

FORWARD BLOC

A POLITICAL WEEKLY

Editor : SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

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SATURDAY, MARCH 23

Congress Addresses

We have gone through the addresses of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad at Ramgarh with all the care that they deserve. Of the two the former is undoubtedly the weightier document. Maulana Azad has the reputation of being one of the keenest intellects in Congress politics today and in his address he has maintained that reputation. His analysis of the national and international situation, specially in the background of British politics, is quite masterly and couched in a language that is both rich and dignified. He has traced the course of events from the beginning of the war and has succeeded in beating hollow the British pretension that it is being waged to make the world safe for democracy. The President has rightly opined in this connection :

India cannot endure the prospect of Nazism and Fascism, but she is even more tired of British imperialism. If India remains deprived of her natural right to freedom, this would clearly mean that British imperialism continued to flourish with all its traditional characteristics, and under such conditions, India would on no account be prepared to lend a helping hand for the triumph of British imperialism.

Maulana Azad has shown himself to be a master-analyst in dissecting the so-called Minorities' problem and has conclusively proved that it is a misnomer in reference to the Muslims of India. The problem is, he has rightly held, the diplomatic creation of British imperialism to side-track the issue of Indian freedom and shall auto-

matically dissolve itself on the attainment of independence by our country. In short, the President's presentation of India's case has been consummate and could hardly be improved upon. His concluding general observation that—

Our case is crystal clear. We do not wish to see British imperialism triumphant and stronger and thus lengthen the period of our subjection to it. We absolutely refuse to do so. Our way lies patently in the opposite direction.

—will find a responsive echo in the heart of every genuine Congressman and true servant of the Motherland. As a matter of fact, the last line of the passage quoted here immensely heartened us and we hopefully proceeded on, alas, to stumble on a sore disappointment. All roads lead to Rome and all the intellectual flourishes, literary grandeur and analytical acumen on the part of the members of the charmed Gandhian circle must finally be liquidated in favour of a blind faith in Gandhiji's omniscience and omnipotence. In fact, the refrain of the presidential song has been : follow the Mahatma implicitly and everything you want will come in due course. The Chairman also tuned the same refrain with all the fidelity of a true devotee. His utterance is naturally instinct with a deeper faith in his *guru*. It is only against this psychological background that the President's and the Chairman's solution of the Indian problem, as noted below, can be understood. In the words of Maulana Azad,

In the prevailing darkness of the times, it is faith in the bright side of human nature which sustains the great soul of Mahatma Gandhi. He is always prepared to take advantage of every opening which might lead to a mutual settlement without feeling that he is weakening his unassailable position.

So in the present crucial hour in the history of the nation when

the country is daily becoming impatient for making a dash at its goal, the Congress leadership has no other *mantram* to utter than that of a "settlement" with imperialism, for which you are to bide time indefinitely and watch all the while for the "opening", of which you are to "take advantage". The concluding rider is there only to give the whole thing a show of bare decency. Frankly speaking, it appears to us nothing but counsel of despair and defeatism. The present critical situation has put the leadership on trial and it has failed most ignominiously. The Maulana says that Mahatma Gandhi will change the heart of the British Lion! We wonder how even the most acute sort of intellect has been hypnotised by Mahatmic incantation! But the Maulana has at least done the good of stating clearly what the present leadership of the Congress stands for. He has raised no smoke-screen of brave verbiage to befog the national vision. We admire him for his refreshing candour. We thank him for it. Let the leadership be now judged at its true worth after the chosen Tribune of the Congress has spoken out. And if the country thinks—we have no doubt it will—that it has failed abjectly, let the nation choose the alternative. The call has already gone forth from Kisannagar. We know it will be splendidly responded to. The nation is bound to achieve its destiny at no distant date.

THE BRENNER TALKS

Intense diplomatic activity is developing along the Axis. Hard on the heels of the Soviet-Finnish Pact Herr Von Ribbentrop visited Rome and Herr Hitler met Signor Mussolini at Brenner. In unofficial

circles this meeting between the two Dictators is linked with Mr. Sumner Welles' visit to Europe and neutral observers believe that a peace offensive is imminent. But the question of peace offensive is not so vital as to require with such haste and discretion the meeting between the two Dictators. The true reason, we believe, is something much more important and dramatic. It may be that the meeting is a prelude to the intensification of war with Italy emerging from non-belligerency. That would surely befool many political critics who have been looking for a split in the Axis since the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.

Eighteen years ago, the Utopian nonsense and hypocrisy of the Social Democrats paved the way for the rise of Fascism in Italy. After long eleven years Herr Hitler's arrival was hailed as another crushing defeat for the cause of Social Democracy. It was immensely gratifying to Fascist Italy to see that the old stronghold of the Second International should have been stormed by a man whose appellation of *Fuehrer* was simply a translation into German of the word *Duce*. In Nazi Reich Italy found not only an ally to stand up against the disintegrating propaganda of Moscow, but also a useful counter-weight to the continental domination of France and of her friends in Poland and the Little Entente. Of course, fear of the Bolshevik peril was the cement which contributed most to binding Italy and Germany together. It brought about an alliance between the followers of Christ, Wotan and Buddha against the forces of Atheism. It governed the attitude of the two countries towards the civil war in Spain and many subsequent adventures of plunder. And

to realise common ends, these two countries have sailed through many bewildering vicissitudes in mutual relations. There have been rifts in the lute before. There have been bickerings too over many issues, such as the Nazi attitude towards Roman Catholic Church and anti-Semitic campaign. But the implacable hostility to Bolshevism is there and behind it there still is that unquenchable desire of the two Fascist Dictators to wrench from the "Big Haves" their lost Colonies and 'Historic' Frontiers.

It is in this light that we shall have to explain the recent Brenner talks. Nazi Germany dreams of "Greater Germany" and Fascist Italy dreams of restoring the ancient Roman Empire. These dreams are yet to be realised and both the dreamers are fully conscious of that. Germany has reached nearer the goal but Italy lags far behind. It is to summon the laggard to hurry up that Ribbentrop visited Italian capital and Hitler arrived at Brenner. The talks between the two Dictators centred round the extension of the war to the Mediterranean and a partition in south-east Europe, which is to become a great source of food supplies for the two countries.

The Allies are still expecting miracles from men like Mussolini and Hitler. Under the Caesars the sands of the Colosseum were soaked with the blood of many a gladiator matched in fanciful duels. A duel between a Signor Mussolini brandishing the lictor's rod and axe and Stalin plying the hammer and sickle might have given a fresh fillip to the games. But the days of such duels are over! Despite the thunderous fulminations against Bolshevism, it is hardly believable

that so essentially realistic a politician as Signor Mussolini can ever remain long the prisoner of ideologies. The free use of the Mediterranean and the partnership of the Balkanic area are the greatest necessities common to Great Britain, France and Italy. And the interests are not complementary, but strictly antagonistic. Herein lies the crux of the Italian problem for the Allied Powers. And does not Italy seek to use the "Bolshevik Bogey" as a smoke-screen to realise her expansionist aims in Danubian and Mediterranean regions as her partner did in Central Europe?

We pause for an answer to this question.

Whither The Congress Socialists ?

Bred on a diet of diluted Marxism, politically the Congress Socialist Party has been the appendage of Pandit Jawaharlal whose international bombast is aped by the Indian socialists. Political activities of the Congress Socialist Party fall into the long, dismal catalogue of sterility. In the past the Socialist Party betrayed signs of vacillation natural to the middle class and had to be saved from lapsing into the morass of absurdity by its spiritual father, Pandit Nehru. Truly speaking, the Congress Socialist Party has compromised the basis of socialism and its leading members are found moving sand-witched in between Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru. The anti-Imperialist Conference of Nagpur revealed their reactionary attitude and left them exposed to a gloomy vision. The pyramid of socialist plans crumbled down and they were ranged under the standards of Gandhism and were busy inculcating its philosophy in a

manner unparalleled since the days of Non-cooperation. The present presidential election brought in a fresh crop of troubles for the socialists and their allegiance to the official nominee yoked them to the plough of barren constitutionalism. Is it in conformity with the fundamentals of Marxism to chime in with the body wedded to the principles of compromise with the alien rulers? The Indian National Congress captained by Mahatma Gandhi is leading the country to the blind alley and its latest resolution is cunningly phrased to disarm the opposition inside the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi is trying to revive the light of good will and reconciliation that shone so brightly but so briefly on the morrow of Viceroy's speech at the Orient Club. Does India really seek any compromise? Thousands of peasants, workers and youths are marching through the streets and roads of India with the light of desire in their eyes to suffer for the liberation of oppressed humanity. Will all these be whistled down the wind? And against all these comes the statement of Mr. Meher Ally, General Secretary, C. S. P., couched in frigid restraint, calculated to promote unity in the ranks of Congress workers. In form and content the statement is slightly different from the official resolution and has a halo of revolutionary sanctity about it. Does not Mr. Meher Ally sense compromise in the atmosphere? What plan of action has he to baffle the sinister move of the bargainers? Situations, we must remind the General Secretary, are worked and never sand-bagged by Socialists. This act of the Congress Socialists has astounded us and we question: Is the Congress Socialist Party breaking away from the moorings of Socia-

list creed and lining up with the Social Democrats? Should we cherish any illusion about the political role of the Congress Socialist Party? It is thinning down and should be relegated to the lumber-room of oblivion.

