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A POLITICAL WEEKLY

Editor :—SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

VOL I. No. 7

CALCUTTA, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 1939

ONE ANNA

## 'ECONOMIC FREEDOM'

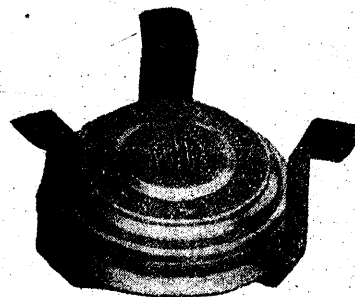
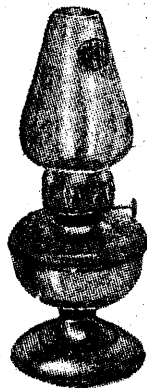
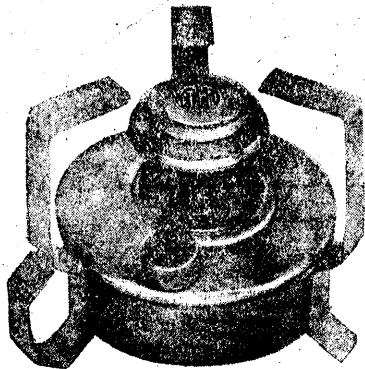


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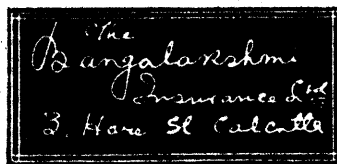
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## FORWARD BLOC

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

*Of the Marrow*

The war has only just begun. It is too early to say how long it will last and what portion of humanity it will take into its sweep. The other day Mr. Chamberlain declared that the war would not end before three years. The last great war lasted about five years and the magnitude of destruction that it wrought is now a part of familiar history. It must not be supposed that even if the present war terminates after three years according to the forecast of the British Premier, the havoc will be any the less. Thanks to the perverted use of progressive science, the agencies of destruction have become much quicker and deadlier today. Then again, it is yet uncertain how many more countries shall have to be involved in the war and when. Mussolini seems only to be biding time in a pose of reticent neutrality; Japan is still undecided, hovering between ideology and expediency. Russia, in spite of the Non-Aggression Pact, seems to be in a disturbed and uncertain mood and her steadily proceeding military preparations are not certainly to be taken as a happy omen; and who knows that America will not repeat the performance of the last war and leap down the fence finally to have a share in the spoils? When the bigger powers will take the field, the smaller ones in Europe will not be able to keep away from the fray for long with the result that the conflagration will gradually engulf almost the whole of humanity. If this estimate of the situation turns out to be true, then not only the map of the World shall have to be re-drawn but what is far more important, the whole attitude of mankind towards life and its problems shall have to undergo a thorough transformation.

After the last great war humanity found itself confronted with a dreary mental blank. The ideals to which it had clung before and which supplied it with faith and hope in the hour of crisis, had all been knocked down to the dust by a mighty psychological shock. The Post-War literature records the terrible

emptiness of mind of the contemporary generation. Eliot's *Waste land* is a typical picture of the mental desolation that overcame all thinking minds. Where is peace, where is peace, was the cry that was wrung out of the bruised and agonised souls. Soaring idealism prescribed universal love and fraternity as the only panacea for the disease to which Europe, nay, practically the whole of thinking humanity fell a victim. But where was love in practice? Was not fraternity an unmeaning word? Rather the exploitation of the weak by the strong continued as rampant as ever. The reality of things was a negation of all idealism. The gross iniquities of life drove, as literature testifies, the most profound idealists to take shelter in the inmost recesses of the soul and revel in mystic musings. Thus with them thought became divorced from life, idea from reality. But man can neither wallow in the blank nor keep flying in the empyrean for long by shutting out his eyes to the world below. He seeks adjustment between the two; so the search went on and hard thinking continued. The latest trend of literature seems to have envisaged that adjustment. If man is to look up full to the sky, he must have the right and privilege of standing erect on the earth and not merely be left rolling in the dust. If life is to flower forth in beauties of its art and religion, genuine and full-blooded, must be assured of the very fundamentals of that unfoldment—freedom and democracy for all. Good-will and peace, the twin blessings for humanity, can only follow the practical establishment of those principles in the world. Will the present war liquidate the accumulated iniquities in the world and serve as a sort of purgatoris for mankind? Will it usher in an era of universal freedom and peace? Who knows?

**Congress and Unity**

It will be remembered that the Constitution Committee wanted members of the Forward Bloc and Socialists to be kept out from the Congress organisation. Members of "other organisations," that is, other than those who belonged to the Gandhi Seva Sangha or said ditto to it, were to be bawled. This punitive clause, however, was dropped at the last moment

on account of the pressure of public opinion or for fear of public odium. It is said that Gandhiji himself advised moderation and sanity.

But the Gandhiji-ites who are in power in the Congress organisation to-day have not been able to shake off the "purge" mania that has seized them and to forego the immediate benefits of a system of ruthless 'purge.' Authoritarianism—conformity—uniformity—these are all that they want. They are impatient of opposition. They are intolerant of other minds and other ideas. 'Either we or they'—this is the slogan. And self-interest dictates that the best is that "we" remain in power and not "they."

The most useful instrument of this policy of purge is disciplinary action'. Those who are not with us are against us, and disciplinary action is the most suitable punishment for 'disobedience' in any form or measure. The Congress, from the commonsense point of view, from the point of view of service to the nation, needs strengthening, needs reinforcements. But the Congress High Command—and their prototypes in the provinces of India have ruled that Swami Sahajananda is undesirable—that Mr. K. F. Nariman is inconvenient, that all those who do not think and act according to a prescribed pattern must go out.

We hear sentimental talks about unity now and then. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—and Jawaharlal Nehru say that unity is not only desirable but is essential "at this critical hour", but the purge goes on as ruthlessly as ever before.

The Delhi Provincial Congress Committee has been disaffiliated. Bengal is being threatened with extinction. And in the remote north west frontier of India, "an important decision to alter the constitution of the Provincial Congress Committee so as to eliminate all other parties existing within it except the Congress" (that is to say, Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan's party) has been taken.

We are told Gandhiji at Abbotabad advised against this course. But he has not succeeded, it seems, in curing the "purge" mania. Keep out others by all "peaceful and legitimate" means. All power only to ourselves! And—all the time, there is to be diligent talk of unity, which, however, should mean only homogeneity. The new forces refuse to be crushed.

## Current Comments

### "All Quiet"

War is news; it is *the news*. But news about the war is meagre. So much so, that people in the bazars have been heard to express that in fact there was no war. Some conceded that Poland has been fighting for her life; many wondered what Britain or France was doing on the Western Front. "All quiet on all fronts?" dubiously comment others as they scan the news sheets and drop them by. To a great extent, we owe this feeling to our ignorance of the military art and science of modern times to which we have been condemned by our masters. We ask why Poland cannot have British or French forces; why the Western front did not immediately prove to be the theatre of main operations, why the bombers only rain leaflets over Germany and the Great British Navy does not still sweep the seven seas. This may be childish; but when knowledge of the elementary things of modern warfare is tabooed, our imagination is not limited by anything—any knowledge of the barriers that stand in the way of big engagements, or of the strategic or preparatory requirements for them. The policy of our rulers puts a premium on all wild imaginings. It is, therefore, all the more desirable that war news should be ampler in supply, should not be withheld from the "market" in censorship stores to be retailed out like commodities in our bazars; and there should be less effort to control than to educate the public on the realities of modern warfare.

### About Poland

If the "*Pravda*" of Moscow is to be believed, the Poles may break from within. "Polish ruling circles have done everything possible to aggravate their relations with the national minorities and bring them to a state of extreme tension."

The "*Pravda*" analyses the internal causes of Poland's "defeat" and says that these are difficult to explain merely by the superiority of German technique, and equipment, and lack of effective assistance from Britain and France.

