of the Congress Socialist Party. Is this all that the CSP can do, is this the way it fights the British, keeps alive the spirit of August 1942, blows up the British plan? By cheering every British attack on anti-imperialists the world over and by asking for the jailing of fellow-patriots in India?

This may be your way, "Birbal", but don't soil the name of Socialism. Call it what it is: plain and simple playing, the British imperialist game.

Deductions

MAYBE, "Birbal" will yelp with delight when he hears this. The British are already busy with anti-Communist plans in India.

The latest Bombay Sub Area Army Orders (dated June 10) by Brigadier Southgate, Commander, contain an annexure on grading Intelligence reports.

It gives only three examples of reports—one of which is the following:

"A telegraph line has been reported by a high official who has just visited the scene, as sabotaged in proximity to a village well-known to be under Communist influence."

And what is the "deduction" made by the Army Generals in this example: "Communists have organised the sabotage!"

This is the kind of report the British want from THEIR Intelligence Officers. Heaps and heaps of such "evidence", so that they can have "cause" to launch an all-out offensive against the Communists. Cheer, "Birbal", cheer!

Ramesh Chandra

LEAGUE'S REJECTION OF BRITISH PROPOSALS

"Pressure For Favourable Compromise, Not A Call For Anti-Imperialist Mass Action"

Bombay, 30th July, 1946

P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, has issued the following statement:

THE Council of the All-India Muslim League has rejected the Cabinet Mission's proposals and decided to launch direct action as and when necessary. The resolution is put across by the leadership as a break with the constitutional politics and greeted by the following as opening the door to anti-imperialist mass action.

Our Party appreciates the urge and desire of the Muslim masses to fight imperialism and its new plan. Our Party which stands for total rejection of the plan and joint struggle against it welcomes every genuine manifestation against it.

Not To Fight. The New Plan

It would consider it a big victory for the forces of freedom if the League were to give up its constitutional path and prepare for a genuine struggle against the new proposal in alliance with other organisations.

But the resolution of the League raises no such hopes. In spite of the talk of struggle, which is new in the mouth of the League leadership, the basic aim of the resolution is not to fight the new plan, but to bring pressure to see that the original declaration of May 16, which denies freedom to India, is adhered to.

It is directed to ensure that the original plan of compulsory

groupings, is not changed and that Muslim League gets the sole right to nominate all Muslims in the Interim Government.

It is thus a pressure to have a favourable compromise with imperialism, not an attempt to overthrow the new proposals. It betrays the same old race for securing more favours from imperialism at the expense of one another by show of strength.

Mr. Jinnah described it as an attempt to rescue the Government from the clutches of the Congress, which only means to get more concessions than the Congress.

This is obvious since in the resolution there is no mention of either freedom or independence.

There is no doubt that the vast freedom-loving Muslim masses—the same who are writing one of the most glorious pages of Indian history in Kashmir—stand for mass action.

Programme For Struggle

But their desire will come to nought, unless they prevail upon the leadership to accept complete independence, self-determination of all nationalities, abolition of landlordism, as their immediate programme and make an offer of joint struggle with the Con-

gress. The question of Pakistan or Union will be decided finally by the vote of the masses without the intervention of British imperialism.

Only on this basis is victorious struggle possible. To think of direct action to enforce compulsory groupings, to enforce that the Assamese people must compulsorily group with the Bengalis, is to deny elementary democracy and create conflicts among the people.

Our Party appeals to all progressives to demand that the above programme be adopted, that offer of joint front be made to the Congress and war be declared against the new plan.

Eye-Opener For Congress

The League resolution must be an eye-opener to the Congress leadership. All their plans based on the Constitution-making Body will be blown up if the League persists in its rejection. It shows the utter bankruptcy of a leadership which refuses to unite the people and accept self-determination, and which relies on the British Government to force the Muslims to come in the Union Centre.

Let the leadership learn from the lesson, reject the plan, raise the slogan of a Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise and self-determination, and offer to build a joint struggle with the League against the British refusal to quit India.

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATIONS?

That the League Council resolution is not a declaration of war against anybody but is only a measure of self-defence and self-protection was the highlight in the Press conference held by Mr. Jinnah at his bungalow on Malabar Hill, on Wednesday, July 31. Mr. Jinnah also said that all nations in the world were making warlike preparations while quite willing to negotiate.

MOST Pressmen — there were over 75 of them — had gone there hoping to specify any conditions upon which the direct action by the League would be contingent. He refused to answer that question and said, "The Congress is also making preparations. Ask them first when they are going to start the movement and then come to me and ask."

Mr. Jinnah gave a long explanation once again of the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission as in the League Council.

"Congress Preparing For Struggle"

Without the slightest regard for the truth, Mr. Jinnah said that the Congress has been and is even now making preparations for the launching of a big movement and that millions are being enrolled with necessary equipment and drilling to launch a movement a thousand times bigger than that of 1942.

In this Mr. Jinnah flew straight in the face of facts because the Congress far from preparing to launch any movement, is, in fact, frowning upon any such preparations and even some times using the Imperialist repressive machinery against the various struggles launched by workers, peasants and other sections of the people.

But Mr. Jinnah did it with a purpose, namely, to justify the direct action resolution and simultaneously to make it clear for the British that no struggle was intended to be undertaken. He said, "We are forced in self-defence, in our own preservation, to say goodbye to constitutionalism and resort to direct action as and when it is necessary."

Mr. Jinnah claimed that the League was very democratic though he did not explain how the compulsory inclusion of the N. W. Frontier and Assam in the Pakistan groups could in any

sense be called democratic. I asked him whether he would specify any conditions upon which the direct action by the League would be contingent. He refused to answer that question and said, "The Congress is also making preparations. Ask them first when they are going to start the movement and then come to me and ask."

In fact, he refused to answer any question upon when, how and in what manner his direct action would start.

It would be of interest to the League Councillors and the Muslim masses generally to know that Mr. Jinnah's authoritative interpretation of the League resolution for direct action is that it is not a declaration of war against anybody and that Mr. Jinnah looks upon it as a sort of a stay-out strike and expects the initiative for fresh negotiations to come either from the British or from the Congress.

Reassurance To British

The whole Press conference seems to have been intended for the British Government and to assure them that no action is meant but that it is an invitation for fresh negotiations for the formation of an Interim Government on terms satisfactory to the Muslim League.

I could not help coming away with the feeling that probably Mr. Jinnah was apprehensive that the British Government would interpret the League resolution as a declaration of war and refuse to negotiate with him. It is significant that Mr. Jinnah admitted that he had received a letter from Lord Wavell earlier, but he refused to disclose the contents, which makes it further clear that he expects negotiations to begin.

—by A. S. R. CHARI.

"SALUTE KASHMIR" CULTURAL FUNCTION IN BOMBAY

OVER 800 people packed the Sunderabai Hall to capacity on the evening of Sunday, July 28. Hundreds more waiting outside have demanded a repetition of the programme.

The great "Poet of the Revolution", Josh-Malhabadi, began the evening's programme with a poem saluting the Kashmiri people and sharply castigating those leaders who are holding back the Indian people from marching to join hands with Kashmir.

A Marathi song by Amar Sheikh and his squad and a Marathi powada (ballad) written by Anna Sathe and sung by Gawankar told of the glorious battle of the people of Kashmir.

One-Act Play

A one-act play, written by Balraj Sahni, gave a glimpse of fighting Kashmir, centred round preparations for one of the most memorable incidents in Kashmir's struggle—the taking out of a torchlight boat procession in the Dal Lake—the play drew attention to the participation of all sections of the people in the movement.

The old artisan-cyer (played magnificently by the author himself) was the most inspiring character in the play—and when he shouted the slogans of Kashmir's national movement, a thrill ran through the audience.

The poet Mahboob; the Kashmiri Pandit Kallash; the once timid, now brave, Nilkanth Kak (played excellently by Mama Phansalkar) — ashamed of his name — the policeman who throws off his filthy uniform—the others, artisans and workers—all gave one in a short period of less than half an hour, a vivid impression of the unity of the Kashmiri people.

The curtain came down with a mighty kick at the policeman's pugree — symbolic of fighting Kashmir and the blows it is striking at the army and the police in every clash in the streets of Srinagar.

Moving Ballet

The highlight of the programme was a ballet by the Communist members of the Central Squad. It began with a beautiful slow boat-dance with a haunting melody in the background—the tale of the beauty of Kashmir and the misery of its people.

Suddenly the machine guns rattle—the dancers—men and women dressed in typical Kashmiri costume—fall dead and wounded.

The news comes, Sher-i-Kashmir is arrested. The upsurge begins. The Maharaja and his British master appear on the scene, dancing happily together. They begin their terror on the people. The terror dance fills one with horror.

And then the dance of triumph... we have crushed them... the British master and his Princely agent dance around arm in arm (after, of course, the latter has polished well the boots of his boss—a scene which brought the house down with laughter).

Tyrants Quit

Then slowly the underground resistance begins. And you see the panic of the Prince and the British. The ring around the two oppressors tightens and then the blows come—a rain of them from men and women all—and the tyrants, overpowered... QUIT.

The ballet ends with a song led by Benoy Roy: "Hum Kash-

miri hongse sub azad."

Prem Dhawan who dances as British Imperialism, and Gangaadharan as the Maharaja are outstanding, and their excellent performances hammered out the vital importance of the Princes to the British.

The chorus is proud and defiant. Their dances and songs portray strikingly every emotion of the Kashmiri people; their pride in their homeland, their hunger, their hate, fearlessness, courage, determination.

Speeches And Collection

Rajani Palme Dutt spoke and gave a report of his recent tour of Kashmir. And finally P. C. Joshi spoke and called for funds for Kashmir.

Over four hundred rupees were collected on the spot. The donations ranged from one anna pieces to a cheque for Rs. 51. This sum is quite apart from about Rs. 1,500 collected as entrance donations from the audience before the performance.

"Quit India" Song

The evening's programme ended with a chorus song written and led by Prem Dhawan, which received the most stupendous applause the Sunderabai Hall has probably ever heard.

The refrain of this song: "Ab Bhago London Jao" was applauded again and again.

"How can we forget the terror of Jallianwalla, How can we forget the fire of today's Kashmir"

And then: "Oh Sahibs, when you go, take your Princely dogs with you"

The cheers which greeted this last verse were a living indication of what the "Salute Kashmir" programme had meant to the audience.

SUPPORT FOR KASHMIR STRUGGLE

BOMBAY

July 22

A PACKED public meeting was held at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall. Dr. G. Adhikari, editor People's Age, presided. A resolution of solidarity with Kashmir was passed with acclamation. Dr. K. M. Ashraf and Syed Sajjad Zaheer were the main speakers. Rs. 45 were collected in small coins from the audience.