CURRENT COMMENTS

Corporation Elections

In less than a week's time the rate-payers of Calcutta will be called upon to elect councillors of the Corporation. And we have no doubt in whose favour they will cast their votes. So long as Congressmen have been in power in the civic affairs of Calcutta, they have tried their level best to push forward the programme chalked out by the late lamented Deshabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das. Service of the *Daridranarayan* has been their sole, unflinching motto. We do not say that they have not suffered from any lapses whatsoever. But their remedy is not certainly to be sought in an attempt to throw the Congress overboard in the Corporation, but to take the definite assurance from the candidates that they will not repeat the errors, if any, that Congressmen had consciously or unconsciously committed before. The rival organisations that have taken the field with the ambition of beating down the Congress, have, it seems, no other programme than that of extorting some jobs and other concessions for their communal brethren. If they have any other programme, that has not yet been placed before the electorate. They can hardly be credited with any lofty idealism or a long view of things. How can any community, we ask, have

any legitimate grievance against the programme of civic welfare laid down by Deshabandhu? We fervently appeal to the rate-payers of the city to cap the Congress with deserving victory.

Saadulla Ministry

Since the beginning of provincial autonomy Assam has hazarded constitutional experiments and consequently its ministers have been bundled out in quick succession. On eleven occasions Sir Muhamad Saadulla was outvoted but he could not be shamed into silence and stayed in shepherded by the Governor till the finality was reached in the form of censure against the Cabinet. This left Sir Muhamad orphaned and his efforts to return to the heights of glory and sunshine proved abortive. And on the resignation of the Congress Coalition Cabinet Sir Muhamad stepped in and formed the new Cabinet. The Saadulla Cabinet has hardly any claim to being called popular for it has already earned cheap notoriety by its avowed sympathy with the European planters. Sir Muhamad's reply to the question on the Digboi strike is startling revelation of his true character and throws into bold relief the forces of reaction that have helped him to travel on the eventful career. Egged on by the European planters, he has buried the report of the Plantation Enquiry Committee into the archives of the Secretariat, for its publication may be telling upon the European planters. Sir Muhamad has offered some palliatives in the form of mass literacy and schemes of social reform. Can these fend off the growing discontent? We would ask the Premier to look to the cold reality beneath the surface of things; hungering soul demands bread.

Fifty Times !

In the Subjects Committee meeting at Ramgarh Gandhiji made a very significant disclosure about his future plan. "I will meet the Viceroy fifty times, I will even seek his interview" he said. As the Mahatma can never be in temper and can never give way to exaggeration, we had no other alternative but to take his words at their face value. We counted how many times he had already called on the Viceroy and what number remained to make up his announced figure. The country at large will gladly hold itself in patience if after the completion of Mahatmaji's desired number of pilgrimages to Delhi, one fine morning it finds that Swaraj has become an accomplished fact. In the meantime, it will solace its heart by the whirring music of the Charkha.

Leaving aside the fun of the matter, we ask in all seriousness how satyagraha (in the name of which the interviews will be sought) is consistent with repeated pleadings with the Representative of British imperialism for the "settlement" of India's constitutional status. A "settlement" through supplications can at most be a half-way house and no real Swaraj. Really, we find ourselves at our wits' end to make out the real nature of the bewitching virtue of satyagraha after the widely different and often contradictory interpretations that have been lent to it by its chief exponent and approved commentators. When the Congress adopted the resolution of complete independence, it did so in the full frenzy of satyagrahic zeal and Mahatmaji too, blessed the resolution most unreservedly. How can the two positions be reconciled? Are we to take that

Gandhian satyagraha means saying one thing in public and doing the other through subterranean means? Will Mahatmaji himself or some one of his close disciples like Acharya Kripalani, Rajagopalchariar or Sitaramia place before the wider uninitiated public an easy and popular edition of the abstruse metaphysics of satyagraha? Since it is calculated to concern the Indian people at large, a task like the one specified above appears too urgent to be ignored any longer.

Shaken France

With the vehement denial by the German press that the meeting between Hitler and Mussolini was concerned with any peace offensive, and with the clarification of the attitude of the two Dictators in the Balkans, the Daladier Ministry resigns. France is almost unequalled in Europe in the swift shuffling of Ministry, particularly in critical times. The new Prime Minister M. Reynaud with the well-chosen members of his Cabinet, have taken the responsibility of harnessing all the forces of the Nation to win the War. London has given whole-hearted support to the new Cabinet. The new Reynaud Cabinet is an evidence of England's triumph, not France's. France loses in the sense that the French people shall have to bear now the entire brunt of their rulers' rapacious economic plans and war measures, and the order will be served to them through Reynaud by London. Reynaud is not only temperamentally pro-British, but his extremely reactionary qualities are well known to those who are acquainted with the recent history of France. Daladier was led to resign because he could not stem the crisis. But what is the crisis? The ruthless repression of the communists, the expulsion from the Cabinet of all the Com-

munist Deputies, failed to wipe out Daladier's inconveniences. So, a more capable man, a stronger hand is needed. Reynaud is the man in France who is best fitted for the task. He will invent economic plans to reduce the French people to ghostly skeletons and forge harder weapons to hammer down their rising discontent. Britain will rejoice because she will now have a reliable vassal in France with her agent M. Reynaud at the helm of affairs.

AS OTHERS SEE US

The Journalist of Bombay carries the following comments about Forward Bloc in its March issue :

"The publication is like a roaring thunder in the midst of placid politics. It has commanded the attention of the whole country in such a brief space of time and the sincerity of the views advocated therein are indisputable, whether one fully agrees with them or not. For the force of arguments, vigour of ideas, presentation of the political panorama from week to week it cannot be surpassed."

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AGE OF IMPERIALISM IS DRAWING TO A CLOSE

The following is the text of the presidential address of Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose at the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference :—

You have done me a very great honour by inviting me to preside over the deliberations of the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh to-day. At the same time, the responsibility you have thrown on my shoulders is onerous to a degree. This Conference is intended to focus all the anti-imperialist forces in the country that are now determined to resist a compromise with Imperialism. To preside over such a Conference is by no means an easy task. This task becomes all the more serious and arduous when the Chairman of the Reception Committee is no less a person than Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. It is in response to Swamiji's clarion call that we have assembled here to-day.

I shall fail in my duty if before proceeding to discuss the problem of the day, I do not pay a tribute to those who are responsible for organising this Conference. I happen to know something of the obstacles and the difficulties that had to be overcome before this Conference could meet and I can therefore speak with a certain amount of authority. These obstacles and difficulties were of a two-fold character. In the first place, there were physical and material obstacles and difficulties to be overcome at Ramgarh before adequate arrangements for the Conference could be made. In the second place, persistent hostile propaganda all over the country had to be faced of the Conference. The most surprising and painful part of this propaganda was the determined endeavour of a section of Leftists (or shall I say pseudo-Leftists?) to make this Conference impossible by openly condemning it and also by trying sabotage it. As a matter of fact, during the last few months it has become more and more evident that a number of Leftists have begun to play the role of apologists of the Rightists but such a phenomenon is not new in history. Man lives to learn and the longer he lives, the more

does he realise the aptness of the oft-repeated truism that history repeats itself.

Reply to Defenders of Congress

It has been argued by the apologists of the Congress Working Committee that the Congress is itself the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference and that such a Conference is therefore unnecessary. The resolution of the last meeting of the Congress Working Committee which met at Patna is held up before our eyes in order to demonstrate that the Congress has adopted an uncompromising policy. One cannot but admire the naivete of such an argument, but is it meet and proper for politicians and political workers to be so very naive?

One has only to go through the whole of the Patna resolution and particularly through the latter portion of it in order to realise that there are loopholes which detract from the intrinsic value of that resolution. No sooner was this resolution passed than Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the statement that the door had not been banged on future negotiations for a settlement. Mahatmaji's subsequent lengthy remarks on Civil Disobedience do not assure us by any means that the period of struggle has commenced. In fact, what has distressed and bewildered us during the last year and a half is the fact that while on the one hand red-hot resolutions are passed and statements issued by members of the Congress Working Committee, simultaneously other remarks are made and statements issued either by Mahatma Gandhi or by other Rightist leaders which create a totally different impression on the average mind. Then there is the moot question as to whether the Patna resolution would have been passed at all, but for the pressure exerted by the Left during the last six months.

When will it come

The country eagerly awaits a clear and unequivocal declaration from the Congress Working Committee that the door has finally been banged on all talks

of a compromise with Imperialism. But will this declaration be forthcoming? If so, when?

Those who aver that the Congress is the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference perhaps suffer from shortness of memory and their brains consequently need refreshing. Have they forgotten that as soon as the war began Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to Simla without caring to consult the Congress Working Committee and informed His Excellency the Viceroy that he was in favour of rendering unconditional help to Great Britain in the prosecution of the War? Do they not realise that Mahatma Gandhi being the sole Dictator of the Congress, his personal views necessarily have a far-reaching implication? Have they forgotten that since the outbreak of war the Congress Working Committee has sidetracked the main issue—namely, our demand for Purna Swaraj—by putting forward a demand for a fake Constituent Assembly? Have they forgotten that some prominent Rightist leaders, including members of the Congress Working Committee, have been continuously whittling down the implication of a Constituent Assembly and that they have gone so far as to accept separate electorate and the existing franchise for the Legislative Assembly as the basis for electing the Constituent Assembly of their dreams? Have they forgotten that after the resignation of Congress Ministries, several Congress Ministers have been showing an inordinate desire to get back to office? Have they forgotten the consistent attitude which Mahatma Gandhi has adopted during the last six months in the matter of a compromise with the British Government? And do they not know that behind the smoke-screen of hot phrases, negotiations for a compromise have been going on apace?

British Attitude

Unfortunately for us, the British Government have ceased to take the Congress seriously and have formed the impression that however much Congressmen may talk, they will not ultimately

show Fight. Since September, 1939, there has not been any dearth of resolutions or statements. Some members of the Congress Working Committee opine that these resolutions have impressed the world. But whether they have impressed the world or not they have certainly not impressed the British, who are essentially a realistic race. During the last six months we have offered them only words and we have received the time-worn reply that so long as the Hindu-Muslim problem remains unsolved, Purna Swaraj is unthinkable.