"All reports on the situation in Poland show that the disorganisation of the entire Polish State machine is constantly increasing and it proved so important and inefficient that it began to crumble with the first military setbacks. The Poles are only sixty per cent of the population

and the remainder include eight million Ukrainians and three million White Russians without administrative autonomy, national schools etc. With the clear thought of such rights it is impossible to preserve a multi-national State and assure internal unity of a vital power."

Poland has in the past shown no consideration for small nations—Lithuania or Czecho-slovakia. But Moscow, perhaps, does not take kindly to Poland which even on the eve of the War would not agree to receive Soviet help on her territories against aggression from other powers. This comment by the "*Pravda*" accompanied by Soviet mobilisation however, is significant under the circumstances.

### Japanese Problems in China

War in Europe claims the attention of the world. "The China incident" has sunk into a comparatively minor affair—though it involves the fate of more men and of a large part of the globe. In a sense a more heroic chapter of human history is being written there. In the hinterlands of the 'wide, wild, west' of the vast continent of China—for China is really a continent—Chiang-Kai-Shek is striving—to build up a new China on sounder foundations. While Japanese war economy is sorely trying her resources, China on the whole is in no worse position. The "Sung dynasty" can show a practical success in the matter. The Chinese dollar was to die and the Sung finance to collapse before Japan could make any further progress. Madam Chiang-Kai-Shek is building up a new Chinese womanhood—not merely 'new women' as the west knows;—but a sound, healthy, trained army of China's 'daughters of revolution', equal to the task of the Front and the Base. The Generalissimo of course is creating the new army of China on the experience of the campaigns of the last two years, planning the factories for Chinese arms and ammunition, and arranging for the supply of the same from outside as Japan closes one door after another. The recent break in the 'Axis' has encouraged the Chinese to expect more handsome help from the Soviet. It has opened better prospect for Chinese of a successful resistance, and, Chinese spirit, unbroken so far, must now assert itself vigorously. Japan may probably reach a settlement now on easier terms with Britain and France, in Far East, but the "New order in the Far

East" must appear to be a vain pursuit before the Chinese reconstruction and the Soviet re-emergence in the Far East.

### Not a Ministry of Repression

News for India are allowed to trickle only through the British sources. That is inevitable now. But the recent attack on the British Ministry of Information, the "muddle" they are accused of, shows that even the British politicians and publicists felt that they were being kept in the dark on the "Athenia" tragedy, the Kiel exploit and on the stationing of British expeditionary force on the French soil. The Labour leader, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, warned the Government against 'the intolerable situation': "If this sort of thing was not stopped they would be playing with the most tricky thing in the country—the psychology of the people. There was an even more serious side to this problem than the Home side—the problem of foreign and Dominion Press. The world was agog for news. If they could not get it from this country they would get it from elsewhere. If they could not get the news, they would take rumour or propaganda." Lord Macmillan, the head of the Ministry, promised more news and assured: "It is a Ministry of expression and not a Ministry of repression, least of all a Ministry of depression."

### What it is in India

We in India, of course, passed through the same that is characterised as 'an intolerable situation! The Press officer play in this respect a minor role. They dole out the Home supply. "Commenting on the personnel of the British information Ministry, *the Statesman* said that its Director-General Sir Findlater Stewart of the India Office had "no direct knowledge of publicity" and "his concern . . . had been more with the holding than with the distribution of news". This India Office stamp so intolerable in Britain, is of course less deep than its original, the Indian official stamp. *The Statesman* would remind us, here other standards are to apply—did always apply—.

### Release of Politicals

The Bengal Government have not yet found their way to release even a small portion of the remaining politicals although their promised period for the consideration of the cases is about to expire. It is said that Mahatma Gandhi pressed on the Viceroy the release of the politicals during his recent interview with the latter to which Lord Linlithgow is understood to have given a sympathetic hearing. In the meantime the Punjab Government—also non-Congress—have already stolen a march over the Bengal Ministry by setting Prithwi Singh to liberty. The Bengal Government have proved impervious to public demand and it will certainly be no credit to the "popular" Ministry if the Viceroy's intervention force them to a course to which insistent public demand could not persuade them.

## CONGRESS ATTITUDE TO WAR

### GANDHIJI EXPLAINS

"The Congress support will mean greater moral asset in favour of England, for the Congress has no soldier to offer. The Congress will fight with non-violent means. All that is required is a mental revolution on the part of the British Government and a clear declaration in their faith in democracy", says Mahatma Gandhi in course of a statement issued to the press to-night in connection with the Congress vis-a-vis the present international situation.

Gandhiji also says that the Working Committee's press statement on the war situation took four days before it took the final shape. Every member expresses his opinion freely on the draft resolution that was, at the invitation of the Working Committee, prepared by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhiji was sorry to find himself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British Government should be given unconditionally.

This could only be done on purely non-violent basis, but the Committee has tremendous responsibilities to discharge. It could not take a purely non-violent attitude. It felt that the nation had not imbibed a non-violent spirit requisite for provision of strength which disdains to take advantage of the difficulties of opponents. But in stating reasons for its conclusion the Committee desires to show greater considerations for the issues.

Gandhiji further adds that the author of the statement is an artist who cannot be surpassed in his implacable hostility to imperialism in every shape or form. He is a friend of the English people. Indeed he is more English than Indian in his methods. He is more at home with the English than with his own men. He is a humanitarian in the true sense of the word. His nationalism is enriched by his fine internationalism. His statement is a manifesto addressed not only to the British Government and British people, but addressed to the nations of the world. He has compelled India through the Working Committee to think not merely of her own friends, but of other peoples also.

Gandhiji hopes this statement will receive the unanimous support of all parties including Congressmen. At this supreme hour of country's history, Mahatmaji trusts, Congressmen and others will not engage themselves in petty squabbles.

### WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION

The following are extracts from the Working Committee statement from Wardha:

"The Working Committee have given their earnest consideration to the grave crisis that has developed owing to the declaration of war in Europe. The principles which should guide the nation in the event of a war have been repeatedly laid down by the Congress and only a month ago this Committee reiterated them and expressed their displeasure at the flouting of Indian opinion by the British Government in India. As a first step to dissociate themselves from this policy of the British Government the Committee called upon the Congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session. Since then the British Government have declared India as a belligerent country, promulgated ordinances, passed the Government of India Act Amending Bill and taken other far-reaching measures which affect the Indian people vitally and circumscribe and limit the powers and the activities of the Provincial Governments. These have been done without the consent of the Indian people whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government. The Working Committee must take the gravest view of these developments.

#### Fascism Condemned

The Congress has repeatedly declared its entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism. It has seen in Fascism and Nazism the intensification of the principle of imperialism against which the Indian people have struggled for many years. The Working Committee must, therefore, unhesitatingly condemn the latest aggression of the Nazi government in Germany against Poland and sympathise with those who resist it.

The Congress has further laid down that the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them nor can the Indian people permit their resources to be

### SJ. SUBHAS BOSE ON CONGRESS RESOLUTION

His breaking away from the position at present taken up by the Working Committee at Wardha was referred to by S. Subhas Chandra Bose addressing a gathering of about fifteen thousand at Nagpur on Sept. 13.

S. Bose said that he took his stand on the resolution that stood on the Congress statute book. He added that Poland was a semi-Fascist State but because she had been attacked by Germany who did not try to settle her claim by peaceful means she had their sympathies. It was a pity that at this critical juncture the Working Committee was deliberating for five days and was unable to come up to a final decision. He hoped the Committee would take public opinion into account. Congress was the only political body in the country and on it lay a great responsibility and it should give a correct lead.

#### Difference in method.

Alluding to the difference that had arisen in Congress S. Bose said this was not because they had different objectives but because of different methods of their achievement. Congress was not Liberal Federation. Under the Congress programme of constitutionalism real fight was forgotten while a fight for loaves and fishes amongst themselves had grown.