July 24

The Rula College Hall and the verandah outside were overflowing for the "Salute Kashmir" meeting, presided over by N. K. Krishnan, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The audience—the majority of whom were young clerks and students—passed the resolution of support with slogans of "Quit Kashmir."

July 27

A mass meeting was held in

the Neighbourhood Hall, Mandanpura. Syed Sajjad Zaheer presided. Over 500 people—workers and citizens—attended, including a number of Muslim women.

DELHI

DESPITE inclement weather between five to six thousand people sat through the meeting in Gandhi Grounds on July 23, organised by the Delhi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party, in connection with the "Kashmir Day". Ram Chander Sharma, Communist trade union leader, presided.

The meeting, in a resolution, moved by Sarla Gupta, greeted the people of Kashmir, both Muslims and Hindus, for their heroic resistance to Dogra Shahi and supported the "Quit Kashmir" struggle as a struggle for "freedom and democracy, which deserves the support of all the freedom-loving peoples of India."

Look Out For!

Salute To Kashmir!

by Ramesh Chandra

In The Press

This small booklet tells us the gripping story of the heroic people of Kashmir—their rich land, their miserable living conditions and the proud record of their national movement. The book throws fresh light on the "Quit Kashmir" movement and shows us our duty towards a people who are fighting a battle which is an integral part of our own freedom movement.

Please write to any of our bookshops at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Lahore, Nagpur, Poona, Bezwada, Calicut and Trivandrum.

★ **REVERSAL OF EARLIER DECISION**
 ★ **TOADIES GIVE UP TITLES**
 ★ **THREAT OF STRUGGLE**

On July 29, in Kesar Baug's vast hall, the Muslim League Council made a sensational decision. It rejected the British proposals more easily than it had accepted them in June, called for renunciation of British titles, and asked Muslims to be ready for 'direct action' for which the Working Committee would forthwith devise a programme. Tremendous enthusiasm and wild cheering greeted these announcements.

Then And Now

TEN years ago, in this self-same hall, the organising meeting of the Bombay Presidency Muslim League had been called by Mr. Jinnah. It was a very different picture. As Jinnah himself told the Council on Sunday, 'after a lot of advertisement and good deal of tomtomming, there were not more than 100 persons who cared to come.'

Today the hall with a capacity of over 3,000 was full to overflowing. Outside hundreds of Muslims stood patiently in mud and rain to know the League's decision. Despite high prices, ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 50, most seats were paid for and reserved long before the tickets were even printed. There were only about 200 Councillors, 100 Pressmen, the rest were visitors; a fair-sized group being women out of purdah—an unusual feature in a League session.

For ten years Mr. Jinnah had led the League on the path of communalism and anti-Congress hate. He had hitched the Muslim waggon to profound faith in British rulers.

Reversal Of Decision

In the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, this policy reached its culmination. He surrendered to the British rather than settle with his brothers, and he agreed to a Union Centre proposed by the British though he had refused to discuss the question at all in the Gandhi-Jinnah talks.

With supreme faith in Wavell's written assurances and solemnity of British pledges, he hurried the League Council into agreeing to the British plan, silencing, even ridiculing the opposition of Maulana Hasrat Mohani and others.

He was quite agreeable to work within the frame-work of the Imperialist Plan. But this policy had come home to roost, the pledges were broken and the League humiliated.

Mr. Jinnah had himself realised that the League's premature acceptance had weakened its pressure tactics. He decided to exercise the supreme pressure.

Meanwhile, among the League masses, their anti-imperialist sentiments seized the British betrayal as a sufficient ground for ending all negotiations and for starting a struggle.

A League leader from the Punjab told me, 'The Muslim masses are in no mood for compromise, they want a struggle.' Other League Councillors, whom I met, had a similar story to relate.

Faith Remains

But even the British betrayal had not killed the League leader's faith in the British. His opening speech was a legalistic defence of his stand, but he took care not to tell his audience that he had never raised the demand for complete freedom from British control and withdrawal of British troops.

It was a history of the negotiations, a long wall against the British for breaking their pledges, a sharp attack on the Congress for using unfair means, and big threats to make the Cabinet Mission yield to League demands.

His lead was anti-Congress, not anti-British. He charged the Congress with dishonesty, the Cabinet Mission with weakness.

He gave sufficient indication, however, that he was personally in favour of rejection of the

proposals. He said that the League should rescue the Cabinet Mission from the fear of the Congress.

It was not a speech for rejection of the Imperialist Plan, but for its reimposition with proper safeguards against Congress intransigence.

His speech evoked little enthusiasm except when he criticised Cripps mildly as a 'juggler with words,' 'debased his legal talents', etc., which were received with a murmur of appreciation.

The audience thirsted for hard-hitting anti-British abuse. The dominant mood was anti-British.

The Dam Bursts

When Jinnah called on the Councillors to frankly express their opinion, the result was astounding. Speaker after speaker

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 by **A. S. R. Chari**  
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rose to attack the British, demand rejection outright of the proposals, and launch a struggle against the British for sovereign Pakistan.

All those who called for bagawat (revolt) or jehad (holy war), were cheered vociferously.

Despite Jinnah's anti-Congress lead the speeches were mainly anti-British and far less anti-Congress than ever before. It was a sharp contrast to the anti-Hindu outbursts in the League Legislators' Convention and the pro-British toadyism so evident in the previous League Council session in June.

When Abul Hashem from Bengal said that the main target for Muslim attack was British imperialism, and when Mian Iftikharuddin declared that, 'Our fight is against the British, not against the Hindu—man, woman, or child—in the streets,' there were cheers.

The League resolution put in words the dominant mood for rejection and struggle. But on what form the struggle should take no one said a word.

Abul Hashem said that Muslims could find allies among non-Muslims, Scheduled Castes, etc., but he did not make it clear that if it was a struggle for complete liquidation of imperialism and landlordism, then there could be a mighty joint front of Muslims and Hindus to end British rule—the question of Pakistan being put to the democratic vote of the people of linguistic, cultural and national units.

Turning Point

Mian Iftikharuddin's speech received the most applause. He put the significance of the session as a turning point in the life of the League. It was turning its face away from the British rulers towards its own people. He wanted it to turn towards the Congress, for without Congress-League agreement there could be no freedom.

But his one-sided attack of the Congress leadership, its policy, the alliance between British imperialism and Hindu capitalists, left the dominant impression that agreement with the Congress was impossible.

He said that only Hindu Biras wanted British armies to remain, but did not criticise Mr. Jinnah for failing to raise the demand for withdrawal of British troops.

In fact, in none of the speeches was there any reference to the Muslim vested interests.

Mian's speech had an effect contrary to what he intended—it became an anti-Congress speech. A young League lawyer told me,

'Mian Iftikharuddin's speech was good, but I could not understand him. He said, Congress-League agreement was necessary, but proved it was impossible. He has not said whether we should go in or keep out of the Constituent Assembly.'

Toadies Give Up Titles

There were, however, sharp attacks on the toadies by Abul Hashem, who called them 'British-manufactured' leaders, who acted as British agents inside the League. All the attacks on the nawabs and knights were cheered.

But a curious feature was that the resolution for relinquishing of titles was moved by a champion toady contractor from the North West Frontier Province, Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin.

The Noons and Nazimuddins at the end of the session readily went up to the mike and announced their 'great sacrifice' for the sake of the millat. But though wild cheering

greeted the announcements, because the visitors took it in the same sense as throwing away of titles in 1921, i.e., as a decisive break with toadies and toadyism, I found a strange artificiality in the whole affair.

I was reminded of Abul Hashem's words that renunciation of titles did not bring about an immediate change of heart. Maybe, they would find it easier now to work for their British masters as in the story related by Mr. Kadiruddin, League Councillor from Delhi.

He said that a title abjurer went and told the White sahib, 'You know mine has always been a loyal family. So am I. But if I have to serve you well and also my millat, you must permit me to relinquish the title you have given me.'

But the jubilation of the common Leaguers was real and genuine—it showed a good, strong hatred for the toadies.

The People As A Pistol

Mr. Jinnah, in his concluding speech, gave out the real meaning of this decision for 'direct action.' It was evidently addressed to the British. He said that hitherto the League was unarmed in the negotiations while both the British (military power) and the Congress (mass movement) had their pistols. 'Today we declare,' said Mr. Jinnah, 'that henceforth we also will have a pistol in future negotiations.'

It is clear that the League leadership interprets the threat of 'direct action' only as a cleaning of the deck for fresh negotiations. But the mood of the Muslim masses is a festive, anti-British, pro-struggle one.

On Monday evening, when a public meeting was to be addressed by Mr. Jinnah, about 40,000 Muslims flooded into Bhandy Bazar. Everywhere there was jubilation, talk of struggle, and eagerness to catch a glimpse of the Qaid-e-Azam, the leader.

But no Leaguer, whom I met, has any idea as yet of when or what forms the 'direct action' will take. The Working Committee has asked Provincial leaders to send memoranda of suggestions to prepare a programme.

This makes it fairly clear that though the Muslim masses might interpret the decision as an anti-British struggle, the leaders want to use it to get British pressure on the Congress. The pistol will be kept poised.

THE NINTH OF AUGUST

THE Congress President has given a call to observe the 9th of August. Notwithstanding the fact that the lead given by the Congress leadership was wrong, in view of the imminence of Japanese invasion, the 9th of August will be remembered by the heroic resistance with which the masses fought Government repression and the upheavals that followed.

We pay our tribute to those who suffered at the hands of the police, to those who were tortured in dungeons and secret cells. We pay our tributes to those who fell in street battles fighting brutal repression; and those who hung from the gallows. We bow down our heads to the outraged women of Ashti and Chimur—the victims of brutal imperialist terror.

The upheaval revealed as never before the striking power of the Indian people. The Government attempted to crush the people with brutal repression. The people's reply was barricades, defiance and street battles, guerrilla warfare, and even armed fights.

The Indian people, temporarily freed from the deadening grip and the emasculating politics of Gandhism, fought like men. The highest point of people's action was reached in the upheavals of Midnapore, Ballia and Satara, where local authority was overpowered.

The peasant revolutionaries of Satara drove out the local authority, established their own courts and administration, and were able to keep their resistance till the advent of the Congress Ministry.

It is to the Congress Ministry that they surrendered their arms; their organisation, based on peasant unity, could not be crushed by the bureaucracy.

Such was the wonderful skill and resourcefulness, courage, and heroism shown by the Indian masses. They took the 'Quit India' resolution seriously, and executed it with a revolutionary decisiveness unexpected by their leaders.

