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A POLITICAL WEEKLY
 Editor :—SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

VOL I. No. 12

CALCUTTA, SATURDAY OCTOBER 28, 1939

ONE ANNA

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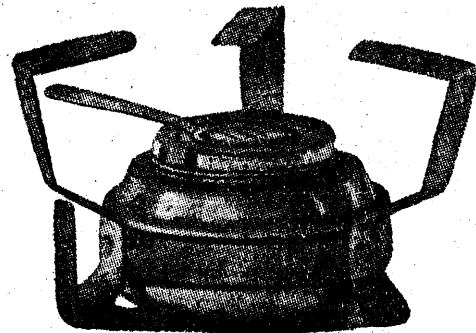
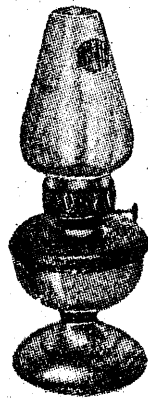
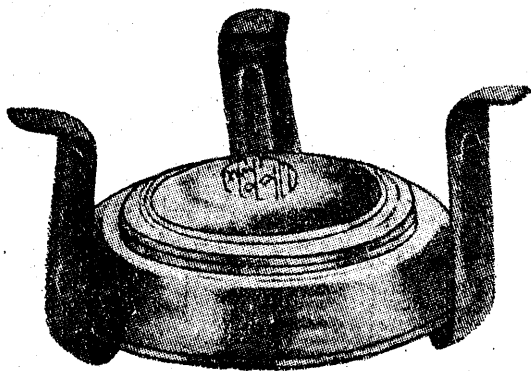


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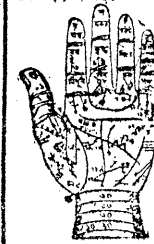
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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28

Heart-Searching

In the life of every nation there come occasions when momentous decisions have to be taken which may make or mar its future. It often happens that on such occasions the final decision has to be made by a few individuals or even by one individual. What would have happened to Russia if Lenin had given a different lead in 1917, is today a matter for speculation or conjecture.

How is this tremendous responsibility to be discharged by those who hold the future of their nation in the hollow of their hands? They have naturally to think and to think deeply. They have to look fore and aft—to consider possible alternatives and to weigh the probable consequences. But even then it may be difficult to decide. Not every leader can make a bold and clear decision when face to face with a crisis. But even if one has that capacity, the human intellect may fail to supply us with all the facts and considerations that are necessary for arriving at a definite conclusion.

We are sometimes told that where reason fails, *instinct* or *intuition* succeeds. The great heroes of history have felt their way through impenetrable darkness and their decisions based on instinct or intuition have been justified by subsequent events.

There is a great deal of truth in this assertion. Within the ken of our limited experience we have seen leaders make striking decisions in crucial moments, being guided solely by unerring political instinct and such decisions have proved to be correct in the light of subsequent developments. Now what is this elusive instinct or intuition? Is it something mystical—something beyond one's comprehension—something which is inborn? To a certain extent it is inborn. The successful painter or musician has a delicacy of touch and a fineness of perception

which cannot be wholly explained by education or training. If he does not start with an innate artistic tendency, he can never reach the heights of artistic excellence. So also in the case of the political fighter. He must have a political sense at the very outset.

But instinct has to be sharpened by training and that training has to be continuous. If instinct or intuition has served as an unerring guide on half-a-dozen occasions, that is no guarantee that it will always do so. Now what is it that can help to make one's political instinct as faultless as possible?

It is absolutely necessary, in the first place, that one should be perfectly selfless in his pursuit. If instinct is warped by selfish considerations, whether conscious or unconscious, it will not lead—but mislead. And when *self* dominates *instinct*, disaster is ahead of us. Consequently, when playing with the destinies of a nation one should endeavour to be as selfless as humanly possible.

Secondly, one should try to merge one's individual consciousness in mass-consciousness—so that the mass-mind may speak through our individual instinct or intuition. This is not an easy thing for the ordinary man. Fortunately, some people can merge their identity more easily in the life of the people than others and they can accordingly have a better understanding of the mass-mind. We know from our own experience that, all things being equal, that leader is more influential, more powerful and more successful who has a better appreciation of mass-psychology. This appreciation is not possible through reason alone, but requires the help of instinct as well.

It is possible to so discipline and train one's mind that one can be in tune with the mass-mind. But this entails continuous effort and vigilance. Imagine a torrential stream breaking through a mountain gorge. Cannot the drops composing that cataract merge their identity in and put themselves in tune with the stream as a whole? Imagine the *elan vital* of Bergson. Cannot the human spirit plunge into the heart of reality and identify

itself with its unceasing flow? Imagine the *Absolute Idea* of Hegel unfolding itself through a world-process. Cannot the individual merge himself in that evolutionary development and thereby comprehend it? Imagine the '*Divine Shakti*' manifesting itself in a kaleidoscopic creation. Cannot the human soul seek to attain oneness with it in thought and feeling?

In short, it is possible for the individual mind to put itself in tune with the mass-mind. But this instinctive or intuitive perception may go wrong and may lead us on to the blind alley of mysticism if we are not mentally fortified with a rational understanding of the evolution of the world and of man. We must therefore, in the third place, have a rational understanding—based on analysis, criticism and extensive study—of history. Where reason fails, instinct can guide us. Where instinct misleads by creating a mystical haze, reason can put us on the right path.

Fourthly, we must have a correct appreciation of international events and developments. We are living in an age when frontiers have, in a way, been obliterated. The world is today one unit. What happens in one corner has far-reaching repercussions throughout our globe. Consequently, even if we are in tune with the mass-mind, even if we have a correct understanding of historical development—we may still go wrong if we lack the international sense.

We are now passing through a most critical period in the history of India and of the world. The All-India Working Committee of the Forward Bloc at its meeting at Wardha on the 8th September and the following days made a momentous decision which was duly conveyed to the Congress Working Committee. Was the decision a correct one? Will it pass the four tests mentioned above? The future alone can give a convincing reply. Meanwhile let us give effect to that decision to the best of our ability. Whatever happens we can certainly claim that we have no other wish, no other desire, but to serve the Cause in the best possible manner.

Subhas Chandra Bose

The Political Prisoners

On October 18 last the Government of Bengal came out with a *communiqué* which recounted the offences and sentences of forty political prisoners in Jails and summed up the position of the Government with regard to the question thus :

Government have now completed their examination of all the cases of terrorist and civil disobedience prisoners which were placed before the Advisory Committee. 149 prisoners have been released unconditionally, 43 have been released or offered their release on conditions, 7 have been granted substantial remission, and in 40 cases clemency has been refused. These figures compare very favourably with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee which were that 146 prisoners should be released unconditionally, that remission should be granted in 15 cases and that clemency should be refused in 45 cases.

So ends the chapter of ministerial consideration of the question exactly two months and a half after the political prisoners in jails had been persuaded to suspend their hunger-strike in order to give the ministry in Bengal a more favourable atmosphere in which they could probably make good their election pledge of releasing the political.

Things have moved apace since the day of their suspension of the hunger strike. Mightier events have overshadowed the political life of the country, and the people, who were impatient to have the political prisoners back to liberty, have also reacted to the fateful happenings that are to make or mar the future of nations. Release of the political prisoners under the circumstances appears to them no longer to be the *only* burning issue that calls for their suffering and sacrifice. The issues have been enlarged; they are at last crystallising into one definite issue of issues, broad enough to encompass all the partial problems and definite enough to leave no room for vague and vagrant idealism to ignore it. This is the issue of War and Indian Independence.

This, of course, does not signify that the difficult question of the release of our political prisoners has, therefore, now receded to the background or can possibly be shelved for the present. On the contrary, we know, the decision of the Bengal Government further strengthens the view we have been forced to take that only struggle, struggle on every front, struggle disciplined and unceasing, can

make the popular will find its way and establish itself.

The Bengal Government had indeed never given any hope for a logical or honest settlement of this question. Words given by its ministers are not made good; pledges are as easily broken by them as their old bureaucratic masters; and 'understandings' have little value with them. For reaction was well-entrenched in Bengal as we saw. This is no surprise. Even in the Congress provinces it began to strike root under a deceptive reformist garb. Congress leadership itself was thrown into its arms without knowing it. No wonder therefore that in a province like Bengal the Huq ministry thought of saving itself only with the help of the European votes in the legislature and European community's support outside. The Europeans are here as the guardsmen of the foreign vested interest and the exploiting system known as Imperialism. They were given by the Imperialist Parliament power and representation proportionate for that object. And they, therefore, now exacted from the Bengal ministry the price for their support for keeping it in saddle. People's will and voice were in consequence suppressed more and more; workers in the cause in the Trade Union movement, in the Kisan Sabha movement or in the Congress, placed under restraints; the grip of reaction in the insidious shape of European influence tightened on the ministry harder and harder. It was evident that the Huq ministry had bartered away its popular aims to the Europeans. In its desperation the ministry sought to hoodwink the supporters of it by banking on the communal passions and jealousies of these ignorant masses. This was designed to cover up the ministry's betrayal of the popular cause to the European vested interest and its hangers on, the Indian vested interests.

