

Danger Ahead

FORWARD BLOC

A POLITICAL WEEKLY

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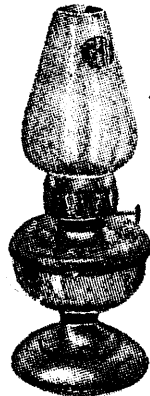
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SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

Danger Ahead

In our last issue we drew attention to the latest move of the Congress Working Committee viz., their demand for a Constituent Assembly. Neither the idea of, nor the demand for, a Constituent Assembly is an innovation. The Congress has repeatedly referred to it in its resolutions. But the form of the present demand and the manner and the circumstances in which it is being put forward is a novelty and an undesirable novelty at that. And the most dangerous feature consists in the fact that this demand has slipped in unnoticed as a virtual substitute for our National Demand for Purna Swaraj. As a piece of political strategy the move is undoubtedly a master-stroke and will confound a large number of Congressmen, including Leftists, who may not be extra-vigilant.

In order to comprehend fully the dangerous character of the above move, we should clarify our minds as to what a Constituent Assembly really signifies. It means no doubt an Assembly elected for the express purpose of framing a Constitution. But who is to convene this Assembly? When and under what circumstances should it be convened or should it actually meet? How will effect be given to its decisions and by whom? These are pertinent questions to be answered in connection with a Constituent Assembly.

When the idea of a Constituent Assembly was first mooted by the

Congress, those who have some knowledge of History and Politics naturally inferred that the idea was to have the Assembly convened after the conquest of power, following a national struggle. After a successful fight when power would be transferred to the representatives of the people, they would form the National Government, or the Provisional National Government. This Government would summon a Constituent Assembly for framing a Constitution for the people. Under the aegis of such a government actually in power after a successful struggle, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for mischievous agencies, Indian or alien, to frustrate the object of the Assembly in any way. But what will happen if the present demand is fulfilled by the British Government now? The Constituent Assembly will be convened by the British Government. It will be elected on the basis of separate electorate. It will meet under the aegis of the present Imperialist Government. There will be no guarantee that the decisions of the Assembly will be given effect to by the British Government and it will be a glorified Debating Society. The floor of the Assembly will become, moreover, the battle ground for all the communal forces in the country. The present Government standing in the background will be in a position to do all the wire-pulling that they consider necessary. Unless a miracle happens, the squabbles within the Assembly will end in a complete deadlock and the Assembly will prove to be abortive. The British Government will then point their fingers at the Congress as the author of the tragedy and they will take credit for the fact that they responded to the Congress demand unreservedly.

What answer will the Congress be able to give in such a predicament?

No, this move is a most dangerous one and we can only hope that the Government for reasons of their own will not agree to it. If they do, then the Congress will land itself in disaster.

For the man in the street it is difficult to understand how the Congress Working Committee could put forward a demand of this sort at this juncture. It has agreed to separate electorate, knowing what its consequences would be. It has not demanded that there should be a prior announcement that the decisions of the Assembly would necessarily be implemented by the British Government. Consequently, even if the Assembly arrives at some agreed solution, it will be open to the British Government or the British Parliament to review, revise or alter it, as in the case of the Round Table Conference on India.

Indications are not wanting that this demand has a reasonable chance of being accepted by the British Government. And why not? They do not stand to lose but to gain therefrom. Messengers from Great Britain who have recently visited India have pleaded with the Congress authorities for a postponement of the struggle. They have also held out hopes that the British Government would be in a position to come to some settlement over the Indian issue within the next few months and that even conservative opinion is veering round now. In normal circumstances, this sort of allurements should fall flat on a nationalist leader, but not so in the case of the present Working Committee who are anxious to find any excuse or justification for postponing the struggle *sine die*. In future, we

shall probably hear of more messengers coming from Great Britain with frequency and regularity.

There is another practical consideration which should further open our eyes to the danger that is ahead of us. After a victorious struggle the leaders of the nation always emerge with tremendous influence and prestige and are therefore able to guide the public and shape public opinion. The public, too, develop so much confidence in the leaders that it almost amounts to blind faith. In such circumstances, it is the leaders who can influence and control the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly and it then becomes impossible for mischief-mongers or reactionaries to frustrate the purpose of that body. A Constituent Assembly to-day as demanded by the Congress will most surely become a platform for intrigues and manoeuvres. It is extremely doubtful if there will be any individual or organisation with so much influence and prestige as to be able to guide and control its deliberations. Among Congressmen themselves, the Rightists being in charge of the Congress machinery to-day, will be returned in much larger numbers than the Leftists. If through good luck, a settlement is reached, the greatest common measure of agreement will be determined not by the most progressive but by the most moderate opinion. Considered from every point of view, therefore, the demand for a fake Constituent Assembly should be repudiated in the most emphatic manner.

While on this subject, we are reminded of a scene when the Constituent Assembly was meeting in Russia after the Revolution of 1917. It was a large gathering composed of all shades of opinion opposed to the Tsarist regime. The

Bolsheviks, who were the most progressive group there, were in a hopeless minority. The heterogeneous Assembly was swayed more by platform orators and doctrinaire revolutionaries of the Kerensky type. The Bolsheviks watched and waited till they were convinced that nothing fruitful would come out of it. They then left the Assembly and ordered its dissolution. What followed is now history. The Constituent Assembly died but the Revolution lived what would have happened if the Bolsheviks had stuck to the Constituent Assembly, one could easily imagine now.

In the case of the Russian Constituent Assembly, there was little or no danger from foreign agencies. The Bolsheviks only apprehended that Mensheviks, moderates and reactionaries would dominate the Assembly and manipulate the deliberations in their own way. Hence they felt called upon to dissolve it.

The Irish analogy is even more relevant and interesting than the Russian. After the Great War, when the Irish people—and particularly the Sinn Fein Party—were showing fight, the then Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Lloyd George, tried a similar experiment. He called upon the Irish people to frame their own constitution through an Irish Convention—an Irish variant of the Constituent Assembly now demanded by the Congress Working Committee. The Sinn Fein leaders, who were more clever and far-sighted than our own, left the Irish Convention severely alone and continued their work outside. The Convention met and debated for sometime, but in the absence of the Sinn Fein Party it proved to be a farce. The Convention broke up; the Sinn Feiners continued the fight and what freedom Ireland won was the result of their efforts.

Let us lose no time in raising our voice of protest against this dangerous move of the Congress Working Committee and let us repudiate the proposed Constituent Assembly in advance, while there is time to prevent its inauguration. And let us tell the Committee plainly that if they are unable to lead the country along the path of struggle, the least they can do is to refrain from adopting such harmful and dangerous tactics.

Sethuram Sankaranarayanan

THE INDIAN PROBLEM

Under the caption "Our Indian Problem" the *Manchester Guardian* writes a longish editorial article to plead with the Government of Great Britain to come to an "agreement with India". The organ of British Liberalism has earned a reputation for being "pro-Indian" in its attitude towards India and in its approach of Indian problems. The sentiments expressed in the article under discussion are laudable, specially its candid admission that "the Moslems, no less than the Hindus, are impatient of the continuance of British rule." Its plea for a final Indian settlement however is induced by motives which, though quite honourable for an Englishman, should serve as a warning to the Indian nationalists. Reformist or revolutionary, a final Indian settlement is welcome to both. There can be nothing repugnant in the idea of Swaraj by peaceful consultation. But any "agreement with India, so far as Indians are concerned, can only be on the basis of a recognition of Indian independence. The *Manchester Guardian* does not plead from the inherent justice of the Indian demand for

independence but argues from the point of view of a bargain in which Great Britain will be on the winning side. The present moment is the most opportune time for Great Britain to negotiate "a final Indian settlement."

Because, "*Congress is inclined to accept a reasonable basis for the negotiation of a final Indian settlement.*" If the Government of Britain pursue a policy of drift, Indian nationalism will "shake off its present pro-British leaders and put itself in the power of rasher and less scrupulous men" and the Government will be "faced with the alternative of forcibly repressing a nation-wide agitation of the Indian majority or surrendering to its threats of violence without regard to the rights of minorities."

Let us give another extract from the article of the *Manchester Guardian* :

"Our vested interests no doubt, give us ground for anxiety. But that is perhaps a reason for choosing this moment to come to an agreement with India, when India is unusually friendly disposed to us and when she feels that in these dangerous days she may need our support no less than we need hers. The present danger may teach her too, to approach the problem of defence with caution."