"Quit India" Spirit Persists

Notwithstanding the repudiation of this revolutionary spirit by the Congress leaders, the 'Quit India' spirit persists in every militant action of the Indian people in recent days.

It was seen during the I.N.A. demonstrations in Calcutta, when crowds again threw barricades and unarmed people decisively stood against armoured cars.

It was seen again in Bombay and Karachi in February when the R.I.N. ratings took arms and rebelled against the authorities; and when the workers and people of Bombay struck in defence of them, defied the military rule and again raised the barricades.

It was seen again in Delhi when the anti-Victory Day demonstrations brought the people on the streets, once more defying all repression.

It is seen again in the 'Quit Kashmir' slogan of Sheikh Abdullah and the great struggle of the Kashmir people.

It finds an echo today in every Indian State where the people are defying the autocratic rule of the Princes.

The new feature in 1946 is the spontaneous unity of the Hindu-Muslim masses behind the barricades. It was outstanding on the I.N.A. and Rashid Day demonstrations in Calcutta. It dominated the R.I.N. mutiny when the ratings hoisted Congress and League flags on the mutineers' ships; when the people crossed Congress, League and Red flags on the streets and Hindus and Muslims fought with equal doggedness.

Over the heads of their bargaining leadership the people were learning to fight the common enemy and mingle their blood together. This is the amendment which the rebellious masses wish to move to the 'Quit India' resolution.

In its hunt for compromise with the Princes and the new British proposals the leadership of the Congress is feeling embarrassed before this revolutionary abandon, and asking the people to substitute dignity for revolutionary action.

The leadership of the League does its desperate-best to keep the Muslims away from the common struggle and even promises a separate struggle.

Carry Forward The Heritage

But to extend the developing struggles, to intensify the 'Quit India' spirit and develop the unity spontaneously achieved by the masses into a huge front against the new imperialist plan is to carry forward the heritage of the 9th of August in 1946.

Not by wordy tributes to the martyrs, not by mere glorification of the past, but by action in the present can we carry forward the rich heritage of 'Quit India.'

On the 9th of August, therefore, the people must vow not to rest till the British are made to quit India. They must raise the slogan of united struggle for immediate freedom in memory of the Hindus and Muslims who died on barricades. They must denounce the Constitution-making Body and the promised Interim Government as a trap and a hoax and vow to defeat the British plan.

In its place they must raise their voice for all power to the Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise and complete right of self-determination to all national units.

The unambiguous acceptance of the right of self-determination will put on permanent footing that unity which the Hindu and Muslim masses achieved behind the barricades in Calcutta and Bombay. It will enable the entire Indian people to raise the demand for 'Quit India,' and arm it with the strength of forty crores to enforce it.

SAVAGE SENTENCE ON BRAGANZA-CUNHA

TRISTAO Braganza-Cunha, leader of the Goan people's struggle for civil liberties, has been sentenced by Court Martial at Margao to eight years' transportation.

Exactly thirty-eight years ago, in 1908, Bal Gangadhar Tilak was sentenced for sedition to six years' transportation. Never since those days has the British Government in India dared to pronounce such a barbarous sentence on a charge of sedition.

But the sentence on Braganza-Cunha is no isolated, independent action of the Portuguese Fascist Government. It has the full backing of the British Government. Only with that backing could the puny Dictator Salazar have dared to launch the present, vicious and bloody assault on the Goan Freedom Movement.

The British back Salazar's terror, because they know Goa's struggle is part of the present mighty revolutionary wave which is sweeping across India. It was no accident that the slogan 'Jai Hind' painted across the carriages of a train in Goa struck terror in the hearts of the Portuguese and they promptly arrested the entire crew of the train.

But just as the Indian people have learnt to fight back, so also in Goa—in Margao, in Mapuca—the people are at war, the police and the military have begun to taste this war on their bodies (see page 7).

The savage sentence on Tristao Braganza-Cunha must not be allowed to be carried out. The cry of 'Quit Goa' must be heard in every city in our land, demonstrating the unbreakable solidarity of all India with Goa's struggle.

FIRST FORTNIGHT OF POSTAL STRIKE IN CALCUTTA

Our Correspondent's Diary

"THE General Strike called for today by the General Council of the Bengal Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), in sympathy with the Posts and Telegraphs strikers has affected almost every aspect of the city's life. Train and bus services are not working today. Most of the city's newspaper offices were closed." (Press message, July 20).

With all its efforts to tone down this news the agency could not kill the truth. And no wonder, the story of Calcutta's postal strike and of her citizen's great support to this strike have written a new and glorious chapter in our common struggle, a chapter that cannot be effaced.

There was the same attempt at repression and disruption, the same lies and attempts at black-legging on the part of the bosses. The same failures dogged their footsteps, the same rousing popular support to strikers faced them! As in Bombay, as in Delhi, as in other cities, so in Calcutta.

Here are a few glimpses of Calcutta during the first fortnight of this great strike.

JULY 11

ABDUL Momin, General Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress (BPTUC), has issued a statement calling for popular pressure on the Government to concede the demands of the postal staff.

Ninety-seven per cent of the postal and lower grade staff are on strike. Attempt was made to use army personnel at the GPO but a batch of them refused to work and left shouting 'Jai Hind'. News of strike from Dacca, Narayanganj, Shillong, Chittagong, etc.

The same threats by the PMG to call off the strike in 72 hours or else.

Amal Bagchi, Secretary of the Ex-Servicemen's League, warns ex-servicemen against the tempting offers of the Employment Exchange for black-legs.

JULY 12

Strike—100 per cent successful. Even the three Muslim peons of the Postmaster, Presidency Division, join in.

The PMG is out for appeals to the strikers' leaders—"please allow the ration shop staff to work". Request granted. Request No. 2 to "allow clerks to stamp letters", turned down. The President of the AITUC (12 days ago he advised against strike) condemns Government's callousness and its attempts to break the strike.

JULY 13-14

Strike spreading Chinsura, Hooghly, Barrackpore, etc. Upper Grade clerks in the A.I. Postal and RMS Union unanimously decide for strike on July 23.

JULY 15

Big meeting at University Hall, where leaders of the AITUC, the All India Kisan Sabha, the Students' Federation, leaders of the All-India Telegraph Union, Telegraph Workers Union, Postal & RMS Union, etc., support the strike. Fazlul Haq and Deben Mukherjee (Hindu Sabha) also support it.

JULY 17

Telegraph and Telephone workers, Postal and RMS clerks and strikers form a joint Council of Action. M. K. Bose, President, AITUC, presiding. Notice of strike sent by wire. Panic in Iazar—Calcutta banks' business reduced by 50 per cent, all links with their branches severed. The Stock Exchange and Chambers of Commerce in fitters. Publishers' business reduced by 7th. One publisher says, "Don't worry about that let the postmen win." The Employment Exchange's efforts to enlist ex-servicemen smashed.

by
Nikhil Chakravarty

Telegraph authorities refuse to book telegram sent by Swadhinata (Communist Party's Bengal daily) to its Shillong correspondent, asking for postal strike news. They dub it as "objectionable."

Sympathetic "pen-down strike" for 15 minutes by clerks of the Dy. Accountant General of P. & T. Indian Seamen's Union, Bengal Miners' Union, Lipton Workers, Dacca students, support the strike.

JULY 18

"Council of Action" unanimously condemns Chamanlal's stand which is being fully used by the Government to fight the strike. All affiliated units decide to break away from the Federation.

Bengal Pottery, paint workers, rubber workers, etc., support the strike. Bhowani Sen on behalf of Communist Party appeals for support to the strike.

JULY 19

No blackleg, even for a yet higher price (Rs. 6 p. day). The President of the local Anglo-Indian Association asks his community men not to go in as blacklegs. Electric Supply workers support the strike.

JULY 20

Meeting of 200 telephone girls decides on strike. High Government officers reported to be rushing from New Delhi to "win over" strike leaders.

M. K. Bose bluntly exposes a whisper-campaign that Chaman Lal's anti-strike statements were being issued in consultation with himself.

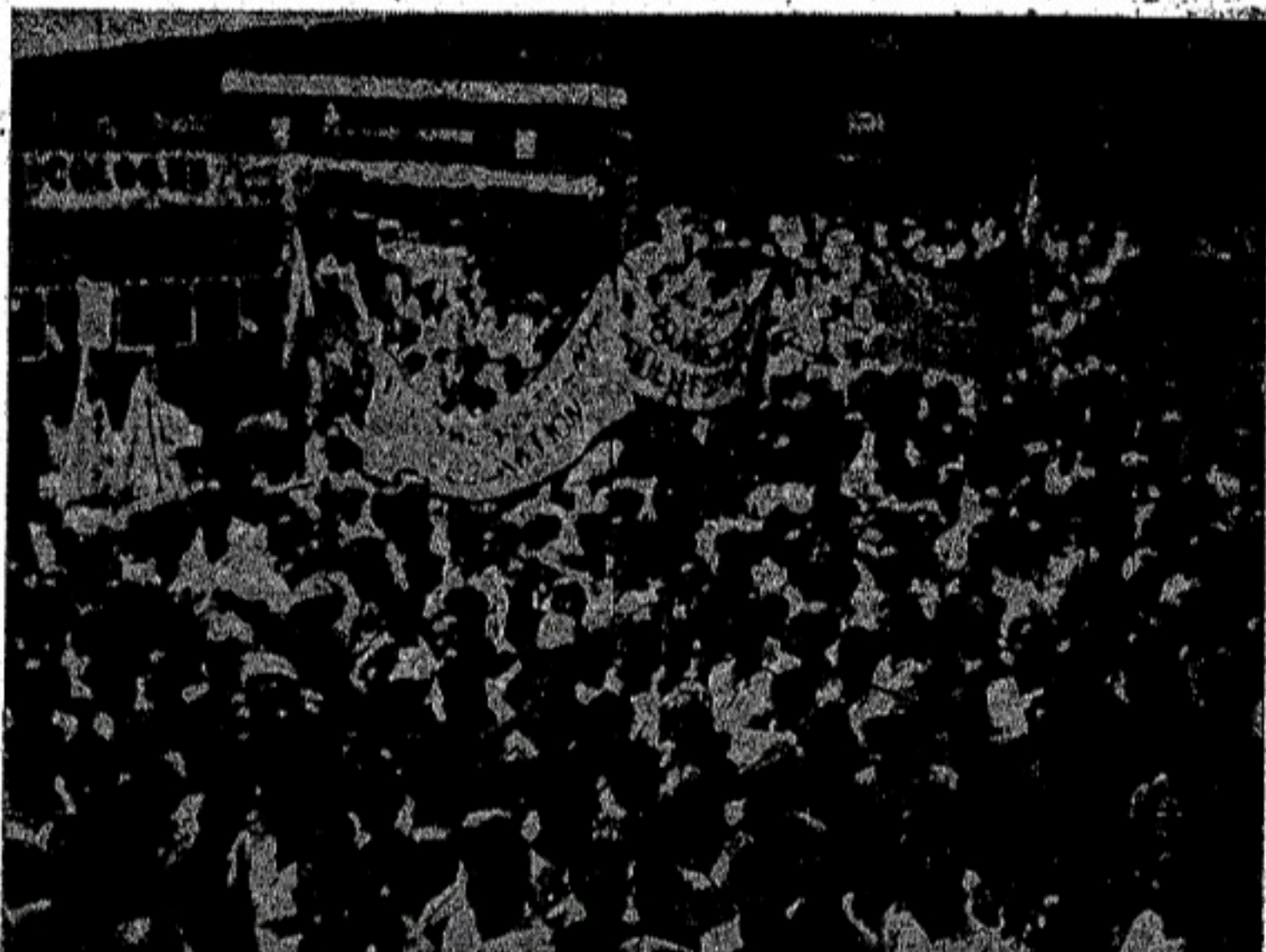
The directors of Indian Telegraph Association repudiate Noronha's, their secretary and Chaman Lal. So does Employees' Association of the PMG's office.