The hunger strike of the political prisoners, undertaken when all the efforts of theirs had failed to effect their release in the way Gandhiji had expected, exposed the character of the present Bengal ministry. On this question, there was and could be no two opinions, Hindu or Muslim. But the ministry was, as was known, helpless against its masters, the Europeans of Bengal. They were said to be against the release of some

important revolutionaries. Their case for release was overwhelming as everybody admitted and even the ministers knew. But the Europeans would not agree to that and the ministry found no way to release them.

The hunger strike revealed this cringing ministerial attitude. Even the Muslim supporters of the ministry felt uneasy on its account. Prominent members of it avowed the fact almost openly. The ministry tried to persuade them that it was prevented from having its honest way with the prisoners only because there was a hunger strike on. Pronouncements of the Congress leaders from outside, upholding the orthodox cause of prison, discipline and orderly Government, did not at the hour go to strengthen the case of the prisoners. So, the prisoners were asked to give a further opportunity to their Muslim supporters to test the sincerity of the Bengal ministry. The people outside and the leaders hatched no illusion regarding its upshot. But they nevertheless recognised the advantage of disarming the mistrust of the Muslim friends who still hoped anything from the ministers. They also knew that the case of the prisoners was too strong to be harmed by the suspension of the hunger strike. And they had already pledged themselves to a campaign for direct action if all other means failed to effect the release of the dear sons of the country.

This gesture of good will and honesty, we know, has been sadly abused by the Bengal ministers. They dared not disobey the masters; they feared to challenge the people too. Just at the moment the war came to present them with an opportunity to suppress the popular movements by putting the entire province under a ban.

For the people the duty now is clear and unambiguous. Their decision was made long ago. Now is their time to act.

The people know their answer, the prisoners behind the prison bars are sure of it. Let the Congress leadership, freeing itself from its constitutionalist illusion, give the call.

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Current Comments

Alternative Leadership

For sheer brilliance of the type which beats chameleon, Mr. Fazlul Huq of Bengal had a serious rival in the ex-revolutionary Bengali (or ex-Bengali revolutionary?), Mr. M. N. Roy. "In course of our revolving moon," he can play as many *role* as that character of the English satire. His latest wisdom is worth quoting :

"In an interview to the 'United Press' on the Working Committee's resolution about the resignation of Congress Ministries, Mr. M. N. Roy said that he apprehended ruinous consequences if prestige and emotionalism overwhelmed realistic political considerations. There was no sense in the resignation of Ministries, he added, except as a beginning of the campaign of Civil Disobedience. But experience should occasion grave doubt about the efficacy of that form of struggle. *The best result was possible, he said, from another Delhi pact and another Round Table Conference as the Viceroy proposed.* (Italics our)

Proceeding he asked : Is it worthwhile risking unnecessary repression for another Round in a vicious circle? It is time to realise the futility of cheap martyrdom."

But he has not "concluded" in fact. He has written to the Congress President on an "alternative policy." The experience of three continents, of "revolutionary leadership" in Mexico, Moscow, China and in other unknown lands by the unknown seas, has helped Mr. Roy to formulate a theory of "alternative leadership" against Gandhism. It is the *Viceregal Leadership*. Mr. Roy's is an inheritance of costly martyrdom indeed.

Russian Riddle

For most of us Russia is still a riddle. She is in friendly relation with Germany, we suspect; but she has refused military aid to Hitler, we are told. This is not surprising. It can after all never be the intention of Stalin to gain for Hitler a victory on the British and the French. At most, he might sit neutral, happy in the sight of the warring capitalists working for the destruction of each other. But repeated messages credit him with the intention of pleading for peace. Why, is explained by Sir Strafford Cripps in the *Tribune* of London. Because, so far

SJ. SURESH CHANDRA DEB EXPLAINS THE REASON OF HIS JOINING THE FORWARD BLOC

Sj. Suresh Chandra Deb, who has been appointed organiser of the "Forward Bloc", for the Surma Valley, explaining why he joined the "Forward Bloc" has issued the following statement:—

"I have been an enthusiastic member of the Congress Socialist Party since its inception and even today I remain a firm believer in Scientific Socialism. But circumstances have forced me to resign from that Party. The manner in which the affairs of this Party have been handled during the last few months has shown a lack of foresight on the one side and a spirit of weakness and vacillation on the other. Since the Tripuri Congress we had been expecting a general conference of the Party which would have given the members an opportunity of making their voice heard in the higher circles of the party but in this we have been disappointed. I have been attracted and impressed by the bold dynamic lead given by the "Forward Bloc" and I have, therefore, joined it as a member. I hope that through the instrumentality of the "Forward Bloc" the ultimate consolidation of all Leftist forces will take place and as a result thereof we shall be able to bring about a radical change in the outlook, policy and programme of the Congress. I would not have voluntarily resigned from the Congress Socialist Party and I wish the party had given individual liberty to its members to join the "Forward Bloc". But I am constrained to resign because until I do so I cannot become a member of the "Forward Bloc". As I was elected a member of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and the All-India Congress Committee, on the ticket of the Congress Socialist Party I have resigned from both these bodies as a logical sequence of my resigning from that party. I hope nevertheless that I shall be able to serve my country in the best way possible as a member of the "Forward Bloc"

as Russia is concerned, the Nazis are checked thoroughly. And then Sir Strafford goes on to remind :

"If my supposition is the right one—that the Russians are genuinely seeking to end the war from their own point of view—then it would not seem likely that if, having applied what they consider the maximum of pressure, they fail, they would enter into that war themselves. Whether or not they adopt this attitude will no doubt depend upon the calculations of their expert advisers as to the likelihood of success in such a venture; as would our attitude in the same way depend upon similar considerations."

SJ. SUBHAS BOSE ON PRESIDENT'S ADVICE

Sj. Bose says in a statement issued on Oct 26, last:—"I have already stated that I welcome wholeheartedly the resignation of the Congress Ministries at the present juncture. But resignation by itself may be ineffective and even futile if it is not followed to its logical conclusion. In the light of such knowledge as I possess, I cannot but entertain the fear that perhaps resignation of ministerial office has been resorted to as an isolated event. Until we know the future programme of the Congress Working Committee we cannot have that implicit confidence in it which will enable us to follow blindly the instructions of that Committee or of the President. If the immediate programme is a forward move then only can we pledge our loyalty to the Working Committee. If on the other hand we feel that the official policy is still one of hesitation and vacillation we shall follow our own course of action."

"The working Committee was apprised of our viewpoint in this matter at its meeting at Wardha in September. People of my way of thinking will find it impossible to obey the instructions issued by the President unless they are first convinced that the Working Committee really intends giving a bold lead to the country. At present there is an impression in several quarters that after the resignation of Ministries there is no further programme and that the Congress will keep the door open for further negotiations with the British Government. This impression, if wrong, should be removed at once."

"If real unity within the Congress is desired by the Working Committee then its attitude towards the Left-wing should be revised and the latter should be taken into confidence with regard to the future programme, if any, of the Working Committee. Otherwise it is but natural that the Left-wing will do what it considers desirable in the best interests of the nation."

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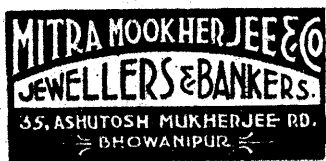
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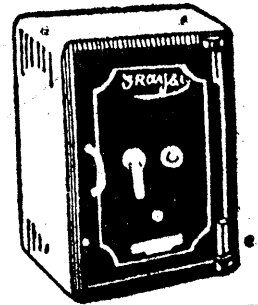
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GLIMPSES OF MY TOUR (1)

Since the formation of the Forward Bloc early in May, 1939, I have toured, though in a rather hurried manner, practically the whole of British India. During the course of this tour, I have passed through a number of Indian States and have addressed large crowds of States' subjects at wayside stations. It is now time to take stock of what I have seen and learnt during the last few months and draw conclusions therefrom for our future guidance.

At the outset I should say that the events and experiences of the last few months have eminently justified the inauguration of the Forward Bloc and nobody can have the shadow of a doubt today that the Bloc has come to stay in order to fulfil its historical role. In what follows I shall endeavour to substantiate this statement.

In most places that I visited I had no co-operation or assistance from Congress organisations or Congress leaders. The exceptions to this rule were few indeed. In some places the attitude of the official Congress was one of neutrality or indifference—but in others, there was hostility, open or covert. In Andhra and Tamil Nad provinces (i.e., Madras Presidency) an appeal was made by the Presidents of the two Provincial Congress Committees asking people to boycott me. Similar public appeals were made elsewhere as well. In other places, as in Gujerat, covert propaganda was carried on and some of my political opponents did not hesitate to calumniate me in the most malicious and unabashed manner. In Patna, provincial sentiment was exploited as far as possible by a group of people and along with shouts of "Long live Gandhism" shoes and stones were hurled. After the 9th of July incident when disciplinary action was taken against me, I was openly proclaimed a rebel against the Congress. There was variety in the propaganda conducted against me by my political opponents. Sometimes they would say that I was organising a new party with the help of anti-Congress elements like the Hindu Mahasabha and Dr. Ambedkar's Independent Labour Party. On other occasions they would

say I had joined the Muslim League. This type of propaganda one could put up with. But what about that scurrilous propaganda carried on secretly from month to month by the votaries of truth and Non-violence against which it was impossible to take action?