We invite our readers to closely examine the quotations we have inserted from the editorial article of the *Manchester Guardian*. Great Britain has been looking for her chance for a final Indian settlement. The reasonable attitude of the present Congress leadership is an inducement. Before long the present pro-British leaders of the Congress may be shaken off, and leadership may soon pass into the hands of rasher men. A settlement now will considerably safeguard

Britain's "vested interests" because "India (that is, to say, the present Congress leadership) is unusually friendly disposed to Britain. All this is a warning to Indian nationalism. It should see that a settlement with Britain with all Britain's vested interests intact may not be made possible. Indian nationalism should also guard against the pro-British leaders sabotaging the demand for Purna Swaraj.

We have already noticed how the present Congress leadership quietly dropped the demand for independence and substituted the demand for a Constituent Assembly. The *Manchester Guardian* has pleaded with the Government of Great-Britain that in this Constituent Assembly was their chance. "In a Constituent Assembly under the supervision of the British Government, with the Viceroy concerned to make it a success" the British Government will have a determining part to play. A Constituent Assembly under the aegis of the British Government "would be another all-parties Conference" which will either decide nothing or leave things to be decided by British arbitration. Let us not fall into the trap.

CURRENT COMMENTS

Leader or the Country ?

Who is greater, the leader or the country--this is the question that Dr. Rajendra Prasad virtually posed before the Nagpur Provincial Congress Workers' Wardha Camp recently. The reply that he himself put forward could be anticipated readily. The arguments, if they are so at all, by which he sought to buttress up his conclusion, have even lost the grace of novelty by repetition for no less than

a thousand times. Dr. Prasad has said with a sense of boastful complacency that "he is criticised for blindly following Gandhiji but he is not ashamed to do so, as his experience reveals that he has always gained a good deal, instead of losing." But he has conveniently forgotten one thing: not only he but the whole country gained when the General, true to his vocation, led struggles and did not raise a specious smoke-screen to befog the national vision. The "constructive programme" has been before the country for no less than twenty years and it may be said with truth that it has never been carried out to the extent that the Mahatma would wish. But still he did not shirk fights. Besides, during this long period, the country has much sobered by "experience". Large sections of people have lost faith in the magical potency of charkha as a weapon in national fight. The General has been failing to tune himself up to the moving spirit of the country. Is it still up to the nation to keep waiting for the General in this fateful hour of its history? Or, should it forge ahead to its goal? Our answer too, like that of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, is too apparent to call for its fresh statement once again.

Finland

There is much confusion in press and among people as to the nature of the struggle that is going on in the Arctic region. *Reuter* has been informing us since the outbreak of hostility that the Red soldiers are dying and thawing in thousands and Mannerheim's White Guards are steadily breaking through the frontier to Russia. Great Britain, France, and America from across the Atlantic, like the spectators of a cricket gallery, are

clapping and cheering up the pupils of Mannerheim for their wizardly knock-outs. But amidst these turmoils and lying propaganda the real issue remains clouded as it has always been before.

The issue is clear. The People's Republic that was set up in Finland under M. Kuissinen has not been recognised as legal by the Mannerheim-Tanner gang, the agents of European imperialists. The war is between the Finnish people and this reactionary ruling clique of Finland. Russia is bound by the Pact of Mutual Assistance to help Finnish People's Government. That is Russia's role in this conflict and it can fairly be compared with the role of the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. The superiority of the Red Army is a widely accepted truth and even a child cannot be caressed to believe the mischievous propaganda of the *Reuter*. We are getting *communiqués* almost daily from Helsinki, but where are the *communiqués* from Leningrad or Moscow? Or the one-tenth of the globe has totally been devastated by a small gang of a tiny island? Not Reds, but Truths are the casualties in this war.

Presidential Address of the Science Congress

The Science Congress has now concluded its annual session at Madras. The Presidential address of Mr. B. Sahni was, strangely enough, a hymn about the imperfections of science. The President revealed the mystic strain in his nature when he said, "The student of science lives in a world of fragments. Nothing in that vast array of visible things that we call Nature appears to our restricted vision as a complete picture. True Artist that he is, the Creator never reveals the whole of His design at once." Mr. Sahni, among

the scientists today, does not stand alone with his mysticism; he can count within his fold such distinguished names as Jeans, Eddington and others. They are pitted against an array of equally brilliant names, who believe in the omnipotence of science as a solvent of the riddle of the universe. And when the masters controvert each other, the layman finds himself into a veritable wilderness. It may be that the advancing science will finally be able to resolve the mystery of life; or at the end of journey—if there be an end of it—it will still find itself staggering before the immensity of the riddle. In the meantime the search has to go on, not in a spirit of dogmatism, but with humble inquisitiveness. The President's timely reference to the "ignoble ends" to which science has been harnessed today, will find an echo in every heart. He might have proceeded to say that only a radical change in the basic relations of society could end this awful travesty of science.

Students and Politics

The address that Mr. Muqimuddin Farooqui delivered as the Chairman of the Reception Committee to the All-India Students' Federation Convention at Delhi, contains much gold but some alloy too. The programme of work that he set before the Convention has undoubtedly many good points in it, but we think he gave a good deal of his case away when he advised the students "to talk less of politics and take up seriously the work of strengthening their organisation." The theory that the students should keep away from politics has now hardly any ground left to it on which it can continue its stand. As a matter of fact, in all the advanced countries of the West to-day, the students have formed the vanguard of the political phalanx. If such is the case

in free countries, the necessity of students' participating in politics in dependent ones is all the more greater. Politics is bound to be the life-breath of people in lands in bondage, and there is no reason why the students, with all their youthful idealism, should be deprived of the high privilege of getting into the thick of it. We are not, however, sure if the Chairman forbade "talking" as being antithetical to "doing", for, elsewhere in the address we find that he counselled the formation of study circles in schools and colleges "with a view to creating political consciousness among students." His address may naturally give rise to confusion; so it is better that he should make a further statement for clearing his position.

Check on Profiteering

It was only the other day that the Government of Bengal fixed up the prices of various commodities. But the wily traders have managed to torpedo the official plans and are having their own unscrupulous ways. By resorting to various subterfuges they have screwed up the prices of many articles, specially the food-stuffs. It is needless to say that the abnormal rise in prices has pressed hard on the people at large; but the poorer classes are being mercilessly fleeced by it. Reports have been pouring in from villages that the dealers there are exacting any prices they like from the stricken customers. Cannot the Government do anything to enforce the schedule that they have fixed, not only in towns but in villages as well? Already serious disturbances have broken out in certain places due to the present rise in prices, and if they go on looking up unchecked, more of them are likely to follow. For, it is merely a truism that hunger is no respecter of laws.

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Celebrate "INDEPENDENCE DAY" Befitting Kisans

The Independence Day, the 26th of January, is fast approaching and lest it be celebrated formally like a number of previous years, the Kisans, their workers and sympathisers and the Kisans' organisations throughout the country must awake betimes and observe it in a truly Kisan way. It has achieved an importance and significance of its own, owing to the Imperialist World War and also to the renewed and sustained efforts on the part of the Zemindars, their likes, the monied men and their mainstay, not to allow, as far as lies in them, any rest or relief to the famished Kisans of India. There is a well-organised move on their behalf to suppress mercilessly the ever-increasing restlessness and power of resistance in the Kisans, with a view to condemn them to a life of dreadful despair in perpetuity.

Hundreds of the Kisans and their beloved leaders are still rotting behind iron bars, not as politicals, but as so many criminals, being treated inhumanly, and the powers have turned a deaf ear to all the protests against it.

Then there is this devil of the European war creating an all-round havoc. On the one hand, the Kisans are forced to buy all their bare necessities of life at prohibitive prices and there is no serious endeavour to stop this ferocious loot. And, on the other hand, there is no guarantee of proportionately high prices for the agricultural products. Rather there is every attempt to keep these prices at the lowest possible level, as is evident with regard to jute, sugar cane etc. Thus the Kisans find themselves between the devil and the deep sea.

And the problem of the deliverance of the Kisans and the masses of India from the political, economic and social bondage has receded as though to the background because of the stalemate created by the attempt and move of our national leadership for a compromise with those who are responsible for our triple bondage. They have turned their eyes to the Whitehall and Delhi instead of to the Kisans and other masses as heretofore and thus created a terribly soul-killing atmosphere.

