

FORWARD BLOC

A POLITICAL WEEKLY

Editor : SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

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ONE ANNA

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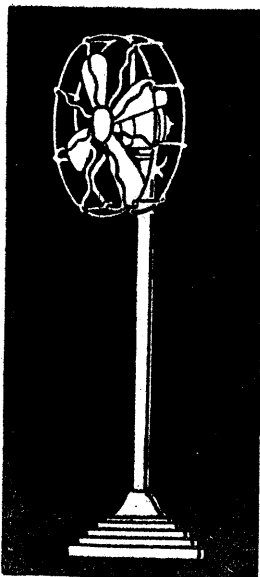
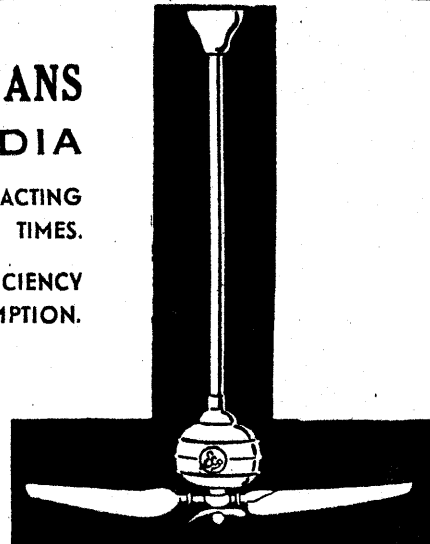
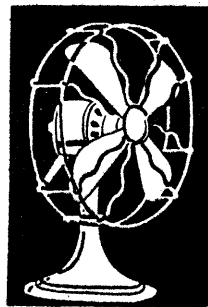


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FORWARD BLOC

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

The Call of Ramgarh

In the last issue we published in full the resolutions passed at the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference which met at Ramgarh on the 19th and 20th March, at the time that the Indian National Congress assembled there. The Conference was organised in the teeth of opposition on the part of Right-wing Congressmen. Till the very last, unscrupulous methods were employed by them in order to frustrate our Conference. Nevertheless, the Conference proved to be an unqualified success. Not only was the attendance phenomenal, surpassing that of the Congress itself—but the Conference afforded a much-needed platform to all genuine anti-imperialists who gathered together from every corner of the country.

The main resolution passed at the Ramgarh Anti-Compromise Conference on the 20th March dealt with the question of our National struggle. That resolution was passed unanimously, amid wild acclamation and frenzied enthusiasm. As soon it was declared carried, the bugles were sounded and one hundred thousand people jumped to their feet, mad with joy and holy inspiration. It was a sight which human memory will never forget.

Ramgarh gave the call and we who were there at the Conference, responded to a man. Our fight has already begun. It is now for the nation to take it up.

On the 6th April, will begin the annual observance of the National Week. That week is a week of humiliation in the recent history of India, for in 1919 the Jallianwala

Bag massacres took place at Amritsar in the Punjab. But it is often necessary to remind a subject nation of its humiliation in order to rouse it to a sense of self-respect and honour.

This year the National Week will have a unique significance, because the Anti-Compromise Conference has ordered that on the 6th April, all local struggles should be intensified and a struggle should be commenced on an All-India basis and on an All-India front. Today we stand on the eve of the National Week with hearts pulsating with new life and inspiration.

Who knows what the future has in store for those who stand on the brink of a precipice? Will they win swaraj or will they not? Will they be able to overcome enemies abroad and croakers at home, both on the Right and on the Left?

They may win Swaraj or they may not. But one thing is certain. They will have the satisfaction of having done their duty when others failed. They will be upholding the honour of the Indian Nation at home and abroad. And what is more, they will be ensuring the future of the Left Movement in this country. Whether Independence is won by one stroke or not, the grave of Rightism will be dug once for all and Leftism will be firmly rooted on Indian soil.

The bugle has been sounded. The die has been cast. Let nobody falter at this hour. We have to leap ahead and ever ahead. Out of the unborn future will spring the light that will bring us all that we have been striving for throughout the ages—liberty and Equality; peace and bread and above all, the Holy Grail of joy sublime.

Sukhdev Dutt

REV. C. F. ANDREWS

After a protracted illness Rev. C. F. Andrews breathed his last the day before yesterday. India has lost in him one of her true friends and benefactors. Since the time when he came to this country more than three decades ago, he made it his home and has been thoroughly unstinted and unsparing in his services to it. He was so much with us and of us that we seemed to forget that he bore a white skin on his person: For the fallen and the lowly his pity and kindness flowed in unceasing stream and it was quite deservedly that the epithet of *Dinabandhu* came to be associated permanently with his name here in our country. A friend and disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath, he was a visionary in every fibre of his being. He dreamt fervently of universal love and brotherhood, alas, to find his dreams and hopes dashed to pieces on the rock of realities. It can truly be said of him as of very few others, that he was a man of sorrows. He lived and died as such. And when after deep travails the world will be re-born in a spirit of justice and love, men like Andrews will be remembered with gratitude as the devoted torch-bearers of that truly enlightened order.

MOLOTOV'S SPEECH

A Ruter message dated Moscow, April 1, reports that an increase of 40 P.C. in defence expenditure has been provided in the Soviet Budget for 1940. The question arises: why this increase? The Finnish War has ended in a glorious victory for the U.S.S.R.; the Soviet has, within the recent past, achieved

no mean successes in safeguarding the security of the country and maintains a position of strict neutrality in the War of the Great Powers. Why then this provision for increased military expenditure? The answer will be found in M. Molotov's recent address to the Congress of the Soviets: "During the past five months there have been many instances of Franco-British hostility towards the Soviet Union. The Finnish War was indeed a welcome opportunity for a number of Imperialist States to embark on a War against the Soviet Union," and, Britain and certain other states availed themselves of the opportunity so far as they could not because they had any respect for Finnish freedom but because "Finland was a ready-made base for military operations against the Soviet Union." Failing to stop the Soviet-Finnish Treaty which they denounced as ruinous to Finland, the imperialists are now steadily endeavouring to drag the Soviet into the European War. This hostile attitude of Great Powers to U.S.S.R. is evident from Britain's refusal to fulfil long-standing Soviet orders and her seizure of Soviet ships in Shanghai (?), from the Souritz affair, which is an artificial pretext of the French Government to emphasise their unfriendly attitude to the Soviet and, lastly, from the U.S.A's refusal to raise the moral embargo against the Soviet Union, even though the Russo-Finnish War has come to an end. On top of all these, the proposed military alliance of Norway, Sweden and Finland, cannot fail to rouse our suspicions.