In such circumstances and in the face of such obstacles I had to conduct my tour. Moreover, almost all the known leaders, from Mahatma Gandhi downwards, were ranged against me. What credentials I carried with me can be better imagined than described. Nevertheless, from beginning to end, the tour was like a triumphal march. As I moved from province to province, more and more surprises were in store for me. And today it is really difficult to say which province gave us the most enthusiastic reception.

When I resigned the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee in Calcutta on the 29th April, 1939, I took a leap in the dark. Among my co-workers and friends, some approved of it but others considered it a blunder. In making that fateful decision, I was

By

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

guided in the last resort by my own instinct and political sense. It was, however, a pleasant surprise to discover soon after, that through my resignation I had succeeded in rallying public opinion round us to an unimaginable degree. Bengal, in particular, stood solidly behind us and there the Forward Bloc had the best start possible.

But what about the rest of India? I could find that out only by travelling extensively. My first visit was to the United Provinces—or rather to Unao and Cawnpore. At both places, Forward Bloc had a very good reception. Some misunderstanding had been created about the policy and programme of the Bloc by interested parties and through my speeches I was able to remove it. When I left, I felt hopeful that the reaction outside Bengal would be favourable to us.

After U. P.—Punjab. When I alighted at Lahore, there was a seething mass of humanity before me and enthusiastic shouts of "Forward Bloc Zindabad." It was not the Lahore I had visited last year as Congress President. I realised in a trice that Forward Bloc had caught the imagination of the masses. But how did the miracle happen? Who had carried the message of the Bloc to remote

Lahore? No human messenger probably but the cloud messenger of the poet or the time spirit of the historian.

Punjab crowds usually bubble with enthusiasm, but this time I had an overdose of it. I was all the more elated and from there I proceeded to the North West Frontier Province. This was a place I had never visited before and I had no idea whatsoever as to how our Pathan brother would react to the call of the Forward Bloc. One had heard so much of the wonderful hold of the Khan Brothers over the Frontier people that a doubtful frame of mind was but natural in the circumstances. Reports had reached me in Lahore that word had already been sent round on behalf of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan Sahib that the Congress should have nothing to do with me, but I was assured that nevertheless a warm welcome awaited me. As soon as I entered the Frontier Province all doubts vanished. There were huge crowds at wayside stations and Red Shirt Volunteers (or Khudai Khidmatgars) figured conspicuously among them. As we approached Peshawar the crowds began to swell and at Peshawar there was a right royal reception.

I was in Peshawar for hardly a day but that was enough to assure me that

the freedom-loving Pathan could not but be a Forward-Blocer in spirit. The public meetings in Peshawar City and in the cantonment were a great success. The cantonment authorities had banned our

meeting at first, though Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had been allowed to lecture there—but when we resolved to defy the ban, the authorities relented and the order was withdrawn. The discussion I had with Congress workers and sympathisers proved very helpful and we were able to inaugurate the Forward Bloc forthwith. In Mian Akbar Shah Sahib of Nowshera, the Forward Bloc found a doughty fighter and organiser.

After my flying visit to the Frontier Province it was clear that so far as Northern India was concerned, the Forward Bloc could count on enthusiastic public support. It had caught the imagination of the masses and "Forward Bloc Zindabad" was already a mass slogan. But Northern India was not India. The Rightist strongholds were at Bombay, Madras and elsewhere and until they were stormed, no generalised statement could be made for India as a whole. I therefore took the Frontier Mail at Peshawar and went straight to Bombay, where Sjt. K. F. Nariman had been organising the All India Conference of the Forward Bloc.

(To be Continued)

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO ?

.....And heard great Argument
About it and about ; but evermore
Came out by the same Door as I went.
—Rubaiyat.

On September 14, the Congress Working Committee, after profound deliberation issued a statement touching the present situation. Stripped of its artistic verbiage, gist of the statement was that the British Government should declare its war aims, particularly in relation to India, and that India could co-operate with Britain in the prosecution of the war only as a free and equal partner. It appeared that the Working Committee was eager to learn the war aims of the British Government, while trying to unlearn the Congress aim of attaining complete independence. As if Britain's aim was ever in doubt! Britain has launched upon this war only for self-preservation, only to fight German hegemony in Europe and to crush that rising formidable rival, German Imperialism, so that British Imperialism may once again reign supreme on the face of this earth. All this rant about defence of Polish freedom and democracy, about the welfare and independence of all nations, is a smoke-screen, a mere camouflage. Where was all this sanctimonious humbug when Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Albania were successively and successfully invaded? Pandit Nehru albeit he so well understands the maze of international politics, yet talks of a coming "new world order." The last war was waged in order to make the world "safe for democracy". We know how well democracy has triumphed in Europe and and the rest of the world. "The new world order" exists only in Panditji's imagination.

But, as ill-luck would have it, Mahatma Gandhi was, "not now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come." He was unbearably distressed at the appalling prospect of Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament in ruins. He was for offering unconditional co-operation to Britain in her extremity, such co-operation being, however based on non-violence! He was surprised and pained to see that he was alone in holding this view.

To us lesser mortals, who cannot soar to Mahatmic altitudes and to whom the vision of a "new world order" is cruelly denied, all this talk of unconditional co-operation sounds meaningless and futile. There is only one duty, one clear duty, before the Congress: to achieve India's freedom. The Haripura resolution on war and the Tripuri resolution on National Demand were quietly and completely shelved. They remained only "words, words, words." Sardar Patel says that it is true enough Congress used to pass resolutions on war in the past, but then war had not actually broken out. Now the war is upon us, but the circumstances are different. Pray, did the Sardar have another type of war in mind in those by-gone days? Did he then think that British Imperialism, instead of attacking German Fascism, would declare war on India? The circumstances have by no means altered. It is the militant spirit of Congress that had undergone a progres-

By

H. V. KAMATH

sive deterioration. It has of late degenerated from a fighting organisation into a machinery for conducting elections and taking disciplinary action. Leaders are not leading. Instead of giving a lead for which the country was waiting, the Congress Working Committee merely issued a lengthy statement. Gandhiji wrote a postscript to it, showering encomiums on the artist-author and introducing him to the Viceroy and to the British Government, as one with whom negotiations could be amicably carried on. That done, the weak-kneed, vacillating policy of "wait and see" took the field and the initiative passed into the hands of our Imperialist masters.

More than a month has elapsed since the Working Committee issued its statement. During this period, the Viceroy has been enjoying himself to the full, interviewing leaders of the Congress as well as of other organizations. Mahatmaji has seen him twice and may see him for

the third time! At the other end of the scale, leaders even those without a following worth the name, were summoned.

"Thick and fast they came at last
And more and more and more"

That is the only way to mark time. The Viceroy must be heartily chuckling to himself as he takes note of the "differences." The British Government is bound to make political capital out of these differences. Already the British Press has delivered the offensive against Congress. "The Times," that mouth-piece of the ruling clique, has come out with what is tantamount to a challenge to Congress, that it does not fully represent Indian political opinion. This, in spite of Mahatmaji's vigorous retort to Lord Zetland!

So leaders come, see and go. They argue with the Viceroy about this and about that, about Britain's attitude to India and about representation in the Viceroy's Advisory Council that is to be. There is nothing gained, nothing lost. Both parties have a pleasant chat, preceded and succeeded by a warm handshake. And at the end of it all, neither party is any wiser.

We are still awaiting the magnanimous declaration of the British Government just as the *chataka* bird expectantly longs for the first drops of rain! If we wait for a declaration or proclamation conferring freedom, we wait in vain.

The A.I.C.C. met after our leaders had interviewed the Viceroy. Whatever had transpired at the interviews galore was closely guarded as a momentous state secret. The A.I.C.C. was merely ordered to endorse the previous statement of the Working Committee and to fully empower the Working Committee to deal with the situation. It obediently proceeded to do so, knowing very well that "yours is not to reason why." The future was safe in the keeping of the Working Committee. The resolution, as placed before the A.I.C.C. by Pandit Nehru and adopted by it, once again invited the British Government to declare its war and peace aims, to declare India an independent nation and to give

(Continued on page 12)

BHOWANI SEN ON

THE VISION OF ECONOMISM

Comrade Ben Bradley, a communist leader of Great Britain, wrote an article in the *Daily Worker*. Only a small portion of it was reproduced in the *Hindusthan Standard*, of the 21st September. Mr. Niharendu Dutta Mazumdar, General Secretary of the Bengal Labour Party has written a lengthy criticism of that extract in the *Forward Bloc*, Vol 1, No. 10. Reading the extract in the *Hindusthan Standard*, Mr. Dutt Mazumdar has drawn the following conclusion:—

“Mr. Bradley pleads for a *United Front* of the democratic forces to fight German Fascism and calls upon the colonial people to join it.” The author has drawn this conclusion from two extracts quoted by him. They run as follows:—

“In the Dominions, colonies and India, the victory of Herr Hitler would mean domination by Hitler with his race superiority and extremely reactionary conception of colonial rule.”