It is against this background that we are to celebrate the Independence Day this year. This unholy alliance to stunt deliberately the growth of the Kisans, the studied and colossal indifference to our demands regarding Kisan prisoners, the anarchy in the prices of commodities and this political stalemate and swing to compromise—all these must be put a stop to and the Kisans must assert themselves on the 26th January by declaring that they are going to tolerate all these no longer. Monster meetings, giant rallies and huge processions should be arranged that day as far as possible, in full co-operation with other bodies and associations, in every nook and corner of the country and more particularly in the provincial and district headquarters, cities and towns and for these, preparations should start in right earnest from now. I hope and believe that Kisan comrades and our organisations will not be found lacking in their efforts to make it a glorious success.

Sd/- Swami Sahajanand Saraswati

FORWARD BLOC

News

BRANCH TO BE FORMED AT MANIKGANJ

With a view to devise ways and means to organise a subdivisional branch of the Forward Bloc, meeting of the Leftist workers (Congress) of the subdivision was held on the 26th December last. A resolution was unanimously adopted appointing Messrs. Chandra Nath Saha and Pramatha Nandy as joint organisers to take necessary steps to organise a subdivisional branch of the Forward Bloc as early as possible. Another resolution was also unanimously passed electing an Advisory Committee to render all possible co-operation to the organisers in the task and empowering the Committee to co-opt additional members not exceeding one third of the total strength of the Committee.

PABNA FORWARD BLOC

Unions being formed

As yet ten Union Forward Blocs have been formed throughout the district of Pabna by the consistent efforts of S. Surendra Sarkar, A. I. Secretary, Pabna District Forward Bloc, and some more will be formed very soon. The places where Union Bloc have already been set up are noted below :—(1) Ruppur (2) Sujanagore (3) Masundia (4) Puran Bharenga (5) Raninagore (6) Dapunia (7) Prannathpur (8) Lakmi Kunda (9) Dasuria (10) Sahapur.

MR. ANNAPURNAIAH'S HOUSE SEARCHED

The residence of Mr. M. Annapurniah, member, All India Forward Bloc Working Committee was searched at Rajahmundry by the Local Police, on the 20th December last. But nothing incriminating was found, and nothing was seized. The search lasted for an hour, the Police throughout, being scrupulously polite and courteous.

HABIGANJ FORWARD BLOC

In a meeting held on the 17th November last a branch of the Forward Bloc was formed at Habiganj with Mr. Sibendra Chandra Biswas as President and Kusum Ranjan Chowdhury as Secretary. The total number of members on the executive Committee is twenty-one.

Moscow's Foreign Policy

By Benoy Ghose

In an after-edit article in the *Hindusthan Standard* of January 3, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia criticises the leading article in the *National Herald* of the 23rd December. The *National Herald* has been assailed by Dr. Lohia on ground of its deviation from the policy of non-violence. The deviation is revealed in the defence of the policy of the Soviet Union, which the Allahabad Daily has been consistently doing since the outbreak of war. Pandit Nehru too has not escaped the flings of Dr. Lohia because the policy of the *National Herald* which is largely responsible to Pandit Nehru, runs counter to the policy Panditji propounds. After explaining the principle of non-violence and the philosophy and outlook of life involved in its acceptance, Dr. Lohia, led by a pernicious casuistry, discovers in Soviet Russia the violation of international law, morality and freedom.

As regards the principle of non-violence and its philosophical implications, it is not worth-while to discuss it here at length. If non-violence is a creed which is un-changeable,

if it is an absolute standard for assessing the value of human conduct and if it is beyond application to different stages of society, human beings have nothing to do with it. Non-violence is certainly not something which is not amenable to reason. If it is, it is a defence-mechanism of a neurotic, not a human ideal. Non-violence as an ideal of human society, every true socialist would welcome. Every true socialist likes that the world should get rid of violence, jealousy, hatred, slavery and instead amity, goodwill and freedom be established. So, every socialist would strive for the realisation of the ideal of non-violence. But for that realisation he shall have to pass through several stages and lift up the social level. Human society must be raised to such a high standard where the ideal of non-violence would no more seem to be a chimera, it will be not something foreign and incomprehensible to the spirit of man and society. Ignoring these basic conditions, it is sheer foolishness to judge the value of

human conduct by non-violence, as if it is a barometre dropped from heaven. It will evolve out of the struggle of human beings towards higher and higher forms of society. It will naturally emerge as a triumph of mankind over irrationality and injustice and it cannot be super-imposed from above. It is an ideal of man, will be evolved by man and realised by man in course of man's incessant struggles through every stage of society, amidst different situations and for the fruition of the ideal the social soil must be sufficiently fertile. Dr. Lohia in his arguments for non-violence, falls in the vicious trap of the Gandhians and his socialism is, therefore, the socialism which the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangha prattle about. Let us now examine other discoveries made by Dr. Lohia.

Dr. Lohia writes: "Is there compulsion in any situation whatsoever for single course of conduct? There was no compulsion for Soviet Russia to conclude her Treaty with Germany or to conquer Poland or to invade Finland." It is a childish question and as such its reply ought to be given in a way which is comprehensible to a child. There are compulsions in situations where a single course of conduct is inescapable. Suppose a person is

DR. RAMMANOHAR LOHIA'S CASUISTRY

surrounded somewhere by a gang of hooligans, what will he do? If he is weak, he will allow himself to be kidnapped, beaten and murdered by them. If he is strong enough to defend himself, he will surely try to resist them, fight out and defend himself. Can Dr. Lohia suggest any alternative course of conduct? Let him think out and answer.

If he cannot, the argument becomes quite simple. Yes, there was compulsion for Soviet Russia to conclude her Treaty with Germany, sovietise (not "to conquer") Eastern Poland and to help (not "to invade") Finland. Egged on by Great Britain and France, the reactionary feudal ruling class of Poland refused the help of the Red Army and thereby willingly welcomed war against Germany rather than peace with the help and under the leadership of the Soviet Union. And the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, which was concluded on the basis of the Rapallo Treaty, was a fitting reply of Soviet diplomacy to the diplomacy of Anglo-French imperialism. Eleven million Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians were saved from Nazi menace and freed from the feudal shackle of the Polish ruling class. As regards Finland, Dr. Lohia may remember that when the young Soviet Russia, in the years after the end of Great War, was fighting against the interven-

tionist armies of the Allied Powers, General Mannerheim, Finland's present Commander-in-Chief, was allowing the use by the Allies of her ice-free port, Petsamo. Since then Finland has been a pawn in the imperialist game of the Allied Powers. In 1936, Finland offered Petsamo to Germany. In 1938, without consulting Soviet Russia and encouraged by Great Britain and France, Finland decided to fortify the Aaland Islands. The League then intervened at the request of the Soviet Union, and the matter was temporarily suspended. This short historical background may help Dr. Lohia to understand the Soviet-Finnish dispute. For the safety of Leningrad and for avoiding an attack from Finland on the Northern Front, Soviet Russia proposed that Finland should sign a mutual assistance pact with her like the Baltic States. The Mannerheim-Tanner gang, like the Beck-Pilsudski group of Poland, refused to sign the Pact. So, the only alternative, or the only 'course of conduct' for Soviet Russia in the situation, was to set up a People's Republic in Finland with M. Kuissinen as Premier and to conclude with the Finnish People's Government a Pact of mutual assistance. This much Russia did. The Mannerheim-Tanner gang did not recognise the People's Government and so

declared war. Russia is pledge-bound to help Finnish People's Republic and she is

helping the Kuissinen Government to win over the Mannerheim-Tanner gang. It is not Russian invasion. It is Russian assistance to Finnish people and Stalin's birth-day message to Kuissinen reveals the Finnish struggle as a civil war. Will Dr. Lohia consider these facts and in the light of these facts reconsider his judgment?

Dr. Lohia writes: "Has Russia acted well and wisely? The answer of the *National Herald* seems to be yes. But there the background of a world that is 'awearying of the methods of violence' and is slowly recognising the worth of rules of international morality has to be given up. If that is the background against which Soviet Russia has worked, she has gone against the world current and has, therefore, neither acted well in the cause of world freedom nor wisely in interests of her own security." It has been proved beyond doubt that Soviet Russia has acted "wisely" in interests of her own security and "well" in the cause of world freedom. Will Dr. Lohia refute the foregoing facts and arguments? Dr. Lohia has not suggested any alternative course of conduct for the Soviet Union. Will Dr. Lohia suggest a possible course of conduct for the Soviet Union in the given situation with an eye to her safety, when the nations are drifting irresistibly towards a second Imperialist War?

States' People's Movement

Mysore is again in the throes of a political struggle. For a third time in quick succession within a couple of years a wave of unrest has swept over the land; and a people known for their gentle and law-abiding nature have risen in revolt against administration which they seek to change. Thousands have been defying the laws and courting arrests, detentions, fines, imprisonments, police excesses and all other sufferings incidental to Civil Disobedience. Several hundreds have been convicted and sentenced, some of them to long terms of imprisonment; and even as I write near about a thousand are still behind prison bars.