The Soviet has, therefore, good reasons to enhance her military expenditure for defence. That she is not arming for aggression, as imperialists would have us believe,

is clear from her policy of neutrality and non-participation in the War of Big Powers, as well as from her relations with her neighbours. From M. Molotov's speech we come to know that there is absolutely no basis for rumours that Soviet Union claimed ports in Sweden and Norway, or that she intended campaigns in India, Egypt and the like. M. Molotov has also declared that the Soviet Union does not mean to regain Bessarabia, over which a controversy is going on between Rumania and Russia, by War. These would amply prove the charges against the Soviet Union as disgraceful falsehoods.

CURRENT COMMENTS

Scavengers' Strike

For days Calcutta lay buried amid dirt and the people were oppressed by the fear of epidemic in the city. The Calcutta Corporation, though saddled with the responsibility of keeping the city clean, sat idle and breathed out hot threats at the strikers and the out-going Mayor addressed some winged words to the Strike Committee. The Corporation made organized efforts to sabotage the strike, and police aid was requisitioned to speed it up. But the scavengers rose superior to the forces of barbarity and darkness and their heroic struggle has challenged our admiration. Their demands are legitimate and cannot be pooh-poohed by any rational being. Scavengers, truly speaking, are captive to perpetual squalor and filth and their life is an Iliad of woes. Socially ostracised, politically reduced to nonentity, they are a race of nomads without home, without social responsibility. Notwithstanding the humanitarian phrases parroted by the guardians

of the society, scant justice has been doled out to the disinherited children of land. And the society has poleaxed them like a locomotive rolling in blind indifference to grind man from limb to limb. The primitive methods of scavenging is a reproach to the civilization that we enjoy, love and seek to preserve. The high officials of the Corporation live chatting, sporting, amused from day to day by cinema and the night clubs. The last meeting of the Corporation recorded fabulous increment for the officials that are not essential to the existence of the Corporation. Do the officials really merit the increment? This increment is a wastage of public money and negation of democratic principles. Citizens must not brook it and the principles of increment must be worked out in the equitable manner. The question of 25 per cent for the scavengers can be made possible only by the organized diminution of the highly salaried officials. What is important for the defenders of civic rights is to substitute for the advantages which the despotic officials gain in the field of action, a lively comradeship that enables them by the co-operation of all sorts and kinds of citizens to produce a more democratic organization.

"The China Incident"

The Sino-Japanese War is very irregularly reported. From all that we come to know through press about it, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Japanese in China are facing a hopeless economic, political and military situation. Ever since the Soviet came to the aid of the Chinese Government, China has remarkably developed her determination and power to fight the aggressors. Every Chinaman now firmly believes in the ultimate victory of his country, so much

so that the Puppet Government set up by the Japanese on behalf of Wang Ching-wei, has signally failed to achieve its real object of influencing the resistance of the Chinese nation. Indeed, it is so intensely hated all over China that even the most reactionary of her statesmen must henceforth think twice before proposing to the people any peace that they may deem derogatory to the honour of the Chinese nation. China has immense man-power to fight Japan for years; her moral strength, inspite of the stray cases of Kuomintang-Communist clashes is, unlike Japan, not only unimpaired, but daily growing. Material assistance from the Soviet has fairly made up her military deficiency. The War is causing Japan serious nervous strain. Face-saving is her only problem now. Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, the Chinese Premier and Commander-in-Chief, does not, therefore, appear to us unduly optimistic in his recent address to the Political Council.

The Scottish Church College Imbroglia

The approval that the College Section of the Church of Scotland Mission, Bengal, has accorded to the attitude and action of Principal Cameron, has put out the last taper of hope for a settlement in the College bearing the name of the Mission. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee tried his level best to bring about a happy termination of the unfortunate deadlock in the College, but all his laudable efforts have now broken on the proverbial Scottish obduracy. Mr. Cameron has circularised that the College will re-open after a couple of days, but we have no doubt that he and his professors will find empty benches staring in their faces. The

real source of the trouble, as we have understood it and pointed out before, is that these Missions, basking in official patronage, can hardly pull themselves up to the level of Indian students' awakened aspirations. In these circumstances, the students cannot be advised to make an abject surrender to the authorities and thus abdicate the very role that students play all the world over. Dr. Mookerjee has addressed an appeal to the guardians of the students of the College to meet and decide their course. We hope the response to this appeal will be spontaneous and full. We further hope that the decision that they will take will not compromise the honour of their wards in any way.

Defence Act Amended

Numerous are the bills piloted through the Central Assembly since the outbreak of war and some are really dangerous weapons forged to maim the normal life of the people. And the extension of the Defence Act to the areas that have hitherto enjoyed some sort of immunity from its rigorous application is no happy augury for the future. Words of nationalist members angered the Co-ordination Secretary and his show of nervousness and haste is baffling to us. Have the Indian States and the excluded areas sent any challenge to British rule? Britain will have to bank upon the States in the event of a protracted war and the States are being armed with extraordinary power to whip the unruly lads into good behaviour. British Government looks upon the excluded areas as addition to its strength for services of the Nagas and other tribes had been widely appreciated in the last War. India is most truly united and the present is the most glorious chapter of history.

Stript of the empire, deprived of the sovereignty of the seas, loaded with debt taxation, Britain would sink to the level of a fifth rate power and nothing would remain of her glory. And it would be most unwise to pursue any policy that does not take account of the growing forces. The Defence Act cannot chill the love of freedom nor would the arsenal of repressive measures cow down the masses.

Let people judge

Lest the Indian public miss the thread and get bewildered, we present once again the sequence of outstanding events that have figured in the political scene recently. Even after Ramgarh Mahatma Gandhi has continued to blow hot and cold in the same breath—talking of satyagraha and compromise simultaneously. Lord Zetland has obdurately clung to his old position that Hindu-Muslim reconciliation must precede any settlement with India *on the basis of a promise of dominionhood*. The Muslim League, under the captaincy of astute Jinnah, has found the moment opportune to develop into a vociferous exponent of the Pakistan plea. It is reported that His Highness the Aga Khan is coming once again to this country with a "mission" from London. And to cap all, Mr. Birla from his visit to Wardha had gone to the Viceroy to explain to him what Mahatma Gandhi really stands for. This, we believe, is a true chronicle of what is happening here today. Let people judge for themselves where things are drifting to.

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FORWARD BLOC NEWS**WAR COUNCIL FORMED****Delhi Forward Bloc Meeting**

The Provincial Forward Bloc, Delhi, at a meeting held recently constituted a War Council of three members in pursuance of the resolution adopted at the Anti-Compromise Conference held at Ramgarh.