Here Comrade Bradley distinguishes between two types of colonial rule,—colonial rule of Fascism and colonial rule under imperialism which still retains bourgeois democracy at home. The General Secretary of the Bengal Labour Party says—“this is not the correct Marxist approach to the colonial problem”! We shall evaluate, later on, the merit of this remark but where does the true Marxist find a call to the Indian people to participate in the war against Germany?

In his customary over-enthusiasm a C.P.G.B. leader has turned opportunist, he has used high sounding phrases to convey to the public the impression that a communist leader has asked India to join the war and he, (Mr. Dutt Mazumdar) as the true upholder of Marxist conscience has timely exposed the opportunism. Dutt Mazumdar writes about Comrade Bradley—“He tells us that this war is a war to crush Hitlerism and that India should join the war.” Evidently this words are put into the mouth of Bradley by the author himself. The other passage of Bradley he quoted runs as follows:—

“We are confident that the colonial peoples are deeply opposed to Nazism but we must recognise that their fight is on two fronts to secure victory over Nazism and to win democracy in their own countries. India has an important role to play. Leaders of Indian people recognise that India should suffer if Hitler wins but India's demand for independence stands today and she has the right to be treated on a basis of complete equality. To the degree that democratic rights are extended and the colonies and India are treated on a basis of complete equality, to that extent will the colonial peoples realise the true meaning of the war and their place alongside us.”

Mr. Dutt Mazumdar, has drawn the lesson from the passage that it is a call to

Indian people to join the war against Hitler. Any one who reads the passage will draw one meaning only—Bradley recognises that Indians are opposed to Nazism but they have their own struggles for democracy at home. It is by no means a call for joining the war against Germany but a stern reminder to them who issue such a call that India has two fronts of fight, one of them being waged for their national independence. It is not a call to Indian people to join the war but a warning to those who give such a call that India has the right to be treated on a footing of equality, i.e. as an independent nation if she is to join the war against Nazism. Blinded by his desire to earn the certificate of a true Marxist, Dutt Mazumdar has missed his fire. Like the queen of cards in the wonderland he is threatening. Alice waiving his imaginary sword in the air.

Bradley's expression is: “To the degree that democratic rights are extended and the colonies and India are treated on a basis of complete equality”—has offended Dutt Mazumdar's petty-bourgeois vanity. The latter remarks—“Incidentally, we venture to suggest that the word “treated” is in bad taste and rather smacks of an inferior brand of sub-conscious superiority complex.” Certainly, India's demand for being treated as equal, that is as an independent nation is by no means a fault to be taken exception to.

Comrade Bradley, in course of his statement, has drawn a distinction between two kinds of colonial rules—under Fascism, under imperialism still retaining bourgeois democracy at home. This is regarded by Dutt Mazumdar as “certainly not the correct Marxist approach.” To him all kinds of colonial rules are of the same category. He finds no difference between the semi-parliamentary rule in Canada and South Africa and the military domination in Abyssinia and Manchukuo.

Perhaps Dutt Mazumdar will at once exclaim, “Lo! he is a supporter of domination status, he distinguishes between Canadian and Abyssinian regimes!” He should know that one who draws a distinction between two things based upon reality, does not necessarily support one against the other. There is a real distinction between fascist rule in Germany and the bourgeois democratic rule in U. S. A. One who draws this distinction does not necessarily become a bourgeois democrat. Marxism does not teach us to be blind to realities. Bradley points out the distinction between two kinds of colonial rules to make it clear that India's struggle for her own democracy and independence must not be taken as the manifestation of “Hitler front” as *The Statesman* described it to be.

Dutt Mazumdar himself says “Fascism is the arch-enemy of Socialism.” Does he mean to say that so far as the colonial

people are concerned, Fascism cannot be described as the worst enemy? His blindness to the difference is dangerous in that it may lead him to the blind alley of pleading for a *United front with Nazism* for India's independence and thereby repeat the mistakes of the classical Germanophiles and Francophiles against whom Marx and Engels fought so bitterly.

Let me point out a specimen of Dutt Mazumdar's correct Marxist approach as revealed in his tirade against Bradley. He says—

“We do not, however, see any reason for making revolutionary changes in our idea of world politics, simply because there is war. For, war is merely a continuation of politics by other means.” An excellent lesson for Marxists. War is nothing but the continuation of disarmament conferences and regional Pacts. Both are merely different means of the same politics. Likewise there is no difference one may say, between ordinary trade union demonstration and social revolution, as both are merely different means of same politics. On the basis of this formula, Dutt Mazumdar banteringly attacks Bradley for the offence of drawing a distinction between fascist rule in the colonies and the rule of an imperialist state still retaining bourgeois democratic form at home. Can't Bradley see that both are merely different means of the same ‘politics’? To Mr. Dutt Mazumdar, all politics are levelled like a plane ground, he refuses to see differences in different political situations. To him all politics are of the same type. This is nothing but the superb lesson of Economism which treats trade union politics on a par with socialist politics. Dutt Mazumdar looks upon the world as a genuine trade unionist; nothing makes any difference to him until and unless it has an explicit and direct bearing upon his day to day trade union work. To a trade unionist, limiting his vision to the confines of collective bargaining among employers and employees, there is no difference between the politics of disarmament conference and the politics of world war, between fascist military rule in colonies and limited civic rights under bourgeois democratic imperialist state. Neither comrade Bradley nor an Indian Communist will ever say that there is no difference to the Indian people between a Popular Front Government in Great Britain and Mosley's dictatorship. While they always stand and fight for India's complete independence consistently and stubbornly, they cannot at the same time remain blind to differences as they interpret politics not as ‘trade-unionists’ but as ‘communists’

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RUSSIA LOOKS AHEAD

—By BENYO GHOSE

We do not quarrel over the mutilation of facts about the deeds and policy of the Soviet Union by the Western Press as it has no alternative but to do it. But it is a matter of great regret that our Nationalist Press has been consistently piping the monotonous tune on the moves of the Soviet Union which the reactionary press of Europe has been doing since the conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. Here are some facts for the perusal of our Nationalist press.

Poland

On September 18 the copies of a note which were communicated to the British and French governments by Russia contained five chief points: (1) "The Polish government has disintegrated and no longer shows any sign of life. This means that the Polish state and its government have, in point of fact, ceased to exist." (2) "Left to her own devices and bereft of leadership, Poland has become a suitable field for all manners of hazards and surprises, which may constitute a threat to U. S. S. R." (3) "The Polish people have been dragged into war by unwise leaders." (4) "The Soviet government.....cannot view with indifference the fact that the kindred Ukrainian and White Russian people, who live on Polish territory.....should be left defenceless." (5) "The Soviet government propose to take all measures to extricate the Polish people from the unfortunate war into which it was dragged by its unwise leaders and to enable it to lead a peaceful life."

The first three of these points are simple statements of facts which are even corroborated by "Daily Herald" and "The Times" of London. "Daily Herald's" diplomatic correspondent wrote on Sept. 18 that: "The members of the Polish government, now in Rumanian territory, cannot by the terms of neutrality, function as a government." "The Times" correspondent wired from Zaleszczyki on September 17 that: "The Polish front has collapsed completely" and on September 19 "The Times" diplomatic correspondent wrote that "by the time that the Red Army entered Poland Polish resistance,

outside a few areas, had collapsed or was collapsing." So, the Soviet statement of facts is correct. The Polish resistance had collapsed, the Polish state had disintegrated and the Polish government had ceased to function when the Red Army entered the Polish territory. The passing of Poland to the hands of the Nazis will undoubtedly mean threat to Soviet Russia. That is the second point. As regards the third point, Polish government refused to accept Soviet help and it rejected the proffered Soviet help because it was a semi-Fascist dictatorship.

The fourth point is the political reason deduced from the actual facts, why Soviet Russia occupied Polish Ukraine and White Russia. This the Soviet Union must do for its own defence and the defence of the "defenceless" White Russians and Ukrainians. It must be remembered that the Curzon Line indicated the British view in 1920 of what was the legitimate Eastern Frontier of the newly created Polish State and Marshal Pilsudski took the White Russian and Ukrainian areas East of the Curzon Line in flagrant defiance of the Allies by a brutal war of aggression. The White Russian and Ukrainian peasants have been ruthlessly exploited by the Polish landowners since then and it is no wonder that they will rejoice now when the Soviet authorities are dividing up the landowner's estates to the peasants and introducing the collective farm system.

Finally, the fifth point, that "is the proposal of Soviet Russia "to take all measures to extricate the Polish people" from the war and "to enable it to lead a peaceful life," does not mean helping Hitler organising a military dictatorship in "Polish" Poland. Hitler will have to build up some sort of puppet government with the help of the ultra-reactionary and pro-Fascist elements in Poland. That means the movement for the emancipation of the Polish people will take the shape of an underground revolutionary movement blended with the class-struggle of the Polish workers and peasants against their Fascist autocrats. That means the revolutionary movement will gradually

accumulate sufficient strength to overthrow the superstructure of the Fascist government and to lay up the foundation of a democratic government, a government for the people, of the people and by the people of Poland.