Why is this unrest all over a land known for its peaceful atmosphere. From the Kolar Gold Fields to Narasimharajapura, from far off Davanagore to the southern borders of Mysore City the entire state is seething with discontent. And it is not communal or a non-Brahmin revolt as the Dewan says. It is general and National. Brahmins and Harijans, Lingayats and Vokkaligars,

the establishment of the Mysore University, with the bold industrial and commercial policy of Sir Seshadri Iyer and Sir M. Visweswara Iyer, with the increasing inflow of political ideas into the State and with the natural and dynamic repercussions of the political activities in the British Indian Provinces, came an awakening among the people of the State who desired political advancement for themselves. The then Dewan Sir Albion Banerjee constituted a committee on Reforms; and in accordance with the recommendations certain reforms were granted. This was in 1924.

Fifteen years have now gone by and tremendous changes have taken place both in and outside Mysore in the political ideology of the people and it is idle to expect the people of the State to submit to old time traditions and sit with folded hands. The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms stated: "Hopes and aspirations may overleap frontier lines like sparks across a street. There are in the native States men of like-minds to those who have been active

By K. T. Bhasyan, (Bangalore.)

abuse of power attracts to itself criticism of growing strength. Nor can it be expected that developments in British India should fail to have their effect upon people of the States. There is abundant evidence that ere-long a similar standard of administration will be demanded which it will be impolitic and dangerous to deny." Lord Irwin spoke in 1931 and very prophetically too! The demand has come in Mysore and the present administration in contrast to previous administration is opposing it. We can only repeat the words of the Viceroy that the attitude of the Government of Mysore to the demand of the people is both impolitic and dangerous. Former Dewans were adjusting the administrative machinery to the times; but Sir Mirza Ismail appears to be too conscious of the imagined defects of democracy to allow Mysore to break on that rock.

He spoke the other day at Madras of his numerous achievements. No one will grudge him the satisfaction arising from it. But one may ask in the words

PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE IN MYSORE

Kurubars, Vaisyas, Maharattas, Mohamadans all are in it, and it is not confined to any class or section of people.

It was not so till a few years ago. In 1881 long before the Indian National Congress was organised in British India a wise and sagacious administrator, Dewan Rangacharlu secured the establishment in the State of a popular Representative Assembly to enable the people and the administration to come together and decide upon the ways and means of advancing the interests and welfare of the people. In 1907 another far-sighted administrator Dewan V. P. Madhava Rao got a Legislative Council established in the State for enacting laws and for discussing the State Budget. Still another Dewan made the official service easily accessible to the people to secure redress of grievances. District Boards, Municipalities, Village Panchayats, Economic Conferences, Standing Committees and the like were all established for the increasing association of the people with the administration of the State. With

in spreading new ideas. We need not conceal our conviction that the processes at work in British India cannot leave the States untouched." It has come true. The reforms of 1919 declaring Responsible Government as the goal, the declaration of the 20th August 1917, the Civil Disobedience Movements, the Gandhi-Irwin pact, the Round-Table Conferences, the Simon and the Butler Commissions the Government of India Act of 1935, the capture of the Legislatures by the Congress and the subsequent working of Provincial Autonomy by Congress Ministries have all awakened and galvanised the intelligent and cultured people who demand not merely an increasing association with the administration but actual control of it.

Speaking at Jaipur Lord Irwin said "The old unquestioning acceptance of autocratic rule is gradually disappearing, even in those quarters where conservatives seemed to have the strongest hold. Rulers are being more and more called on to justify their authority to rule; and

of the Bible "What shall it profit a man that he gains the whole world but lose his own soul." Are the people of the State mere machines whimpering only for food, clothing and shelter? Undoubtedly people do need food and the comforts of life. But is that all?

The struggle for Responsible Government need create no bitterness of feeling between the government and the people engaged in it. Each party is actuated by a sense of duty and whoever can convince the other may at last prevail unless indeed it is our good fortune that both parties agree on a common formula. The Congress and the people behind them believe that Responsible Government is their birthright, that they are entitled to it apart from all other questions of their fitness and the like, that they are as a matter of fact fit, that responsible government will help them in their economic and social advancement and that good government, even if it does exist at present, is no substitute for self-government. The government in power

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from Page 9)

believes that self-government as a means of advancement and progress is unnecessary since the country is as well-governed as it could be, that self-government or democracy as conceived by the Congress is impossible without political parties which at present do not exist, that the existence of communal parties, special interests and minorities is a hindrance to self-government and that self-government under the circumstances will set the clock of the country back by several decades if not centuries. Each party resists the other in the interests of the country and the ultimate motive or both is the welfare and advance of the people. It is therefore, a clash of ideals between benevolent autocracy and popular democracy. The Government which believes that self-government will endanger society is morally justified in arresting and imprisoning us who to them are subversive agitators. Congressmen who believe that autocracy however benevolent is stunting and undesirable are morally justified in carrying on Civil Disobedience and undergoing arrest and imprisonment. So far all may agree.

But both parties are apt to forget the high plane of the struggle and descend to lower forms of hatred and violence. When the authorities commit tortures on arrested persons, when they coax and threaten people to tender apologies, when they carry on false and scandalous propaganda based on lies and vulgar attacks, they are forgetting their duty to the country and degrading their high office.

About a thousand and odd congressmen are now in jail. It is a sufficient number to indicate the strength of feeling in the country in favour of the congress ideal. But the Government do not seem to think so. Hence more people have to undergo the suffering if the country should deserve self-government. If people really want self-government and if they deserve it, why then they should participate in the struggle, enter the jails, allow their properties to be proceeded against for fines, confiscation etc. and if it so happens, to undergo physical tortures also. If in country of over 65 lacs of people there is that desire for responsible government so keenly felt and a few thousands at least possess the necessary courage to suffer and sacrifice for the cause, what doubt can there be that the government will soon yield to the demand of the people and help in the establishment of responsible government in the State. It now depends on us, on our strength of mind, on the purity of our methods and on our wise and courageous resolve to go through the test of fire that is before us.

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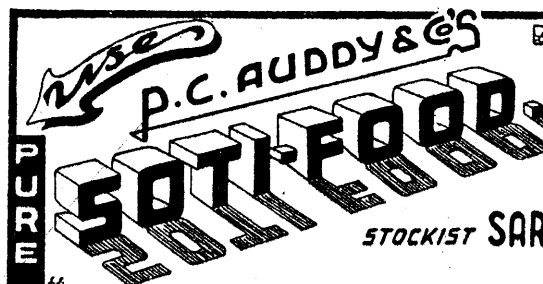
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Sj. SUBHAS BOSE'S SPEECH AT THE ALL INDIA STUDENTS' CONFERENCE AT DELHI

"FREEDOM COMES TO THOSE WHO DARE AND ACT"

Comrades !

It has become customary for the President of a Conference to preface his speech with the remark that the Conference is meeting at a most critical juncture. But if I were to use that expression today, I should not be speaking in the language of convention. If you have not summoned me in a light-hearted manner—as I am sure you have not—then there can be no doubt that you have done me a very great honour. After from the honour involved, I am deeply sensible of the confidence in and the affection for me which you have exhibited on this occasion. I am in your midst today to answer your call and I thank you most sincerely for honouring me by selecting me as your President.

The dawn of the new year has brought us all together with hearts throbbing with anxious expectation. The problem of problems today is as to how the Indian people should face the crisis that has overtaken them. Average student who in normal times may not look beyond the four walls of his institution is also being forced to put aside his books and his problems for a while and to think of that crisis and his duty in relation to it. You are aware that in such a grave emergency, it is practice and the convention abroad to shut down the Universities and to hand over the entire student-population to the drill sergeants. What are our students to do in India now ?

The approaching war-crisis was looming in the horizon ever since 1927. The Indian National Congress dealt with it year after year and embodied its decision in successive resolutions. The last resolution which has now become historic, was passed at the Haripura Congress in February, 1938. It was the natural expectation of the public that as soon as the expected crisis broke out, the Haripura resolution would be implemented.

This has not happened. The Congress Working Committee has been thinking for the last four months. But, in reality, there is nothing to deliberate over. The thinking has been done by the Congress already ever since 1927. And if any further deliberation were necessary, it should have been started and concluded before September last, when we were crying ourselves hoarse in asking the Congress to prepare in advance for coming eventualities. Does it not evince bankruptcy of statesmanship on the part of elders that, thanks to them, the Congress has proved to be the only major political organisation in the world that has not made necessary preparations to meet the crisis ?