JULY 21

A big day. Ex-servicemen picket the Employment Exchange. At Comilla the Dist. Magistrate ordered a railway guard to remove government mail. He even threatened him, but the guard refused.

Police forced to use their own radio service.

Meeting of twenty thousand at Wellington Square. Leaders of a number of workers' and students' organisations address. Annada Bhattacharyya (of the Students' Federation) offers students' help to collect "Atash-H-Bhika" (moral collection) for strike relief. Tramway men, through Misir, donate Rs. 50, bus and motor workers



A part of the 25,000-strong procession of students and citizens which paraded the streets of Bombay on July 17 in support of postal workers.

through Barin Bannerjee, pay Rs. 25. Wild cheers for fraternal solidarity!

At 12 midnight telephone operators of the Burra Bazaar, Calcutta, Park Exchange, go on strike. So does the staff of the Central Telegraph Office.

Reuters, the never-failing Reuters, ceases sending messages outside.

JULY 22

Calcutta cut off from the world for 24 hours. The Share Market indefinitely closed. Banks doing only local business. Commerce held up for want of revenue stamps. I.C.I. business falls by Rs. 50,000 in just a day. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce gets only 20 telephone calls instead of the usual 700. Publication of the Reserve Bank's Weekly Bulletin held up.

At Howrah Station coolies refuse to handle mail bags. The Indian Telegraph Union (so far anti-strike) decides on strike which means 18 radio centres will be affected. The Alipore Observatory handicapped for lack of outstation reports that affects ships and air service.

Government officer exposed as lying when he said 90 per cent of the telephone workers. Only 13 out of 700 operators are at work at Calcutta's four main exchanges.

From Howrah mail trains left without mail vans.

JULY 23

In the last two days alone, according to the Calcutta Bank Clearing House, business fell by a crore of rupees.

Bengali and Anglo-Indian girl operators jointly picket the telephone exchanges. It has been decided by the Union to furnish a few operators for answering calls for hospital, ambulance and fire brigade services.

The Employment Exchange completely failed to supply any black-legs.

Strikers collect Rs. 5,000 from house to house collections. Empty mail vans again from Howrah and Sealdah stations.

Phanindra Panday, Police constable No. 3504, sent to barracks for refusing to do postal work at the GPO on July 11.

Mass meetings by the Communist Party and labour unions at Shradhdhand Park, another at Howrah. Also a meeting held by the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

Abul Hashem, Secretary of the Bengal Muslim League, supports the demands of strikers.

The B. & A. Railroad Workers' Union, Kancharapara Branch, and the Motor Transport Union, Baranagore, support the postmen.

Reports of strikes and meetings from all over Bengal, Jessore, Faridpore, Rajshahi, Midnapore, Burdwan, Nadia, etc.

The All-India Radio announces complete suspension of mails to Bengal and Assam.

JULY 24

Krishna Prasad trying to bring pressure on postal leaders. No success for him.

The BPTUC's General Council meets tomorrow, 25th, to decide on general strike.

In fraternal solidarity, some postmen today join the all-party demonstration for release of political prisoners.

This is Calcutta.

DEWAN CHAMANLAL

A man, it is said, is known by the company he keeps. Dewan Chamanlal could be known by the unions he has smashed.

HE started it in 1920 by smashing behind the back of the workers! and hushing up the Victoriawallas' (Cabinmen) Union in Bombay. With that his instructions to his unions the B.E.S.T. (tramways) Union he was incorporated in the Director General's (Posts and Telegraphs) circular to his officials.

In 1929, the Lahore High Court censured him for "unprofessional conduct". As a Defence Counsel in the Meerut Conspiracy Case he had secured by way of memento a badge from one of the accused. Within 24 hours this badge was found with the Prosecution Counsel to be produced as evidence against the accused!

But with consummate skill he hushed it up soon and in 1930 managed to smash the G.L.P. Railwaymen's Union. They fought a strike and Chamanlal got them an "agreement". Of course it was behind the back of the workers and against their wishes. But so what?

Another spell of silence for 15 years. No big strike which he could disrupt and, therefore, no Chamanlal in the limelight.

During Threatened Railway Strike

With the threatened railway strike of 10 lakh workers in 1946 Dewan Chamanlal also was back. This President of the E. I. Railwaymen's Association from his permanent seat in Lahore (N. W. India) rushed forth. The Railwaymen's Federation would not have him, but the other side needed him. And for the sins of the Federation he refused to desert the workers.

If the Federation would not bend the Railway Board; he would. He did. He even made them "practically concede" all the demands. Which how far? What of the Federation? Leave these "delicate points" to me, said Chamanlal. Only withdraw the strike and all would be well!

But the ungrateful workers let this noble soul down. Like Shylock they insisted on their pound of flesh from the Board. The Board, for all that Chamanlal did for them, were forced to put him into cold storage and open direct talks with the Federation!

Into The Picture Again With Postal Strike

But history insisted on repeating itself. Chamanlal (Long live his love for the underdog!) insisted on having another round of "fruitful negotiations" with the bosses, and the bosses insisted on bypassing another union! This time the action revolved round the postal strike.

With his uncanny vision, Chamanlal had already managed to become the President of the Federation of the Posts and Telegraphs Union. He said it was "powerful". But a colleague of his complained that even Delhi flip him as the Labour Member the President and General Secretary in Wavell's new Government. The of the AITUC were "ignorant of its 1946 antics of Dewan Chamanlal they existence." The Government, however, attribute to that. But Chamanlal ever, was not so blind to develop-ments inside the Labour movement. And he is safe in Argentina.

So hard did he work (what if it was

Deserted By Own Followers

But suddenly the award was found to be "unsatisfactory." Why that? Chamanlal's own units from Bengal and Assam suddenly had 'deserted' the General's army. Worse still, At the New Delhi meeting of Chamanlal's Federation (mid-July), Hyder Ali (Agra) and B. N. Ghosh (Calcutta) denounced "these self-imposed leaders, who have betrayed our cause."

Chamanlal now gave the strike notice. "Surrender within 48 hours or we march" he thundered. He would have even led the battle in person. But then far off Argentina suddenly called him. He had to go. He almost got into a plane. But then Viscount Wavell suddenly sent him an S.O.S.—"Delicate negotiations are on. We need you," he entreated. And Chamanlal yielded.

The battle would have duly begun. But then suddenly Sardar Patel appealed to him to postpone it. Again Chamanlal had to yield.

Was All His "Sacrifice" In Vain?

Meanwhile the bosses had decided not to yield. Let them the workers, felt Chamanlal. He even approached a member of the Strike Committees. "I fought the Adjudication for two months and lost Rs. 50,000! Is that not enough of a sacrifice? Is it not clear that I wish good by the staff? Now at least you should yield," he appealed. But he was roughly brushed aside. Foregoing two months' income in law courts was no argument for these young hot-heads!

He has now left India's shores. Some assert that Sardar Patel has sharply rebuked him for betraying the postmen and putting the Congress to shame. High circles in New Delhi flip him as the Labour Member the President and General Secretary in Wavell's new Government. The of the AITUC were "ignorant of its 1946 antics of Dewan Chamanlal they existence." The Government, however, attribute to that. But Chamanlal ever, was not so blind to develop-ments inside the Labour movement. And he is safe in Argentina.

—by P. B. Rangnaker

BOMBAY SECT. CLERKS ORDERED TO BLACKLEG?

AS we go to press, a report has been received that the clerks of the Bombay Secretariat have been informed that from August 3, 15 to 20 per cent of them will be required for duties in the post offices. They are said to have been told that they will be paid one rupee per day extra allowance for the days they perform these "duties". And that if they refuse to do the jobs assigned to them; they will be dismissed.

If this is true, it is scandalous. These open orders to break the postal strike by the Congress Ministry will fill patriotic Bombay with shame.

But the Secretariat are preparing to resist these orders of the Ministry. They feel certain that it will not mean disobedience to the Congress if they do this, but will in fact be carrying out the real "principles" of the Congress.

Bombay's citizens must support the clerks in this courageous action and call for an explanation from Premier Kher for this totally anti-national order to blackleg.

● Imperial Partition Of Palestine

● Democratic China Resists U.S. Domination

THE events of the last week in Palestine have exposed in all its nakedness the bloody evil hand of imperialism—events which are the vicious result of a 'divide and rule' policy that is the very foundation of British policy in Palestine.

For twenty-five years, British imperialism's policy of playing off Jew against Arab and Arab against Jew has continued—because Palestine is a key strategic centre of the entire Mediterranean, and this was the only way Britain could retain its domination of the area. For, when the entire Arab movement was rising, it was of fundamental importance that the Jewish community in Palestine should be kept away from uniting with the Arabs.

This was the policy which alone could ensure that the Jews would act as the fifth-column of the British against the Arab peoples and not as fraternal brothers of the Arabs in the struggle against British imperialism and for the freedom of the peoples of the entire Middle East.

Responsibility Of Imperialism

It was this policy that is responsible for the incident of July 22 at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem when, as a result of a huge explosion, engineered by Jewish terrorists, more than 80 lives were lost and as many people injured.

It is this same policy that is responsible for the Jewish attacks on Arabs and the bitter atmosphere in Palestine.