Balkan and the Baltic States

The Soviet Union has now stolen the wind out of the imperialist sail in the Balkans and the Baltics. The action of the Soviet Union in Eastern Poland has immensely enhanced its prestige among the Balkan and the Baltic states. Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had so long pro-Axis bend which was strengthened by the partiality of Great Britain and France with their hasty conclusion of pacts of Mutual Assistance with Rumania and Greece. The success of the Soviet Union in the Eastern Poland has turned the course. Bulgaria is now eager to enter into a friendly agreement with the Soviet Union. Already its export trade has been brought under the control of Moscow. The Yugoslav Government is also looking up to Krenlin and now that the vexing Serb-Croat dispute has been peacefully settled, it is expected that its foreign relations with the Soviet Union will be favourable. Hungary, an honest member of the Anti-Comintern Bloc, has changed its policy. The Horthy Government, since its establishment some twenty years ago after the suppression of the communist movement in Budapest, has been diligently maintaining the pro-Fascist policy. Today Hungarian policy is avowedly anti-Fascist and the Hungarian Government is anxious to come to an understanding with Soviet Russia. Rumania is the only country in the Balkans which has been anti-Fascist despite its internal autocracy and it is not likely that it will stand aside the *Balkan Bloc* created under Soviet guidance. The Turkish Foreign Minister, M. Sarajoglu, discussed with the Soviet Government the possibility of turning the Non-Aggression Pact into a Pact of Mutual Assistance and of closing the Dardanelles. M. Sarajoglu has returned, not being disappointed or annoyed at the excessive pressure of the Soviet Union, but to confer with his

(Continued on page 14)

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO ?

(Continued from page 8)

present application to that status to the largest possible extent. Mind the tail! Who is to decide what would constitute "The largest possible extent"? I daresay, the Viceroy acting on his own, or at best, in friendly consultation with the Congress War Sub-Committee over a cup of tea!

Apropos of the meritorious resolution passed by the A. I. C. C. Gandhiji has remarked that its merit lies in not fixing any time-limit for the declaration of the British Government. In all humility I must submit that this is its greatest demerit. Congress has no desire to act "precipitately" and wants to give the British Government every opportunity. So our masters need be in no hurry and we shall await their pleasure, in the meantime carrying on as best as we may!

Mahatmaji also talks of a majority in the A. I. C. C. for the resolution. Did he not say, only a few months ago soon after Subhas Bose's re-election as Congress President, that majorities and minorities had lost all meaning on account of bogus membership in Congress?

Subhas Babu issued a statement after the A. I. C. C. meeting criticising the weak and vacillating attitude of the A. I. C. C. Pandit Nehru is reported to have laughed over it. I ask, what is more laughable, setting at naught the vital decision of Congress or implementing those decisions in all sincerity and strength? Not so very long ago, Panditji similarly pooh-poohed the idea of an ultimatum to the British Government. Had he seriously considered it, fully taking into account the international tangle, and got the Congress to accept it and act up to it, we would not have been in this sorry plight today. He laughs best who laughs last!

Lastly, there is the "ethical" objection to resumption of the struggle for our independence at his juncture. We should not exploit Britain's difficulty for our own advantage, says Gandhiji. So long as our means are peaceful and legitimate, we will not be violating our creed our principles by making a bold bid for freedom here and now. It is only as a free nation that India can determine her attitude to the present war. The problem is neither moral nor immoral; it is a-moral. Our goal is the attainment of national independence by all peaceful and legitimate means. How did the British themselves conquer us, if not by taking advantage of our internal weaknesses?

P. S. The Working Committee had met again. The Viceroy has "let down" the Congress leaders. The Congress Ministries have been asked by the Working Committee to resign. "In the circumstances like the present a bald neutrality," says Pandit Nehru, "is an almost impossible proposition." Let us hope we shall not have to wait for another clarification of British aims before we choose to decide upon our course of action.

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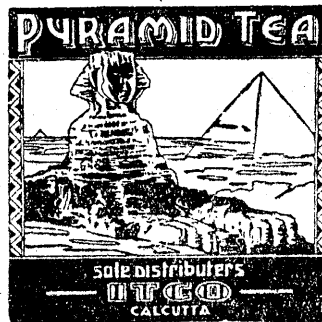
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THE TURKISH TREATY

—By GOPAL HALDAR

The return of M. Sarajoglu from Moscow without any new agreement and the signing of the treaty of alliance between Turkey and Britain and France are likely to give a further new turn to the politics of the Balkans and the Near East. It undoubtedly records a victory for British diplomacy and, when one remembers how that diplomacy has fared in its efforts during the last few years of "peace," one must see in this success a promise for a new start on its more fortunate career in the coming months of war. Perhaps, war will suit its conditions better. The last Great War proved this triumph of British diplomacy. It brought the world down upon Germany, it seduced Italy from the side of the Central Powers to that of the Allies, and it finally turned the scale beyond doubt when Woodrow Wilson's idealism joined itself to the war efforts of the Allies and in their professions to create a 'new order' out of the chaos, a World Federation based on the self-determination of nations. In the present war too British diplomacy may regain its old art and repeat its old successes. The Treaty with Turkey is perhaps the opening chapter of that eventful history and closes the period that ends with Berlin-Moscow agreements of August and September.

If the Turkish agreement is a gain for the Anglo-French diplomacy it is difficult to know how far it is a rebuff for Moscow or a defeat for Berlin. The importance of Turkey is quite apparent. Istanbul has a historic past in the annals of civilisation. Diplomacy wove its net around it for generations until a new Turkey and a Revolutionary Russia were born and the old glamour of St. Sophia was worn away by the changing politics and military requirements. But the straits still held the key from the Black sea to the Mediterranean for Russia, Bulgaria, Rumania and their neighbours; and Turkey still could prove the real gateway from Europe to Asia, from the Balkans to the Near East, from Berlin to Baghdad, or anywhere else. And as a new Fascist Power was born in the Mediterranean, the importance of Turkey became self-evident, especially when the Dodacanese islands and Albanian shores became the shelter for Italian ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus, Turkey by her very situation was marked out for the Big Powers—to be courted into alliance if she was strong, to be

yoked into subordination if she was weak. These are the powers—Russia from Odessa, Germany through the Balkans, Italy and Britain—that all had an eye on Turkey as the mistress of the Bosphorus, as the deciding factor in the politics of the Balkan and the Near East, and, also, as the great watchman of the Eastern Mediterranean.

A healthy restraint was put on all the contending powers when Kemalist Turkey came into its own at Lausanne. The Turks were in friendship with all from a respectable distance. Only Soviet Russia as the consistent friend of their dark days counted for more. Turkey began to rebuild herself while Europe began to break into rival camps of 'Haves' and 'Have-nots.' A five-year plan began to remake the industrial and commercial life, extend the lines of communication from Sivas to Erzerum, and build docks and naval bases on the Black Sea, on the Mediterranean and on the Sea of Marmora. Skilled direction and capital from outside had to be borrowed, but the Turk would encourage only indigenous resources. So, Turkey was laying the foundation for a modern State, with modern industrial equipments, which alone enable now-a-days a power to pull its moral strength in peace and war.

When Europe was sliding back to the jungle laws, Turkey at Montreaux in 1936, entered an agreement opening the straits. British and French naval units up to a certain tonnage were given the freedom to enter the Black Sea, while the Russian navy from the Odessa was allowed now the free right to emerge into the Mediterranean. The Montreaux agreement thus allowed Franco-British alliance a way to the Balkan; especially Rumania, when it opened the Mediterranean world to the Soviet. The latter was welcome there by the British and French; for about that time 'unknown' pirate attacks had made their merchant shipping in the region unsafe, and, the Spanish coast was the happy hunting ground for Italian and German naval units.

That right and privilege of the Soviet has not been revised or repudiated by the recent Franco-British-Turkish Treaty. It definitely reserves that any provision of the Pact would be invalid if it operated against the Soviet. This is positive, and, the Soviet, therefore, sees nothing in the present Treaty that signifies a rebuff. But the language of diplomacy cannot hide the fact that Soviet expected an agreement with Turkey as the war began and as it went on pushing back the German ambition from the Baltic to the Black Sea. What exactly were the Moscow terms offered to M. Sarajoglu is not known. Certainly, the closing of the straits to the Anglo-French navy would mean a hindrance

to the Allies, an advantage to German ambitions in Rumania or Near East, but it would mean equally, a great initial success for Soviet diplomacy in the Balkans and the Near East. The quick and lightning victory of Stalin had unnerved his enemies so far that the regions appeared to be open to him—and opening to him the further march to victory,—when this Turkish Agreement with Britain and France comes as a set back. M. Stalin has to pause at the Bosphorus; he has to pause at the Gulf of Finland too. Has he been too rapid for his aims or does he want not to win for Hitler a closed Dardanelles which might revive Nazi ambitions against Moscow in Rumania and the Balkans again?