Concluding S. Bose appealed for unity of classes and communities.

exploited for imperialist ends. Any imposed decision or attempt to use Indian resources for purposes not approved by them will necessarily have to be opposed by them. If co-operation is desired in a worthy cause this cannot be obtained by compulsion and imposition and the Committee cannot agree to the carrying out by the Indian people of orders issued by an external authority.

There is an inherent ineradicable conflict between democracy for India or elsewhere and Imperialism and Fascism. If Great Britain fights for maintenance and extension of democracy then she must necessarily end Imperialism in her own possessions and establish full democracy in India and the Indian people must have

the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference and must guide their own policy. A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy utilising the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity.

The Working Committee have noted that many rulers of Indian States have offered their services and resources and expressed their desire to support the cause of democracy in Europe. If they must make their professions in favour of democracy abroad the Committee would suggest that their first concern should be the introduction of democracy within their own states in which to-day undiluted autocracy reigns supreme. British Government in India is more responsible for this autocracy than even the rulers themselves as has been made painfully evident during the past year.

In view, however, of the gravity of the occasion and the fact that the pace of events during the last few days has often been swifter than the working of men's minds the committee desire to take no final decision at this stage so as to allow for the full elucidation of the issues at stake, the real objectives aimed at and the position of India in the present and in the future. But the decision cannot long be delayed as India is being committed from day to day to a policy to which she is not a party, of which she disapproves. The Working Committee, therefore, invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms their war aims in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with wishes of her people?

A clear declaration about the future pledging the Government to the ending of Imperialism and Fascism alike will be welcomed by the people of all countries, but it is far more important to give immediate effect to it to the largest possible extent for only this will convince the people that the declaration is meant to be honoured. The real test of any declaration is its application in the present for it is the present that will govern action today and give shape to the future.

#### Socialist attitude

Congress Socialist and Communist leaders were closeted with Pandit Jawahrlal and they, it is reported, pledged their full support to a forward move.



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By SUBHENDU GHOSH

If the severest test of the culture of a civilised man be his freedom from banal hypocrisies concerning the central facts of life, Ellis emerged triumphantly from the test. If the test of personal heroism of a man be the degree of his unflinching devotion to a noble cause, Havelock Ellis, who at the outset of his career as a psychologist quietly flung out a formidable challenge to some of exactly those traditional ideas about which society is the most absurdly touchy, was unquestionably the most heroic, the most civilized Englishman of his generation.

What was the sacred cause this man espoused and fought for all his life? As a boy of sixteen in Australia, he chanced to bump his head against the conventional ideas on the subject of sex and thenceforth, he tells us, "I determined that I would make it the main business of my life to get to the natural facts of sex apart from all would-be moralistic and sentimental notions, and so spare the youth of future generations the trouble and perplexity which the ignorance has caused me." With his mission of life thus found, as the first step to its realisation, he qualified as a doctor at St. Thomas's hospital, but after a short period of practice, adopted writing as his profession.

Ellis was a prodigiously prolific writer and the range of his studies and interests was extraordinarily wide. He wrote literary criticisms and essays, and works on sociology and psychology. His illuminating and lively disquisitions on religion, mysticism and ethics are contributions of enduring value to the art of life. But his *magnus opus* is, of course, concerned with his life's mission—a proper understanding of the problem of sex, "the central problem of life."

Ellis was indubitably a genius—an intellectual rebel with the vision of a poet, who passionately affirmed the awful realities of life, and with an amazing insight probed into its mysteries. Ellis has written volumes, but of him it can be truthfully said that, among his writings, there never was a 'pot-boiler'. He could only write out of his self; his writings sprang direct from his unique personality.

It is never an easy task to "unlock the heart of genius". But Ellis himself has left for us some "vital facts" of his life, which we may profitably use as keys to his personality. The supremely illuminative facts of his life were, of course, the two major emotional crises,—one sexual and the other 'conversional', that affected his serious, sensitive and ardent nature in its formative period. The sexual crisis of

his adolescence released his demonic energy to explore man as a "naturally social animal", vehemently to assert that all forms of rigid "asceticism" (which is distinct from true restraint) "were non-natural and unwholesome", to declare that "to face and reject temptation may be to fortify life. To face and accept temptation may be to enrich life. He who can do neither is not fit to live", that "what, as a matter of fact, people actually do is the really fundamental and essential morality". In brief, this earlier crisis left him passionately asking all the vitally important questions of awakening youth. The answers, this intellectual rebel sought out, startling enough though they were, might very well have been anti-social, negative of all morality. But they were not so. We find Ellis relating all his observations to society as a whole, to the general scheme of existence, integrating his psychology of sex into a general theme of life and culture. We find him teaching the art of life. How so? The second crisis gives us the clue. This 'conversional' crisis at the age of nineteen "developed and harmonised the most extravagant emotions and enabled him to pass for ever out of the valley of the shadow of barren intellectualism into the grace of vision." This religious experience, this "initiation into complete manhood" gave Ellis his sweet serenity, his quiet confidence and strength and balanced his conflicting emotions, at whose command his giant intellect functioned.

Ellis was a scholar, scientist and philosopher,—all these with an essentially poetic vision. In all his writings we can feel the deep and compassionate heart of a poet directing a master intellect. There is no pedantry anywhere in them. Ellis wrote on taboored subject to be understood, and this is why the stupid censorship of his land sought to silence him. Ellis wrote to be read with delight; this is why we find scattered in all his writings an engaging variety of everyday topics, which he illuminated as he passed. Above all Ellis wrote to bring vitalising light into a world of self-satisfied ignorance; this is why we find him making positive "affirmation" on the "central facts" of every individual's life, and not satisfied with their analysis in a passive manner.

The mighty voice of Ellis did make itself heard at least. But those to whom it spoke have not yet been able to free themselves from the puerile prudery that even now passes for 'good taste' among the cultured men and women of society. Now that he is dead, let us hope that a better fate awaits his message to mankind.

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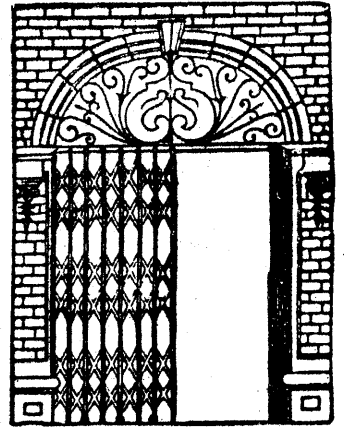
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# THE GANDHIAN ENIGMA

By NAREN SARKAR

To the average Indian the essential fact about Gandhiji is that he is a Mahatma. He is considered to be a man of religion transforming his gospel to suit the exigencies of politics. His politics is a product of his credo, his religion, which is his *forte*. It is not without significance that while in the case of other leaders the encomium of an admiring country has expressed itself in epithets like Desha-bandhu, Desha-priya, Desha-gaurab, Desha-ratnam or Lokamanya, Gandhiji stands in serene isolation of his spiritual halo—his Mahatmaship.

While it is difficult to probe the inner mind of the Mahatma as to what appraisal he would himself prefer, the fact remains that the Gandhian blend of matters temporal and spiritual is destined to be a tragedy to its author and a dead-weight to the country's political progress.