The silver lining in today's cloud consists of the fact that while the Congress

leaders have been deliberating and vacillating, the Majlis-i-Ahrar of the Punjab has been acting. Nevertheless, there are people—and stay-at-home at that—who do not scruple to cast aspersions on the patriotism of Indian Muslims as a body.

During the last twelve months or more, our suggestions regarding the coming crisis have been pooh-poohed. Our idea of an ultimatum and preparation in advance was sneered at and ridiculed at the Tripuri session of the Indian National Congress in March, 1939. Our elders were more anxious to rehabilitate what considered to be their lost prestige than to consider seriously urgent national problems. There can be no doubt that at Tripuri they failed to look after the nation's interests properly or to rise to the occasion, as was expected of them. They put self-interest and personal prestige above the interests and the prestige of the nation.

In passing, we may ask those who laughed at us at Tripuri if the resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed in September, 1939, was not in effect an ultimatum. But what a difference it would have made to us if the ultimatum had been presented in March last !

Prior to September last, two classic arguments used to be advanced by Mahatma Gandhi and his followers in order to resist the demand for a resumption to the national struggle. Firstly, there was corruption in the ranks of the Congress and secondly, the launching of a 'Satyagraha' movement would lead to the outbreak of violence. Since September, they have had a brain-wave and a third argument has been added viz., the apprehension of Hindu-Muslim trouble. On previous occasions, communal trouble did take place here and there—but that was never used as a plea for deterring us in our march towards our goal. Let us see what other arguments are invented by our elders in future.

It may certainly be argued that the Congress Working Committee has not been sitting idle since September. Long-winded resolutions have been passed and what is more, the Congress ministries in eight provinces have been withdrawn. War-Councils have been set up in several provinces and there is talk of volunteer camps and volunteer organisation. True. But what is all this talk of a three months' holiday indulged in by an ex-Premier ? Why whispers on all sides that the Congress Ministers will soon return to office ? The man in the street is naturally confused and does not know what to do. To make confusion worse confounded, War-Councils have been ordered to spin. We are now

expected to spin our way to Swaraj, but how can we be convinced of the efficacy of this 'magic mantra' of Mahatma Gandhi when we know that a century ago when the Indian people knew nothing but Khadi and hand-spinning, they fell a victim to foreign domination. No, it is time to call a spade a spade and to tell our people clearly that the idea of winning Swaraj through spinning is moonshine. Spinning has its place in our national economy, but but let it not be exalted into the method of our national struggle. And let not the Independence Day pledge be vulgarised by introducing clauses about spinning etc.

Frankly speaking, it is much more honest to follow the unambiguous lead of Mahatma Gandhi in the matter of unconditional support to Great Britain in the war, however erroneous that policy may be, than to resort to confused thinking or to pursue a zig-zag course which will lead us nowhere.

It should now be clear from from the programme outlined by the Congress Working Committee that till the next session of the Congress is held at Ramgrah, i. e. till the end of March, 1940, no forward move is under contemplation. We know that wherever a grave emergency has arisen, elections have been postponed indefinitely. No so in the case of the Congress, which is virtually working out a peace-time programme. And we know already that the Congress Working Committee has achieved the unique distinction of continuing its drive against the Leftwing, though in other countries faced with a similar crisis, party politics has been suspended *sine die*.

What accounts for this strange behaviour of the Congress High Command ? They can think of a compromise with the Fascist British Government, but there must be war to the bitter end, where the Leftist and Forward-Blocists are concerned. I shall leave it to you to explain this phenomenon—but I shall just suggest in passing that the struggle between the Right and the Left within the Congress is not so much for today as for tomorrow and that behind the facade of party-struggle there is, in fact, a class-struggle—perhaps an unconscious class-struggle—going on all the time. The cold-blooded, determined and ruthless attitude of our High Command is an exhibition of complete lack of Ahimsa or Non-violence and is a demonstration of 'Macht-Politik' or 'Power-politics' under Indian conditions.

The Problem is—"what are we to do when confronted by our High Command and their shrewd and zig-zag policy ?" Judging from past experience, particularly

since January, 1939 I have no doubt that they are past masters in political strategy in dealing with their own people. They will not easily allow themselves and their erroneous policy to be exposed, nor will they easily permit themselves to be isolated. Their latest stunt, viz their demand for a fake Constituent Assembly, is a case in point. Most ingeniously and almost without being noticed, they have substituted the demand for a Constituent Assembly in place of our National Demand, our demand for Purna Swaraj. Perhaps, they think that there is some chance of getting this fake Constituent Assembly and if they succeed therein, they will be able to stave off a fight. It seems as if they are capable of any subterfuge, if only they can put off a struggle.

But why are they thus shirking a struggle? What is the real truth behind this whole game? It is difficult to answer the question—but I presume that they are afraid that once a nation-wide campaign is launched, the control and the leadership of the nationalist movement will pass out of their hands. Consequently, their strategy consists in retaining the power that they have already won in the provinces and in working for some power at the centre, through negotiations with the British Government. Hence these rumours about the Congress Ministries staging a come-back. Hence the endeavour to purge the Congress of the Leftists. Hence the vendetta against the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. And hence the elaborate efforts that have been made for some time past to resist mass invasion of the Congress through increased membership and to convert the Congress into a close preserve of the Rightists.

The above apprehension is not altogether without foundation. The Rightists are out of touch with the new forces and the new elements that have come into existence during the last few years. What, we may ask, are their contacts with the Kishan Movement, the Working-class Movement, the Student-Movement, the Youth Movement and similar radical and progressive movements in different parts of the country? They have, moreover, lost ground among our Muslim compatriots and among the states' subjects. Consequently, they may nurse the apprehension that in the event of a struggle, they will lose their hold over the movement and ultimately over the Congress.

But there is a fallacy in this logic which may be fatal to the Rightists. If they avoid a fight owing to this fear and apprehension, that in itself may make back-numbers of them.

This brings us to a consideration of Rightist tactics. It is possible that under pressure they may alter their broad strategy and actually launch a struggle and that should not mean that our problem has been solved. If the struggle is launched under such circumstances, then Rightist tactics will consist in prematurely ending the struggle by some means or

other. We shall, therefore, have to remain alert and guard against another episode like the Chauri-Chaura episode of 1922, another diversion like the Harijan movement of 1932 or another pact like the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. In the absence of close vigilance, a struggle launched by the Rightists may end in a *debacle*. The best course, therefore, would be for the Leftists to announce clearly in advance with what object and with what mental attitude they will enter a struggle, whether it is launched by the Right or by the Left.

A word about the Constituent Assembly is necessary here. A real Constituent National Assembly is one which is convened by a Government after the transference of power has taken place. An Assembly convened by and meeting under the aegis of an Imperialist Government and electorate will surely end in disaster to the Congress and to the Indian people. Let us raise our voice in protest against it while there is time and warn our countrymen in advance of the coming danger, in the event of this demand being fulfilled by the British Government in its own interest.

The immediate problem before us is the launching of the national struggle. Will it be launched by the Congress Working Committee? That is what we all want and that is what will bring a united Congress into the movement. But what if they hold back? Shall we, too, then hold back? The country is ours, as much as it is theirs. Each and every one of us has his or her duty to fulfil towards the common motherland. Consequently, we cannot hold back in this fateful hour of our history. If the leaders fail us, we have to march ahead with such strength and resources as we happen to possess.

Even if the struggle is launched by the Left, it will not mean that it will be a leftist struggle. The struggle will be a national struggle—no matter who gives the call, the Right or the Left. It will be a fatal mistake to confuse the nature of the call with the nature of the struggle.

In this connection, I cannot help observing on the basis of indisputable facts that the Congress is much stronger today than it was in 1921 or 1930 or 1932. If we have fought thrice with less strength and resources—should we quail before the present crisis?

I therefore appeal to you to gird up your lions and prepare for the impending struggle. The struggle coming—what does it matter who gives the call.

Standing today in the midst of a complex situation it is just possible that you may feel perplexed for a while. The vacillating, zig-zag policy of the Congress High Command increases one's bewilderment. The menacing attitude of some communal organisations adds to one's difficulties. The want of unity among the Leftists themselves well-nigh unnerves an ordinary mortal. But though you stand with your backs to the wall, do not for one moment lose courage or self-confidence. Remember, comrades, that the Left Movement today is on its trial.