Since September last, India has been passing through a rare crisis when men's minds have fallen a prey to doubt and vacillation. The first to fall were the leaders themselves and the demoralisation that seized them has been spreading as a contagion throughout the land. A determined and wide-spread effort is needed if we are to stem the rot. To make this effort really effective our activities should be focussed at an All-India Conference of all those who are determined to have no truck with Imperialism.

The crisis that has overtaken us may be rare in Indian history, but it is nothing new in the history of the world. Such crisis generally appears in periods of transition. In India, we are now ringing down the curtain on an age that is passing away, while we are at the same time ushering in the dawn of a new era. The age of imperialism is drawing to a close and the era of freedom, democracy and socialism looms ahead of us. India, therefore, stands to-day at one of the cross-roads of history. It is for us to share, if we so will, the heritage that awaits the world.

Supreme test

It is not to be wondered at that men's minds should be bewildered when the old structure is crushing under its own weight and the new has yet to rise out of the ashes of the old. But let us not lose faith in ourselves, or in our countrymen or in humanity in our countrymen or in humanity in this hour of uncertainty. To lose faith would be a calamity of the first magnitude. Such crises constitute the supreme test of a nation's leadership. The present crisis has put our own leadership to the test and the latter has been unfortunately found wanting. It is only by analysing

and exposing the causes of its failure that we can learn the lesson of history and lay the foundation of our future effort and achievement. But such analysis and exposure will necessarily be painful to all concerned, though there is means of avoiding it.

I may digress at this stage and draw an analogy with similar crises in other climes and ages. When the October Revolution broke out in Russia in 1917, nobody had a clear conception as to how the revolution should be directed. Most of the Bolsheviks were then thinking in terms of a coalition with other parties. It was left to Lenin to denounce all coalitions and give out the slogan—'All Power to the Soviet.' Who knows what turn Russian history who have taken, but for this timely lead of Lenin's, during a period of doubt and vacillation? Lenin's unerring instinct (or intuition which ultimately proved to be prophetic, saved Russia from disaster and from a tragedy similar to that which overtook Spain the other day.

What Mussolini Did

Let us now take a contrary case. Italy in 1922 was to all intents and purposes, ripe for Socialism. All that she needed was an Italian Lenin. But the man of the hour did not arrive and the opportunity slipped out of socialist hands. It was immediately seized by the Fascist leader, Benito Mussolini.

By his march to Rome and his seizure of power Italian history took an altogether different turn and Italy ultimately went Fascist instead of going socialist. Doubt and vacillation had seized the Italian leaders and so they failed. Mussolini had one supreme virtue which not only saved him but brought him the laurels of victory. He knew his mind and he was not afraid to act. That constituted the essence of leadership.

To-day our leaders are wobbling and vacillation has demoralised a section of leftists as well. "Unity," "National Front," "Discipline"—these have become cheap slogans which have no relation to reality. Befogged by such attractive slogans, they seem to have forgotten that the supreme need of the hour is a bold, uncompromising policy leading us on to a national struggle. Whatever strengthens us for this purpose is to be welcomed. Whatever weakens us is to be eschewed.

Unity which ties us to the apron-strings of rightist politicians is by no means a blessing. We might as well induce the Congress to effect unity with the Liberal Federation—if unity is to be desired under all conditions and circumstances.

In the present crisis, the most distressing phenomenon is the disruption within the ranks of those who were hitherto regarded as leftists. The immediate future will prove to be the acid test of leftism in India. Those who will be found wanting will be soon exposed as pseudo-leftists. The members of the 'Forward Bloc', too, will have to demonstrate by their work and conduct that they are really forward and dynamic. It may be that in the ordeal that is ahead of us, some of those who are branded as rightists to-day, will prove to be genuine leftists—in action, I mean.

What is Leftism

A word is necessary here in order to explain what we mean by leftism. The present age is the anti-imperialist phase of our movement. Our main task in this age is to end imperialism and win national independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be the socialist phase of our movement. In the present phase of our movement, leftists will be those who will wage an uncompromising fight with imperialism. Those who waver and vacillate in their struggle against imperialism—those who tend towards a compromise with it—cannot by any means be leftists. In the next phase of our movement, leftism will be synonymous with socialism—but in the present phase the words "Leftist" and "Anti-Imperialist" should be interchangeable.

The problem of the hour is—"Will India still remain under the thumb of the rightists or will she swing to the left, once for all?" The answer to this can be furnished only by the leftists themselves. If they adopt a bold uncompromising policy in their struggle with imperialism regardless of all danger, difficulties and obstacles then the leftists will make history and India will go left.

To those who may still be thinking of a compromise, the recent history of Ireland and the sequel to the Anglo-Irish

(Continued on page 9)

PRESIDENTIAL PROCESSION OF THE ANTI-COMPROMISE CONFERENCE

(By Our Staff Correspondent)

The presidential procession of the Anti-compromise conference was really a show worth seeing. The Ranchi Road Station was a vast sea of human heads when the Gaya Special carrying the President steamed in at 9 in the morning. But it was not merely the numbers that counted; beaming enthusiasm was writ large in the faces that had gathered there. As a matter of fact, villagers came hundreds of miles on foot to get a 'darshan' of their beloved leader and afterwards to join the conference. On getting down from the train S. J. Bose was garlanded by Swami Sahajanand, Chairman, Reception Committee, and was given a guard of honour by the lady volunteers.

Then the procession started. The stereotyped adjective of 'royal' does not fully describe it. It was much more than that. The procession moved in the following order: volunteers on horseback led it and they were followed by one hundred cyclists carrying Congress flags; then followed a large number of Kisans and the delegates to the conference seated in bullock-carts; then again another batch of Kisans, with men and women volunteers coming just in front of the presidential chariot—a magnificently decorated bullock-cart. By the side of the President sat Swami Sahajanand. An enchanting atmosphere was created all around by the music of the Adibasis. The rear was formed by another batch of Kisans—and the procession moved slowly and with great dignity towards Kisanagar. Flowers were scattered on the way, conches were blown by the ladies and revolutionary slogans continued to be shouted with tremendous gusto. The numbers swelled as the procession moved on and even at a very modest computation no less than 50,000 people joined it. The *Statesman* has rightly noted that "it was, if anything, more impressive than that of the Congress President," although the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, by a curious process of calculation, has estimated that only four thousand people took part in it. It is a piece of flagrant "untruth" which the paper frequently indulges in. Of course, the sponsors of

the Congress show used questionable means to foil the performance, but to no perceptible effect. For instance, as the Congress had no function scheduled for the time, it was announced by the microphone in the preceding night that a public meeting would be held at Jhanda Chawk (through which the procession was to pass) which would be addressed by Pandit Nehru and Acharya Narendra Dev. People numbering about 5000 gathered there, but as Pandit Nehru did not turn up and the Acharya harangued only for half an hour, the gathering began to disperse and swell the procession. After a couple of hours it reached Kisanagar when both the President and the Chairman addressed some inspiring words to the gathering which made a fitting sequel to that wonderful show. *The former said, "ours is not a 'tamasha' and we are not here to attend a 'mela'. We mean business. We believe in real work and that is why the Anti-Compromise Conference is being held."*

Who attended the Conference?

Representatives of all the anti-imperialist organisations attended the conference in large numbers. Besides the Kisan Sabha and the Forward Bloc, the Ahrar Party, the Kirti Kisan Party of the Punjab, the Trade Union Congress, the Students' Federation, the Labour Party and the Congress Socialist Party were amply represented. There was a rally of not less than a lac of Kisans on the occasion. Among the notable personalities present were the following, among others:—Mr. H. V. Kamath, Prof. Ranga, Baba Gurudit Singh, S. J. Indulal Yagnik, Sardar Sardul Singh Kavesshar, Master Mohta Singh, Sardar Niranjana Singh Talib, 6th Dictator of Ahrar Party, Punjab, Sardar Ramsingh Akali, Sardar Mangal Singh M. L. A. (Central), Swami Govindananda (Sind), Senapati Bapat, Gopal Ratanam (Tamil Nadu) Annapurniah (Andhra) Lala Sankar Lal, Ansar Harwani, Khalilur Rahman (Ahrar leader), Niharendu Dutt-Majumdar, Satya Bakshi, Jnan Mazumdar, S. J. Bimal Protiva Devi and Sarala Devi. The absence of the great Kisan leader, Rahul Sankirtayana (recently arrested under Defence ordinance) was keenly felt.

(Cont. from page 8)

Treaty should prove highly instructive and edifying. A compromise with Imperialism will mean that an anti-imperialist national struggle will soon be converted into a civil war among the people themselves. Should that be desirable from any point of view?

Danger of Civil War

In the event of a compromise being effected with imperialism in this country, Indian leftists will in future have to fight not only imperialism, but its new-fangled Indian allies as well. This will necessarily mean that the national struggle against imperialism will be converted into a civil war among the Indians themselves.

Let us take time by the forelock and let us act while it is not too late. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati has sounded the clarion call. Let us respond to it with all the strength and courage that we possess. From this Conference let us send out a warning to both imperialism and its Indian allies. The success of this Conference should mean the death-knell of compromise with imperialism.

Before we part, let us also set up a permanent machinery for implementing the resolutions of this Conference and for waging an uncompromising war with imperialism. Everybody now realises that if the Working Committee of the Congress does not give the call for launching a national struggle—others will have to do so. It would therefore be in the fitness of things for this Conference to set up a permanent machinery for undertaking this responsibility—should the Working Committee fail us in this crisis. I hope and trust that the deliberations of this Conference will be a prelude to work and struggle on a nation-wide scale and on an All-India front.

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GEMS CULLED FROM RAMGARH

I was so loyal that I wrote to Lord Chelmsford that I longed to have the same loyalty towards the Empire as a Britisher had in his heart. I wrote those words because yet I am a believer in truth. Truth is my god and I could not have written anything else if I wanted to be true to myself.

* * * * *

MAHATMA GANDHI

I do not want to reply to what has been said by some of you in the course of the debate. I want to tell you, however, that there was occasion when I agreed to launch a movement although some of my conditions had not been fulfilled but on this occasion I am going to be very strict.