On his own admission Gandhiji is no propounder of religion. He claims to have shed new illumination on old ideas. Indeed his Trinity of Truth, Non-violence, and Non-resistance have been known to the world since Zarathustra spake, or Confucius opened his lips. The early Christians under imperial Rome built, as it were, a monument of non-resistance. Mahatma Gandhi's religion has not yet been woven out into a system of philosophy. The Gandhian metaphysics is a finesse wherein even Desai, Rajaji and Pattabhi fumble. It is indeed a sad commentary on Gandhiji's saintship that no two disciples of his are alike in the interpretation of their master's message. His is at best an ethical religion, a rule of conduct. To the teeming millions this rule, with its infinite nuances of meaning, its protean connotation at the hands of the master, is no better than a jargon; to the elite it has been intriguing but ineffectual. Applied to the political field this will-o'-the-wisp having failed to delude the wary and the discriminating, has often times taken re-course to the sanctuary of unquestioning faith and allegiance. Subsequent historians of theology may perhaps reserve a niche for Gandhiji as the prototype of a medieval universalist with a passionate 'elan of the soul.' The experiments with Truth to which the Mahatma submitted himself

are interesting reading for all. But they evolve no special formula, point to no deduction. Certainly this is not the way with the masterminds we know of in this sphere of life. The 'inner voice' which is reputed to be his sole guide, must be a shrewd inner voice indeed coming exactly when it should,—courteously paying compliments to 'new techniques' with all their implications. It is also wonderfully pragmatic—coaxing, cajoling or coercing (non-violently) individuals and the whole nation as occasions arise.

The nemesis of spiritual fetishism is never late in appearing. What at one phase of intellectual development of the individual or the race is necessary as a restorative, acts banefully at another. It is no wonder that Gandhian formulæ should, to-day, appear as definite clogs to the forward march of the self-conscious masses—the same masses who in the early twenties and thirties looked to the saint as one who alone could 'deliver the goods.' The tilt towards the spirit has wrested from him the high sense of objectivity which is the hall-mark of a leader of the masses. Essentially a man of the world and of its most turbulent portion too, namely political, Gandhiji's *amour-propre* in matters not of this world has confused logic with magic, rendered his pet formulæ a shibboleth for the upper bourgeois who thrive on discarded notions of class-collaboration. The sentimental humanitarianism, which has entrenched the welfare of the dumb millions in his heart, has its own limitations. When man is pitched against man, when interest clashes with interest, it must grope in search of Light which ever eludes the gaze or temporise with the help of emollient phrases or makeshift formulæ. To do good to people is one thing, to free them from bondage is another. The latter pre-

supposes a courage to face realities and to acknowledge them as such, to evolve a consistent and dynamic theory of social reconstruction. The deplorable fact about Gandhism is that it is no 'ism' in the correct sense, for 'isms'—once they are let loose—march by their inherent logic. Phase after phase come in their causal nexus gathering momentum even as they move on. There is no oscillation, no vigil for things that are not. It is idle to believe that the emancipation of the nation can be achieved by its passage through the *purgatoris* of masterly inaction or such action that does not scorch or corrode anybody—no, not even the enemy's heart. Freedom can wait till the millennium in which tyrants weep out their expurgated heart and self-seekers tremble in inner agony!

It has often been asserted that in the struggle between the Right and the Left everything is non-personal, everything is about principles and tendencies. While this is true to a great extent, and is really the pith of the matter, there is an element of abstraction in the statement. To separate the milk from its whiteness is the philosopher's job, not the politician's. It is true that Gandhiji symbolises certain tendencies which the Left is out to combat and he is opposed because he is the accredited spokesman of the Right Wing. But inasmuch as Gandhiji is the repository of numerous irrational whims all his own, the contest is personal too. The progressive mind of the nation wants him to get rid of his Mahatmaship, to label himself as a politician out and out and frankly act as such; it would fain see him abandon altogether the romantic or the mystic approach to hard political facts so that men can see him from the correct perspective, read his mind and argue with him to accept or reject him for aught he is worth.

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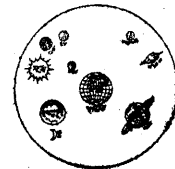
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## SQUIBS, QUIBBLES AND SQUABBLES

By ATINDRA NATH BOSE

Sj. M. N. Roy, in the September 9 issue of the 'Forward', under the caption 'Confessions, Contradictions and Confusions' has criticised my article published in the August 26 number of this paper. It is regrettable that he has missed the very basis of my arguments and indulged in quibbles; that taking my article as an authorised theoretical exposition of the Forward Bloc he has hurled his squibs against it and tried to run it down at a time when Leftist Unity is the crying need of the hour.

Sj. Bose had declared, we are told, that the Presidential election involved no question of principle or policy, while I had stated that "the contest and the verdict also crystallised the struggle between the conflicting ideologies and programmes which emerged under the vague generic denominations of the Right and the Left." The conflicting ideologies and programmes were concentrated in the three issues raised by Sj. Bose—delegates' rights, opposition to Federation and struggle in the Native states. These issues are vital questions of principle and policy. The written constitution and the resolutions of the Congress on these questions are precise enough. Sj. Bose stood upon this declared policy and constitution of the Congress while the Rightists were going back upon them. In the open, no principle or policy were involved. "Whoever wins, Federation is lost"—said Jawaharlal. The theme of struggle in Native States loomed large in Sitaramiyya's election manifesto. But behind the verbiage every voter knew that principles and policies embodied in the three issues raised by Sj. Bose, dominated the contest. Certainly, the Royists did not vote for a candidate fighting for position and leadership.

The main criticisms are spun around my statement that "the Left accepts Gandhian leadership and Gandhian ideology as an inevitable phase in the anti-imperialist struggle." He comments, "the acceptance of Gandhian ideology precludes any new ideology on the part of the Forward Bloc."

The quoted words of the present writer did not refer to Forward Bloc alone but to all Leftists, including Royists. They accept Gandhian ideology when, as primary members of the Congress they sign the creed of "peaceful and legitimate means" for the attainment of independence. They accept Gandhian leadership so long as they submit to the Pant Resolu-

tion of Tripuri. Sj. Roy is even more Gandhian than other Leftists,—the Protestants of July. With all his thunders for "Alternative Leadership" and changing of Congress creed, he accepts the present position as inevitable. Between acceptance of Congress or Gandhian creed and secession from Congress there is no middle path. The Leftists including Royists have not chosen to secede.

So all the logical quibblings of the critic arise out of his start from a wrong premise. He quotes my unctuation of Gandhian ideology and asserts that the acceptance of this leaves no room for difference for the Left. The Leftist objectives of class war and nationalisation of wealth as defined by me are unattainable under Gandhian leadership. Agreed. But he mutilates my statement by dropping the clause "though for the present these questions are side-tracked" Here is the fundamental difference between the Right and the Left which has escaped my critic. The Left believes in class war and nationalisation but will not raise these issues until imperialist domination goes. For Gandhi and the Right the overthrow of foreign imperialism is the end of the struggle; for the Left that is the end of a phase after which begins the next phase of economic and social revolution wherein Gandhians have no role to play.

I am presumed to have confessed the inherent contradiction of accepting Gandhian ideology and having a separate ideology for the Left in my statement—"They (the Left) mixed the slogan of the joint leadership under Gandhiji; they did not realise that this pithy phrase contained all the contradictions in earth". I simply pointed out the fallacy of the Communist-Socialist position on the eve of the Calcutta Session of the A. I. C. C. They floundered in the bog of "unity at any price" when Gandhi tore down their pattern by refusing to share leadership with the Left. Sj. Bose set a lowest price to unity and refused to be bargained out. But he caused no split and left leadership to Gandhi as Tripuri demanded.

What does acceptance of Gandhian leadership and Gandhian ideology mean during the anti-imperialist struggle or until the working out of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution as it is called in socialist jargon? Questions of class war and nationalisation may be shelved for the present. But there is much ground for the

Left to win even in the present stage and within the present Gandhian framework of the Congress. This is in the directions of "nationalisation of the struggle, i. e. bringing in the masses in the national struggle which is the substance of the Tripuri Resolution of National Demand" and "democratic practice in internal organisation" which is being consistently infringed since the last election and has been the object of the July Protests from which Sj. Roy chose to dissociate. For the present, i. e. during the anti-imperialist phase the struggle between the Right and the Left rages about these two issues.