War Council Formed

New Delhi, Apl. 1.

It is understood that the Leftist Leaders who recently met under the presidency of Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose at Calcutta constituted a War Council with Sj. Bose as convener in pursuance of the resolution adopted at the Anti-Compromise Conference.

GANDHINAGAR FORWARD BLOC**Office-Bearers and Executive elected**

In a meeting of the members and sympathisers of the Gandhinagar Ward (Cawnpore) Forward Bloc, held under the presidentship of Mr. Jagdish Prosad Agnihotri, Secretary of the City Forward Bloc, the following office-bearers and executive were elected for the current year.

President— Sj. Jagdamba Prosad
Johri.
Vice-President—Shivashanker Verma.
Secretary— „ Pransanker Misra.
Asst. Secretary— „ Raj Beharilal Srivastava.
Treasurer— „ Debi Prosad.

BRITAIN FIGHTS FOR "DEMOCRACY" >

(Cont. from page 10)

SJ. DEVEN SEN GETS ONE YEAR'S R. I.**Conviction Under Defence Act**

Deben Sen, President of the Calcutta Electric workers Union, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment under the Defence of India Act by the S. D. O. Howrah, on Tuesday.

Two other workers of the same Union were sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment each.

PROF. RANGA CONVICTED**One Year's R. I. And Rs. 500****Fine For Kisan Leader**

Madras, April 2.

Mr. N. G. Ranga, M. L. A., (Central) and Vice-President, All-India Kisan Sabha, was produced before the Third Presidency Magistrate at Egmore this afternoon, on a charge of having defied the Local Government's order served on him on Sunday last under the Defence of India Act.

Mr. Ranga was given a chair during the trial.

The special C. I. D. Inspector who arrested him was the only witness examined.

Mr. Ranga pleaded guilty to the charge against him.

The Magistrate convicted and sentenced Mr. Ranga to one year's rigorous imprisonment and to pay a fine of Rs. 500/- in default to undergo six months' further imprisonment.

SJ. SATYA GUPTA ARRESTED (B.V.)

-5440

Sj. Satya Bhusan Gupta, M. A. an ex-state prisoner, member of the Executive Council, B. P. C. C., one of the founders of Bengal Volunteers of which SJ. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE was G.O.C. a prominent member of Forward Bloc, was arrested this morning at Dinapore and taken to Comilla to stand his trial, in connection with his speech delivered at Comilla.

SENTENCE UPHELD**Prison For Peshawar 'Forward Bloc' Secretary**

Peshawar, Apl. 1.

The sentence of six months' simple imprisonment was upheld by the Additional Sessions Judge to-day in the case against H. C. Chatterji, General Secretary, Frontier Sweepers' Union and Secretary of the Peshawar Forward Bloc, who had been convicted in the lower court on a charge of defaming the police in connection with the Gnalladher peasants' agitation.

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NATIONAL WEEK BAN ON BENGAL PRESS

NO PROGRAMME TO BE PRINTED

DRASTIC ORDER OF BENGAL GOVERNMENT

The following is the text of the order :—

Government of Bengal, Home Department Political (Press).

Order to all Printers, Publishers and Editors in Bengal.

No. 2097P.—5th April 1940.—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-rule (1) of rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules, the Governor is pleased to prohibit absolutely the printing or publishing within the Province of Bengal of :—

(1) any document containing a reference by way of statement, advertisement, notice, news, comment or otherwise to—

(a) the whole or any part of any programme for the so-called "NATIONAL WEEK, 1940", issued by or on behalf of the (suspended) BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE or ANY BODY AFFILIATED THERETO or CONNECTED THEREWITH or Mr. SUBHÁS CHANDRA BOSE and SWAMI SAHAJANANDA or either of them or ANY ORGANISATION WITH WHICH THEY ARE OR EITHER OF THEM IS CONNECTED, or any programme identical with, or based on, or substantially similar to, or reproducing part or the whole of, any such programme ; and

(b) any procession, meeting, assembly or demonstration held, speech delivered, or thing done or omitted to be done in connection or in accordance with or for the furtherance of any programme referred to in sub-clause (a) or part of such programme ; and

(2) any document containing a reference by way of comment to this order.

By order of the Governor,

H. J. TWYNAM

Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

By Politicus

MORALITY IN THE MARXIAN SYSTEM

It is well known that in the communist state, as envisaged by Karl Marx, there will be no family *as such*. I have earmarked the last two words most deliberately, for among the ill-informed babblers on Marxism, whose number is gradually growing to be a legion, there seems to be a prevalent misconception that communism will give wide berth to sexual anarchy. I have taken morality here in that restricted sense in which it is commonly used, *viz*, as pertaining to relations between men and women. The truth about the matter is far from what is wrongly thought about it. It is undeniable that family, as it exists today, is founded on a sense of property and has been buttressed up by the sanction of religion. This is borne out by the testimony of two eminent thinkers of modern times, who are not even apologists for Marxism, I mean Westermarck and Havelock Ellis. I quote two sentences from these two distinguished authors in support of my contention. Ellis has said, "the morality that obtains today is one which belongs mainly to the sphere of property and was very largely developed on a property basis." Westermarck has said, "religion has probably been the most persistent cause of the wife's subjection to her husband's rule."

The point calls for further elucidation. How is the current brand of morality connected with property and religion? How is it being sustained by them? For a proper answer to this question one has to go a-fielding into the sphere of sociology, which has not, unfortunately, been able as yet to give the most decisive verdict in the controversy as to whether family preceded commune, or *vice versa*. Whatever that may be, one fact is certain, that with the family life began the most shameless bondage of women, their practical annihilation as independent human entities. An unstraying and ever-clinging wife came to be regarded as the safe custodian of one's individual properties and a guarantee for their continuance through sons and grandsons to succeeding generations. The aid of conventional religion, ingeniously bolstered up, was requisitioned to hold up the scare to

women in order to enforce unflinching chastity on their part. Thus they were placed under the wheels of an oppressive machine which has been grinding down their souls through ages and from which they have not been able to obtain relief as yet, in spite of their strenuous wriggling. This is the explanation of how property has been the foundation and religion the shield of the current brand of morality.

But things are going to change. A new understanding and awakening have been steadily coming over the whole world. Humanity now stands on the parting of ways. Its destiny has beckoned it right. In the new adjustment of relations woman will take her rightful place as an absolutely free social unit along with man. The conventional system of morality, too, will receive re-orientation. That is the social aspect of Marxism.