Its future will depend on how you and I come out of his ordeal. Remember, also, that we now have a supreme opportunity for winning Liberty for India. Such a rare opportunity we can miss only at our own peril. Posterity will never forgive us if we do not rise to the occasion.

I confess that I am not one of those who suffer from an inferiority complex. I do believe that even if the call comes from the Left, the masses will readily respond. Though we may be comparatively weak from the purely organisational point of view, the united Left has undoubtedly a larger mass-following than the united Right. Why then should we hesitate if Mahatma Gandhi or the Congress Working Committee does not give the lead that the country has been expecting and awaiting? If the Left is called upon by the logic of History to act as the spear-head of the nationalist movement, let us not be sorry for it. Let us on the contrary, welcome the opportunity, should it come, of playing the role of the vanguard in our movement. We shall thereby help in winning Swaraj, in bringing about the isolation of the Rightists and lastly in establishing the Left Movement firmly in the hearts of our countrymen.

If any of you feel upset at the continued onslaught from the Rightists and at their diversionist tactics whereby the national Demand has degenerated into a demand for a pseudo-Constituent Assembly, I would appeal to you to keep up your faith and courage and launch the counter-offensive against the Right in the shape of a *National Struggle*. Only by this means can one hope to frustrate the tactics of our Rightist friends.

In this fateful hour I am reminded of a message once given to Young India by one of our erstwhile Leftist leaders. "Freedom comes" he said, "to those who dare and act." The time has come for all of us to dare and act and let not any of us flinch at this critical juncture. I am also reminded of the inspiring words addressed by a famous Italian General to his innumerable followers while the Revolution was still in progress. "I shall give you hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death" said he, "if you will follow me." Let these words ring in our ears now and inspire us to march forward and to dare and act. Only then shall we win victory and Swaraj.

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AGREE WITH IT OR NOT— —ALSO A PROPHECY

By Herezo

Of late years at this season we have been witnessing a strange phenomenon. With the arrival of the cold snap, there appears on the horizon a number of spellbinders, who suffer from an epidemic of speeches: some of these speeches are snappy, some frozen platitudes, some just frothy, others are remarkable only for their plethora of words burdening an insignificant number of microscopic ideas, many of which seem to have germinated in diseased brains. After that remark, we consider it prudent not to classify the speeches made at the different A-I Conferences and meetings now agitating the various political, communal and other clans all over the country.

From the seclusion of his peaceful ashram at Wardha, the great Mahatma has finally hinted that in the future, in some future as indefinite and probably remote as Dominion Status for India in the imagination of Zetland, Hoare & Co., there might be a resort to Civil Disobedience. But—first, we must train ourselves for the fray in Khadi uniform, and develop our muscles by the strenuous use of the *Charka* and the *takkli*. The uniform will produce martial psychology, while the *Charka* which compels a frequent movement of the arms away from the body, will teach us to be come expert in warding off *lathi* blows. Undoubtedly this is splendid training to take non-violently and philosophically all refusals to demands of Dominion Status and Independence. Perhaps, the Mahatma realises that only when the present generation, who remembers the shadow of things gained by this variety of Civil Disobedience, passes away that once more the people can be deluded into this kind of warfare. That is the only reason that the country is not ready for a Civil Disobedience that invariably ends in a compromise, that scarcely takes us forward by one nail's breadth—otherwise the country is ready today as ever it was, with or without *Khadi*, with or without *Charka* and the *takkli*—with the assurance that Civil Disobedience is immediate and will not end in a compromise, which brings us mere promises and reforms and Acts that tether us to the same spot with just a

little longer rope, making entanglement more easy.

If Dr. Paranjpye's speech reflects the thought of the Liberal Party, then the Party has been generalised and liberalised out of existence. That party is not fish, nor fowl, nor vegetable. It is a non-descript fluid that travels in the direction of least resistance without any effort of its own. There seems to be only one marked characteristic of the Party, it is the desire to co-operate with all, which means they co-operate with none. Their desire is not turned to action: it remains always a desire—an admirable desire—a shining inanimate mirror, reflecting all things, but is none of them.

The Hindu Mahasabha is obsessed with the idea of creating a martial spirit. They would be indeed useful, if the Arms Act were repealed, if they had enough money to buy arms and ammunition, if they could train huge armies; but this is putting the cart before the horse. To conquer by might, one must have a force stronger than the opponents' and that can be possible only with the support of the whole nation with the power to raise the necessary money for the requirements of an army. One cannot fight against the weapons of modern warfare with sticks and wooden guns. Only learning the goose-steps is not sufficient to build an army. There is enough martial spirit, which is the spirit of resistance unto death, in this country without learning the goose-step, as has been proved by Civil Disobedience, time after time. What is wanted is a leader without the spirit compromise, ready to do or die, not ready to run away to fight another day—the habit of running away grows until there is no "another day to fight". It becomes a non-stop performance.

It is, however, remarkable that in all the speeches of the various meetings, there is an uniform demand for Independence and a desire to know when India will get it, and every one wants to know it for certain, and in hurry—not in the sweet by and by. We want to know that and want to know that now—that is the universal demand.

It was strange to note that even the Indian Christians held an A-I Meeting at Nagpur. If nothing else, it is a sign that they are breaking away from the apron-strings of foreign missionaries, who as a fee for the little education they give, demanded the corruption of Indian mentality and Indian culture; who to exalt their on western ideas, decried and deprecated our own Indian ways of thinking and living.

That reminds me that the great modern philosopher and educationist who has acquired a British title in the process of philosophising, says there is no national culture, all culture is international and cosmopolitan. Science, art, literature, philosophy belong to all mankind and is restricted to no nation or locality. The knighted philosopher is quite right. Music is also art, therefore belonging to culture. We would like to engage a Chinese band to lull him to sleep after his meditations have been helped by an up-to-date jazz band. We would like to hear his opinion about the international character of culture after his sleep has been sweetened by a celestial, pig-tailed nightmare and his meditation deepened by the jingle-jangle of jazz music. There are other experiments one would like to suggest to prove the cosmopolitan nature of culture. Still we maintain the K. P. is right, though somewhat drastic. The K. P. has travelled in different countries and has had doses of culture in different countries, and if he has stood it and still survives to express his opinion, stoutly we say, that we can do the same and support him. *Vive le philosophe!* and *tra-tra-la-la!* *Hoch! Hoch!*—hip, hip, hurrah!

Again we have ended another year, a memorable year, in which a good deal of brave talking has been done, although something substantial has been achieved. It has brought realisation to the peoples of India that Britain has no intention of granting Dominion Status or Independence in the near future, it has also brought into well-defined prominence the political conceptions of various communities. Thus one knows clearly the forces ranged for or against the National Congress ideal. While the

outlook does not promise much effectual action in the coming year, the activities of the *Forward Bloc*, together with the uncertainties of war time, produce some hope that for India 1940 may be an important year. It was prophesied in 1905 that the year 1940 would bring us the first instalment of real Independence. Further it was foretold that full Independence in form at least, would be given between 1942-44, after which would follow eight years of anarchy, then peace. In 1954, the last British soldier would leave the shore of India, after which would follow, a progressive prosperity and complete peace for sixty years.

The prophesy was made by automatic writing when the medium was controlled by the spirit of a great departed soul in the presence of Sri Aurobindo Ghose, Monmohan Ghose, Bepin Chandra Pal, J. N. Roy, Shamsunder Chakravarty, C. Mukherji, Raja Subodh Chandra Mullick and the writer. Every prophecy upto this date has been right; therefore, there is no reason to believe that what has been foretold of the future will be incorrect. Undoubtedly the signs portend that we stand on the threshold of an important year, a year which marks the turning point in the destiny of India, and while we shall watch with eager anxiety the present year, we must all prepare to meet the call on our strength and love for our country. All our leaders say that there is a hard time before us, how hard it is going to be, may be gauged by the attitude of some of the leaders of various communities and the blunders of the Congress oligarchy in Western Provinces, and the Ordinances of the Central Government. Our only armour is the righteousness of our Cause and the stoutness of our hearts. True, the times are going to be hard but we are filled with the hope that 1940 marks the beginning of Victory with *Forward Bloc* in the vanguard, led by our unconquerable Subhas Chandra Bose. Then welcome 1940 and Forward!

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NOTICE.

NUMEROUS letters are being received daily in this office enquiring about the closing and the drawing dates, the price of lottery tickets, number of tickets and free tickets in a book, and the winner of the First Prize of the last session. It would not be possible to attend to these letters individually.

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The price of each ticket is Re. 1/- one only. Each lottery book contains 12 tickets of which two are free as vendor's commission.