For years the Jews have been deluded by the British-inspired dream of a Jewish Palestine; and the acts of terrorism have arisen because the Jewish youth today are drunk with the prospect of this dream and impatient at the delay in achieving their goal; chauvinistic anti-Arab feeling has bitten deep into their

hearts and led to this situation.

The Zionist leadership of the Jewish Agency has contributed to this in its own characteristic way; throughout the last twenty years, it has led the Jewish people to place their trust in the imperial British rulers and consistently opposed any proposal of joint action with the Arabs and against the British—for the freedom of both Arabs and Jews.

It is also a fact that on the Arab side, the Arab Higher Committee, led first by the

administrative autonomy except for Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications, which would be a Federal responsibility." (Times of India, July 26).

Thus the same vicious principle that underlines the fake plan for Indian 'independence' is sought to be applied in Palestine also; it is an administrative plan by which:

Details Of The Evil Plan

(1) The British retain key power in the Federal Govern-

by Mohan Kumaramangalam

Mufti and then by Jamal Husseini, pursued a policy which ruled out any co-operation between Arabs and Jews and concentrated its fire on the Jews, rather than the British.

This has inevitably played into the hands of the anti-Arab Zionist leadership who have been able to rally the mass of the Jews to regard the Arabs as their enemy and the British imperialists as their friend.

Arab-Jew Leaderships Play Into British Hands

The present situation is one, therefore, in which the two leaderships have played right into imperialism's hands—and this can be seen in the bastard plan for the 'partition' of Palestine, reported to have been framed by an Anglo-American Commission—and to be under consideration by the U. S. and British Governments.

According to this plan, after "some population transfer" Palestine will become a Federal State of two autonomous States, one Jewish and one Arab; the Central Federal Government would have British, Jewish and Arab members; the two autonomous States "would enjoy

ment in their own hands by playing off the Jewish and Arab members against one another and thus get themselves in a position to perpetuate Jewish-Arab differences.

(2) Defence is a Federal subject and, therefore, the British retain the military domination and unity of Palestine so that it remains a British base.

(3) Because Economic resources, Tariffs and Planning are in the hands of the autonomous States, the plan disrupts the economic unity of Palestine, so essential if it is to progress rapidly by planned development of all its resources.

Such is the real intention of the Palestine partition plan—vicious and evil offspring of the same imperial brains that gave birth to the Indian plan.

Of course, it will not be easy to put through; the Jewish Agency will be reluctant to accept any form of Federal Government; the Arab Higher Committee is likely to oppose a Jewish autonomous State.

But so long as they hold their present positions, and keep the Jewish and Arab peoples apart and fight each other, only the British, ar-

chitects of mischief, will profit, while Palestine will remain the colonial slave of British imperialism.

Madame Sun Yat-Sen's Appeal

But China knows clearly what this means. Last week, Madame Sun Yat-sen, widow of the great Dr. Sun Yat-sen, father of the Chinese Republic, warned that the desire to promote war between Russia and the United States "motivates Kuomintang reactionaries seeking to start civil war," "because they hope the civil conflict in China will incite war between America and the U.S.S.R. and thus at last crush the Chinese Communists."

The Americans, she concluded, must be told that the presence of United States forces in China "is not strengthening peace and order among the Chinese."

Other Democrats Also Raise Their Voice

And 56 people—Liberals, Leftists, educators, industrialists and journalists with Madame Sun Yat-sen as the leader—have called to the U.S. to end its military assistance to the KMT Government. The appeal concludes:

"The American people can now decide whether China should suffer a devastating civil war.

"Shooting has already started. Whether it continues or not, depends almost entirely on you. If it does, you will be a participant."

Thus even though American imperialism hopes to do its worst in order to achieve its domination through the rule of the KMT, it is clear that democratic China is not asleep but is waking to the real dangers involved in a civil war in which a KMT victory could only mean the degradation of China to colonial status, and thus the loss of her independence, without which there can be no future for the Chinese people.

U.S. Arms For KMT Government

THE role of American imperialism in China is becoming clearer every day. After posing for the last one year as the impartial 'referee' and 'arbitrator' between rival Chinese parties, today it is becoming increasingly obvious that it is not out to unify but to divide and dominate.

Last week an 'informed and reliable source' told the Washington correspondent of the imperial Times of India the real truth about American intentions.

He revealed that American military supplies and personnel for the Kuomintang Government will continue, whether there is a civil war or not; and he summed up that "any thought of a United States withdrawal from China may be ruled out as inconceivable."

And in this he expressed the determination of U. S. imperialism to back Chiang Kai-shek in his attempt to destroy the democratic movement led by the Communists and the leaders of the Democratic League.

This intention of U. S. imperialism has been further emphasised by the news that:

Building Up A Navy For Chiang

(1) Eight warships "presented to China" (i.e., to the KMT Government) by the U. S. Government have arrived in Nanking.

(2) The U. S. Senate last month approved legislation authorising "the loan, sale or gift" of up to 271 warships to China (again, the KMT—M.K.) to assist her in building up her war-ravaged navy. (Hindu, July 24.)

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★ INSIDE THE FORCES ★

DISCIPLINE

LAST week when Captain Cooke took over charge of Castle Barracks as Commanding Officer, ratings said—"Let us hope that the change is for the better."

In less than a week, however, they have seen that the change has been for the worse.

On Saturday came the order announcing division (roll-call) on the next day. This order was a shock to the ratings. This was the first time that a division was announced on the last Sunday of the month, a day on which ratings like to go out.

Ratings were, of course, annoyed over this order. One of them tried to mollify the others by reminding them of the Naval Rule, "My ship, my order," i.e., the Captain is the boss. But the rest answered him back quickly: "If again there is division on the last Sunday of the month, we will have to tell Captain Cooke, 'Our ship, our order!'"

JAIL

LAST week a book 'Jahajon ki Hartal' (Urdu edition of the RIN Strike), was found lying on the canteen table. A Regulating Petty Officer who happened to come there asked the ratings in a threatening voice, "Whose book is that?"

One of the ratings explained that when they entered the canteen that book was lying there. On this the

Regulating Petty Officer said, "I see, so you fellows want to go to jail?"

Naturally ratings laughed at this threat of the R.P.O. "We have seen enough jails and now we are not afraid of such things", they told him.

BLACKMARKET

It is not the grasping bazaar-wallah alone who exploits the men of the Forces, but the Forces canteens also exploit them and exploit them very badly.

The other day a rating went to purchase a hair-oil bottle and he was charged one rupee for that bottle. Later, he went and enquired the price of the same, and he was told that it was As. 12 only.

He came back and told the story to his friends; and he was told that this sort of blackmarketing had been going on in the canteen. The ratings had wanted to stop it, but they did not know how to achieve their end. The ratings expect that this type of exposure will stop the blackmarketing in canteens.

CIVILIANS

FOR five months black shoes have not been available in the store—and this means ratings have to wear tattered worn-out shoes or pay heavy prices in the market and purchase civilian shoes; on top of this, at the time of division the Officer used to warn ratings that if they were found with civilian shoes in the

division they would be put down as defaulters.

Ratings made a number of requests for shoes and it was only the last week that some pairs of shoes were brought and kept in the store.

READY-MADE

WE know that ratings look quite tip-top when they come out in the city but many do not know what price they have to pay for it.

When ratings go to the store and ask for cloth, they always get one answer: "Cloth is not available. You can only purchase ready-made clothes."

Ratings avoid purchasing ready-made clothes for these are often too big for their size, hence they have to spend money on getting them altered, which means they become more expensive than clothes made to order.

But when for months together they do not get cloth, they are forced to purchase ready-made clothes.

It is in this manner that the naval authorities—who so pride themselves on their "efficiency" and "care for ratings"—allow the blackmarket to flourish under their own noses. No wonder ratings are getting increasingly impatient.

—Our Forces Correspondent

THE BALKANS -- OLD AND NEW

From Backward, Feudal Pawns In Imperialist Game To People's Democracies

Except for Greece, all the countries of South-Eastern Europe—the Balkan and Danubian States—have, as a result of the second world war, won complete national independence and taken the path of democratic reorganization. Important political changes have taken place within these countries.

Where only recently absolute monarchies or Fascist dictatorships existed and every democratic movement was suppressed, the broad masses of the people have become the main driving force.

With these internal changes have come corresponding changes in the foreign policy of the Balkan countries and in their international position.

Germany for choice morsels in the Balkans, primarily Serbia. This was the direct prelude to the first world war.

Germany's defeat in the first world war led to the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and to the growth of French influence in the Balkan Peninsula and in the Danube basin. This influence, however, proved evanescent.

France's short-term 'political' loan and insignificant capital investments failed to alleviate the catastrophic consequences of the agrarian crisis that swept over the backward agricultural countries of South-Eastern Europe.

Growth Of Working Class

The critical position of the Balkan Danubian countries was taken advantage of by Great Britain, and later by Germany. Exploiting the agrarian crisis and the striving of South-Eastern Europe for industrialization, the Germans tried, by means of capital investments to impose their political domination upon these countries.

The industrialization carried through under these conditions the Dardanelles and Turkey, smacked of colonization. It was but also, and primarily, control



TO explain the tenor and significance of these changes it will be necessary to deal briefly with the historical causes which converted the Balkans into Europe's "powder barrel." It would be wrong to call the historic break with the past which we witness today accidental or unexpected. Actually, it had been brewing over a period of many decades of struggle by the Balkan peoples, first against the Turkish yoke and thereafter against the so-called "Balkanization policy" pursued by the Great Powers.

Semi-Colonies

For a long time the normal development of the Balkan peoples was retarded by Turkish rule. Turkey hindered the development of the economies and national cultures of the Balkan peoples by isolating them from the rest of Europe. But even when the yoke of the Porte was at last thrown off, in the nineteenth century, the masses of the Balkan peoples failed to obtain their longed-for freedom.

Power was taken over by the privileged upper classes, which had been fed on the leavings from the table of the Turkish conquerors, and which now began to sell out the national interests of their countries and peoples to the European powers. The Balkan countries became semi-colonies of the Great Powers.

The imperialists' interests were not confined to preserving the economic backwardness of these countries, retarding their industrial development and exploiting them as agrarian appendages of their economic systems.

The imperialists wanted to gain control over these countries not so much for economic reasons as in the capacity of vantage points in the contest for spheres of influence.

Imperialist Tussle

The tussle among the Great Powers for the Balkans commenced with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and was evoked primarily by the rivalry for strategic bases. The chief issue at first was control over the Dardanelles and over Turkey, which had dropped into decline.

The maintenance of seats of unrest in the Balkans was entirely in keeping with the imperialist aims of the Great Powers, which generously financed governmental cliques in the different countries that were ready to sell their services to the highest bidder.