* * * * *

MAHATMA GANDHI

We have no time to think of what Subhas Babu says or does. A Rightist leader as reported by the "Statesman."

I am surprised that people ask us to start immediately civil disobedience, but I ask them why they are indulging in tall talks, instead of starting direct action, if they have the courage to do so (cheers). Unity and discipline are essential before we start any fight on a mass basis. Whoever wants to fight is at liberty to do so. Why don't they do it?

* * * * *

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL

It is easy to frame resolutions for rescinding disciplinary actions but it is difficult to avoid facts. The Working Committee was compelled to take actions in the interest of the organisation inasmuch as the Congress is a fighting organisation and military discipline is necessary. If, the Working Committee shows the slightest signs of weakness at the time of crisis, the whole organisation will collapse.

* * * * *

RASTRAPATI AZAD

I never looked upon myself as a Mahatma. We are all equals in the eye of God. Some of you have criticised me for my attempt to arrive at a compromise with the British Government. I am not surprised at it. Compromise is inherent in satyagraha. I shall go to the Viceroy fifty times, if necessary. I shall even seek an interview with him. I am not ashamed of having gone to Lord Reading nor I am

ashamed of my efforts to reach an understanding with General Smuts.

* * * * *

MAHATMA GANDHI

If you want to start civil disobedience tomorrow you could do so; there is nothing heroic about it. But you should ponder seriously on our ability to carry it to a successful conclusion. I do not want to detail here all our short-comings except to say that as much as we are you are also beware of the petty squabbles in local and provincial committees. These amendments only show that while we are prepared for disobedience we are not prepared for civil disobedience. Such disobedience will only result in counter-violence and it is not we who will be sufferers for it but the masses (cheers). I would, therefore, appeal to members of the Committee to take stock of the situation seriously.

* * * * *

SARDAR PATEL

I do not find anything to suggest that we are ready for a fight immediately. The required conditions have to be fulfilled. There are conditions both external and internal. For a satyagrahi external difficulties are not of serious consequence. Internal difficulties must be taken note of and overcome. Lack of discipline and an atmosphere of violence are among such internal difficulties and they have to be overcome before I can start a fight.

* * * * *

MAHATMA GANDHI

Those who want immediate fight may start fighting to-day. It was no use quarrelling over this question and thus divide Congress. One could not fight his enemy with tall talks only.

* * * * *

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL

The reasons why the Central Executive of the Congress Socialist Party has decided to support this resolution may be briefly stated. There is, of course, an obvious reason that we are in agreement with its essential points. Complete dissociation with the Imperialist war is enjoined on all. Dominion Status has been categorically rejected, demand for a Constituent Assembly elected on adult

suffrage is reiterated, the sovereignty of the people in the States is upheld against the pretensions of feudal Princes and civil disobedience as the next step is envisaged.

We feel that what is important at this time is not our differences but unswerving determination to march together in this hour of crisis. In a comprehensive resolution like this, it is possible to detect things that one would phrase differently or points that are not fully covered. For the party whose role is that of parliamentary opposition, amendments are easy and even natural. But for a party of action at this critical time to differ over details however important is inexcusable.

* * * * *

MEHERALLY

They must have complete faith in their policy and programme. There was no use giving it a halfhearted support as that would not create moral strength which they must get. Members must repose their faith in the Working Committee just as they had reposed complete faith in Mahatma Gandhi. They must mobilise public opinion and take it with them in all their actions. It was Mr. Gandhi's voice that would be listened

* * * * *

RAJENDRA PRASAD

Misguided enthusiasm of a few people to go headstrong for any objective had often caused disruption in fighting forces. Such enthusiasts were counter-revolutionaries and rebels. Their object should be to get the entire army moving and not a few headstrong people who could be described as adventurers. They were not better than terrorists. These people were not led by reason, but by cheap sentiment. India was renowned for her high level of intellect, but he regretted that attempts were being made to solve national problems by mere shouts and bluster.

* * * * *

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL

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KHADI, CHARKA, WILL ADORN MUSEUMS

KISANS, MAZDOORS AND STUDENTS ARE MAKING HISTORY

The following is the full text of the speech of Swami Sahajananda, Chairman of the Reception Committee, at the Anti-Compromise Conference on March 19 :

Comrades, I deem it my singular honour and privilege to accord you, dauntless and distinguished sons and daughters of Mother India and seasoned soldiers of freedom's fight, a humble but hearty welcome on behalf of the Reception Committee of the first, and let us hope the last, All-India Anti-Compromise Conference. I am painfully aware of the all-round glaring shortcomings in making you feel at home here. But, circumstanced as we are, this should not be otherwise as all of you know it well and this is my only excuse to be forgiven for these. I am therefore sanguine, you will not mind the inconveniences confronting you at every step and proceed composedly forthwith with the work in mind.

Present Situation

You are assembled here at a time when our chequered national history of the long-drawn freedom's battle is about, I am afraid, to take a most violent turn which may make or mar our assured and systematic onward march at least for some time to come and it is your profound duty to see here and now that this turn is entirely in favour of that march and accelerates it. It pains me extremely to recollect the fact that a nation in bondage which has consistently and uninterruptedly for these twenty long years fought tooth and nail in a most marvellous manner ever known to history the mightiest Empire in the world with a considerable success, is now under the deadly grip of a terrible inertia and stalemate at this most critical juncture. Is this the time for us even to think of a compromise with Imperialism? Is it not the most opportune moment to strike a fatal blow at it and win our emancipation we are hungering for and thirsting after? British Imperialism, although struggling hard and attempting desparately for its very existence under the dreadful danger of being eclipsed fully and wiped out completely, treats our demand for even full-fledged

Dominion Status with unusual contempt and yet we talk and think in the terms of an 'honourable settlement' with it and that too to achieve complete independence. Is this the way of honourable nation which has challenged more than once Imperialism successfully? Do you not feel the pinch of this shameful move of our national leadership bent upon dishonouring, may be unconsciously, still more Mother India? We are so seized with this idea of compromise, the atmosphere is so thoroughly charged with and we are so objectively under its poisonous influence that even in our ordinary talks on politics we cannot do without its idea and yet we do not realise. I am afraid, its soul-killing influence on us, so much so that some of us, who are taken as 'pucca' revolutionary and intellectual giants felt in their heart of hearts that the complete and undiluted independence may be established here as a result of the talk o compromise. Our political bankruptcy and national downfall cannot go further.

Example of Ireland

To instance, Ireland on this score is the height of ignorance. Ireland used the last great war to the best of her advantage, gave all possible kicks to her neighbour master and never approached him with folded hands and did perform pilgrimages to any Vice-regal lodge and London. She always stood erect and remained to kick, whenever opportunity afforded itself to her. She is so even now. Hers has been constant fight and nothing but fight and not any talk of compromise and settlement. And yet that freedom is not full and complete as desired and required by the Irish masses.

The Irish masses are still under social and economic bondage and theirs is the mere political freedom which alone we do not require here. We want to establish here complete emancipation of the masses from the triple bondage and exploitation. We want the masses to wrest for ever from the hands of our masters the very power which enables them to exploit economically, socially and politically the Kisans, the Mazdoors and other producers of wealth, and we want to end this

exploitation for all time to come by making these masses the custodians of that power and hence of peace, progress and fraternity. And nothing but an uncompromising struggle can achieve it.

A Diplomatic Utterance

After the election of Moulana Azad to the Presidentship of the National Congress he made a vague mention in a press interview of a new form of civil disobedience and this was too much for some of our revolutionary friends, who went into hysterics over it and their excitement and joy knew no bounds. But to the piercing eyes there was nothing like this in that interview, which was a sheer diplomatic move on the eve of the Ramgarh Congress with the set purpose of smooth sailing in it, and therefore a preparatory instrument for that. First of all this new type of civil disobedience was sure to lead the nation nowhere. It seemed somewhat mystic and the nation is tired already of the mysticism of Mahatmas and saints. We have had enough of this and to spare. Then again the mention of the possibility of coalition ministries, although in a diplomatically guarded language, in the same breath had nothing to do with a serious fight and it pointed clearly, if still clarity was needed at all, that all this was a clever move to prepare the ground for compromise.

Door kept open

Then came the Patna Resolution of the Working Committee which is meant for the Ramgarh session of the Congress. The same shrewdness, all-round vagueness pastmastership in a diplomatic drafting and non-committal attitude is again to be found in it and there is nothing said unequivocally final here. The dimmest prospect of fight is of course there. But then the door for compromise has also been kept purposely open in that resolution.

It is evident beyond a shadow of doubt from the statements, press interviews and speeches of High Command leaders after the resolution has been passed. The retiring Rashtrapati has said that there is still time for the British Government to make amends and concede to our demands. The Sardar has told

clearly that if our master concedes to our demands for a Constituent Assembly there will be no need for fight and we all are aware by now what sort of a Constituent Assembly he has in his mind. It is nothing but a joint session of all the Assemblies elected under the Constitution Act of 1935. And the great Premier of Madras has declared that the resolution does not contemplate at all an immediate fight.

But why go so far and grope in the dark? The author himself of the resolution, the saint of Shegaon has thus given the authoritative interpretation of that resolution: "The question has come from London whether the Congress has closed the door to negotiation and compromise. My interpretation of the resolution is that the Congress has not closed the door. It has been closed by Lord Zetland."

It is evident from the above that although Lord Zetland closed the door unceremoniously and contemptuously months back, yet even now the resolution passed at Patna has not deemed it advisable and proper to bang it on behalf of the Congress and the nation thus still made to look with eager and expectant eyes to the high and mighty British Imperialism to condescend to throw the crumbs of Dominion Status as a result of the change of heart though it has no heart at all, consequent upon the unbounded love and perfect non-violence displayed towards it by the Indian masses led by Mahatmas, Deputy Mahatmas, Assistant Mahatmas and their staunch followers.