'Free love', as propounded by Marx, must not be mistaken as providing a sanction for unbridled license. The latter is, as Marx has repeatedly pointed out, anti-Marxian, bourgeois. In the communistic order of things there will be union between man and woman, two independent entities and the foundation of that union will be love, pure and simple. No other extraneous consideration, whether of financial gain or of social prestige, is to be the motive behind it. The time appears to have come when this lesson of the great teacher must be driven home to every enthusiast for Marxism. Mistaken ardour may do more harm to its cause than total absence thereof.

Karl Marx himself was rigorously clean in his personal life, almost an ascetic. So were Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Plekhanov and his other followers. In this connection it will be quite relevant to quote certain extracts from a letter of Lenin to a woman comrade of his, a document not very widely known, but nevertheless very valuable. For its austere tone this epistle of the exponent of 'free love' reads almost like an epistle of Swami Vivekananda or Mahatma Gandhi, the avowed apostles of celibacy. Lenin writes, "..... You, of course, are well acquainted with the famous theory that in a communist society the satisfaction of the sex impulse

and the demands of love will be as simple and inconsequential as the drinking of a glass of water. Really, our young people have gone mad over this theory of a glass of water. It has become the evil fate of many boys and girls. Its devotees insist that it is the Marxian theory. Thank you for so much Marxism. I consider the famous theory of a glass of water absolutely un-Marxian and anti-social. Then, again, "In my opinion, the excess in sex-life, so often observed at the present time, does not bring with it joy of life and vigour, but on the contrary, lessens them. In time of revolution this is bad, very bad" Further on he writes, "You know our young comrade X. A fine, healthy, gifted youth. I am afraid that in spite of that, nothing good will come of him. He jumps from one love affair to another. That does not go either for the political struggle or the revolution. Neither do I guarantee the reliability and steadfastness in struggle of those women whose personal romance is intertwined with politics, nor the men who run after every skirt and let themselves be entangled by every young female. No, no, this does not tie up well with revolution. It demands concentration, the straitening of all energies by the masses and the individuals. It does not tolerate orgies....."

The letter should be read in whole and digested by every enthusiast for Marxism for his or her benefit. It may be stated here that Soviet Russia, the only country in the modern world that has not only accepted the Marxian principle but has been practising it as far as circumstances allow, has prohibited frequent divorces by a recent legislation. The ideal of morality, as embodied in the Marxian system, should be carefully studied and studiously preached by those who profess this doctrine, at least to silence those who, frightened by its economic and social radicalism, raise the scare of its immorality and thus try to set back its progress.

The best historical drama of the age.

"BAKYA-RAO"

By BHOLA NATH GHOSE

By S. UPADHYAY

The world is moving against will towards some catastrophe. The victors appear to be vanquished and those who threw down the arms on the field are striding to the world mastery. Parleys of diplomats have fed the fire and hustled the world towards the furnace. And the diplomats have presided over series of butcheries that have robbed them of the lineaments of a civilized people. Professed love of democracy, guarantee of peace have worked murder and the world stands disillusioned of these dangerous doctrines. And against all these stands the Soviet Union like an oasis in the desert of lawlessness. It is eager to see peace and good

question of Lithuanian independence on seceding from the Tzarist Russia, was not scouted down by the Soviet Union though it was gulling to the western democracies. The Soviet Union rated high the existence of a democratic republic and succeeding years recorded steady rise in the barometer of confidence. The treaty of 1926 was a bulwark against the foreign influences that might undermine the existing relations.

The territory of Vilna was an internal colony of the Polish gentry who instituted a regime of repression and savage rule. The key industries were transferred to central Poland and the workers were reduced to street. Their lust for domination was fulfilled by wresting the province of Vilna from Lithuanian. But the Soviet Union refused to give sanction to the rape of Vilna. The Lithuanian people lived under the shadow of a

THE SOVIET

will established among the nations of the world, old quarrels forgotten and the masses united to rebuild the old world. History of its dealings with neighbouring countries is a formidable catalogue upon which prophets of peace can feast their minds. Of late the hostile press has ranked the Soviet Union with the totalitarian regime and fathered the story of atrocities upon it. Are they really true? Has the Soviet Union any imperialist ambition? And Lithuania sheltered and shut out from the sight and sound of war would be a fit reply to it. The Soviet-Lithuanian Pact is a startling achievement and has arrested the admiration of freedom-loving people of the world. The aims of the treaty had been discussed by *Izvesta* :

The Soviet-Lithuanian treaty is in this sense a document of genuine historic importance. In it are eloquently inscribed the justice, the nobleness and the unselfishness of the great Socialist power. The Soviet-Lithuanian treaty shows clearly that the Soviet Union deems it its duty and task to remove all sources of enmity between peoples, to consolidate a firm and lasting peace in Eastern Europe, to guarantee its own and neighbouring peoples the blessings of a life of peace and certainty of security. In its turn, the Soviet Union has received by this treaty a new guarantee of the security of its borders.

For the last two decades Lithuania has been at peace with the Soviet Union and the treaty of 1920 cemented unity between the two countries. The treaty was based upon the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs and recognition of independent state. And the

LITHUANIAN

fearful sword and Poland preyed upon Rzecz Pospolita. And in 1927 the conflict became more acute and Poland held out the threat of, an armed invasion, but words of the Soviet Union cooled down the ardour of the Polish Generals. On the liquidation of the old Polish regime the Red Army marched into Poland and a great work was achieved, a work of liberation and justice, in the restoration of Vilna to Lithuanian. The restoration of Vilna is a striking illustration of peace policy of Soviet Russia; of its respect for sovereign rights of smaller nations and its readiness to protect their security.

The news of the transfer of Vilna spread like wildfire through out Lithuania. An air of festivity prevailed in the land and national marches and songs were broadcast. Workers, scientists and school children flocked at the Soviet Embassy and asked for the photographs of Lenin, Stalin, Molotov and Vorshilov.

All the Lithuanian newspapers featured the text of the treaty on their front pages.

Portraits of Stalin, Molotov and Vorshilov were carried by "Letuvos Zinios."

"The Lithuanian people, have every ground for rejoicing, since an injury done to Lithuania by the Polish usurpers 19 years ago has now been remedied," stated "Lietuvos Aidas" in an article on the treaty. "The leaders of the USSR have upheld the just demands of Lithuania from the beginning of Lithuanian independence," it declared, pointing out that the Lithuanian people could have no two opinions on the matter. "The whole world has the opportunity of convincing itself that the great Soviet Union knows how to value the peaceful policy of its neighbours. The U.S.S.R has always been known as a champion of a policy of peace. In this respect Lithuania has always well understood the peace policy pursued by the USSR."