Has the Left exhausted all possibilities for expansion within the Gandhian frame? "Is it not possible to univensalise the principle of Satyagraha, to make it the bedrock of programmes other than our own?" asked Dr. Lohia in a well-reasoned letter. "I cannot bless or encourage a new programme that makes no appeal to me," replied the Mahatma (Harijan, July 20, 1939). He may not; but so long his Satyagraha remains a *technique for fight*, the *fighting elements* will take and adopt this technique to their needs. The technique will grow and burst its shell. On the hands of the masses as distinguished from Rightist leadership, it will shed the taboos of Gandhian fetishes. This is what is happening before the eyes of the Mahatma and what according to his own confession has scared him out of the struggle. Hidden in the inherent contradiction of Gandhian Satyagraha, this tendency has spoken through the Resolution of National Demand emphasising the need of a "nation wide struggle", as opposed to a limited Satyagrahic fight. The organisational development of the Congress too is intensifying the conflict. With the expansion of the Congress and its consequent transformation for a homogeneous party to a common platform for parties of different shades, Gandhian ideology has been put to severe trial. With all the strivings of the Right, with all the constitutional amendments effected at Bombay, Congress no longer remains the close preserve of the Gandhian school. The Leftist who wants to dislodge Gandhism overnight without exhausting its potentialities and trying its implications and instead of marching with the inevitably slow process of history is no less a doctrinaire than the Rightist who thinks that the nature of struggle can be determined by personalities and their pet antics in ignorance of seething undercurrents of social and economic antagonisms.

## OUR AGRICULTURE

By SACHIN SEN

Ours is a country of problems. But in the process of historical evolution, we have reached a stage when the problems are to be faced and tackled. Otherwise, we shall not only stagnate, but corrode.

Agriculture is our mainstay. Our national prosperity is unquestionably bound up with it. The primary factor to be considered in the matter of improvement of agriculture is that agriculture is not merely "a way of making money by raising crops; it is not merely an industry or business; it is essentially a public function or service performed by private individuals for the care and use of land in the national interest." Farmers are the custodians of the basis of the national life. Agriculture is a national industry calling forth far-sighted policies to conserve and improve the natural and human resources involved in it and to promote social and political stability.

With our agriculture declining, it is difficult to bring about economic prosperity through other agencies. The low purchasing power amongst the people connected with agriculture sets a limit to industrial expansion in the country. If there is money-famine in the business of agriculture, it will have disturbing repercussions in other spheres of business. On the other hand, with our agriculture improved and prosperous, the channels of industrial expansion will be automatically widened. It is evidently this lack of appreciation of the place of agriculture in our national life that has upto now guided our thinkers to build a better and new India on the basis of industrial renaissance. Industrial products are to be consumed either at home or abroad; the mere act of production is not a guarantee for economic prosperity. If there is declining agriculture where the greater number of people are involved, the demand-curve will naturally shrink and the products will tend to travel abroad. The existing quality of Indian products is not encouraging to assure a favourable reception in foreign markets which are, however, restricted and guided by a policy of state-interventionism. Any scheme of national planning propounded in scorn of the importance of agriculture in the economic

life of India is bound to founder on the rock of misunderstanding of our problems. Agriculture is, therefore, to be treated as a matter of national concern. All other interests must be subordinated to it. In any move towards economic prosperity, better agriculture should be our objective. If we fail to rescue our agriculture, we shall soon find the whole national resources throttled and wasted by decadent agriculture. If any one in the pursuit of a private profit, so long as it is not eliminated, hurt agriculture, his actions will necessarily be restricted by a forward agricultural policy. This basic factor is to predominate, and the congeries of competing and conflicting interests must sink under its weight.

To have a better agriculture, the primary factors are tenure and credit; the ancillary things are methods of farming, marketing of commodities and quality of the human unit. A tiller must know where he stands in relation to his products and to his land. Agriculture being an industry of slow turnover, a tiller must have credit-money within his reach. The method of farming, whichever is suitable, must be made known to the tiller and the neces-

sary guidance and resources must be brought within his grasp. A tiller produces crops for his own consumption and for the consumption of others; he must and can discharge his duty of cultivation but the disposal of products in a scientific manner must be left to reside in other agency. The efficiency of the tiller must be great; he will be remembered and treated as a national agent in the task of of cultivation. The whole agricultural chain from the primary producer to the ultimate consumer must be forged keeping the national interests in the forefront.

The shaping of a forward policy for better agriculture is, I contend, a fundamental problem and consequently an immediate issue. If it waits or is made to wait, if it is subordinated to the other catchy programme of national planning under pressure of industrial magnates and capitalist politicians, the wastage in our national resources will be pronounced and eloquent, so much so that the collapse of our economy on the agricultural front will be sufficient to spread contagious corrosion in the whole body-economic of the country. It will be unfortunate if those who want to reconstruct, forget the primary lesson of reconstruction that the vital nerve-centre must be revitalised first, if any order of precedence is at all adopted.

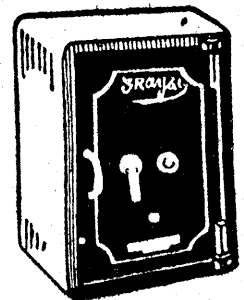
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## THE HAPPY WRITER

By BUDDHADEVA BOSE

Who is the happiest man in the world today? I have not a moment's hesitation in answering this question: it is the successful English-speaking author. With a world market at his command, he has a large, even, an immense, income; unrestricted by the usual conventions of the upper class, he is free to do as he likes; he is not a wage-slave and all his time is his own; and though he is looked at with a slight suspicion at home and by his own people, he enjoys, on the whole, a substantial reputation nearly all over the civilised world. Such a combination of circumstances is indeed, remarkable. There are famous authors in other countries; but the most popular of them hope to have the opulence of an author writing in English; sportsmen, filmstars and cabinet ministers achieve, for some time, a staggering notoriety, but generally they sink into oblivion long before their lives are ended, and, oftener than not, they are strangers to freedom. Art is comparatively durable, though not, as some suppose, unperishable; and the artist has always the joy of exercising his talent. It is no small matter to be able to delight millions of people, and when it brings ample material rewards, there remains little to be desired.

Though the last pages of the book are a trifle gloomy, Somerset Maugham's 'Summing Up' gives us an excellent picture of the happy English author of the modern times. This book is an autobiography, and quite an unusual one. The author does not tell us much about himself—we are not even told whether he married—but he portrays himself very creditably, and discusses the art of the drama and the novel with more sincerity than superficial brilliance. The book is loosely constructed; the author, now in his sixties, surrenders himself to his recollections and reveries rather than follow any rigid sequence of events, and has, in the process, allowed some repetitions to creep in. Readers familiar with other works of Mr. Maugham will find here some observations they have come across before, but that was only inevitable; as the very title implies, the author is here trying to sum up in direct narration all

that he said through numerous implications and inventions in the work of his lifetime. The book is necessarily loose but not careless; every word is weighed, every statement qualified, wherever qualification is necessary. The exquisite sense of form that went into the making of so many fine stories and plays is here exercised in a reticence and modesty that give a special flavour to the pages. Mr. Maugham has passed the severest test of all he has been able to talk about himself or around and about himself, with perfect good taste and quite an incredible amount of good sense.