The struggle of the Great Powers for spheres of influence in the Balkans led to numerous "little wars," such as, for example, the Bulgaro-Serbian war in 1885, or the Greco-Turkish war. Britain was particularly active in all this in her anxiety to close the Dardanelles to the Russian navy.

Taking advantage of Turkey's enfeeblement as a result of the victory of Russian arms, Britain seized Cyprus from the Turks, thereby strengthening her own position in the Near East.

Yet at the Berlin Congress in 1878, Great Britain supported Turkey and succeeded in preventing a settlement of questions so vitally important for the Balkan peoples as the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eastern

by **Z. LIPATOV**

Rumelia, Macedonia, Thrace, Albania. And at the same time these were questions that threatened to blow up peace in the Balkans, and not only in the Balkans, at any moment.

The entry of German imperialism, with its developed industry and formidable army, into the international arena upset the notorious Great Power equilibrium in the Balkans.

Now the issue was not only through under these conditions the Dardanelles and Turkey, smacked of colonization. It was but also, and primarily, control

AGRARIAN REFORMS

Secret Of Success

This one sample of agrarian reform—in Rumania—will show why the Anglo-Americans are against the new democratic regimes in the Balkans. The big landlords were the props of the old Fascist and Monarchist regimes and the agents of the Western imperialists. They exist no more.

OWNERSHIP IN PRE-WAR RUMANIA

Percentage of holdings	Size	Percentage of total land
74.9	Under 12.5 acres	35.8
8	Over 50 acres	18.8

That is to say that less than one-hundredth of the land-owning population owned almost half the amount of land in the hands of three-quarters of all the peasant proprietors.

POST-WAR AGRARIAN REFORM

All estates over 125 acres belonging to big landlords, have been distributed to landless or small peasants, owning less than 12.5 acres; the result is that more than 500 estates of 2,500 acres, or over, were distributed by the end of September 1948.

More than nine lakh peasant families have thus benefited and own holdings of 12.5 to 21 acres.

Altogether about 10,300,000 acres by now will have been distributed among the peasants.

Similarly, in Yugoslavia, where in pre-war Vojvodina Province alone, there were one lakh landless labourers, Marshal Tito's Government is carrying out the land reform on the basis of "Land Shall Be Long To Those Who Till It."

of the shortest land routes from Europe to the treasures of the Middle East. Britain regarded Germany's plan to build the Berlin-Baghdad railway as a direct threat to the communications of the British Empire.

This was clearly revealed in 1912, during the first Balkan war. This war, which ended in the liberation of the Balkan Peninsula from the Turkish yoke, was at the same time a reflection of the struggle among the Great Powers.

Behind the Balkan coalition stood Great Britain, Russia, France and Italy; Turkey was backed by Germany and Austria-Hungary.

After Turkey's Defeat

The defeat of Turkey and her almost complete expulsion from the Balkan Peninsula frustrated Germany's colonial plans. Reluctant to resign themselves to the situation that had arisen, the German imperialists, with the aid of King Ferdinand, their agent on the Bulgarian throne, unleashed the second Balkan

war. But this time, too, the Germans were unlucky. Dragged into this adventure, Bulgaria sustained defeat and was obliged to sign the harsh Bucharest peace.

Then Germany, now experiencing difficulty in retaining her positions in Turkey and Bulgaria, set out to whet the appetite of aggressive Austria-Hun-

tion of certain strategic raw materials, such as oil and bauxite.

But circumscribed as the industrial development of the Balkan countries was, it nevertheless furthered the growth of the working-class and of the democratic movement, and stimulated the struggle against the reactionaries and the corrupt ruling cliques.

This applied particularly to Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, where the peoples suffered most from the imperialist "Balkanization policy" the incitement of one national group against another and the semi-colonial regime.

Soviet Revolution

The victory of the Soviet Revolution in Russia supplied great impetus to the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle of the peoples of South-Eastern Europe. The birth and development of the Soviet Union instilled hopes of a better future into the hearts of the peoples of the Balkan countries.

The widespread popular movements which sprang up after the first world war in a number of Balkan countries were drowned in blood by the reactionaries, who called foreign forces to their aid. These memorable events left their profound imprint on the minds of the broad masses of the people. In this period too, however, the Balkan countries continued to serve as pawns in the impe-

rialist game played by the Great Powers.

In the twenties Britain took advantage of the national contradictions and antagonisms between victors and vanquished in South-Eastern Europe to allow France out of her positions.

Early in the thirties, when German imperialism was rearming and rapidly gaining strength, German - British antagonisms thrust Franco-British antagonisms into the background. Gradually, Britain captured from a steadily yielding France her positions in the Balkans; and the countries of the Little Entente changed their French orientation for British.

German Penetration

At the same time, Germany was penetrating into the Balkans. Anxious, on the one hand, to set up a barrier against German expansion in the Near and Middle East, towards the heart of the British Empire, Britain also attempted to turn German imperialist aggression against the Soviet Union.

These plans failed. At the beginning of the second world war Britain proved incapable of preventing the Germans from capturing the Balkan Peninsula. Germany succeeded in dragging Rumania and Bulgaria over to her side in capturing Greece and Yugoslavia, and in securing the benevolent "neutrality" of Turkey, Great Britain's ally.

The possession of the Balkan place d'armes not only protected the southern flank of the German aggressors in their campaign against the Soviet Union, but also affected the vital interests of the British Empire. And of the United States too, because at the time the war broke out American penetration into the Balkans, the eastern regions of the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Africa, was an accomplished fact.

While Great Britain was unable to bar Germany's access to the Balkans, the Germans on their part did not succeed in

utilizing the "easy victory" they had achieved over the small Balkan countries for the execution of their criminal plans.

Liberation Movements

They were prevented from doing so by the Soviet Union and the liberation movements of the Balkan peoples.

The part played by Yugoslavia's People's Army of Liberation, and also by Albania's People's Army of Liberation, by ELAS, the armed forces of the Greek people's liberation movement, and by the partisan units in Bulgaria is common knowledge.

The Red Army, which crossed the Danube in the autumn of 1944, rendered the Balkan peoples powerful support in their fight for liberation from the Nazi yoke and for the expulsion of German invaders.

The defeat of German imperialism in the second world war created a new situation in the Balkans. The masses of the people in the Balkan countries entered a new stage in their struggle for liberation, the direct object of which was to create conditions that would prevent the Balkans and their peoples from ever again becoming mere pawns in the game of imperialist interests.

Democracy Wins

After the German invaders were expelled from the Balkan countries, the Fascist regimes were liquidated, and democratic systems established (except in Greece, where the British troops supported the forces of reaction).

The Yugoslav Committee of National Liberation was transformed into the Provisional Government of Yugoslavia.

In Bulgaria the people set up the government of the Patriotic Front.

Albania, which for many years had been subjected first to the Italian and then to the German Fascist yoke, gained national independence and instituted a democratic form of government.

(Continued on page 11)

WHY ANGLO-AMERICANS ARE AGAINST NEW BALKANS

In Rumania, the oil industry was in the hands of the Anglo-Dutch-American and French capitalists to the extent of 82.84 per cent of total investments.

The British had nearly two crores of capital investments in metallurgical works and a locomotive factory.

In Bulgaria, the principal industries were controlled as follows:
Cement and lime (Swiss); Metallurgy (German);
Electricity (Belgian); Textile (Italian).

In Yugoslavia, the copper mines were French; the lead and zinc mines British. Of the 2½ million of foreign capital invested in Yugoslavia, 25 million was British and 25 million French.

In Greece, two thirds of all foreign investments were British. The British owned the Athens-Piraeus Electricity Company and the Electric Transport Company.

In Albania, an Italian company built the Valona oil pipe line and the oil supplies were all shipped to Italy.

Italian officers trained the army; British officers the police.

With nationalisation of large-scale industries, the Balkan capitalists who served foreign interests, are no more, hence the campaign against the new Balkan democracies in the Anglo-American capitalist Press.

Calcutta's Fighting Youth Heads Mighty Demonstration

ALL-PARTY, STUDENTS, CITIZENS PROCESSION DEMANDS RELEASE POLITICALS

"Siasi Kaideon Ko Chorana Hai, Bhoolo Mat, Bhoolo Mat!"—was the call of the Nagpur Session of the AISF Conference. From Nagpur to Calcutta is a far cry. But across the distance, Calcutta's fighting youth heard the call and responded to it vigorously, and on July 24 Calcutta streets were filled with ringing shouts of "Siasi Kaideon Ko Chor Do," "Alipore Aur Dacca Jail Ko Tor Do," and above all "Mantri Sabha Sunoon Sunoon, Rajbandider Charte Hobe" (Listen Ministry, you must release our jailed patriots).

It was the march of the Calcutta students to the Bengal Legislative Assembly, with the demand for the release of all political prisoners. Fifteen thousand students and citizens were on the march. The whole of Calcutta was awake!

LIKE a million streams the students rushed to Wellington Square, the central meeting place. The Assembly starts its session at 4 p.m. What if? A hundred girls from Dani Mandir came to Wellington Square at 11 a.m. and stayed right through till 4 p.m.

From far South, across three miles, came over fifty girls from the Beltala School. Muslim girls from the Brabourne College were there too. Scores of students came from the suburbs, Behala, Howrah, Kidderpore, Belegata and so on.

From Schools And Colleges

From South Calcutta, hundreds of young school kids came in packed tram cars, shouting lustily all the way, "British Imperialism, Down, Down!"

From the Bangabasi College came a huge demonstration of students led by three professors of that institution.

Students rushed in from all the colleges including the far-off Carmichael Medical and Jadavpur Engineering Colleges.

Peasants were there too, nearly five hundred of them, from nearby villages under their own Red banner.

Wellington Square was almost full. The flags had united once again. The Students' flag (Freedom, Peace, Progress), the Red flag, the Tri-

by
Gautam Chattopadhyaya

colour, and the League Crescent, were flying side by side. It was a grand sight that would have swelled the heart of every genuine patriot.

The meeting was short and fiery. Suresh Ghose, Organising Secretary of the BPSF (not affiliated to AISF), moved the resolution and it was formally supported by one of the SF speakers. The main speaker was Ananda Gupta (recently released hero of the Chittagong Armoury Raid) who gave a flaming call to the students to march unitedly till our heroes were released. And the historic march started.

An All-Party Procession

At the head of the procession were four flags—Congress, League, Communist and AISF. Then huge streamers demanding the release of all politicals. Then nearly 1,000 girls. Hundreds of Muslim students, college boys, school kids, clerks, factory workers—even peasants. Professors were there too, and NRIPIEN CHAKRAVARTY, Associate Editor of the leading Bengali daily Swadhinata. A mile-long and ten deep. Nearly 15,000 of them. And their roars

shook the air, shook the jail gates.