"The treaty of mutual assistance between Lithuania and the U.S.S.R will doubtless bring the two countries still closer together. Lithuania never objected to developing her relations with Soviet Union in the past, when she did not have a common frontier with the U.S.S.R. These relations will now naturally begin to develop still further."

RELATIONS

Demonstrators in Kaunas on Oct. 11 were addressed by Smetona, President of the Lithuanian Republic, and General Nagevicius :

"As a result of an agreement with the great Soviet Union which is friendly toward us," Smetona said, "we have received Vilno and Vilno Province." Relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union have always been friendly, he continued, and friendship will be consolidated in the future. A pledge of this is the common frontier with our great neighbor, which we will defend jointly in case of need."

The president stressed the fact that the return of Vilna was an occasion for great rejoicing on the part of the Lithuanian people. "We regard with great respect and friendship the just decision of our great neighbour in our favour," stated General Nagevicius in his speech.

BRITAIN FIGHTS FOR "DEMOCRACY" ?

DEFENCE ACT ARRESTS

Benares Forward Bloc Secy, In Custody

(From Our Own Correspondent)

Sj. Ramgati Ganguli Divisional Organiser and Secretary of the local "Forward Bloc" was summoned by the Sub-Inspector of Police of Dasaswamedh and was subsequently arrested under the Defence of India Act. Later the office of the Forward Bloc was searched as also Socialist Party office and the Hindusthan Book Shop owned by Mr. Bijoy Paul who has been ordered to leave Benares.

Congress Socialist Arrested At Coconada

Mr. P. Venkateswara Rao a Congress Socialist, has been arrested by the Police. The office of the local Congress Socialist Party was also searched.

Five Socialists Arrested at Tiruvannamalai

Mr. Shanmugham, Secretary of the Tiruvannamalai Taluk Congress Socialist Committee, and four other Socialist workers, namely, Messrs. Perumal, Mannu, Arunagin and Rathnam were arrested by the Police. They are now in remand.

BENERAS ARREST

Promode Lahiri, Secretary of the Mazdur Sabha, Benares, has been arrested under the Defence of India Rules.

ARREST AT CHITTAGONG

Bisweswar Chakravarty, a student of Fatchabad village, was arrested on Thursday at Chowdhuryhat station under the Defence of India Rules.

WORKERS' MEETING

Sec. 144 Order Promulgated At Asansol

A meeting of the workers of Asansol, Burnpore and Kulti was arranged to be held on the 28th March. Sja. Bimal Prativa Devi and other labour leaders had been there to attend the meeting in support of the demand of the workers. But the S. D. O. of Asansol promulgated Sec. 144 all over the area. Police surrounded the entire labour area and made it impossible for the workers to gather for the purpose. The workers however, met in groups in different quarters and resolved to fight for their legitimate demands.

DEFENCE ACT CASES

3 Sentenced At Sherpur

Dhirendradhar Guha Mazumder and **Jaladhar Paul** who were prosecuted under 38 (5) and 56 (1) of the Defence of India Rules and were sentenced to-day by Mr. K. C. Ganguli, Deputy Magistrate, to undergo six months' rigorous imprisonment on each count, sentences to run concurrently. They were being tried in connection with a "Baithak" alleged to have been held at village Daodhara P. S. Nalitabari. Both the accused were ex-detenus and joined Congress and Kisan movement just after their release.

RELEASED WHEN DYING

Comrade Dinanath Burman, Vice-President of the Bakpur-Managram Union Krishak Samity in the district of Jalpaiguri, was arrested on the 27th January last while he was in a state of ill-health and was kept in the 'hazat' till the 4th March. No proper arrangement was made for his treatment there and his condition worsened. At this stage, he was released and he breathed his last on the 18th March. About a hundred Kisan volunteers carried his body shouting various Kisan slogans.

MR. J. NARAIN SENTENCED 9 Months' R I.

Chaibassa, Mar. 27

Mr. Jaiprakash Narain, General Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist party, was sentenced to-day to nine months' rigorous imprisonment by the District Magistrate of Singhum and was placed as a second class prisoner.

He was prosecuted under the Defence of India Rules on a charge of delivering an anti-war speech at Jamshedpur on February 18.

Ban On Mr. M. L. Sarcar

An order of the Bihar Government under the Defence of India Act was served by the officer in charge of the Jealpur-Jealgora Police station in the company of some Bengal Police officers on **Mr. Mukunda Lal Sarcar**, Vice-President of the All-India Trade Union Congress at Jadavpur Colony near Calcutta on Sunday last prohibiting him from entering into any place within the Chota Nagpur Division in the Province of Bihar

Labour Party Organiser Externed

Sj. Promode Sen, a member of the Organising Committee for the Labour Party of India was arrested by the Calcutta Police on Saturday last on the Bowbazar Street at 1 p. m. and was brought to the police station where he was served with an order under the Defence of India Act to leave Calcutta within 48 hours and not to enter into the suburbs of Howrah. By another special order of the Calcutta Police Commissioner Sj. Promode Sen has been asked not to leave his residence within that 48 hours.

Mr. Dayaram Beri has been served with an order under the Defence of India Act to leave Calcutta and its suburbs within 24 hours and not to remain within the districts of Howrah, Hooghly, 24-Parganas and the sub-division of Asansol.

Order On Dutt Majumdar

Sj. Niharendu Dutt Majumdar, General Organising Secretary of the Labour Party of India and member, All-India Working Committee of the "Forward Bloc" was visited on Sunday last by a Sub-inspector of Police of the Dhanbad Thana accompanied by an officer of Special Political Branch of the Calcutta Police with an order of the Bihar Government under sub-rule (2) of Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules, read with clause (c) of sub rule (1) of that rule purporting to extern him from the Chota Nagpur Division of the Province of Bihar.

It is reported that in reply to his queries Sj. Dutt Majumdar was informed that the Bihar Government's officer came without being armed with any orders, directions or authority from the Bengal Government and he refused to accept service of the order.

It is understood that Sj. Dutt Majumdar is making a strong representation to the Bengal Ministry enquiring as to whether the visit of the Bihar Police with this order took place with the knowledge and approval of the Bengal Government and protesting that the Bengal Ministry should allow the Police of a Province, where the Constitution stands already suspended, to interfere with persons in Bengal without any authority from and over the head of the Bengal Government.