Mr. Maugham's childhood was spent in France, and he spoke in French as a child. He had read nearly all his Maupassant as a boy; and, indeed, in his short stories he is the most successful disciple of Maupassant in the English language. He was left an orphan at the age of ten, but not without substantial means. He passed on to the care of an uncle, an orthodox and stupid clergyman, and was sent to bad schools where he learnt pretty little. He was delicate, short-statured, and he stammered; moreover, his English was bad, and his life at school was a torture. He says repeatedly that he had taught himself all the English, literature and philosophy he has at his command, and further taught himself, as best he could, to write. He confesses that he might have been much benefitted if he had found somebody reliable to guide him through English grammar and style. After passing out of school, he went in for medicine, and was for some time attached to St. Thomas' hospital. His work as a medical man brought him in intimate contact with humanity in the raw—he says that a hospital is an excellent training ground for young novelists—and out of those experiences he made his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth*. He was working very hard all the time, reading all kinds of books, and trying desperately to write well. Acting against his own instincts, he fell in with the fashion of the day, and tried to imitate Pater and Wilde. But he soon tired of that bejewelled stuffiness, read Swift and Dryden, and discovered that he had a

natural facility for writing dialogue whereas two sentences of narration floored him. And that is why he turned to the drama. For though he was ambitious to be a writer, he felt that it was not enough only to be a writer. He had no notion of starving in garrets; he was determined to get whatever fulfillment he could out of social intercourse and human relations, out of food, drink and fornication, luxury, sport, art, travel, and as Henry James says, whatever. To some ears this may sound a trifle grossly materialistic, but this is, in fact, far more sensible than the sham idealism of the callow who suppose that starving is a necessary condition of artistic greatness. Nobody ever starved willingly, and the artist has a greater right to the good things of life because he knows how best to use them.

In his early youth Maugham had made a pattern of his life, and had spent the rest of it working that pattern out. At every step he shows admirable good sense. It did not take him too long to earn money and notoriety, as he calls it, as a dramatist; and when three of his plays were running simultaneously at West End, and it looked that money, for him, had ceased to be a source of worry, he breathed a sigh of relief because he could then look at a sunset without having to trouble himself as to how to describe it. A curious feeling, no doubt, and it shows that he had little short of an aversion for writing narrative. And yet, after spending the earlier part of his life, writing sophisticated plays for fashionable theatres, he turned to fiction again as man nearly in middle age, for he had begun to feel that his popularity as a playwright might soon wane, and anyway the prose play was doomed. (This is the only prediction that Mr. Maugham makes in this book, and the modern revival of the poetic drama shows that he was not far wrong). He does not tell us how exactly he managed to master the narrative form; but it appears now that his novels and stories are the more durable part of his works. Some of his stories reach a point of excellence which none of his plays did. He found

material for his fiction in travel—he has travelled nearly all round the world, and was never quite happy in London. During the war he was engaged in diplomatic service (of which the Ashenden stories were born); he had been to Russia on the eve of the revolution, and he does not ask his readers to believe him when he says that had he been successful in the job with which the authorities had entrusted him, the history of Russia might have taken a different course. In any case, he was working out his pattern of life. He has got all he could out of travel and human companionship; he has his house in Mayfairs, motor cars and other accessories of modern comfort; but he is not so deeply attached to any of his things that he cannot easily part with them. He found life good, finds it good still, nor does he regret the follies of his youth, and, what is more, looks forward to old age without dismay. The final impression we get of him is of a man who was fortunate enough to have got nearly all he wanted out of life, a man who has always done himself good, and for whom writing itself was a part of the pattern he had made for himself. Which life can be completer or happier?

As a novelist, Mr Maugham's chief concern has been what he calls 'direction of interest.' He wished to direct the readers' interest, and left the matter at that. He likes construction, balance, cohesion. He likes a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. He admires Tchekhov, but decries his English imitators for whom 'atmosphere' is often a smoke-screen to conceal ineptitude. He does not think much of the drama of ideas, and considers the stream-of-consciousness technique in fiction only a passing vogue. For him, the secret of characterisation in modern fiction is the recognition of inconsistency. All men are inconsistent, and it is best that a novelist takes them for what they are. There is neither the perfect angel nor the perfect brute in this world, nor even the perfect miser, the perfect glutton, or the perfect hypocrite—all those who have peopled the pages of the classical French drama, and novelists like Balzac and Dickens. People are good at one moment and vile at another, and at which moment are we to judge them? Mr Maugham in the course of his stories often asks himself this question: 'Is he a bad man who does good things or a good man

who does bad things?' But he suspends his judgement and leaves his reader to make up his own mind. He is extremely tolerant, he has no desire to reform his fellow-beings, nor has he the least passion for bringing over others to his own way of thinking. There is a certain shy aloofness about him: he is content to observe the stream of life as much as is relevant to his profession; and he makes no bones of the fact that most of his characters were sketched from real persons. This last may sound slightly shocking to the layman, but it shouldn't, for this more or less has been the case with all great novelists of the world.

So far most readers will willingly share the author's opinions. But in the last chapters Mr Maugham, perhaps out of a sense of duty, or perhaps urged by his novelist's instinct to bring about a neat conclusion, discusses things like God, Immortality, and the Problem of Evil. I for one would rather that he had left these things alone. He hasn't anything profound to say on these subjects (these are ticklish things to talk about); and sometimes his bourgeois prejudices let him down quite pitifully. As when he very blandly says:

'Most people have little imagination and they do not suffer from circumstances that to the imaginative would be unbearable. The lack of privacy, to take an instance, in which the very poor live seems frightful to us who value it; but it

does not seem so to the very poor. ...No one who has dwelt among them (the poor) can fail to have noticed how little they envy the well-to-do.'

This is just the comfortable doctrine of the rich, a sort of night-cap for the conscience, which has too long been in use and it is curious how so intelligent a man as Mr. Maugham has unconsciously fallen into the rut. If the poor are unimaginative, it is poverty that has made them so. Mr. Maugham realises, however, that the world-wide poverty of today is a terrible thing, and that something must be done about it, though he doesn't know what. It is clear that he didn't think very logically about the matter; for while he gives us to understand that he hasn't much faith in revolution nor in modern Russia, he declares on the next page that he 'cannot doubt that the proletariat, increasingly conscious of its rights, will eventually seize power in one country after the other. He thus contradicts himself, and we feel that at heart he is one of those who believe that things will go on pretty much in the same way, for all the strenuous efforts of man to make them better. Did not Mirsky say that 'fear of revolution is the fundamental policy of the British ruling class?' Unfortunately, Mr. Maugham is no exception, and his remarks on this subject savour of the same incompetent prevarication as is shown in Mr. Chamberlain's policy.

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## BEHIND THE MOSCOW MYSTERY

By BENOY GHOSE

Round the edges of the storm-centre over Poland there was plenty of diplomatic scurrying. In the democratic camp negotiations with the Soviet Union continued to move, but the movement was shockingly slow. During the period of negotiations 'generous gestures' were made to Herr Hitler by England and France as could be seen from the inept statements that "Danzig is really not worth a War." The Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations were thus doomed to failure. They revealed a series of crying contradictions culminating in the disapproval by Poland of the military help from the U.S.S.R. Suddenly Germany made a scoop by signing up a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union.

In reply to the most common charge of the betrayal of the cause of peace against the Soviet Union, it is best to recall the events of the past. Let the complainants see the facts face to face as they are found in history. If they care to look into the records of what actually happened they will see that the Soviet Union is the only nation which has assiduously led the world in fight for peace and she was first to give out a call to world public opinion: to combine together in a world peace front when the terrors and brutalities of Fascism cast its blight over peoples and countries. The Genoa Disarmament Conference of 1922; the proposals for the limitations of naval armaments in 1923, for general disarmament in 1927 and 1928; the entry into the League of Nations in 1934 after the triumph of Nazism in 1933; the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance with France and Czechoslovakia in 1935; the signing up of a non-aggression pact with China in 1937; Nyon Agreement and such other activities to crush the Italo-German conspiracy throughout the Spanish Civil War; the proposal for the discussion of practical measures with other powers inside or outside the League during the annexations of Austria and Czechoslovakia; the appeal for a peace conference at Bucharest with all powers, disdainfully rejected by Mr. Chamberlain as 'premature'; and finally the honest and

sober attempt for long four months to straighten out the contradictions in the Anglo-French proposals for mutual assistance;—these are, in brief, the facts on the credit side of the Soviet Union which glare through the pages of history. Do not all these facts roar out that the Soviet Union has unfalteringly fought for peace, against Fascist aggression? They do. But the tragedy is that she has been consistently cold-shouldered. The bourgeois diplomats, being blindly confident in their superior political wisdom, have offered rebuffs only to the Soviet Union in return.