The European burra sahebs trembled as thunderous slogans went up: "Jeler Darja Bhangte Hobe," "Bir Bandider Charte Hobe," and "European Oudhyatyer Jabab Dao" ("Break the jail gates," "Release the politicals," "Give a fitting reply to European insolence").

Assembly "Captured"

Like a roaring torrent the procession entered the Assembly and above the din came the ringing shout clear and distinct: "Ainsabha Sunoon, Sunoon; Bir Bandider Charte Hobe" (Listen Legislators, release our heroes you must). No Ministers were in sight, nor even the traditional armed forces of our imperial masters. The students had captured the Assembly and for a day at least, it was theirs.

Communist MLA JYOTI BASU drove inside in a car fitted with a microphone. Annada, Secretary of the BPSF, jumped up on the hood and shouted before the mike: "Pratiruti Chal Na" (We don't want promises),

and back the roar, "Mukti Chai" (Release, Release).

Jyoti Basu got up and told the processionists that he was going to move an adjournment motion on that day demanding the release of politicals. This announcement was greeted with deafening cheers.

BHUPESH GUPTA, Communist barrister, got the loudest ovation when he thundered against the satanic conspiracy of the European group to torpedo the release of our jailed heroes.

Releases Promised

The Chief Minister, SUHRAWARDY, came out at last and had to promise that he would release all the politicals by August 15. The rally went back stating clearly that if our heroes were not among us by the 15th, we should force the jail gates open.

And this time the jail gates will open. Cracks can already be seen. Congress MLAs are waking up. KIRON SHANKAR ROY, leader of the Congress Party in

the Bengal Assembly said, "An all-party demonstration wanted the release of all politicals. Why won't the Ministry release them then?" Some Ministerial front benchers shouted, "Question, question" at the mention of the phrase "All-Party" rally.

Kiron Babu replied, "Yes, it was an all-party rally. There were a number of progressive Muslim Leaguers in it, not perhaps any reactionary." And at this repartee, there were claps from League back-benchers.

The Bastilles Will Fall

It is significant. If the people's representatives inside the Assembly close up their ranks at least on this issue, as the people have done outside, especially the students, then no power on earth, not even the worst machinations of the European group and their bosses in the Whitehall can prevent the Bastilles of Alipore and Dacca from crumbling down.

And crumble, they will. In this conviction we pledge to carry on the fight till our heroes are with us again.

Around the World

Behind The Wavell Loan To Siam

A FIVE-CRORE loan to Siam by the Government of India—this from Wavell when he has intervened to deny the barest relief out of huge war-profits to thousands of India's starving postmen!

Anticipating that there might be a furore against the loan, I was not surprised that The Times of India came out against the loan calling it a "Siam Scandal."

"But of the 1,500,000 tons of rice (under the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of January 1, 1946) to be supplied by Siam, only 175,000 tons were shipped from the time Japan surrendered to the end of April (1946)...."

"It is startling to learn that a Siamese purchasing mission is shortly to arrive here to procure railway locomotives, rolling stock, lorries, tyres and, believe it or not, petrol...."

"Siam will also need textiles of which India has already made 10,000,000 yards available." (The Times of India, July 18).

And all this despite a food, cloth, petrol and transport crisis in India!

Where's The Mystery?

While the Dalmia-owned paper gives these telling facts, it wraps up Wavell's motives in a mystery—"though why New Delhi should join in abetting her (Siam—S.A.A.) is a mystery." (The Times of India, July 18).

Astonishingly enough, I find that the pro-Congress papers have passed over this scandal with scarcely a line. I suppose to probe into Wavell's motives is a very delicate subject to handle nowadays!

However, is the British game in Siam such a 'mystery' after all? Siam is strategically situated in S. E. Asia. It lies between China, Indo-China and British Malaya.

Except Siam, all these countries are seething with the post-war national liberationist upsurge.

Siam is the only country with the power of its old ruling class intact. The very same first surrendered to Japan and then with equal facility to the British and the U. S. The democratic movement is weakest here as a result of the continuous regime of terror.

Now post-war, as a result of the presence of 90,000 British-Indian

troops, it has become a virtual British colony.

Exactly how this was done does real credit to Bevin, champion of the lofty ideals of 'Western democracy'.

Towards the end of 1945, the British presented an ultimatum to Siam. The British demanded unlimited control over the Civil Administration, banks, commerce and communications and also indemnities in the form of huge deliveries of rice (United Press of America report).

The Washington Post reported:

"It is shocking to receive reports that British occupation forces not only treat Siam as a conquered country but as a British colony."

The Bangkok correspondent of the New York Herald Tribune said the British were out to grab Siamese tin, rubber and rice.

Uncle Sam was furious—after all, was not Siam under U. S. 'sphere of influence'?

Dean Acheson, acting for Byrnes, made repeated representations against British inroads.

This 'interference', in turn, was not to the liking of the British.

"Officials in London are mystified by the statement attributed to Dean Acheson." (Daily Telegraph and Morning Post correspondent's report, December 20).

Anglo-U. S. Deal

Finally, Bevin got it squared up. Were not the British and U.S. post-war 'spheres' clearly divided—China and the entire Pacific for the U.S. and S.E. Asia for the British?

Britain was not going to hold up on American economic demands when weapons 'made in the U.S.A.' were being freely given for use against the Indonesians!

Moreover, Siam's rice was a good political weapon in Wavell's hands in India.

The U. S. agreed to these 'weighty' arguments and soon it was announced that the Americans had no objection to the terms of British controls as it accommodated their 'viewpoint'.

The Anglo-Siamese Treaty of January 1, 1946, was then signed. It provided a Rice Commission consisting of the representatives of Bevin, Byrnes-Wavell to settle the amount of rice to be made available to all three.

Some for Byrnes for Chiang's armies!

To the British, the treaty gave what they wanted. It secured for Wavell-Auchinleck a new military and anti-liberationist base in S. E. Asia.

And now Wavell's new loan has been given to bolster the rule of Siam's pro-British princeling—Prince Vithat, head of the Mission to New Delhi, is a Governor of the Bank of Siam—in their efforts to stabilise their rule still more against the democratic movement in Siam.

No, it is not the rice that Wavell is after.

What this rule means for the people's food can be seen from the fact that, thanks to the suppression of democracy in Siam, a widespread hoarders' ring has cornered all the rice stocks in the villages.

To Crush S. E. Asia Freedom Movements

Similarly, the British are aiding the pro-British section inside the ruling class to crush any opposition to Siam's new status as a British dependency on the basis of the Treaty.

On June 27, "General Abdul Dejarat, known to his enemies as the 'strong man' of the Siamese gestapo during the war, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Siamese army." (APA message from Bangkok, June 28, in The Hindu).

This man was in touch with the British Intelligence Service in whose code he was known as "Betty".

The present Premier Pridi was also a pro-British agent—he was named in leaflets circulated in Bangkok after the mysterious death of King Ananda Mahidol as "the beast who killed our King."

It is with this regime that Wavell is establishing—despite non-delivery of rice to India—"intimate connections in all fields whether political, economic or cultural!"

So, the British game in Siam is not a "mystery" after all—the truth is it is part of Bevin's policy to extend the Empire and to crush the national liberation movements for independence and democracy now sweeping S. E. Asia.

Shyam Akh. Akh.

THE NEW BALKANS

(Continued from page 10.)

Rumania witnessed the inauguration of the government of the National Democratic Front.

In all these countries the administration passed into the hands of the parties and men who had won the confidence of the people by the services they had rendered their countries in the struggle for national independence and for the expulsion of the German invaders.

The victory of democracy put an end to the semi-colonial dependence of the Balkan countries upon the imperialist powers and to their "Balkanization policy." The task of building up this democracy of, and for the broad masses of the people is being carried out by representatives of the toiling population: workers, peasants and intellectuals.

Nationality Problem

The democratization of the internal political system in a number of Balkan countries has created conditions favourable for the eradication of enmity and strife among these States. Being now in a position independently to establish their relations with each other and with other countries, the Balkan States are endeavouring to build up these relations on the basis of friendship and cooperation.

On the other hand, the practical application of democratic principles ensures, for the first time in Balkan history, the correct solution of the

problem of nationalities.

This opens up excellent prospects for lasting peace and cooperation among the peoples of the Balkans, a part of Europe where national strife, fomented and encouraged by foreign imperialism, was incessant and which for ages past served as a hotbed of international conflicts.

The establishment of democratic regimes and liberation from semi-colonial dependence create the most favourable conditions for economic rehabilitation and industrialization in the Hitler-devastated Balkan and Danubian countries and for the free and healthy development of their national economies.

Agrarian Reforms

The democratic agrarian reforms, which have abolished the relics of feudalism, clear the ground for the solution of the agrarian problem, one of the most rankling and acute problems in this part of Europe.

The economic progress of the Balkan countries will undoubtedly have a beneficial effect upon the economic situation in Europe as a whole.

All the more regrettable, therefore, are the artificial obstacles which are being placed in their way by certain influential circles in the Anglo-Saxon countries, which cannot stomach the independence of the Balkan countries and are desperately trying to turn back the wheel of history....

Delhi's Postmen In The Battlefield

PUBLIC, WORKING-CLASS RALLY BEHIND

They used to say that postmen were among the 'backward' sections of the working-class. And they were.

BUT it has been a different story since July 11. No one expected that the postmen would remain so firm and strong for so long, that the strikers would INCREASE in number every day.

Poor Krishna Prasad, sitting in New Delhi, thought he could crush the workers in a day.

On July 10, on the eve of the strike, he declared that in any circumstances he would maintain a SKELETON service and maintain at least ONE delivery service a day.

Krishna Prasad is living in pre-war days. This is 1946. The 'backward' postal worker has become a giant.

Police Put To Flight

Even as this bloated sahib was mouthing his boastful nonsense over the radio, the workers of Delhi were giving him his answer.

It was a solidarity meeting of Delhi's working-class. Tram workers, electricity workers, men employed in the Water and Sewage Board, mill workers, shop assistants—all rallied with the postmen to be present with them at midnight when the strike began.

by
Our Correspondent

Suraj Prakash Anand, Acting President of the Punjab Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union, was speaking. It was he who was very largely responsible for the strike, preparations in Delhi.

Suddenly a lorry-load of policemen arrived. It was learnt that they had come to arrest Suraj Prakash.

The thousands of workers assembled almost laughed at the stupidity of the sahibs. This is not the OLD India. Do you think we shall surrender our leader to you, just because you have a slip of paper in your hand signed by some magistrate?