(Continued on page 6)

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF RAHULA SANKRITYAYANA PROBLEMS OF KISANS IN INDIA

(Concluded)

With the extension of the Zamindari system of tenure to other provinces its evils appeared in various degrees of intensity almost through out the length and breadth of the country. Even the so-called Ryotwari system soon developed within itself strong vested interests resembling in most respects the landlordism of the Zamindari type. Thus the excesses of the Zamindars of Bengal and the Taluqdars were repeated by the Bhagdars of Gujrat, Khots of the Kokan, Malguzars of the Central Provinces, Maliks of the Frontier, Jagirdars of the Punjab, Janamis of Kerala, Mirasdars and Inamdars of Bombay and Madras.

The burden of the Zamindari system on the agrarian economy can be gauged from the fact that in Bengal the total land revenue demand of the Government in 1934-35 amounted to Rs. 3,09,42,520 though in the same year the gross rental of the province was estimated at Rs. 16,83,37,893. Thus it will be seen that the land tax to be paid by the Zamindars to the Government has remained the same since the Permanent Settlement while the rents received by the Zamindars from the cultivators have been enhanced to a fabulous amount during the past 150 years.

Marx very aptly described the real nature and significance of the systems of tenure introduced by the British in India in the following words: "Three existing forms—the Zamindari, the Ryotwari and the village system—are only so many forms of fiscal exploitation in the hands of the Company." (Marx on 'India Bill,' New York Daily Tribune, June 9, 1853.)

Indebtedness

The great majority of peasants are obliged to borrow from money-lenders. The extent to which the peasantry is indebted can be seen from the following figures. In the Punjab the total rural indebtedness in 1921 was Rs. 90 crores; this rose to Rs. 135 crores in 1929. If we consider that during this period agriculture prices fell by about 50 per cent, it will

be seen that the real burden of indebtedness in 1929 was equivalent to about 270 crores. Similarly in Madras rural indebtedness as shown by registered deeds was 6 crores and 67 lakhs of rupees in 1891-92; this amount had risen to 14 crores and 73 lakhs of rupees in 1914, and to 20 crores of rupees in 1928. The real burden in this case also was twice as large if the change in the price level is taken into account.

The above quotations give us a picture of the extent to which the peasantry had been involved in debt within less than a century of the establishment of British rule in India. The position to-day is however far worse. It has been estimated that the total rural indebtedness in British India at present is not less than Rs. 1800 crores.

The cultivators are obliged to borrow at exorbitant rates not only for satisfying their elementary wants but also for meeting the ordinary cost of cultivation, as for example, for buying seeds, cattle, agricultural implements etc. The rates of interest vary from about 12 to 300 per cent, while the money-lenders resort to various illegal devices, such as the manipulation of accounts, wrong entries, false receipts etc., in order to squeeze the utmost out of the indebted peasants.

Profiteering in Marketing

Commercial capital has successfully penetrated the agrarian system through the mechanism of marketing of the agricultural goods that obtains in the country. Middlemen are able to deprive the cultivator of a large part of his returns by buying up the produce at very low prices immediately after the harvest is reaped and when the peasant is most hard-pressed for cash in order to pay his taxes. In some cases merchants buy up standing crops from needy peasants at prices which are considerably lower than the prevailing market rates. There are various other devices through which the merchants take advantage of the poverty and ignorance of the peasants. Seed grain is advanced and when the harvest is ready four or five

times the amount advanced is taken back. Similarly when cash is advanced, considerably more is exacted in grain at harvest time. False weights and measures used by petty merchants also deprive the cultivator of a good deal of his produce. It is interesting to note that in the United Provinces the produce passes through the hands of five or six middlemen (Boopari, Kachha Arhatiya, Broker, Pacca Arhatiya, wholesale dealer, retailer) before it reaches the consumer. All these middlemen make fairly substantial profits and add the same on to the price of the commodity.

Landless Labour

Nearly one third of the agricultural population of India is destitute of land. Most of the so-called landless labourers were however once small peasants cultivating either their own holdings or land rented from zamindars. The operation of the economic forces which brought about the rapid decline of agriculture under British rule have ousted them from their small holdings. The number of landless labourers has increased rapidly during the last few decades. In 1921 for every 1000 ordinary cultivators, there were 291 landless field labourers, but by 1931 the proportion of labourers had increased. This astounding increase in the number of landless workers is a conclusive proof of the rapidity with which the small peasantry is being uprooted from the soil by the combined exploitation of the imperialist state machinery, the feudal vested interests, the money lenders and other middle men.

It may be pertinent to note here that there is a good deal of culturable waste land throughout the country, which cannot however be utilized by landless labour on account of the existence of proprietary rights of the landlords or of the state in that land. The following table shows the percentage of culturable waste other than follow to the total area according to survey for the year 1936-37 :

Madras	...	13.4%
Bombay	...	1.8%
Sind	...	19 %

Bengal	...	11.3%
United Province	...	13.9%
Punjab	...	21.6%
Bihar	...	11.6%
Orissa	...	17.5%
C. P. & Berar	...	22.2%
Assam	...	43.2%
N. W. F. Province	...	31.1%
Ajmer-Merwara	...	16.6%
Coorg	...	1.1%
Delhi	...	16.9%

Backward Technique of Production

Another very significant feature of Indian agriculture is the backwardness of the technique of production.

The backwardness of Indian agriculture in this respect is attributable to the attempts of British Imperialism to maintain feudal property relationships in the agrarian system. Feudal landlordism, vested with innumerable rights and privileges has effectively checked any enterprise on the part of the peasantry, who in any case have no capital resources to resort to better methods. The landlords themselves have no incentive to promote improved technique when they can easily secure large incomes by renting out their lands at high rates to the cultivators. Widespread unemployment in the countryside and the existence of a large starving army of landless farm-workers causes labour to be much cheaper than machinery. Hence any investment of capital for securing improved methods does not necessarily pay.

Peasants' Revolts

I now want to deal briefly with the agrarian risings of the 19th century, which were the direct outcome of the intense exploitation of the peasantry by imperialism in alliance with big feudal interests and merchant capital.

A number of agrarian revolts took place during the first three decades of the 19th century. The violent and rapid introduction of capitalist elements into the agrarian economy of India were the chief causes of these revolts. The oppression of the Zamindars and the money-lenders were supplemented by that of European planters. All these risings were in the nature of elementary unorganised revolts on the part of the peasants against their manifold grievances.

The great rebellion of 1857, though led by feudal princes, had as its back-

ground, intense unrest of the mass of the peasantry and the workless artisans. As in all the earlier revolts the peasantry that took part in the rebellion of 1857 was not consciously fighting for its rights, nor were its leaders capable of putting forward its class demands.