Thus, being painfully fed up with the Bourgeois diplomacy, the childish dallying of the Bourgeois democrats, the Soviet Union was willy-nilly compelled to explore other possibilities of peace and security. *The Soviet Union must have her own security first. And when Germany agreed to change her foreign policy, her relations with the U. S. S. R., her proposal for a non-aggression pact was accepted by the Soviet Union. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed.*

People will now ask with an air of simplicity that how the Soviet Union could agree to improve political relations with a Fascist State like Germany. But they should know that *the Pact is not in the least concerned with the attitude of the Soviet Union towards the internal regime of Germany.* It is simply concerned with the foreign relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. There was, and still is, a wide gulf of difference between the outlook and political systems of the Soviet Union and Germany. But that is quite irrelevant so far as the Non-Aggression Pact is concerned. It must not be forgotten, never, that the Soviet Union does not meddle in the internal affairs of other countries and correspondingly does not tolerate others meddling in her own affairs. The Soviet Union will strive always to maintain good-neighbourly relations with all non-Soviet countries provided these countries maintain the same relations with her. This policy of the Soviet Union was clearly expounded

by Stalin in his speech at the 18th Party Congress and also has recently been explained by the Soviet Premier, Molotov, before the extraordinary session of the Soviet Parliament. Above all, it must not be overlooked that *the Pact is not a Pact of mutual assistance, as was contemplated in Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations, but only a non-aggression Pact.*

Finally, the only question that may loom up in people's minds is whether this policy of exclusiveness and isolation is worthy of a Socialist State like the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union should give the lead that the world may triumphantly march on to the era of Socialism. But where is that lead? She simply seeks her own security, is busy amassing her own strength and fortifying her own frontiers. Does the victory of Socialism in one country ensure the victory of Socialism in other countries? Again, can the victory of Socialism in a particular country, like the Soviet Union, be called permanent, when other capitalist countries encircle it? The answers to both these questions will be emphatically in the negative. Here lies the fundamental difference between the views on Socialist Revolution of Trotsky and Stalin. Here is the difference between the *poetic and artistic revolution* of Trotsky and the *prosaic and scientific revolution* of Stalin. Stalin says that the country in which Socialism has triumphed must be carefully protected against the possible attacks from other capitalist countries. That is why the Soviet Union has gathered up her economic strength, externally, by strengthening business relations with all countries, internally, by economic planning, and her military strength, by delaying the war and strengthening the might of the Red Army and Red Navy to the utmost. Meanwhile, the progressive forces in all countries have got adequate opportunity to get themselves prepared and consolidated and the inherent contradictions of Fascist States have been sharpened to the extreme. These Fascist States will reach the stage of internal revolutions through the last conflagration. And in that final ignition the Soviet Union will help the progressive forces of the world to emerge triumphant. The help will be direct or indirect as the circumstances will dictate.

**C**ONQUEST of Spain is complete and the land of Spain hallowed with historicity lies yoked to the Rebel General. The war that rocked Spain for years has turned it into a desolate land and Franco is saddled with the responsibility of reconstructing Spain. The Spanish war was an attempt to undo the achievements of democracy and the landed aristocracy, big businessmen and the church were ranged against the Republic. Active support of Hitler and Mussolini speeded up the total process of conquest. At present numerous problems are facing Franco and of supreme importance is the reconstruction of the Spanish Government, for it involves the basic question of the form of the Government. Franco is no democrat and is opposed to any form of democracy. In the past he advocated some sort of totalitarianism and the relation between labour and capital was to be defined on the termination of war. He abhors the race theory of Germany and is unwilling to see it flourish on the Spanish soil. The epoch of liberalism is over. The state must directly intervene in the national life, said General Franco in November last. And the new Spanish Government, though totalitarian in spirit, cannot be on a par with the Reich. Evolution of the Falangist party has been through reconciliation with political opponents, while in Germany political rivals were hounded out of existence by the Nazi. Early in 1937 the difference between the Requetes and the Falangist was smoothed out by Franco and the Falangist party emerged triumphant. There are other political forces in Spain that may prove a stumbling block to Franco. The Radicals stand for greater social changes and stress the need of closer relation with Italy and Germany. And against them are pitted the military generals whose pronounced neutrality in foreign policy tallies in with Franco. General Aranda, a man of character and ability, has repeatedly aired his views on foreign policy and it is one of strict neutrality. General Franco will have to essay the difficult task of balancing these rival bodies. Franco's difficulties at home are greater. Roads are totally dislocated, railway stocks are lost and the cities are unfit for human habitation. Peace is essential to the reconstruction of Spain and neutrality is imperative for Franco. Declared neutrality would save

## SPAIN UNDER FRANCO

By S. UPADHYAY

millions to be spent on fortifying the Pyrenees.

Franco is but a pawn placed by the German General Staff, observes Nogales, a former Madrid Editor. It is a correct reading of the Spanish situation and reveals the forces at work. Exports to Germany are increasing and this exceeds the total exports to Germany in 1935. The total monthly export of iron ore from the Basque provinces is estimated at 120,000 tons and half of it goes to Germany. The Basque smelting industry exports pig iron and steel iron to Germany, one plant has a contract for 60,000 tons per year. Rough dressed skin exported to Germany in two years is about 38,000 tons. In 1938 Spain sent 42,000 tons of sugar to Hamburg. Oils, fats, skins, fruits and wheat are regularly shipped to Germany. Of late there has been an increased demand of cement for the 'Siegfried Line'. Certain parts of Spain rich in mineral resources have passed over to German control. Mines in the Basque provinces are under direct control of German Companies; the Meazuri and San Narcison mines have been bought by German firms. Moroccan ferromanganese mines are monopolised by 'Hisma Rowak'. Machineries working in the Spanish mines are of German make and the slow

process of flooding Spain with German machineries is going on. Germany has reaped 'a rich harvest of profits' and this reminds a significant utterance of Hitler made on the conquest of northern provinces—'Germany wants the mineral ores.' Spain is virtually reduced to the status of a colony whose economic structure is remodelled to the German advantage. In a debate in the Commons it was admitted that the number of British ships going to Spain had declined by 60 per cent while German ships had increased by 65 per cent. British capital in Spain is not faring well and the Rio Tinto copper mine mainly owned by the British Company yielded an annual income of one penny during the war.

Spain is enjoying a sort of forced peace and Franco has to face tremendous odds inside. Mass execution of Spanish intelligentsia and detention of a million souls are all revolting to the civilized world. Law of Political Responsibilities has rendered the life of the Spanish people all the more unhappy. The law establishes the loss of citizenship, imprisonment, exile, confiscation of property for offences committed years back. Forced obedience and mechanical working of the State cannot guarantee lasting peace. Would the millions of peasants and workers who had enjoyed political and economic freedom in the past submit to the totalitarian regime time will show.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### POLAND—THE DANGER SPOT

1. *Poland's Destiny*. By George Bilainkin. Hutchinson Special.

2. *Poland*. By W. J. Rose. Penguin Special.

Until the early part of 1933 Western Europe, with the only exception of France, was very little interested in the existence of Poland, a State of thirty five million inhabitants with eight frontiers, with an exemplary army and air force and with a realism in national outlook so acute as to make others nervous. It was only after the rise of Herr Hitler that Western Europeans realised with concern the possibility of an attack upon Poland from an armed Germany and felt the need of fitting in their policies with the exigencies of the situation. It was then that Poland was found in news in British Press from time to time. Hence, without being unkind to Western Europe it can be said with an amount of certainty that if, prior to 1933 there had been a war between Germany and Poland, there would have been no immediate help for her from anywhere outside France. Poland was fully conscious of the danger in Danzig and the Polish Corridor. She watched helplessly every move in the Foreign Offices of Western Europe thinking of the day when by a concerted drive by her enemies she might be made to lose her outlet to the sea, her mines in Silesia, and her special privileges in Danzig. The day has come.