Indeed we are seriously advised by comrades and others that the compromise has been given the go-by and buried fathoms deep once for all by this resolution and the stage for fight has been set. But any one reading between the lines is bound to reach the only one conclusion that the resolution as yet does not rule out Dominion Status or the like only if it is not within the Imperial structure, as though there is such a state ever possible and existent, although history sets its face against it.

Impossible Conditions

As regards the fight, it is hinted at no doubt in the fifth paragraph of the resolution but at the same time it has been bound down by almost impossible conditions to be fulfilled. The first of these is that "if and when the Congress organisation is considered fit enough for the purpose."

And who will judge this fitness and enoughness thereof and how? It is clarified in the next sentence. "The Congress desires to draw the attention of Congressmen to Gandhiji's declarations that he can only undertake the responsibility of declaring civil disobedience when he is satisfied that they are strictly observing discipline and carrying out the constructive programme described in the Independence Pledge." This is the second condition, which again is impossible of fulfilment as the nation as a whole has already shown by not taking the pledge on the independence Day and by contemptuously disregarding Gandhiji's and Rashtrapati's advice for the students and the workers not to leave their classes and factories and not to resort to strikes that day. Our comrades themselves who are extremely enthused over the prospect of an immediate fight have declared unequivocally that they can never be a party to that pledge.

The third condition is in the shape of an alternative which too should deceive none. It is "or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis."

But the fact of the matter is that the independence fight is not or has never been a thing caused by circumstances, which precipitate a crisis. Rather those who wage this fight are invariably in search of the means how to precipitate such a crisis and they never commit the grave blunder of leaving this crisis to be created by the circumstances. But here our leadership clearly shirks this responsibility and to be frank, is afraid of this crisis; otherwise the present being the most opportune occasion they ought to have resorted to means which have now presented themselves to them and through them to the nation.

Moreover, our masters are clever enough to take the time by forelock and in no case to allow the circumstances to cause such a crisis. Therefore, it is totally wrong to expect any fight from our leaders in the near future and to those who say that the Patna resolution is a great advance over the prevailing conditions, I make bold to submit humbly that it is an advance no doubt, but surely not over the prevailing conditions. It is an advance in the art of a most clever and diplomatic draftsmanship in which our leaders are unparalleled. I admit. Of course I shall be very glad and happy if

I prove wrong and the real fight starts. But the latest pronouncement by Gandhiji in the 'Harijan' has dashed to the ground all such prospects. Indeed personal leadership, and that too on the part of a single individual, cannot but result in a fiasco in the end and for a nation to depend on such a leadership for freedom's fight is a calamity.

Unpreparedness

It is baseless and absurd to say that the country is not prepared for fight while previously it was and Gandhiji had no hesitation in declaring repeatedly fights against the British Government on the basis of this very preparedness. And what are the reasons of its deterioration since 1934 so far as the fight is concerned and how to ascertain them? There is an all-round tremendous consciousness among the masses and they have waged marvellously many a successful struggle, on various fronts throughout the country. This phenomenon was almost non-existent prior to 1934 and instances of it were few and far between while to-day there are thousands. Even the Princely India is in the midst of a ferment and there is a tremendous mass upsurge there which was formerly untraceable.

The kisans, mazdoors, youths and students are making history and forging ahead. They have established their solid organisations. The hunger, poverty, helplessness and the nakedness are growing rapidly in the masses, taking their heavy tolls and rendering them impatient and desperate to get rid of their present hellish condition. The deterioration in their material conditions has reached its limit and they know fully that even jails, bullets and gallows are any day preferable to this death of theirs by inches. What is then the justification in dubbing them as unprepared? This is rather a most uncalled for insult hurled at them. Surely it is the leaders who are not ready for fight and they hide their unpreparedness under this false plea.

The fact is that the dire economic distress has touched and adversely affected the broad layer of the masses and the storm of the political awakening has swept over them giving them a new life and vigour. The result is that the lowest and the most oppressed stratum of the society has been rendered fully fit for a phenomenal stir and spontaneous action. Then there are middle and upper strata too of the

society resting for centuries over that most suppressed and oppressed stratum and above all there is the British Imperialism.

Now any mass movement on a nation wide scale is bound to give a violent shake to that lowest layer, unleashing its mass energy and setting it in an uncontrollable motion with the clear result that all the middle and upper layers together with the British Imperialism are destined to be forcibly thrown away and torn into tatters. Our leadership consisting of the middle class is painfully aware and mortally afraid of its impending doom if it once starts fight. Hence this excuse on unpreparedness, this excessive emphasis on nonviolence and this constant slogan of keeping blindly an implicit faith in the Gandhian leadership. Otherwise if the fight is started once, Gandhiji or the present leadership will not be able to stop it in the middle, when they sense danger to their very existence and their cry for halt will simply prove their crying in the wilderness.

Khadi And Charka

We too are not opposed to khadi, charkha and village industries and admit their place in the present national economy of our country. But unlike Gandhian school of thought we are not ready to accept them as the basis of future society. Rather we believe that these will vanish from the society never to return and will adorn museums. So here our differences with that school are basic and fundamental and not practical and it is why we are opposed to the forefold Gandhian programme.

And as regards non-violence we are ready to accept it as a policy. Circumstanced as we are we can progress towards our aim through peaceful means alone and to that extent we are ready to pledge ourselves to it as practical men. My experience of the fight for the day-to-day demands of the kisans has taught me this policy. We are ready to give our national leadership full and unrestricted a scope for the trial of the peaceful means to win complete independence, with the full liberty to take recourse to other means if and when they fail to liberate the masses from the triple bondage. Here Gandhiji insists that we should accept non-violence as the only means to achieve our aim. It is only then that he will lead the fight.

But it is just like the insistence of a doctor before he begins to serve a patient to pledge to him that he would approach no other doctor whether he is cured by him or not, while the ailing person wants to reserve for himself the right to requisition the services of other doctors too, in case he fails. Here we follow simple logic and history and hence our differences are basic and not immediately practical.

Poles Apart

Then comes the problem of change of heart and transformation of the society by love and 'ahimsa'. Frankly speaking I never believe in these and it is only on the Marxian line, I maintain, that the society can be rebuilt in order to be free from 'himsa' and exploitation of all descriptions. Therefore, here we stand poles apart 'vis-a-vis the Gandhian school.

In a nutshell, we stand for an around revolution, which is the only result sooner or later of a national fight, while the other school stands for reformism in every sphere of our life. It is why it is so anxious for the compromise. The compromise is the very essence of reformism and it can exist and flourish on that alone.

Task is Clear

In the circumstances our task is clear. If we do not awake betimes, seize upon every opportunity make desperate attempts, take concerted steps and move with a dashing spirit to thwart every effort to the contrary, this detestable compromise will shortly become, I fear, a settled fact and the country will be

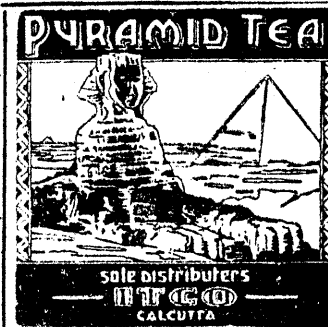
committed to it in the name of the National Congress. Political stalemate and inaction serves only those who want to profit by deterioration. It is why they always favour delay in a decisive and swift action. We must learn in this respect from the office acceptance episode where indecision and delaying tactics failed us and served the purpose of office-wallas. Therefore there is no time to lose and we, while vigilant enough to detect and check in time every retrograde move, should take the risk of an immediate plunge for direction action. Then and then alone we shall be able to save the nation from an ignoble surrender and capitulation.

But I am sorry, I have transgressed my limit and encroached upon the duty of our president of this conference. It is his duty and right to discuss threadbare the knotty problems staring us in the face and show us the way to their solution. My duty is only to welcome you all and crave your indulgence to excuse me and the reception committee for its various failings in providing for your comforts and bare necessities of life. Once more, therefore, I thank you for the patience with which you have tolerated large-heartedly not only this uncalled for speech inflicted upon you but also our shortcomings in your reception and welcome. I now request you to elect your President and proceed with work awaiting your attention and deliberation.

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TIT-BITS FROM RAMGARH

(1)

In the sitting of the Subjects Committee of the Congress when a member from the Punjab said in the course of his speech that "everybody was ready for struggle except the Mahatma", Gandhiji threw an arch look at him and sought to silence him by his customary bewitching smile.

(2)

In the Subjects Committee Mr. M. N. Roy was allowed only five minutes to move his amendment. At this he flared up and said that the time allotted would be taken up in merely reading the amendment. He further blurted out, "The leaders are determined to stifle all criticism." On this the President allowed him fifteen minutes. Mr. Roy then finished his speech and returned to his seat. It was observed that he took a long time to cool down and regain his normal self.

(3)

Attitude of the Congress High Command with regard to the present political situation, as expressed in the deliberations of the Subjects Committee on the Patna War resolution, came as a great disappointment not only to the visitors in Congressnagar, but to a large section of the delegates as well. The most disheartened group in this respect seemed to be the Communist party and their disapproval of the Congress High Command's stand found spontaneous expression through a big demonstration of the members of the party staged this morning within the Congressnagar.

A big procession consisting of the members of Communist party came out this morning which paraded through the Congressnagar shouting "Inquilab Zindabad" and condemning the Government drive against the party's leaders. Even some of the volunteers of the Congressnagar were found joining the procession.

(4)

Dr. Ashraf who moved an amendment to the main resolution at the Subjects Committee yesterday, resigned his membership of the Congress Socialist Party which accorded full support to the official resolution. This resignation is regarded as the first and the most significant fruit of the party's new policy.

(5)

Mahatma Gandhi granted an exclusive interview to Mr. Satyamurti. Special significance is attached to it in view of the latter's recent meeting with the Viceroy.