And a mighty voice rose from amongst the audience, calling on the police to get out before the anger of the thousands DROVE them out.

The police party literally RAN. Their lorry narrowly escaped the treatment it deserved.

Suraj Prakash Anand continued his speech. The workers of Delhi had taught the police

that a new India was in the battlefield.

At midnight—amidst deafening cheers—the strike was declared **BEGUN**.

Mass Support

Of course, the strike was complete. No 'skeleton service'. No deliveries at all.

But what was BIGGER than anything else, DIFFERENT from anything else was the whole-hearted ACTIVE support of the people.

Krishna Prasad thought everybody would be against the strike. And yet, in a day, he KNEW:

● The half-dozen strike breakers he managed to muster to deliver dak in a couple of streets, returned with the anger of the people written in bruises on their bodies. They were thrashed everywhere—severely—by the very people whose letters they were trying to DELIVER!

● The so-called delivery centres were almost completely boycotted.

● In THREE days, a small group of postmen collected THREE THOUSAND RUPEES for the Strike Fund from the householders on their own beats.

If You Dare . . .

Krishna Prasad threatened: If you don't return to work in 72 hours, you will be dismissed; your living quarters will be confiscated.

POSTAL BOSSES' SECRET TELEPHONE TALK

BE careful when you talk. White bosses of the Indian Empire. For we, the Indian people, are listening everywhere, listening in on you and your dirty plans to blow up the Indian struggle for liberation.

A telephone worker—one of India's 40 crore freedom-fighters—listened in on you, Sir Eric Conran Smith, Caretaker of the Postal Department, when you talked over the trunk lines to your Chhota Sahib, Krishna Prasad, on the night of July 25.

Why Negotiations Failed

We are glad to be able to tell the Indian people what the two of you said, for this secret conversation of yours reveals why the negotiations which were then taking place between Krishna Prasad and the Postmen's Strike Committee, broke down.

You, Sir Eric, had made a broadcast the previous night, saying you were NOT prepared to go an inch beyond the Adjudicator's award. You wanted to know if that broadcast, right in the middle of the 'negotiations', had served its purpose.

Krishna Prasad replied: "It has very considerably strengthened my hands in the negotiations. I was able to tell the Committee today that you as Head of the Post and Air Department had categorically expressed your inability

to go beyond the award and that, therefore, I could add nothing to what you had said."

You were delighted, Sir Eric. Our listening scout could almost hear you chuckle. You had succeeded in blowing up the 'negotiations', as you had planned.

Then Krishna Prasad reported: "As instructed by you, I met Mr. Jinnah and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and acquainted them with the point of view of the Government of India. . . Mr. Jinnah was to issue a Press statement in support of the strike, but I persuaded him to withhold it for the present."

A Pat For Chaman Lal

Shabash! How proud you were of your Chhota Sahib, Sir Eric. . . He was doing pretty well. . .

The final piece of your chat, which our scout remembers, was about Diwan Chaman Lal, that 'labour leader'.

"Please see that Diwan Chaman Lal does not leave for Argentine just yet," Krishna Prasad whined, "I am sure he will continue to be of immense help to us in these days". . .

Hear them at it! It's a grand job you did, Telephone Worker.

We know now what the salutes are up to. We can get ready to meet them.

Oh, yes, Krishna Prasad? FIFTEEN THOUSAND workers, postmen, textile workers, municipal and PWD workers assembled under the banner of the Delhi Communist Party and gave him his answer:

"IF YOU DARE suspend one man, turn one man out of his quarters, WE, all Delhi, shall

march on you and take forcible possession of the quarters."

Krishna Prasad's White bosses trembled, vent their spleen on their Black underling. Whimpering, Krishna Prasad rushed to the Radio Station and declared it was all a mistake, nobody would be turned out of his living place!

In Support Of Postal Strike

ONE LAKH WORKERS DOWN TOOLS IN MADRAS

★ Joint Meeting, Procession With Citizens

The biggest strike ever, the biggest common procession ever, the biggest common meeting ever! That was the record of Madras workers on July 23 in support of the postal strike.

ABOUT 30 trade unions in the city responded to the call of the Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress to come out in sympathy and support of the postal staff. Congressmen, Communists and non-party trade unionists gave the common call. And one lakh workers responded.

Those in the essential services like the Municipal Corporation and the Electric Supply were asked to man their posts and they did it. What happened in Bombay on July 22, happened in Madras on July 23. As the local Hindu put it "Among those who had been called upon to join the strike, the response was almost complete."

Students, Shopkeepers Join In

But someone else was not called upon and yet joined in. That was the student and shopkeeper of Madras. In fraternal solidarity with the postman, they closed down all the colleges and about three-fourths of the city's shops.

A mammoth procession, 15,000 strong, was the highlight of the afternoon. Workers from the tramways, the bus services, the Buckingham and Carnatic (B. & C.) Mills, engineering workers, press workers, workers from the harbour, from the Government Medical Stores, all were there with their flags and placards. Students' flags mingled with those of the workers to back the postmen.

As they covered the three-mile route through the main streets from the People's Park to the Tlak Ghat on the beach these 15,000 shouted: "Down With the Caretaker Government," "Concede the Postal Workers' Demands," "Long Live Students-Workers' Unity", etc.

Over 50,000 gathered at the beach. Never before had Madras seen such a huge meeting where on a common platform flew the Congress Tricolour,

the Leaguer's Crescent and Star and the Communist Red flag as also the flags of the Madras Students' Organisation and the Madras Labour Union.

V. Chakkral Chettiar, the veteran T. U. leader presided. T. S. Ramanujam, the leader of the postmen spoke. So did a number of labour leaders, P. Ramamurthy, P. R. K. Sharma, M.L.C., V. S. Somasundaram, Sankunni Nair, and others. Unanimously they condemned the Provincial Ministry lending men of the local Fire Brigade to act as blacklegs (as a result of these protests, the Ministry later withdrew this staff).

Of course there were attempts made to disrupt this mightiest united demonstration. But the workers just smashed them up. The Congress Socialist leaders of the local Aluminium Factory refused to join the strike because it was organised by the Communists and also because that would worsen their "harmonious relations with the management".

Disruptors Defeated

But the workers were out to establish new relations with their co-workers and the postmen. Out they came with their union flag and the Tricolour and joined the procession at the People's Park.

The other chip of this block was A. Pillai, Trotskyite leader of the B. & O. Mill workers, who on a common platform vented his spleen against the Communists. His volunteers after he had finished tried to disrupt the meeting. They wanted no one to speak after their leader had spoken. Not only did they fall but speaker after speaker got up to condemn this disruption in the sharpest terms. No playing in the bosses' game, they said.

See that, Krishna Prasad, if you have eyes to see.

U. P. CONGRESS MINISTRY AND THE POSTAL STRIKE

The postal strike was to begin from the 11th of July.

On the 8th, the U.P. Congress Minister (Dr. Katju) had a "Secret and Immediate" circular issued to the District Magistrates, Police Superintendents, Inspector-General of Police, and other officers in the Province.

HERE are some of the choicest bits from this confidential document.

"The Government of India have been definitely advised that the strike threatened will be illegal. (And our popular Minister humbly agrees with it!)"

"The question whether it would be advisable to take action against the members of the Council of Action or others who may incite the workers to strike has not been decided as yet by the Government of India." (What a pity!)

Support The Govt. Of India

"In case they (the Government of India) decide that . . . action should be taken . . . such help as they may ask for may be given promptly. . ."

"The Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs has issued a Press Communiqué explaining why the Government of India cannot accede to the demands put forward by the Union. . . There are no justifiable grounds for the Union to call a strike. . ."

Of course, Dr. Katju agrees with the Director-General and even goes so far as to suggest and pray that in case:

No Public Sympathy For Postmen!

"The Union goes on strike in spite of this . . . it is not expected that the sympathy of the public or the support of a large body of postmen and inferior servants will be with the strikers. The strike if it does occur may therefore be confined to a limited number of staff and to certain areas only and is not very likely to be of long duration. . ."

But "the Government of India have instructed the Heads of Posts and Te-

legraph Circles to make preparations for the worst contingency, and I am to ask that you should give local officials of the Posts and Telegraph Department your fullest support in their endeavours to meet the situation (non-violently?). . ."

Extend All Help To Local Officials

"In particular, I am to ask that you should extend all necessary help to the local officials. . ."

- By:
- (1) Recruiting temporary staff;
 - (2) Lending temporarily the services of such Government servants working under you as can be spared and as may be found necessary;
 - (3) Affording police protection to loyal workers;
 - (4) Supply of police guards for protection of Posts and Telegraph plants, installations and buildings;
 - (5) Dealing with (another non-violent expression!) sabotage or attempted stoppage of communications; and
 - (6) Affording any other aid asked for by the Heads of Posts and Telegraph Circles or Local Posts and Telegraph Officers. . ."

A Sop For Big Business

Finally, "I am also to request that if possible, the services of recruits attached to POLICE LINES may be spared" for use by the Postal authorities! And a touching sop for Big Business:

"Important private agencies connected with essential civil supplies (what is not connected with them?) . . . which have to do a large amount of correspondence to keep their services going—should also be allowed to take advantage of your messenger services."

As is to be expected, this circular was kept a dead secret. . . But the news leaked out.

When the representatives of the Lucknow postal workers led by the local Communist leader Babul Varma, met Premier Pant, they politely blank asked him if the Congress Ministry had issued such instructions.

Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Home and Revenue Minister, and Dr. Katju were also present.

They all evaded the question. Later on, I was able to get hold of a copy of the circular which I showed to a number of Press correspondents and to some members of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee.

Of course, not one of the nationalist newspapers dared to publish it.

Pandit Nehru

'Surprised'

But the question WAS raised in the U.P. P.C.C. Council where Pandit Jawaharlal is reported to have expressed "surprise" that any Congressman could issue a circular like that! There Dr. Katju could not deny it and had to own it up.

Later on, it was reported, that he withdrew the circular.

But the attempts to break the strike and give "full support" to the postal autocrats in the U.P. continue.

In Lucknow, with the help of Congress Ministry,

"Clerks have been borrowed from the Central Jail, Supply, Rationing and other offices of the U.P. Government to man the empty benches in the sorting rooms in the G.P.O."

Outside the Offices, armed 'sentries' mount guard! (Hindustan Times, 16th July '46.)

Number Of Arrested Workers Mounting

In Allahabad, the number of arrested workers, who did not allow the police-patronised blacklegs to sabotage their strike, has risen to 45, and now it is reported that some of them have even been forced to resort to hunger-strike!

Is this how the Congress Ministry translates into action Gandhiji's and Pandit Nehru's support for the postal strikers?

— From Our Correspondent