The Turkish Agreement, however, had its repercussion. At Sofia the Government failed. The Balkan which after the German influence was replaced by the Soviet, was about to veer round the Soviet, now halted on the pan-slav path. The Balkans appeared now to be gathering round two great Powers—Italy and Britain. Jugoslavia thought more of Italy, and, Bulgaria was not sure which way to look. British influence was steady in Rumania and Greece, and now firm in Turkey that accepted a loan of £60 millions for internal development. It was given out that the check to German influence was a satisfaction to Italy. This friend of the Nazis resented the Communist connections of Hitler. And arrangement with Italy for marking out distinct spheres of influence for Italy and Britain was considered to be welcome to Rome. But the recent attack of Signor Gayda in the *Giornale d'Italia* on the Turkish Treaty is uncompromising. Italy, no less than Russia, is an enigma in the present circumstances. It remains to be seen how British diplomacy woos it during the present war.

The Turkish Treaty has not reconciled Italy, it seems; the Treaty has consolidated British position in the Near East, in the Mediterranean, in the Black sea regions. It has ensured her position with the Muslim powers of the world, with Egypt, Palestine, and particularly with Iraq, Iran, and Afganistan with which Turkish relations are very close and friendly. So far as the Near East is concerned Britain can be more at ease now. And, when one remembers the ambitions of Mussolini in the Mediterranean and the Near East, one can realise why the Treaty means a rebuff to him also,—a rebuff that any offer of a Balkan 'sphere of influence' may not counter-balance.

The Turkish agreement is thus a victory for the Allies and a set back for the ambitions of the other big powers who are interested, as we saw, in Turkey.

RUSSIA LOOKS AHEAD

(Continued from page 11)

other colleagues in the Ankara Cabinet. M. Sarajoglu himself has said that the door of negotiations with Russia is still open and Ankara's traditional cultural unity or other good-neighbourly relations with Kremlin has not in the least been injured. Thus the prospect of a Black Sea Pact with Soviet Russia has not faded out.

One of the fond dreams of Hitler was to convert the Baltic Sea into a "German Lake" as his axis-partner Mussolini dreamt of converting Mediterranean into an "Italian lake." With that end in view Hitler tried to bring under his control both the Scandinavian and the Baltic Bloes. He met with strong rebuffs from Norway and Sweden, though the Baltic States, particularly Esthonia, yielded to some extent. Had Hitler been successful he would have controlled the Gulf of Finland and Russia's only northern outlet to the Sea would have been blocked. Now the Nazi diplomacy has been thrown overboard and all the Baltic states,—Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania,—have entered into Pacts of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. The Baltic States have willingly offered suitable sites to Russia to create air and naval bases and to concentrate Soviet troops. Finland is hesitating due to the pressure of the Scandinavian Bloc. The Scandinavian States—Denmark, Norway and Sweden,—are unnerved because their neutrality is endangered and their trade interests are hampered. They like that the Baltic should be free to maintain trade relations with Germany and other countries. That is why they intend to fortify the Aaland Islands. Russia wanted to gain control over these islands from Finland for its defence and now it will agree to come to an understanding with Finland avoiding dissension. Russia would not ask for the Aaland Islands on condition that other Powers do not fortify it. Finnish Foreign Minister has again started for Moscow and it is expected that the issue will be settled this time. Thus the Baltic States have been saved from the menace of Fascism.

The Soviet Policy

To save Europe from the clutch of Fascism, to establish people's governments in states where Fascism holds sway, to enable the people of Europe to lead a peaceful life, and above all, to socialise as much portion of Europe as possible for the greater interest of humanity,—these are, in short, the prime factors which guide the policy of Soviet Union. That is the policy of the Soviet Union. That is what Stalinism stands for. That is how the policy will be worked out. Is there any thing mystic in it?

38/2, Elgin Road,
Calcutta, 12th May, 1939.

I am glad to know that some congress workers whom I know personally, with co-operation of well-known Zemindars and Merchants of Midnapur have floated a Cotton Mill under the name and style of "THE MIDNAPUR COTTON MILLS LTD." at 12, Dalhousie Square.

There is plenty of scope in this province for at least a dozen new Cotton Mills. Consequently an enterprise of this sort will fulfil a long-felt want and at the same time help to relieve the present acute unemployment to some extent. I wish this venture all success.

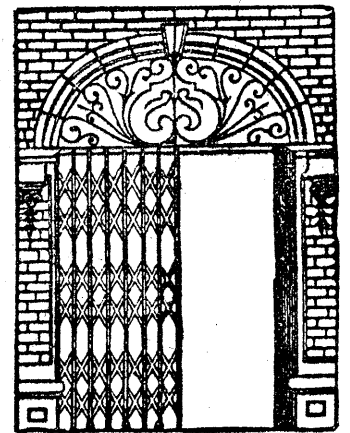
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THE PROBLEM OF INDIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS

By PARIMAL KUMAR ROY

The Viceroy's announcement of October 7 last, defining Britain's war objectives as also the aim of British policy in India has, as was expected, traversed the familiar and trodden path of British diplomacy. It indulges in glamorous phrases bloating up insignificant matters with a view to overshadowing the real and fundamental issues. In response to the Congress Working Committee's invitation to 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, and how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present," the announcement that has been made by the Crown Representative is not only vague but full of irrelevancies and worn-out sentences which failed to carry convictions in the minds of the Indian people as early as two decades.

The aim of the British policy in India is naturally shrouded in ambiguity. But what strikes us most is that even Britain's war objectives are not yet clearly defined, and that every reason is put forward to show that such definitions in the early stage of the war is not only impracticable, but unwise too. If the war, as we are told, is being fought for principles, we, for ourselves, still remain to be convinced of the reasons why the war objectives cannot be clarified even after the war has been fought for nearly two calendar months. In the absence of a declaration, as the Congress has demanded, in unequivocal terms of the war aims of the British Government and of their immediate application in India and other subject nations, how can Britain convince the Indian people that the war is being waged for no material advantage to herself? That we are not casting doubts in the aim is evidenced from the fact that the Viceroy's announcement has even shaken the faith of Mahatma Gandhi, perhaps the greatest well-wisher of Britain in this country, in her genuine intentions of entering the current war. If an individual or a nation values certain principles and even is said to have invited a life and death struggle to uphold those principles in certain spheres or regions,

it passes our comprehension how can he or it be a party to a negation of these principles in other spheres or regions.

Our doubts are greatly intensified also by the recent statement made by the British Under-Secretary for foreign Affairs in the House of Commons. Asked as to whether the references to aggression by a European Power in the agreement of mutual assistance signed between Britain and Poland on August 25 last were intended to cover aggressions by other Powers, including Russia, the Under-Secretary replied in the negative. He said that the Agreement, it was understood between the Polish Government and His Majesty's Government during the negotiations, should cover only the case of aggression by Germany. If Britain is looking ahead "to laying the foundation of a better international system," how can she make discrimination between aggression by two different Powers? We are not acquainted with the secret clauses or understandings, if any, that might accompany the Anglo Polish Pact. But reading between the lines of the Pact we are left with no doubts about its generality. An aggression, after all, is always an aggression no matter whoever the aggressor might be.

As regards the Congress demand as to how far the British Government are going to apply in India the principles behind their war aims, the Viceroy has not inadvertently omitted any references to the principles of democracy or of justice or of the right to self-determination, and has simply referred to the Preamble to the Act of 1919 and the subsequent reiterations by different British statesmen at different times of the pledges contained therein.

The Preamble to the Act of 1919, which embodies *in toto* the Declaration of 1917, runs as follow :

"Whereas it is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration, and for the gradual development of the self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire :

And whereas progress in giving effect to this policy can only be achieved by successive stages,

and it is expedient that substantial steps in this direction should now be taken :

And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples :

And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility :

And whereas concurrently with the gradual development of self-governing institutions in the Provinces of India it is expedient to give to those Provinces in provincial matters the largest measure of independence of the Government of India, which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities."

We quote here the entire Preamble as in it the British Parliament have once for all ordained the destiny of India. Mark the italics which are our own. The Preamble which derives its validity from being incorporated in an Act of Parliament nowhere mentions the term Dominion Status as the ultimate goal of British policy in India. As an introduction to an Act of Parliament which miserably failed to meet the Indian demands itself could not be a satisfactory piece of document.