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A Rationalist's Prescription *

—By "POLITICUS"

Senor Madriaga is one of those rare spirits who believe in reason and are becoming rarer with every passing hour. Nineteenth century marked in some ways the culmination of western civilisation as we know it and towards the end of the period flowered in ideas of liberty and democracy based upon the essential reasonableness of man. Progress was in the air and evolution was regarded as the order not only of nature but of human affairs as well. The opening years of the twentieth century shattered some of the cherished dreams, for the note of war and colonial exploitation on which it opened was strangely inconsistent with ideas of human equality and justice which nineteenth century Liberalism had spread to the far corners of the globe. Crisis followed crisis till the tension reached its climax in the armagaddon of 1914. Even its mighty catharsis did not however relieve the strain, for ever since the war, Europe has been one mighty armed camp in which nation watched nation suspiciously behind the smoke screen of high-sounding words of universal peace and justice.

New modes of thought more suited to the temper of the times have come into vogue. Democracy is today openly ridiculed by the believers in the new cult of power and the old fashioned liberal faith in human reason has become the scorn of the new intellectuals of a new age. But the ills of the world know no remedy and with every passing day, new crises remind that unless we end the malady, the malady will soon make an end of us and our civilisation. Power over the forces of nature without corresponding power over the passions of the human heart has made the modern age the despair of moralists and philosophers alike and everywhere we find men frantically trying to cure ills whose very nature they do not often understand. Senor Madriaga diagnoses the malady as one of maladjustment between the achieved solidarity of the world and the yet unrealised solidity of human feelings and ideas. Maladjustment between production and distribution or the other types of social malaise from

* The World's Design By Salvadorde Madriaga (Allen and Unwin 10s. 6d)

which the world suffers today are regarded by him as ultimately traceable to this one fundamental maladjustment. The League of Nations has, in his opinion, failed till now for it has not sufficiently stressed this factual solidarity of the world. A League based on the theory of sovereignty of independent nations in a world where nations are no longer independent was bound to fail and the more attempts were made to preserve the sovereignty of nations, the more did the world land itself into new troubles. Senor Madriaga has no difficulty in showing that even in spheres generally regarded as the peculiar province of national sovereignty, an amount of international, or to be accurate, world control has been established that most of us do not realise. And the dangers to world peace arose precisely because we do not understand this fact of interdependence. In armaments and tariffs, in labour questions and currency, in raw materials and aviation, sovereignty has in fact made its exit and we continue to be troubled by the ghosts of ideas which have long departed this world.

The conclusion which Senor Madriaga derives from this is that peace is indivisible and the modern tendency to isolate different areas and patch up peace by regional policies of appeasement is bound to end in disaster. He gives enthusiastic support to Monsieur Litvinov's plea that peace cannot be divided but adds with a touch of malicious humour that this is true not only of the external affairs but also of the internal affairs of nations. Fascism and Communism are therefore in his opinion equally inimical to peace. Both in his opinion represent attempts to discard reason in favour of force as the instrument of policy in public affairs. Both in his opinion, misunderstand the nature of man and simplify it almost to the extent of falsifying it. Both have immediate and indeed resounding success because the average man loves nothing more than simplifications which seem to solve the problems of life for him. Both will, in his opinion, ultimately fail because they seek to translate into simple formulae the complications of human nature with its infinite variety and shades of difference.

In a word, in his opinion Communism and Fascism are the obverse sides of the same fact.

Senor Madriaga's indictment of Lenin on the issues of glorification of violence as a political instrument, of disdain for democracy and reason, of interference with the life of other nations from outside makes an imposing tale, but admitting the truth of most of it, there is surely one fundamental difference between Communism and Fascism in the former's abolition of private control over the means of production and distribution. Senor Madriaga would perhaps retort that this may be achieved without resort to Communism, for the world he designs will also override ideas of private property (whether of the individual or of the nation) in a way that will seem to many to be hardly distinguishable from the reddest of Communism. This however requires men who are sensitive, intelligent organisers and yet devoid of all selfishness, and the problem is—where are they to be found?

Senor Madriaga writes with charm and distinction and almost persuades one to believe that the preset dethronement of reason is only a passing phase. In his scheme, England naturally occupies the centre of the picture, but it is difficult to see the England of Chamberlain accepting the challenge of history and voluntarily transcending its imperialism for the sake of world peace and world order.

Since the above was written, the war has broken out. Most of Senor Madriaga's fears have come true, Spain has been shattered, Czechoslovakia destroyed and China weakened by attack after attack. Chamberlain's England did not stir a finger to help Czechoslovakia where there was at least a semblance of democracy but rushed to help Poland whose regime was admittedly one of the worst in the whole world. Not merely so, but the pressure of events has forced the truth from Mr. Chamberlain's unwilling lip, and he has admitted that what he works for is a new order in Europe based a balance of power that will leave Britain the arbiter of destiny. All his talk of a new world order has evaporated, but who knows, events will perhaps prove that Mr. Chamberlain was, against all his inclinations and his conscious endeavour, a truer prophet than he feared?

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By Swami Sahajanand Saraswati

DEVILISH DESIGNS AGAINST CANE GROWERS

As pointed out time and again there has all along been a deliberate and well-planned move on the part of the Sugar concerns of the country against the cane-growers and the Sugar Syndicate has earned notoriety in this respect besides various Sugar Mill Associations and organisations. It has been my painful duty to expose their different devices from time to time to rob the helpless growers of their due by hoodwinking the public and the authorities. Not in vain I have forewarned repeatedly both the latter against this danger and once again I am forced by the circumstances to raise my voice in the interest of not only the Kisans, but also the Sugar Industry itself. I am glad the Director of Agriculture has taken a saner view in the matter and has tried to serve both the growers and this nascent enterprise in sugar manufacture. Let me hope he represents the governmental views in this matter and he will stick fast to it.

But I am pained to learn that some of the Sugar Mills in Champaran have closed all at once number of their weigh bridges with impunity and have thus unnecessarily penalised the growers for no fault of theirs. Is there no provision in the Sugar Act and the rules framed thereunder for the Government to intervene promptly and bring these mills to book? I think there is. But what is wanting perhaps is a will on their part to do it. Let them realise the seriousness of the situation thus created and give up the inertia or they will be held responsible for the most damaging reaction as a result of this inaction of theirs. I am at a loss to understand why do they not pounce upon the offenders just as in matters political. After getting specified areas reserved for themselves, the mills have no right to close their weigh bridges without due notice and the sanction of the authorities. Certainly the growers are not responsible for the diseases. It is others who must be responsible for it.

Then there is a threat on the part of the Sugar Syndicate to close some mills. I am definitely of the opinion that neither the Syndicate nor the mills have any right to do it after entering into solemn

agreements with the growers or any one on their behalf and also after inducing the innocent Kisans to grow cane in areas specified for a particular mill. And if they persist yet in their nefarious deeds they must be held responsible for the breach of trust and punished accordingly. The Syndicate too, must be taught a lesson as an instigator in the matter. Let them face the results of daring an illegal strike and then let them take a lesson in it from others before resorting to the same.

There is a loose talk about the huge reduction of the prices of diseased cane and in default and all-round reduction in the prices of all the canes. This is a very faulty and fatal move and it must be nipped in bud. Those who advocate it, easily forget that just like the fixation of the minimum prices there should be same basis for this differentiation between the prices of the diseased and other canes and unless the sucrose contents of both the canes are known and established beyond doubt through experiment how

can it be decided at random? And even after this a most carefully conducted survey from field to field will be necessitated.

It requires a lot of money and experts and even then it can not be expected to materialize before the season ends. After the zoning of the mill areas there is no free market for canes and if the price of cane is lessened in the name of the disease, the grower will automatically be left at the arbitrary will of the specific mills. And even if there be a free market it will be in name only, since the sugar mills being limited in number, they can easily combine against the growers. Honestly speaking, therefore, no reduction in cane prices should be allowed at present at least and whatever has been allowed should be restored. It is the bounden duty of the government to ignore contemptuously the alarm in this respect raised from the interested quarters.

A Prisoner

To be shortly out

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BOOK REVIEW

Democracy up-to-date, By Sir Stafford Cripps, George Allen and Unwin, 2/-.

The basic political feeling in England at the present time is one of bewilderment. This is expressed in a variety of ways. The outbreak of the present war is blamed wholly on the aggression of Nazism (no explanation beyond "the traditional German ideas" is advanced for the rise of Nazism); the vacillations of Mr. Chamberlain's foreign policy are accepted with what amounts to blind faith; and the inability of the Opposition Parties to defeat the National Government on their obvious renunciations of their election pledges is ascribed rather to the weakness of the Opposition than to the failure of their Parliamentary position, giving them as it does, no basic principles of Governmental policy to attack.