(6)

Dr. B. C. Roy, last year's member of the Working Committee, was one of the most notable absentees in the Congress.

Quite naturally speculations cropped up regarding the cause of his absence. The most plausible surmise was that proud man as he is, the uniformly arrogant behaviour of the Gujrati Sardar has proved too much for him for which he has sulked away. It is only a guess, who knows where is the truth?

(7)

The editors of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and its vernacular understudy have come here, presumably to gather some testimonials for their papers.

(8)

The popular enthusiasm and spontaneous demonstrations that have been

witnessed here in connection with the huge procession organised in honour of S. Subhas Bose, the President-elect, Anti-Compromise Conference, and other activities in connection with it, have had their natural repercussion on the minds of rightwing Congress leaders.

One such leader who at present figures very prominently, is reported to have told a member of Bengal legislature that S. Subhas Bose really deserved the credit of giving stiff single-handed fight to those who generally passed as Congress High Command. This has been a topic of discussions among groups of Congressmen to-day.

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ILLUSIONS AND DELUSIONS (3)

The fundamental question now is, "What is to be done"?

The young and more or less impetuous section of the Congress which consists largely of the leftists, and which is naturally tired of the present state of inaction, is impatient that the struggle should be commenced immediately. This section says, that the country is fully prepared for the fight. On the other hand, the rightists and their leader think—but do they think? they seem to have only intuitions—that the country is still unprepared for the struggle. The leader's latest announcement that he will not fight till he feels the urge from within, is a virtual admission of this unpreparedness. In the first place, the leader's three indispensable conditions of victory have not yet been even partially fulfilled. The quantity of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth is still insufficient to cover even a small proportion of the naked bodies in the country. Then the untouchables are still outside the pale of respectable Hinduism and the Hindu-Muslim relations are, if any thing, more muddled than before.

The serious politician, however, is not worried about this. For him the only relevant question is, "Are the objective conditions favourable or unfavourable to the struggle"? Now what are these objective conditions? they are:—

1. Our own strength.
2. The strength of the opponent.
3. The form, time and other conditions of the struggle.

As regards our own strength, it is evident that numerically we are not strong enough yet to score a victory in peaceful civil disobedience. In any case, civil disobedience is only a form of strike. Now the total membership of the Congress is between thirty and forty lacs, i.e., about 2 per cent of the total adult population in British India. Assuming that all the members take part in the strike, it will mean a strike of about 200 workers (and for that perhaps the least effective and useful operatives), in a plant of 10000 workers. And if we include among the prospective strikers all the sympathisers of the Congress also,

such as the members of the Kisan Sabhas and the Trade Unions, though a strike on their part, in the absence of any organised relief, would mean down-right starvation for their dependants, the proportion of strikers might rise to 3 or 4 per cent. Of the ultimate success of such a strike one may reasonably be in some doubt.

As to the strength of the Government, in so far as it lies in the loyalty of its civil and military servants, it is as unshakable as ever. There is indeed, the economic discontent of the mass of the population, but as long as it does not develop into conscious political discontent, it can not be regarded as a significant factor in the struggle.

As regards time and the other conditions of the struggle, they are definitely not more favourable today than they were in the first two months of the war when the international situation was more unsettled than it is now. All that can be said in favour of the struggle today is:—

1. That it will discredit the British in the neutral countries. But we know that all the smaller countries which are the minor members of the League, are more or less under the tutelage of the Allies, and therefore, they do not count. The only important country that can influence the British policy is U. S. A. but it is idle to think that the U. S. A. capitalists, out of mere sympathy for India, will stop the military supplies to the Allies and forego their profits.
2. That it will affect the British exports to India, which Great Britain must be anxious to keep up, otherwise, she would go bankrupt. Now the total imports in India from the United Kingdom in 1936, the latest figures are not available—were of the value of about 60 crores of rupees. Assuming that Great Britain can maintain her export trade at the pre-war level, and as a result of non-co-operation, India forthwith stops all her imports from Great Britain, it will mean, at the worst, a loss of 60 crores of rupees in a year, which is less than a couple of weeks' expenditure on the war at the present moment.
3. That it will cost the Provincial governments a good bit

of money. The imprisonment of thirty lacs of people alone will cost about 15 crores of rupees a year, plus an extra 5 crores for additional police, etc. This might necessitate subsidies from the Central Government, which it may be able to provide from the Excess Profits Tax and other taxes even without a loan.

Thus civil disobedience at the present moment can not give us what we want—or profess to want—viz., complete independence. We must wait for a more opportune moment. We must see how the international situation develops. That alone should determine our future course of action. Meanwhile, we should concentrate on increasing our strength, by enrolling more members. We should do intensive work among the masses and try to enlist at least 3 crores of active members within the next six months. The success of civil disobedience lies only in dislocating the administrative machinery of the Government as well as the normal civil life of the people. And this obviously depends entirely on the numbers that take part in the civil disobedience. We should also try to ascertain through the primary committees at least the approximate number of persons who are prepared to take part in the civil disobedience, and then on that basis prepare a detailed plan of action for the guidance of each provincial and even district committee.

Another thing that is of the utmost importance is that politics should be taken out of the obscurantism of mediaeval mysticism and based on a scientific study of history as well as of the objective conditions and on clear realistic thinking. Particularly the question of tactics should cease to be treated as a branch of metaphysical ethics, but should be regarded as a matter of practical politics, in regard to which guidance can be obtained and should be sought only from history and from a scientific examination of the objective conditions through which the struggle at each stage is passing. It is, of course, not suggested that violence should now or at any future date be substituted for non-violence. Only what should be clearly and definitely borne in mind is that non-violent non-co-operation and its various forms are only a means to the supreme end viz., Freedom. In any case, it is to be regarded not as an immutable article of faith, but only as a rational course of action which shall have to be changed if the conditions so demand. In other words, if owing to the still imperfect mental and moral development of the human race, this weapon proves ineffective, we should not hesitate to adopt another which promises better success.

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Book Reviews

1. **Propaganda**—by E. H. Carr. 2. **The Blockade**—by W. Arnold-Forster. Published by Oxford University Press.

The above are Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs. The writer of the first-named pamphlet is a British liberal professor with a distinct anti-communist bias, who characteristically enough finds Trotskyism 'intellectually satisfying' and he has allowed his historical sense to run on his own 'national' lines so much so that his essay reads very much like subtle British propaganda. When he asserts that the Comintern is only the Propaganda Organisation of the Soviet Government or that the U. S. S. R. is a totalitarian and not a democratic power, he but exposes himself as an anti-Soviet propagandist, as a deliberate distorter of history; again when he asserts that there was no militant international working class movement in 1914, he betrays himself as an imperialist hireling. Did not militants like Liebnicht and Rosa in Germany, Joures in France and Maclean in Britain oppose the 1914 war? Were they not working class leaders?

The writer dared not face facts squarely; he therefore not only mis-states facts, but also refuses to discuss the 'contents' of propaganda, conducted by different states and parties. Does not imperialist propaganda belie our everyday experience? Does not socialist propaganda confirm it?

As for the writer's theory that political propaganda cannot be dissociated from (national) political power, we maintain that standing as it does on wrong data it cannot claim to be seriously considered.

The second pamphlet purports to give facts about the deadly blockade of the Central Powers during the War of 1914—18 and especially effects of the continuance of blockade measures by the Allied Powers after the Armistice of 1918, and endeavours to justify British action throughout. 'Blockade' in the present war has come to be the principal weapon, (though there are reasons to believe that it has not been so far as effective as in the last Great War) and for this reason this pamphlet may be read with profit by all students of international affairs.

BENGALI

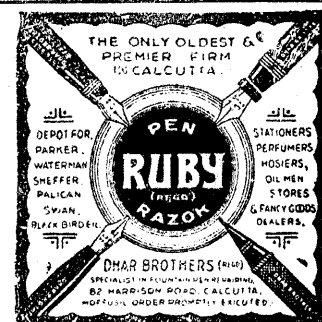
1. **Grahan**—By Samar Sen.

2. **Padatik**—By Subhas Mukhopadhyay. Published by the authors from Kavita Bhavan; 202, Rashbehari Avenue, Ballygunj, Calcutta. Price Re. 1/- each.

The above are books of modern Bengali poems. They are modern in the special sense that they are not only unconventional but also deliberately directed to express our times. We are living in a fast changing world and everywhere old values are being re-evaluated in accordance with new experiences. In poetry this revaluation is evident in a change of content, and since content determines the form, also of form. New verse has, thus, a perfectly natural growth. Messrs. Sen and Mukherji are two of the band of young poets who are experimenting on the newly-admitted themes of poetry. So long as the experiences are genuine, these poets deserve encouragement, but they are not always so. It becomes disastrous for poetry when the poet is not himself, but just somebody else. There is an element of truth in poet Tagore's assertion that much of our modern poetry merely echoes ideas and sentiments that have a distinctly foreign ring. Mr. Sen, for instance, draws his inspiration from Pound, Eliot and other modern poets of post-War England.

Mr. Sen enjoys among his friends a reputation for progressive writing. In his poetry there is the delight that can be derived from a pictorial undisciplined remembering of sights and sounds and a throwing into the cake plenty of the cochineal of lovely, unrelated phrases of pure colour, not often borrowed from other poets. We have not found it at all easy to enjoy him. There is hardly any real poetry in him; his experiences ring false and are related exclusively to the ugly things of life, which are, thus presented, soul-degrading half-truths. Mr. Sen leads us to a "Waste Land", peopled by penniless, sex-obsessed, solitary souls. This is not the reality any normal Indian or Bengali is aware of. The poet himself appears to know this when in *Bakudharmik* he asks "How long shall I live in imitation nightmare?" Progressive writing can only be balanced, objective writing, but Mr. Sen has nothing to do with objective truth.