True, that in order to win over the moderates and the liberals of India and to play them against the extreme nationalists, renewals and restatement of pledges, to which the Viceroy refers in his announcement, have been made from time to time. Thus, the statement of H. M. The King Emperor, read by H. R. H. The Duke of Connaught, on the 6th February, 1921, to the new Indian Legislature contained the words :—"For years, it may be for generations, patriotic and loyal Indians have dreamed of Swaraj for their Motherland. To-day you have the beginnings of Swaraj within my Empire, and the widest scope and ample opportunity for progress to the liberty which my other Dominions enjoy." The same point is emphasised in the revised Instrument of Instructions from H. M. The King Emperor to Governor General of India, dated March 15, 1921, which states :—"For above all things it is our will and pleasure that the plans laid by our Parliament... may come to fruition to

the end that British India may attain its true place among our Dominions." Again on October 31, 1929, the object of British rule was explicitly reaffirmed by Lord Irwin, when, speaking with the full authority of the then British Government, he said that it was "implicit in the declaration of 1916 that the natural issue of Indian constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status". The concluding words of the Prime Minister at the final session of the First Round Table conference in January, 1931, also declared:—"Finally, I hope, and I trust, and I pray that by labours together India will come to possess the only thing she now lacks to give her Status of Dominion amongst the British Commonwealth of Nations—what she now lacks for that—the responsibilities and cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the pride and the honour of responsible self-government." Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, as head of the National Government, confirmed the statement of policy made in 1931 in the words—"My colleagues fully accept the statement of January last as representing their own policy." Finally, the same has been reiterated also by Sir Samuel Hoare, the late Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons on February 6, 1935, on behalf and with full authority of H. M. Government. The Viceroy, too, confirms these pledges.

But in view of the doubts expressed at the time when the present Government of India Act was passing through the different preparatory stages as to the exact import of these pledges by Mr. Churchill and other British politicians, who even went to the length of arguing that Dominion Status meant something different from that which it was understood by Indians at the time to mean, and that it did not involve the grant to India of a status equal to Australia or Canada" and, further, that "Dominion Status is only a distant remote goal which it is not practicable to take into consideration in any period of which human beings need take account," the above pledges even failed to satisfy the moderates and the nominated representatives of Britain from India. Hence the Indian Delegates (?) to the Joint Committee on the Indian Constitutional Reform stated in their Memorandum to the Committee *inter alia*: "Indian public opinion has been profoundly

disturbed by the attempts made during the last two or three years to qualify the repeated pledges given by responsible Ministers on behalf of H. M. Government. Since it is apparently contended that *only a definite statement in an Act of Parliament would be binding on future Parliaments, and that even the solemn declaration made by H. M. The King Emperor on a formal occasion is not authoritative*, (italics ours) we feel that a declaration in the preamble is (of the new Act) is essential in order to remove present grave misgivings and avoid future misunderstandings." If even a solemn declaration made by H. M. The King Emperor on a formal occasion is not authoritative, then all the above mentioned explanations and reiterations of the pledges including the latest one pronounced by Lord Linlithgow stand on very insecure foundation. It was for this that the Indians nominated to speak for India before the Joint Committee demanded that the new Act should have a Preamble clearly defining India's final status. But, as we know, the British Government were not prepared to commit themselves further by a fresh Act of Parliament and pointed out that the Preamble to the Act of 1919 had laid down the ultimate aims of Britain in India. The result was that the old Act was repealed minus its Preamble and the new Act went without any Preamble. The head of an anthropoid ape was severed from its body and was joined with that of a modern man. A constitutional freak of the British statesmanship indeed!

Apart from the later declarations, it is necessary to analyse the Preamble to the Act of 1919, at least in some of its aspects. Dominion Status, as an express or implied term, is nowhere mentioned in it the only significant word is to be found in the first part, the insertion of the word "responsible" before the "government means that India would have an Executive wholly responsible to the people of India in the same sense as the British Cabinet is to the people of Great Britain through the House of Commons. This form of executive is prevalent in other Dominions. It is an indispensable factor to India's attaining to the status of a free associate in the Commonwealth of Nations. But, because of this very importance, the British Government in the Chairman's Draft Report submitted before the Joint Com-

mittee gives as different meaning to the use of the term "responsible government" in the Preamble. It runs as follows:—"By a responsible government we mean a form of government in which the executive is in some sense (our italics) accountable to the legislature" and, again, "self-government and responsible government are by no means the same thing. We use advisedly the expression 'in some sense accountable' lest we should be thought to advocate the adoption in India without qualification of the parliamentary system which obtains in the United Kingdom." Here the wind is taken out of the sails of those who wish to reach the goal of Dominion Status by the faulty crafts of the Preamble to the Act of 1919 and of the good will of our rulers. There can be no clearer Statement than this and Lord Linlithgow, as the sponsor of that Draft, must have remembered its true import. Mr. Attlee's Draft produced as a substitute before the Joint Committee Stated: "We feel that nothing could be more unfortunate for the creation of a fruitful partnership between peoples of this country and India than that *words understood in one sense should be subsequently explained away and given a different meaning*" (our italics).

Thus the single word used in the Preamble to the Act of 1919 which might naturally be construed to imply a Status of the Dominions for India (even Prof. Keith, the eminent British constitutionalist has admitted it, *cf.* his Preface to the 'Constitutional History of India') has been sought to be explained away in a novel way. And the subsequent declarations, although they mention that the final aim of the British policy in India is the attainment of Dominion Status, we have already seen, are of doubtful strength. That we are making no airy contention is further proved from a passage taken from the amendment moved by the Marquess of Salisbury in the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The amendment begins as: "It is unnecessary to discuss how far there have been pledges by this country to carry out a policy of self-Government in India or how far these have been conditional, because the Secretary of State on behalf of H. M. Government has stated that the reference to Joint Committee leaves the recommendations it is to make unreservedly in its hands." By, thus, giving plenary powers to the Committee the pledges were

rendered unimportant, as the Committee was authorised to recommend anything irrespective of these pledges. However, the last straw was put by Lord Linlithgow himself in his amendment moved from the Chair before the Joint Committee which declared *inter alia* that, "in the Preamble to the Act of 1919, Parliament has set out, finally and definitely the ultimate aims of British rule in India. **Subsequent statements of policy have added nothing to the substance of this declaration.**" It is strange that Lord Linlithgow in his capacity as Viceroy has sought to bring home to the Indian people the significance of these very statements. It is no wonder that under these circumstances, the Congress should have demanded not merely a declaration of the aim of British policy in India, but the immediate application to a great extent of that policy.

Moreover, the Preamble to the Act of 1919 provides that "the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament." This is indeed, the negation of the principle which was even recognised by the British Government (vide Chairman's Draft Report before the Joint Committee, p. 16) themselves that the constitution must contain within itself the seeds of its growth. Elsewhere we find in the Chairman's Draft Report: "There is no date or time-limit mentioned in the Preamble, and on this aspect of the matter, Parliament is bound by no pledges, and is free to make its own decision. It can grant the demand (for self-government) or it can reject it as premature and unwise." Does this lead to Dominion Status? The Statute of Westminster gives almost Sovereign powers to the Dominions. By that virtue of that Statute, a Dominion Legislature can pass all laws, both constitutional and ordinary, even if they contravene any Act of British Parliament or any order or rule made thereunder. Even a Dominion can modify by its own initiative and power unilaterally its relation with Britain. Ireland is a typical example of this. Hence, if the British Government really wished that India is to attain to the status of an equal partner, she should have avoided the lengthy phrases and have clearly stated that the Statute of Westminster would apply to India without reservation from the moment of that declaration. **Although such a declaration**

will not fully satisfy the politically conscious section of India whose objective is complete independence. However, that would have made a great way to prove the sincerity of the British purpose.

We need not dwell on, to unnecessary length, the jingle of constitutional phrases. There is no secret about the aims of Britain in India. The Congress wanted to know if there was a change in mentality. But the latest official announcements show the common thing that an Ethiopian can change his colour only after death. It is unfortunate that the British Government have so far been unwilling to pay a not undue cost for India's valuable help

demand by the Congress and, thus, throw away the arms of co-operation held out by Gandhiji. By laying unnecessary stress on the minority issues, they have failed to meet the real need of the hour. No body knows what is in store for us in the future. But, above all, we must remember one of the rare and valuable passages that have of late gleamed forth out of Gandhiji's pen. "Independence is not dependent upon the British or any one else's mercy. It will come when the people are ready for it. Evidently British statesmen think that the people of India are not ready. (Reported in "The Statesman" Oct. 22).

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BOOK REVIEWS

Society and Its Development: By Revati Burman. (Marxist Study Course, Vol I.); National Book Agency, 72, Harrison Road, Calcutta.

Nothing probably can equal in extent the popular inquiry on Marxism. In many cases it is the sign of a mere curiosity. But frequently we meet with earnest spirits who want to know and understand what Marxism means. As often we come across people whom the tangled growth of the present day socio-economic life puzzles and who vainly searches for a key to its present and a key to its future. Ready made answers to the same are available from many quarters; but none except many probably makes any attempts to understand and explain society and its riddles on a realistic study of everything about it and tries to form on a scientific basis what might be called a *weltanschauung*. The very scope of the Marx's study, which was encyclopaedic in charter however, baffles many students who would learn from him what our society signifies. And as the Marxist is a propagandist by creed, he never neglects the duty of popularising his theory. But at times there are no great success, as so many attempts regarding *The Capital* show.

In India, they had to work with some English or American publications. These were difficult to secure in India. The Socialist Publishing House in Agra came forward to meet the situation. The entry of the present publishing with the scheme of a course of 12 volumes of cheap, concise and simple introductions to cover up the entire field is therefore welcome. They are to be congratulated for securing the service of Com. Revati Burman, a recognised and through going scholar of social sciences, for this purpose. Com. Burman, has mastered the technique of popular writing as students of his books in Bengali know.