Since the Treaty of Versailles the tension between Germany and Poland has been increasing. The German points out that by the Peace of Versailles the Reich lost in the East 13,770,000 acres, or 28 p. c. of the total area; 4,375,000 inhabitants or 31 p. c. of the total population; and one-third of its producing power, including in Upper Silesia 53 coal mines out of a total of 67, ten zinc and lead mines out of 15, twenty-two blast furnaces out of 25, nine steel works out of 12 and nine rolling mills. Eastern Germany has been sliced into two. East Prussia is separated from the rest of the Reich. It is divided

by what the Germans call the "Polish Corridor" and "the Free State of Danzig." The Polish Corridor is known to the Poles as the Pomorze, and they strongly denounce the other designation as being the "cleverest piece of German propaganda." On the other hand, the 13th of the 14 points of Wilson stipulated that Poland must be composed of territories inhabited by the Poles and be assured of "a secure access to the Sea." So Poland was given the province of Pomorze, the Polish corridor, which in 1921, consisted of a population of 935,643, of whom 81.3 p. c. were Poles and 18.7 p. c. Germans. But the Poles must have a Polish Port which Danzig never was and could not be. Thus Poland was confronted with the problem of her existence in 1920. Germany declared her neutrality in the Russo-Polish dispute. Poland, under Pilsudski, had no munitions when the invaders were almost upon the city. Luckily, despite the betrayal of the Germans and the foolhardy of the Danzigers, Poland was able to retain herself on the map of Europe. She clearly realised that the friendship of the Danzigers was not reliable and humiliated but victorious in the Battle of the Vistula, she determined to sever herself from the Free City of Danzig. Since 1920 there have been lots of Treaties of Friendship and Conferences to remove misunderstanding and promote goodwill and Poland has been assured that the existence of Danzig rests in her hands. Those treaties and assurances have been cast to the winds by the impudent Germans. And now the conflict between the two, a foregone conclusion, has come.

Standing between the two forces of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, Poland occupies a key position in Central Europe. She is considered both as a bulwark against German dreams of *Drang Nach Osten* and the Soviet policy of Bolshevisation of Europe. Now her existence is at stake and it remains to be seen what comes out of this war. These and a mine of other informations are available in these two valuable books, though offered at a very cheap price.

### BENGALI

*Krisaker Sangram O Andolan (Peasants' fight and movement in Bengal)*—Published by the B. P. K. S.

This illuminating thesis on the Kisan movement of Bengal was originally adopted by the second conference of the Bengal Kisan Sava. Every important problem that Bengal peasants and their movement have come to face today has been exhaustively discussed and the immediate programme towards its solution drawn up. We heartily welcome its rather belated publication and believe that it shall be perused with profit by every Congress and Kisan worker of our province.

*Samaj Bijyan (Part I)* by Prof. Binay Kumar Sarkar and others. Chakraverti Chatterjee & Co, Ltd. 15, College Square. Calcutta. Price Rs 3.

The book under review is a collection of some sociological papers, mostly contributed by Prof. Sarkar and his enterprising band of researchers. The opening essay sets forth an account of the meagre sociological work as yet done in Bengali; as a matter of fact, practically it had been an unexplored subject in Bengali till Prof. Sarkar and his researchers set to work on it. The choice of subjects for the papers has been excellent—hardly anything that is of sociological value having been left out. All the papers bear the unmistakable stamp of extensive studies and deep thinking. The evolution of the sociological thought in the West has been dealt out in a few essays in a very simple way and in this connection all prominent sociologists from Montesquieu down to Giddings and Sorokin have been laid under contribution. Speaking briefly it may be said that it is an immensely valuable Bengali publication. We are waiting eagerly for the following parts. The excellent print and get up has been testimony to the care that the publishers have deservedly bestowed on the book.

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## Letter To The Editor

# SPIRITUALITY IN POLITICS

To  
The Editor, Forward Bloc

SIR,

Perhaps the most remarkable achievement of modern political thought is its escape from the bondage of theology. The mediæval age saw the two hopelessly jumbled together causing utter confusion in both spheres. It does not require much thinking to realise that the domain of politics stands apart from that of theology. The progress of modern science and psychology has set up distinct bounds to each sphere of human existence, as a result of which the chances of overlapping have been minimised almost to nil. Politics is the science of temporal relations, while theology aims at psychic adjustments and enrichment; and since the connection between the two is quite remote and uncertain, there cannot be any rational justification for linking the two together and bringing endless confusion in its trail.

There was a time in Europe when the Pope was not only the spiritual but also the temporal Head of the Christian world and European monarchs were in virtual thralldom to him. In the East, the undefinable, but nonetheless real authority of the religious order over secular administration has been proverbial. But the mystic spell of religion over politics is broken today and there is hope that the lingering traces of their age-long inter-connection will ere long be a thing of the past.

But there is another aspect of the matter which can hardly be ignored. It has been truly said that nothing in this world is an unmixed evil. Though religion was a cumbersome overgrowth on politics in the past, it was certainly not without its redeeming feature. It imparted a distinct moral tone to politics and invested its humdrum affairs with a certain air of sanctity. Cut off from the anchor-sheet of religion, it tended more and more to take a downward course.

Machiavellism was the first off-shoot of its secularisation—a secularisation

which has assumed increasingly tortuous shapes with the passing of time and has today culminated in the Tammany Hall brand of domestic politics and in the international sphere in the most unabashed violation of the rights of the weaker states by the stronger. There is nothing to wonder at it. It was Hobbes who first countered the prevailing, sentimental belief about human nature by declaring that it is essentially base and self-seeking—a conclusion amply borne out by the latest findings of psychology. Verily, without the inspiring urge of a lofty moral idealism, man runs the risk of sliding back to the anarchy of the jungle—to judge by the trend of events in the modern world.

In the modern setting of politics, Mahatma Gandhi's gospel of its spiritualisation is admittedly a force of great significance. Truth and non-violence which constitute its essence, may be difficult of strict collective application, but they have a broad efficacy today which humanity can only forego at its peril. But it should not be forgotten that Gandhiji's cult has not been without its pitfalls. As a matter of fact, a lofty Principle, half-understood or misunderstood, can sometimes become a source of dangerous confusion. It may be remembered that during the days of non-cooperation movement a tendency became manifest in certain quarters to push the broad moral idealism of the Mahatma to

the background and substitute theology in its place—a revival of the mediæval distemper of which modern politics has fortunately got cured. It is perhaps known to many that during the Congress session at Gaya, when the late Deshabandhu Das mooted his proposal for council-entry, it was contended by an influential section of Muslim opinion that the matter should be decided by a reference to the *shariat*. The absurdity of the plea is self-evident, and if it was then put forward as a serious proposition the reason thereof is to be sought in the fact that the political judgment of its advocates was hopelessly clouded by the intrusion of a strong dose of theology. The mixture of incompatibles can only make sad hybrids incapable of bringing forth anything else than rank folly.

If politics is a science, it should be based on hard ratiocination. Mysticism, which is a crude form of religiosity, should therefore have no place in it. Mahatma Gandhi often talks of the guidance of "inner light" in reference to particular states of things. He alone can say what he precisely means by it.

The difficulty sometimes with Gandhiji is that he merely snaps out a conclusion and omits to buttress it up by rational explanation. But in spite of the Mahatma, it should be clearly and definitely laid down that even mystical terminology is not to be allowed to cumber politics, which should be put on the broad track of reason to keep it logical. Spiritualising politics is an unhappy phrase but since it has gained considerable currency, there should be proper caution that it may not mean more or less than it should.

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