The first effective outburst of the peasantry took the form of Indigo riots, which were the logical outcome of the policy of the forced cultivation of commercial crops especially indigo by the European planters. The peasants were compelled to grow indigo when they preferred to cultivate other crops, yielding better returns. A virtual reign of terror was established by the planters in areas which refused to grow and supply them with indigo. Even the Indigo Commission of 1880 admitted that "the serious charges of kidnapping men, carrying cattle and uprooting of the gardens and other offences which were brought by the cultivators against the Zaminders were not without foundation. The continuance of these atrocities led to the mass emigration of the peasants from Bengal and Bihar to the territories of Nepal. The inevitable consequence of this oppression was that for a number of years sporadic peasants revolts broke out against the system of Indigo cultivation. All these revolts were however suppressed ruthlessly, and hardly any attempts were made by the government to put an end to the abuses which have given rise to them.

In Bengal & Bihar

Peasants outbreak against the atrocities of the Zaminders characterised the greater part of Bengal and Bihar for several decades after 1850. Abhaycharan Dass writing about the bitter class war between peasants and zaminders in the year 1885 observed. "The disputes between zaminders and rayots have divided Bengal into two great camps, which have terrible reprisals to make against each other. Serious riots, breaches of peace, bloodshed, murder, plundering and burning of villages and atrocities of like nature are of daily occurrence." (*Abhaycharan Dass—The Indian Rayot*). It seems that these peasant struggles were to some extent consciously organised and directed, for the general administration report for Dacca Division for the year 1872 refers to combinations of rayots' and of 'strikes'. Needless to add that all these outbursts

were mercilessly crushed by the Zamindars with the help of the bureaucracy.

The hatred of the money-lenders on the part of peasantry which had been smouldering for decades found a sharp expression in the Deccan riots of 1875 which took the form of organised attacks on village 'sahukars' in the district of Poona, Satara, Ahmednagar and Sholapur. A significant feature of these riots was that all account-books and bonds held by the money-lenders which the peasants could find were destroyed.

Various other sporadic peasant revolts occurred in several provinces during the 19th century and were directed mainly against the excesses of the landlords, money-lenders and the imperialist bureaucracy. They all represented the elementary urge of the peasantry to retaliate against their oppressors.

A number of agrarian outbreaks have also occurred in more recent times, of which the most notable are the Mopla rebellion of 1921 and the Burma rebellion of 1930-31. The most outstanding weakness of all these outbreaks was lack of organisation and the absence of class-conscious leadership. Besides they were isolated sporadic attempts, which could be easily crushed by the repressive state machinery.

Proposed Programmes

Let us now examine some of the programmes that have been put forward to solve the agrarian problem.

We have noted above that in recent years the British Government have made certain attempts to increase the agricultural productivity of India in order to extend the Indian market for British industrial imports. The policy of the government towards the agrarian problem is directed essentially towards bringing about certain improvements in the method of production, without any way altering the property relationships on land. This can be seen from the fact that in the terms of reference of the Royal Commission on agriculture it was expressly stated that "it will not be within the scope of the Commission's duties to make recommendations regarding the existing system of land ownership and tenancy or of assessment of land revenue and irrigation charges." This means that British Imperialism does not in any way desire to touch the rights and privileges of the big feudal interest that it has created and fostered. Obviously no permanent improvement in the method and technique

(Continued on page 14)

By BFNOY GHOSE

ART AND SOCIALISM

A few days before I visited the art exhibition held under the auspices of Mr. Subho Tagore at the Continental. Mr. Subho Tagore is an artist and he and his students were represented in the exhibition. I am not a connoisseur of art. Still, I venture to say a few words about it simply because I love and respect art. I do not know how far I will be able to assess the merit of Mr. Subho Tagore as an artist, but in the exhibits I found the work of a highly cultured young man trying to find a pictorial language appropriate to the sensibilities of the modern outlook. Herein, chiefly, lies my interest.

The paintings are really remarkable. They are remarkable not only for the realism exhibited by so many, but also for the deliberate decorative purpose and a freedom from the limitation to delineation in profile which characterises for the most part the drawings of primitive peoples. The picture of *Yama* (the God of Death) with *both* eyes upon a profile face, is an instance which can only be found in the undeveloped art of most backward races. The painting, *Civilisation*, is a sum of concept-symbols (Plantain tree, Monkey's face and Gas Mask), arranged with great orderliness and with a decorative feeling, without any break in the rhythm. One would be surprised to see here a miraculous blending of the ultra-primitive directness of vision with high-class craftsmanship, decorative purpose, and post-Impressionistic boldness and accuracy. But one thing wounded my feeling, and that was the most ungracious jeer of the artist at modern civilisation, the sense of climbing down rather than soaring up. I felt that the artist was smiling ironically behind the Gas Mask, crying down this scientific civilisation of ours at the top of his voice. I thought why should not the artist feel as I was feeling then, why should he see and feel the world turned upside down. All his pictures express a mechanical mind, static and stead-fast, fitted within determined limits of colour, and lack that dynamic movement, that upsurge of a living mind, which lifts up a spectator along with the strokes

of brush to the heights of artist's feeling. It is this lack of dynamism in his paintings which has disabled Mr. Subho Tagore to create an illusion, a visual music, a greater reality, a thing to come, out of the womb of the cribbed, cabined and mutilated reality of the present. "Emergence of something new", "suggestion of something what is not",—I think, this sums up the value of a work of art.

These are not my cavils at Mr. Subho Tagore. He is a young, powerful artist. I do appreciate his keen perception and colour sense. His technique is distinctly unconventional. His interest in contemporary social and political movements is hopeful. His refined taste and manners are beyond praise. In his mature days, I firmly believe, he will show his merit in revolutionising his technique and theme.

He is a conscious artist, and he has no intention to escape from the hard realities of the world. He has a yearning to serve the society in which he lives by his art. He told me that he would solely devote himself to the national cause through his art in future.

I would, therefore, conclude with a few suggestions, not necessarily for acceptance by the artist, but as matters for careful consideration of those who are not artists for the sake of being artists. And Mr. Subho Tagore denounces 'Art for Art's Sake' theory.

No art can flourish in an uncongenial atmosphere of indifference and apathy. Bureaucracy breeds this indifference by keeping the broadest section of the people in a state of utter helplessness. No bureaucracy can, therefore, patronise art, because a bureaucracy cannot feel enthusiasm for it. Today India is under a foreign rule, and these foreigners in alliance with the feudal princes and upper bourgeoisie, have dehumanised the people of India. Aesthetic today is a sort of taboo to the people of India. What greater tragedy can there be than this!