This first volume of the course traces the origin and development of society in nine short chapters.

From primitive society through clan communism and commodity production to capitalism and the socialism,—everything is covered in a masterly manner and, the beginner is sure to find here an introduction that will help him on his way to proceed with his study.

Unreservedly we must compliment the writer on one thing. The book does not leave much scope for his scholarship to prove itself. But none but a thorough master of the subject could be so lucid, clear and precise in his expression. The style is eminently simple and direct. It will answer the purpose for which the volume is meant.

(BENGALI)

Socialism—Scientific and Utopian by F. Engels. Translated by Dr. Bhupen Dutta and Krishna Goswami,—Price Re 1-4 as.

Communist Manifesto—Translated By Krishna Goswami, Price 6 as.

Published By Burman Publishing House, 72, Harrison Road, Calcutta.

The books under review are Bengali translations of the original works of Marx and Engels. "Socialism—Scientific and Utopian" and "Communist Manifesto" are really the books which should form the basis of all studies on socialism and communism and as such, they have a claim to be constant companions of those who are interested in the subject. Bengali literature is miserably poor in translations and it is surely a happy sign that these invaluable works have drawn our attention for their popular representation. These Bengali versions will serve a great purpose by

making available these important works of Marx and Engels in our own plain and simple language. We believe that wide sale of these books will further encourage the translators to their duties.

Patrika—(A Bengali Monthly) Edited by S. Biram Mukhopadhyaya. Price 4as Per copy. Annual Subscription Rs 3/- Published From 13, Debendra Ghose Road, Bhawanipur, Calcutta.

We are reviewing this Bengali monthly on ground of its special attractions and with a view to bring them in the notice of Bengali readers. We have a host of literary journals in Bengal and the craze of progressivism is driving the literary enthusiasts to publish papers through which they can express their emotions in their own ways. These are undoubtedly good signs, but the emotions and their expressions, almost in all cases, are cheap and flabby. "Patrika" is out, driven by no such craze, but inspired by the honest desire of catering good literary articles, short stories and poems to the readers. Among the contributions of the issue under review the articles of Dilip Roy, Jaminikanto Sen, the short stories of Jyotirmoy Roy, Achintya Sen Gupta and Jagadish Gupta deserve attention and praise. We congratulate the capable Editor for his careful selection and genuine literary taste and strongly commend the paper to the Bengali readers for its regular perusal.

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Letter To The Editor

League of Radical Congressmen

Its Propaganda Role Examined

To

The Editor, Forward Bloc

SIR,

As an independent observer not belonging to any Party, I write to you this letter and request you to publish it in your esteemed paper. I am very sorry, that some responsible members of the League of the Radical Congressmen are carrying on baseless propaganda that the Forward Bloc has no programme different from the official Congress group. It cannot be believed that these leaders of the L.R.C. have not read the Programme of the Bloc, which is based on full support to the Freedom movement, and to the Peasants, Workers and the States Peoples' struggles, and which demands among other things that politics be freed from mysticism and religion, and that the Congress be freed from the influence of the vested interests. **These are the things which the Rightists detest.** The Forward Bloc programme has laid a solid foundation for the Revolutionary Leadership of India.

It must be said in fairness to the C.S.P. and the National Front group that they recognise the comprehensive programme of the Bloc. The "National Front", the official organ of the National Front group, the other day accepted this fact, though it advised the C.S.P. and National Front group not to join the Bloc as members. It is also open to these L.R.C. members to advise their friends to join or not to join the Bloc. But they must be fair in politics.

Please allow me to remark, that I have very carefully gone through the published programme of every left Party. I had heard tall talks regarding the "Alternative Programme" of the League of Radical Congressmen. But I must say, that it was the L.R.C. programme which totally disappointed me. One may find some high sounding phrases in its manifesto, but on the concrete issue of the programme it is clearly stated, that the L.R.C. accepts the programme of the official Congress. Therefore if the charge of having no programme can be levelled against any organisation, it is the League of Radical Congressmen. I may mention one thing more. The League not only says that it will have no other programme than that of the official Congress, but it also unconditionally accepts the discipline of the Congress. Let me write that the discipline of an organisation in practice frequently is another name for its policy. According to the Congress constitution, disciplinary

matters are primarily the concern of the Congress Working Committee. Therefore, the L.R.C. accepts the programme, the policy and the leadership of the Working Committee.

I congratulate the Forward Bloc supporters on the great restraint that they have been exhibiting inspite of the worthless attacks of the Radical Leaguers. Every impartial observer shall have to admit that the Bloc has placed a radical Programme before the Nation. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Forward Bloc supporters and their sympathisers constitute now a majority in Provincial Congress Committees. They are a force to be felt in almost every province of India. Some prominent L.R.C. leaders explain this to be due to the anti-High Command feelings. These Leaguers may think, that they are ridiculing the Forward Bloc in this way, but they are really paying a tribute to it. The Congress High Command represents, a certain programme and a certain policy. The primary causes of its unpopularity is that programme and policy. The suggestion that the Forward Bloc's popularity is due to anti-High Command feeling amounts to a confession that the Forward Bloc has a different programme and policy. I may add that the Bloc is the symbol of the aspirations of a Nation struggling to be free.

Some members of the L.R.C. are making much capital out of a speech of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramya in which the doctor is reported to have said that Subhas Babu accepted Gandhiji's leadership provided Gandhiji followed Subhas Babu's lead. If this sentence shows any thing, it is that even Dr. Pattabhi had to accept that Subhas Babu's differences with Gandhiji are not personal but are based on fundamental principles, and that Subhas Babu can accept the leadership of Gandhiji or anybody else provided there is agreement on principles. I make an earnest appeal to the Leaguers concerned to give up misinterpreting things. While accepting the programme and the discipline of the Congress, they have formed a party known as the League of Radical Congressmen. Still they have the courage to slander the Forward Bloc by alleging that the Bloc has not a programme of its own, and that, therefore, it should not exist. Firstly, the League having no programme of its own, such an assertion cannot be made by any of its members. Secondly, the Forward Bloc has a programme and policy of its own.

The Forward Bloc has justified its exenceist by its actions. In every Province, the Bloc members are boldly championing the Left cause. I may compare with them "the role of the Bengal Branch of the League of Radical Congressmen with the approval of their all India Body." The Leaguers in Bengal have been and are playing directly into the hands of the Rightists and the opportunists. They were loudly claiming that their opposition to the Leftists was from the Left and was based on principles of Democracy. Perhaps their Ultra-Leftism and principles of Democracy consisted in having an Election Tribunal enjoying the confidence of 28 per cent members of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee only. Where have their Ultra-Leftism and principles of Democracy gone now. There is another aspect of their Bengal attitude. I take it that they do not oppose the Forward Bloc and other Leftists in Bengal simply for the sake of opposition. It seems that they realise the implication of their actions, because they have said many a time that the opposition should always be prepared to take up the responsibilities of Leadership. It is, therefore, clear that they want to replace the present Leftist leadership of Bengal by an "Alternative Leadership" consisting of Gandhi-ites and famous opportunists.

Before I conclude, allow me to mention a welcome change that has come in the politics of the members of the League of Radical Congressmen. Most of them did not believe till last year in the ideas of the formation of the Parties in the Congress. Now they have become members of the League of Radical Congressmen, which is a party though they may say that it is not. It has a General Secretary, a number of Secretaries and an executive Council, which takes decisions for the guidance of the members. The membership of the League is conducted by certain rules and it has branches at some places. It is definitely a party. But this is not enough to meet the needs of the time. If its members want to play their role in bringing about a Revolutionary Leadership they must shake off all their shyness and become part and parcel of the Left Movement and the Left Consolidation. They should immediately support like, the Forward Bloc people, a concrete Radical Programme. Let me hope that by the term "Alternative Leadership," they do not mean occupying some high positions in the Congress with the help of the Rightists and the opportunists as they are trying to do in Bengal; but they mean the leadership of the Revolutionary forces in the country. If they mean the latter they must sincerely co-operate with the anti-Imperialist organisations and forces that are working in the country. Let them realise once for all, that Revolutionary leadership cannot come out of nothing.

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"I visited the Sakti Oushadhalaya Dacca, to-day and was very kindly shown round the premises. Indegenous medicines are prepared here on a large scale and in accordance with Ayurvedic principles. The institution reflects great credit on Babu Mathura Mohan Chakravarty, whose enterprise has brought Ayurvedic medicines within the reach of the poor. I wish all success to the institution which he has built up after so much enterprise and hard labour for a long period. The success of Sakti Oushadhalaya, Dacca, means the popularity of Ayurveda throughout the country and this in its turn means the relief of suffering humanity."

Props :—Mathuramohan, Lalmohan, and
 Phanindramohan Mukhopadhyay Chakravarty }
 Sd/- Subhas Chandra Bose.
 Dacca, 6-6-1939.

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