Padatik is, we believe, Mr. Mukherji's first book of verse. For a first book it is a creditable performance. The first thing to be noted is that Mr. Mukherji does not, as many of his compeers do, make incomprehensibility his strong retreat. He has a really lyrical mind (as is evidenced in the beautiful word-picture of *Asansol*) though he chooses 'Satire' as his special line. Of course, his satires are not always inspired. Besides, his political creed sometimes shows itself too obtrusively. These defects however do not eclipse his remarkable talent and we heartily welcome this young and progressive poet.



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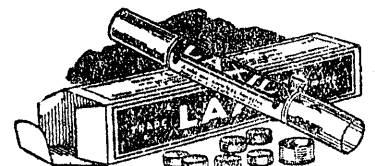
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NATIONAL STRUGGLE

This Conference affirms the inalienable and indefeasible right of the Indian people to complete sovereign independence. The glorious past, the immense natural resources and the vast and varied population of India entitle her to the position of a great and powerful modern state armed with an Army, Navy and Air Force and standing for the highest ideals of humanity viz. democracy and socialism.

On the banks of the Ravi, on the first day of the memorable year, 1930, the Indian people through their mouth-piece the Indian National Congress, solemnly resolved for the first time that complete Independence was to be their political objective. In a resolution that has since become historic, not only was it declared that freedom was the inalienable right of every nation but the all-round ruin that had overtaken India as a result of foreign subjugation was also described in clear details. Since then the fight for freedom has been waged with redoubled vigour and intensity, though there have been intervening periods of slackness and pause. Since the suspension of the last civil disobedience movement in 1933, while on the one side there has been a drift towards constitutionalism there has appeared on the other side, an unexpected and unprecedented mass-awakening. Organised masses of Kisans and mazdoors and youths and students—besides the people of the Indian States—are as a result more politically conscious today than ever before. The idea has now filtered down into the poorest strata of our society that freedom alone can bring bread and that the masses of India must first achieve their political liberation if they want to rid themselves of poverty and unemployment.

The Indian people are therefore hungry for freedom today and the objective conditions are also ripe for the attainment of their political objective. The outbreak of War

in Europe has served to expose thoroughly the hypocrisy under which British Imperialism has been masquerading so far. While the ideals of freedom and democracy have been trumpeted by the Western Imperialist Powers as their War Aims, the war has meant for India further suppression of civil liberty, ruthless exploitation of the people of both British India and the States leading to further taxation of the people at large and acute distress of the already poverty-stricken Kisans and Majdoors. Moreover, war-conditions have brought about a closer association between British Imperialism and its Indian Allies viz. the Rulers of Indian States and the big landlords and the big capitalists in this country. This has resulted in further sharpening of class-consciousness and it appears inevitable that with the prolongation of the War, this process will continue.

In the view of the Indian people the present War between Great Britain and France on the one side and Germany on the other is an Imperialist War, one of the objects of which is to retain for the Western Imperialist Powers the ill-gotten gains of the Treaty of Versailles. India has already condemned the action of the British Government in declaring her as belligerent power on the side of Great Britain without the consent of the Indian people. The attitude of the Indian people towards an Imperialist War was reaffirmed by the Indian National Congress for the last time in the now famous War Resolution adopted by that body at its annual session at Haripura in February, 1938.

Judging from our experience of the Great War and also from present-day conditions, it appears inevitable that as the days roll by, civil liberty will be suppressed more and more and that arrest, imprisonment, internment, externment and similar persecution will continue in an intensified form. It is equally certain that the screw of economic exploitation will be tightened considerably in future. The rise in prices, the increase in railway

fare and freight and the imposition of an excise duty on sugar have already given us a foretaste of what is to follow. There is no doubt that the accentuation of the repressive policy of the British Government and the aggravation of poverty and unemployment in future due to increasingly ruthless exploitation will serve to stimulate further the hunger of the Indian masses for political freedom.

While the Haripura session of the Congress in 1938 instructed the Indian nation as to its duty when a war broke out again, the Tripuri session of Congress held in March, 1939, reaffirmed the National Demand and called upon the people to take adequate steps to prepare the country for a national struggle for winning Independence. Unfortunately for the Indian nation, when the war started in September, 1939, doubt and hesitation seized a section of our national leadership. As a consequence valuable months have been lost in carrying on useless negotiations with the British Government and in seeking a clarification of British War-aims. Though the Congress Ministries resigned in October, 1939, following the unsatisfactory pronouncement of His Excellency the Viceroy, no forward step has been taken by the Congress Working Committee since then. On the contrary the steps that they have taken can only serve to confuse and bewilder the mind of the ordinary man. The emphasis once again laid on spinning and constructive work as a political weapon for achieving Independence calls for condemnation. Moreover, the presentation of a new demand by the Congress Working Committee in the form of a fake Constituent Assembly as a substitute for the original demand for Purna Swaraj is a dangerous political stratagem calculated to divert men's minds from the path of struggle. The Constituent Assembly as envisaged in previous resolutions of the Congress was not meant to be a Constituent Assembly under the aegis of the British Government and on the basis of separate electorates and the existing

RALLY THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST FORCES UNDER THE SLOGAN OF FREEDOM AND BREAD

franchise. This Conference respectfully warns the Indian people not to be misled or confused by the demand for a fake Constituent Assembly.

Owing to the mishandling of the political situation by the Congress Working Committee and the wrong moves adopted by it during the last twelve months, there is confusion, doubt and hesitation in the minds of many people as to our immediate task. But the situation has to be retrieved at any cost and it can be retrieved only if all lovers of freedom stand up boldly and courageously for the ideals of political social and economic emancipation and line up with all those who will fight for these ideals. Though it may be natural for many people to feel bewildered when faced with such an unprecedented situation and therefore to hesitate and vacillate—it would be suicidal to fall a victim to such weakness. The people must therefore launch a counter-offensive against the onslaught on civil liberty and against the imposition of new burdens for prosecuting the war and must also come forward to identify ourselves with the toiling masses of India, Kisans and Mazdoors, and join them in the struggle for their economic demands. They must also declare their solidarity with the people of the Indian States who have been carrying on a fight for civil liberty and representative government in their respective areas and actively assist them to the best of our ability. To crown everything, we must rally all the anti-imperialist, radical and progressive forces in the country under a common banner, the banner of Liberty, and under a common slogan, the slogan of "Freedom and Bread" and resume our march towards the goal of Liberty. We have waited long enough for nearly seven months for the timely lead in the matter from the Congress leadership and to no purpose and we find from experience that the longer we wait, the greater is the vacillation and the demoralisation in our own ranks. Consequently no further time should be lost.

It is a matter for pride and gratification

that during the last six months, struggles on various issues like War-policy, Kisan and workers' demands, civil liberty etc. have been going on in various parts of the country. Day after day, political workers in many provinces have been arrested and imprisoned in this connection and their total number today is by no means small. The time has come to intensify local struggles that have been going on and to start new ones wherever necessary and possible. At the same time these innumerable local struggles should be linked up and pooled together to culminate in one common struggle for the achievement of India's Independence. It is also necessary that politically conscious groups in different parts of the country should merge all their efforts in one common endeavour to emancipate their country. The sixth of April next, the beginning of the National week, should be signal for the intensification of local struggles and the commencement of a struggle on an All-India basis and on an All-India front. This should symbolize the resolve of the Indian people to withdraw themselves from forcible participation in the war and to make the final effort for the achievement of India's Independence. Once this struggle begins, there should be no rest, and no break, no Chauri Chaura as in 1922 and no Delhi Pact as in 1931. Nor should there be any side-tracking of the struggle as happened in 1932 when the Harijan movement was launched :

With a view to launching and directing the struggle this Conference resolves to set up an All-India Council of Action and S. J. Subhas Chandar Bose and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati are requested to take steps to bring this Council of Action into existence.

In conclusion, this Conference appeals to the freedom loving men and women of India to line up in the great struggle for liberty. Their difficulties will be manifold and their suffering immense. But the price of freedom has to be paid if they are to have it. Let them have confidence in themselves and in their national destiny

and let them feel confident that India and the world stand today on the threshold of a new age—the age of freedom, democracy and socialism.

Majlis-i-Ahrar

This Conference congratulates the Majlis-i-Ahrar on the bold, courageous and patriotic policy it has been pursuing even since the outbreak of War in September, 1939. It is a matter of gratification and pride for every Indian that while the Congress High Command has been marking time for last six months, the Majlis-i-Ahrar has gone forward in its endeavour to implement the War Resolution of the Haripura Congress and in so doing, has been undergoing considerable persecution at the hands of the Punjab Government. This Conference sends its warmest felicitations to those members of the Majlis-i-Ahrar who have suffered imprisonment or other forms of persecution since September last while executing the above task and hopes that the example set by the Majlis-i-Ahrar will soon be followed by others.

Mass-awakening

The suspension of the civil disobedience movement in 1933 ushered in an era of Constitutionalism in the history of the Congress. The Central Assembly elections in 1934, the Provincial Assembly elections in 1937 and the formation there-after of Congress Ministries in eight provinces gradually diverted men's minds from the path of struggle to the path of constitutional effort. This constitutionalist tendency was accentuated by the failure of the Congress leadership to utilise the constitutional positions secured by congressmen for preparing the country for the next struggle. Fortunately the drift towards constitutionalism was counteracted by an unexpected and unprecedented mass-awakening throughout the country since that year. In the view of this Conference the growth of organised political consciousness among the Kisans, the Workers, Youths, Students and the States' subjects during the last six years constitutes the

CRY HALT TO CONSTITUTIONALISM

VACILLATION AND DRIFT TO COMPROMISE

most hopeful political phenomenon of recent times. This Conference heartily welcomes this mass-awakening which will be the foundation for all the progressive and militant movements of the future.