This bewilderment Sir Stafford Cripps, in his latest book, ascribes chiefly to the failure of the British democratic machinery to provide an adequate administration for the mass of planning and governmental interference with industry that has devolved upon it since the collapse of the Liberal economics of the last century.

He sketches the growth of this planning, and proceeds to define the liberties which are essential to democracy. These, the rights of free speech, free opinions, and "the right to a reasonable share in the country's wealth," he distinguishes from the "false liberties," such as the economic liberty of private industry. Thus true liberty would result from the planning that would give the common man governmental safeguards against exploitation.

In the course of the second half of the book, "The Solution," he analyses the time spent in Parliament during 1937-8. He points out that only 17 hours were spent in Delegated Legislation, that, out of 1661 Orders in Council, only 67 were considered by Parliament, and that, in the course of an average day, only ten backbenchers from both sides could have the opportunity to comment on the second reading of a Bill. The most important point is that, at present, no one can say when the Government has been defeated on a question of principle involving its electoral policy.

To remedy this he would extend the

Committee principle, forming them from all parties, and giving them continuity of membership as far as possible. A Bill would be introduced in the usual way, then referred to the Committee for the embodiment of suggestions made in the House, and the third reading would be dispensed with. There would be no question of a defeat for the Government in these committees; that would be reserved for the debates of the whole House, for which there would thus be more time.

At the beginning of each session the Government would state its principles in Foreign and Domestic policy, and bring forward a "Planning and Finance Bill", in which would be included all the coming financial resolutions. For an emergency a second Planning and Finance Bill would be introduced.

The book is a small one, and necessarily suffers from being a popular exposition. Many points, particularly where the author sketches the decline in British and other democracies, require more elucidation. But the general theme is practical, and admirably lucid. Parliamentary procedure has provided discussion for many years now. As Bernard Shaw said, "The House of

Commons takes thirty years to do what a Municipal Corporation can do in half an hour". But the issue has suddenly become of extreme importance. Present day necessities often require bills to be passed and decisions to be taken with the minimum of delay; the danger now is that Ministers can rush through important Bills without adequate Parliamentary discussion. The choice between a Fascist and a Socialist economy is one which is before every modern democracy, and, as Sir Stafford says;

"Unless we reform our methods we shall find ourselves quite unable to preserve those elements of democratic freedom that have been won by the most heroic struggles in the past, and equally incapable of advancing to that fuller share of economic liberty which alone can form the basis for a permanently free and peaceful society."

It is worth noting that Socialism is not once mentioned in the book; the question whether genuine democracy can survive a continuance of the private profit motive in industry is one that can be left to the political prejudices of the reader.

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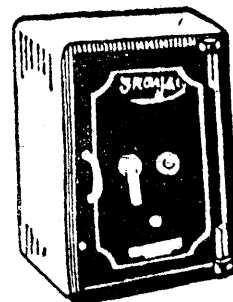
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Letter To The Editor

SOME ASPECTS OF EUROPE'S DOMINATION

To

The Editor, Forward Bloc

Sir,

Europe and European politics dominate the rest of the world and its political life. It is, as it were, that the progress and development of the human populations on the globe are dependent on the progress and development of a part of them which inhabits the continent of Europe. This of course, is due to obvious reasons. The material progress which mankind has achieved is directly the outcome of the Industrial Revolution in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The building up of armaments has kept pace with the advance in science and industry in Europe. Political power was necessary to maintain the material progress. Countries in Asia and Africa played purely a passive role in this onward march of events, with the result that they have had to be subservient to the political domination and economic exploitation by the nations of Europe. Probably, Europe's material progress would have been impossible but for the field of exploitation which Asia and Africa offered to it. Consequently, a habit has grown in Europe to look upon Asiatic and African countries as their rightful tools to subserve the ends of Europe alone. The passive attitude of the countries of Asia and Africa is responsible for the supercilious and impudent disregard which European statesmen and politicians have been displaying in any discussion of world problems. The expression civilization itself and all the best which is envisaged thereby, such as democracy, freedom and a happier life for the community, are looked upon as the special preserve of European populations only. Such attitude was partly responsible for backwardness of Asiatic and African populations who could not share in the improved standard of living and the general advance in culture which was the direct outcome of the progress achieved by science and industry for the betterment of the world.

The struggle that is going on at present in Europe and its implications have, therefore, deep lessons for non-European populations, and deserve con-

stant attention from them. That the aggression against Poland was the immediate cause of the war against Germany is true; but it is not true that the attack on Poland was the main reason for inviting millions of Frenchmen and Englishmen, including the millions over whom Englishmen and Frenchmen dominate, to teach a lesson to Germany. The cause was deeper. Europe was not at rest. The enjoyment of the "blessings" of peaceful exploitation of non-European countries was not deemed secure. There were disputants who wanted a share in the spoils at the cost of those who already held sway over them. The whole gamut of the complications of European politics is often best expressed as a conflict between the "haves" and the "have-nots". The "haves" include of course, Britain and France, principally, and the "have-nots" Germany and Italy, but none of the peoples in Asia Africa. That is taken for granted! So, war was inevitable; for otherwise, the spoils would be snatched away by force. The German menace was threatening the European peace. That it would threaten Asia and Africa was a subordinate idea. If German aggression could be stopped in Europe, its inroads in territories in Asia and Africa under the French and British suzerainty would be automatically stopped. That is the plain point of view of the recent speeches of the British Prime Minister. It is the story of the white man's burden repeated over again. The cause of freedom of European nationalities however infinitesimally small the nations might be, is nearest to the heart of the ruling classes of the Western world. That their anxiety for the great principles of freedom, liberty and democracy is mainly, nay only for the peoples of Europe, is at no time better illustrated than now. The Bolshevik march on Finland has evoked a tornado of sympathy for the so-called victimisation of that country and of resentment against the so-called aggression of the U. S. S. R. Even the United States of America has been moving heaven and earth protesting against the Soviet's action: the League of Nations whose "failure" "as an international instrument for preserving peace" was proclaimed by Mr. Chamberlain only the other day (28-11-39), is invoked to pour its wrath on Stalin. Public memory is said to be proverbially short; yet, the truth of that statement was never more

glaringly proved than today. The rape of China forgotten by the governments in America and Europe, who are clicking their tongues in sorrow at the sad plight of Finland. Compared to Finland the sufferings of China were a thousand-fold more staggering, were the sufferings of the vast humanity of that country taken into account,—led alone to the devastation of property, destruction of industry and enslaving of large masses by Japan. At that time, and even afterwards, we never witnessed the stirring protest the European and American continents are shouting forth to-day for the sake of the liberty of the ruling classes of Finland, whose population does not exceed 1/125th of that of China. The race arrogance of the Westerner and his callous disregard of the interests, sufferings and dignity of non-European masses and classes in exemplified in the differentiated point of view in regard to the application of the universal principles of democracy and freedom, and of the most elementary notions of humanity.

This callously dominating attitude is the hall-mark of British imperialism. Mr. Chamberlain generally depicts the attitude in a remarkably frank manner. He has more than once affirmed the war aims and peace aims in terms of European nations alone. Lord Halifax has also sung to the same tune. Just observe his concern for the European nations while the Asiatics and Africans have been quietly dropped away from any consideration whatsoever. In the course of a recent speech he said, "We desire to redeem the peoples of Europe from the constant fear of German aggression, and to safeguard our freedom and security". One can hear in it an echo of Mr. Chamberlain's following declarations:—

".....Britain's general purpose in this struggle was to redeem Europe from the perpetual recurring of the fear of German aggression and to enable the peoples of Europe to preserve their independence and liberty" (21-9-39).

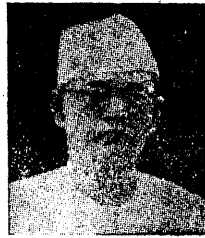
".....If Poland was the direct occasion of the war, it was not the fundamental cause. That cause was the overwhelming sense in this country and in France of the intolerable nature of a state of affairs in which the nations of Europe were faced with the alternative of jeopardising their freedom or of mobilising their forces at regular intervals to defend it" (4-10-39).

Contrasted with the callous disregard of the freedom of China and Abyssinia the above sentiments appear unmistakably selfish and narrow-minded. It is taken for granted that the safety and freedom of Europe is the safety and freedom of the rest of the world.

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