Repressive Policy of the Government

This Conference deploras the fact that even after three years' working of Provincial Autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935, a number of political prisoners who have already spent long years in prison have not yet been set at liberty. The country-wide agitation carried on during the last three years for securing the liberation of these political prisoners has been only partially successful and in Bengal alone more than 80 of the old political prisoners are still languishing behind the bars. This Conference condemns the reactionary policy of the Bengal Government and of other provincial Governments that are responsible for the continued incarceration of so many freedom-loving and patriotic men.

This Conference notes that during the last three years fresh arrestees have been made in most provinces all over the country, not excluding Congress-administered provinces, under various pretexts with a view to suppressing the progressive and radical movements among the people. This repressive policy has been so accentuated at the instance of the British Government since the outbreak of War and the promulgations of ordinances, as to amount to a suppression of civil liberty. At a time when the British Government professes to fight for the principles of freedom and democracy, infringement of the civil liberty of the Indian people deserves the severest condemnation.

This Conference, further notes with deep concern that in recent weeks wholesale arrests, internments, externments and the like have been ordered in several provinces, particularly the Punjab and Bengal, and that these repressive acts have aimed primarily at undermining the peasants workers, youth and students movements.

The latest act of the British Government is the fiat ordering the wholesale arrest of Indian Communists. The reasons advanced by the British Government in justification of this fiat cannot stand a moment's examination. It is, therefore, time that the outside world were acquainted with the real conditions now obtaining in India.

In conclusion, this Conference expresses its appreciation of the action of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in resisting encroachment on civil liberty in that province and in resuming the normal activities of the Congress by holding mee-

tings, demonstrations etc. in defiance of the ordinances promulgated there. This Conference, further, congratulates Moulvi Ashrafuddin Chowdhury, Secretary B. P. C. C. and other colleagues of his on their incarceration following the defiance of the ordinance.

Kisan Demands

India is preeminently an agricultural country, the vast population of which lives on the land and the Kisans are the main producers of the nation's wealth. Consequently, the welfare of this country depends to a very large extent on the condition of the Kisans. The Indian Kisans have for a long time been suffering from manifold grievances, both at the hands of the land-lords and of the Government. This Conference is of opinion that the time has come when the problem of the Kisans should be treated as the most important internal problem of India. Accordingly, this conference accords its full support to the demands of the Indian Kisans and opines at the same time that the fulfilment of these demands in their entirety will be possible only when India is politically free. This Conference therefore hopes and trusts that the organised Kisans of India while fighting for their own demands will wholeheartedly participate in the national struggle and form the vanguard of India's army of freedom.

This Conference endorses the following all-India immediate demands of the Kisans:

1. Fifty percent reduction in rent and revenue and canal rates.
2. Wiping out arrears of rent, debts and canal rates etc.
3. Right of personal, domestic and agricultural use of the produce of the jungles.
4. Abolition of the Zamindari system and similar system of landlordism without compensation.
5. Provision by the state of cheap credit for the rural masses.
6. Restoration of the old third class railway fare.
7. Restoration of one pice post-cards and two pice envelopes.

In addition to this, this Conference extends its support to the demands of the Provincial Kisan Sabhas e. g. the demands of the Bihar Kisan Sabha for (a) abolition of Chowkidari Tax (b) no enhancement in road-cess (c) no tax on bullock carts.

Workers' Demand For Dear Food Allowance

Since the outbreak of War in September last, the new conditions created thereby have resulted in accentuation of

the distress of the masses, the overwhelming majority of whom normally live in a state of chronic starvation. With the prolongation of the War, this economic distress is bound to become exceedingly acute and to affect the entire population of the country.

The War Budget of the Government of India providing for increase in the price of sugar and in railway fare and freight has increased the burdens on the millions in the land. Further burdens are in store for the Indian people and the country's resources will be exploited more and more ruthlessly by the British Government for the prosecution of the War.

It is regrettable that the General increase in prices has not so far been followed by a commensurate rise in wages with the result that the Working classes in particular have been hard hit. This Conference strongly advocates a countrywide campaign for compelling the Government and other employers of labour to adopt such measures as will secure for the working classes a Dear Food Allowance so long as abnormal conditions prevail in the country.

This Conference congratulates the Textile workers of Bombay and other workers who are now on strike in several other places on their struggle against the Millowners for increase in their wages due to rise in prices. This conference further condemns the Bombay Government's repression of the Working class movement as evidenced by the arrest of its leaders in an arbitrary and high-handed manner.

This Conference is confident that the Bombay Textile workers will stand firm till their legitimate demands are fully conceded and appeals to the public to lend their effective support to the workers in their just cause.

States' People

This Conference strongly condemns the policy of repression carried on by the Rulers of Indian States against the legitimate activities of the States' people for the attainment of civil liberty and representative Government. In this connection, the Conference disapproves of the policy and new technique of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee within the last year or so, which has amounted to active discouragement of the States' people's struggle and indirect encouragement to the Rulers. The Conference regards India as one and indivisible and in consequence regards the struggle of the States' people as a part of the National struggle of Indian Independence. This Conference therefore extends its full support to the States' people in their struggle for their legitimate demands.

STRUGGLE AFTER FULFILMENT OF CONDITIONS GANDHIJI MUST BE SATISFIED

The following is the full text of the resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the Congress at Patna and passed in the open session at Ramgarh by overwhelming majority :

"This Congress having considered the grave and critical situation resulting from the war in Europe and British policy in regard to it approves of and endorses the resolutions passed and the action taken on the war situation by the A. I. C. C. and Working Committee. The Congress considers the declaration by the British Government of India as a belligerent country, without any reference to the people of India, and the exploitation of India's resources in this war, as an affront to them, which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate. The recent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the reservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India, as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the Congress cannot in any way, directly or indirectly be party to the war, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation. The Congress, therefore, strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britain and of the drain from India of men and material for the purpose of the war. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to be voluntary contributions from India. Congressmen, and those under the Congress influence, cannot help in the prosecution of the war with men, money or material.

"The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people of India. Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of imperialism and Dominion Status or any other status within the Imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with the dignity of a great nation, and would bind India in many ways to British politics and economic structure. The people of India alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations to the other countries of the world, through a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

The Congress is further of opinion that while it will always be ready, as it ever has been, to make every effort to secure communal harmony, no permanent solution is possible except through a Constituent Assembly, where the rights of all recognised minorities will be fully protected by agreement, as far as possible, between the elected representatives of various majority, and minority groups, or by arbitration if agreement is not reached on any point. Any alternative will lack finality. India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiate attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual, and social injustice yields place to a juster social order.

"The Congress cannot admit the right of the rulers of Indian States, or of foreign vested interests to come in the way of Indian freedom. Sovereignty in India must rest with the people, whether in the states or the provinces, and all other interests must be subordinated to their vital interests. The Congress holds that the difficulty raised in regard to the states is of British creation and it will not be satisfactorily solved unless the declaration of the freedom of India from foreign rule is unequivocally made. Foreign interests, if they are not in conflict with the interests of the Indian people, will be protected.

"The Congress withdraw the ministries from the provinces where the Congress had a majority in order to dissociate India from the war and to enforce the Congress determination to free India from foreign domination. This preliminary step must naturally be followed by Civil Disobedience, to which the Congress will unhesitatingly resort as soon as the Congress organisation is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis. The Congress desire to draw the attention of Congressmen to Gandhiji's declaration that he can only undertake the responsibility of declaring Civil Disobedience when he is satisfied that they are strictly observing discipline and are carrying out the constructive programme prescribed in the Independence Pledge.

"The Congress seeks to represent and serve all classes and communities without distinction of

race or religion, and the struggle for Indian independence is for the freedom of the whole nation. Hence the Congress cherishes the hope that all classes and communities will take part in it. The Civil Disobedience is to evoke the spirit of sacrifice in the whole nation.

"The Congress hereby authorises the All-India Congress Committee and in the event this being necessary, the Working Committee, to take all steps to implement the resolution, as the committee concerned may deem necessary."

Amendments

The following amendments to the main resolution were moved and thrown out by majority in the Congress.

On behalf of the Communists Mr. Chitale urged, by an amendment, immediate launching of the struggle.

Presenting the amendment Mr. Chitale described that Congress, as the only organ of revolution ought to have an endorsement of the amendment which sought the insertion in the resolution that the country should immediately declare Civil Disobedience on a mass scale.

Mr. Mahmud Ali from the Punjab followed with the same suggestion and referred to "the repressive policy" of the Government.

Mr. Mli said that rejection of the national demand by British was shameful, which ought to make the Congress launch civil disobedience immediately. The Congress should no more avoid such issue. It was time that both the British India and States joined in the last struggle.

Sj. Gopal Singh in moving his amendment said that he could tell Gandhiji that irrespective of caste and creed, the entire India was waiting for a fresh struggle. He implored Gandhiji to give sanction for immediate fight. "Just the fight starts, everyone closes ranks and unite under the Congress to resist further repression and win Freedom." Sj. Singh criticised the compulsory adoption of Charkha as an imposition. "Let both Charkha and passive resistance go together without any compulsion" he said.

Mr. Gopal Singh Kaumi of the Punjab asked the audience repeatedly to give proof of their readiness. The audience responded with shouts of "We are ready."

Mr. Rajani Mukherjee made a statement on behalf of the Royists saying what they wanted was severance of British connection and ordering of the society in such a manner that the masses would have power.

Dr. Ashraf moving an amendment said that there should be no talk of compromise. He regretted that the speeches of leaders after his own speech in the Subjects Committee had not changed his attitude towards the resolution. The question was what preparations were they going to make for the struggle? This remained unanswered.

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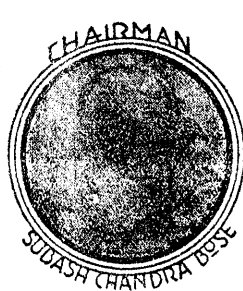
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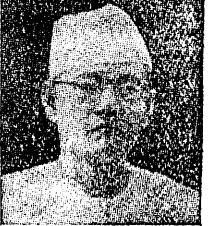
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