When India gave the world a great art, her people were essentially of one mind, and the same art flowered out everywhere, little dependent upon individual genius, while affording opportunity

to every power. That 'one mind' found expression just as surely in a painted cotton or a brazen bowl, as in any painting. It was "more than one or ten men deep," and had its roots far back in social experience. The fact that art cannot thrive on feudal feeding-bottle can adequately be explained by the inevitable doom of Moghul Art in India. Moghul Art was essentially a product of court patronage and that is why it could not outlast the period of Moghul supremacy. It began with Akbar (A. D. 1556 to 1600) and practically finished with the death of Aurangzeb in 1703. But Rajput Art even survives today with all its traditional glory because it was not contaminated by the artificial pomp of the Moghul court. It acquired an undying life force because it had its roots in the fertile soil of society, its subject-matters were humane. Mr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, after finishing his brilliant study of Rajput painting, concludes with these words:

"The future of Indian art will not depend upon the excellent taste of any group of artists in our day, but upon our *attitude to life*. We cannot leave it to a single group of even the wisest and most accomplished artists, or most sincere critics, to achieve the task of a whole race; artists or not, all are *individually and collectively* responsible." (Italics mine).

(*Rajput Painting Vol I. Text*).

Today this attitude to life can only be socialistic, because our social experience demands that we must free ourselves from feudal and bureaucratic patronage to make art breathe freely and bask in open sunlight. Artists can individually and collectively be responsible to achieve their task for the people only in a socialist society. Socialism ensures individuality a free play by removing the barriers of class antagonism, the difference between the rulers and the ruled. The sooner the artists of India realise this truth the better. It is useless to hang pictures on exhibition-walls with a catalogue of thousand-rupees prices to seek the favours of feudal princes. I think, Mr. Subho Tagore, young and promising artist as he is, will think over these suggestions, humble though they are.

PRESEDENTIAL ADDRESS OF RAHULA SANKRITYAYANA

(Cont. from page 12)

of production can be secured unless the system of landownership in India is radically altered.

Thus we can say that imperialism can not solve the agrarian problem even on its own interest. It cannot abolish feudal vested interest without weakening itself for, these interests are one of the major props of its political hold over the country.

Landlords' Attitude

The attitude of the landlords towards the agrarian problem is that of organised and bitter opposition to all measures which in any way extend the rights and privileges of the cultivators in land. Similarly the money-lending and commercial capital is so intimately connected with the existing proprietary interests that it cannot support any radical alterations in the present agrarian order.

It is however necessary to take into account the attitude of the nationalist movement towards the agrarian problem. It cannot be denied that so far the Indian bourgeoisie has held the hegemony of this movement. It is important to note that the bourgeoisie in its early efforts at building up modern industry had to dissolve the feudal relations in land and had to put an end to many forms of feudal exploitation. This happened in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe. But the young bourgeoisie of colonial countries like India, China, Egypt etc., has grown up under totally different conditions and therefore reacts differently to the agrarian question. Arising out of the needs of trade relations of Imperialist capital, it has slowly developed into an industrial bourgeoisie. But its enterprise and ambition is seriously checked by the policy of Imperialism to curb the growth of industries in the colonies. On account of this conflict of interests the bourgeoisie plays a prominent oppositional role to imperialist rule, and on the basis of a popular programme seeks to secure the support of the masses, particularly the peasantry. At the same time its immediate interests are so closely bound up with the existing property relations that it cannot advocate a revolutionary overhauling of the agrarian system. Thus the agrarian programme of the nationalist bourgeoisie confines itself mainly to technical improvement in the method of production, spread of education among the peasantry, more facilities for co-operative credit, rural development and the encouragement of cottage industries, particularly hand-spinning and weaving. The removal of some of the oppressive and antiquated forms of feudal exploitation are also advocated and the need for giving the peasants greater rights in land is emphasised. Such measures as the abolition of the Zamindari system or complete wiping out of rural debts are opposed.

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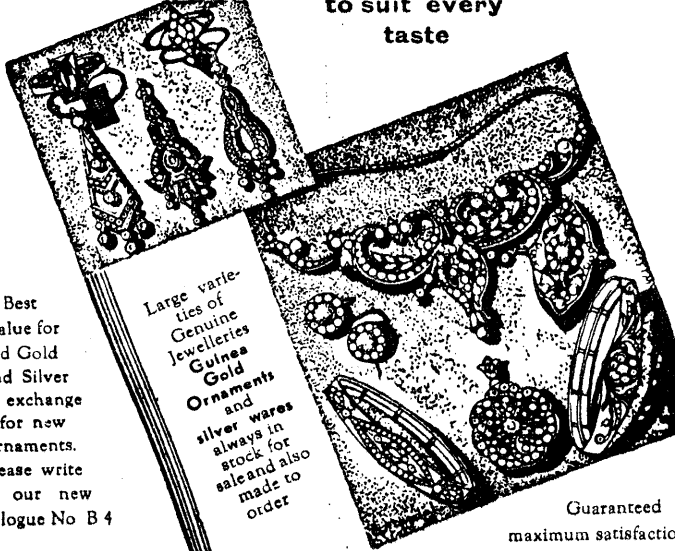
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From our Cochin Correspondent

COCHIN—CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND AFTER

High in literacy and culture, Cochin still does not enjoy full responsible government. Measuring about 1480 sq miles in area, it is perhaps surprising to note that of its 12 lakhs of population about 95 per cent are literate. Women have shared literacy alike with men and it is a matter for pride for a Cochinite to realize that his small State stands foremost among the other Indian States in point of literacy. However, it is a matter for regret that with a broad-minded Ruler and an enlightened Dewan, this State does not enjoy full responsible government.

Only 18 months have passed since certain reforms—expected to be a model for other States—were ushered in the name of responsible government. Although the State deserves credit for many political reforms, being unique in that respect amongst 600 Native States, Cochin does not yet appear to have reached the stage of full responsible government. Many winters have come and gone since people began intensive agitations for real reforms and it was in the midst of one such that some reforms were brought into being, neither as a gift from its Ruler, nor yet as the outcome of the cultured talents of the Dewan, but really as the result of the political consciousness and efforts of its multitudes.

Even at the time when the reforms were to be introduced, the people were under no illusion as to their completeness: but the authorities at the helm had, however, promised the introduction of full responsible government in the near future. It is now about two years since the reforms were first introduced and the pious promises then made by the ruling authorities still remain unfulfilled. Dewan Sir. Shanmukham is known to be an able politician but he seems to be sleeping over the whole matter. It seems likely that the people of Cochin have been doped by the rhetoric of the Dewan's flowing speeches. Really there seems to be an ominous silence brooding over the whole political atmosphere of the State.

The Minister for Rural Development—elected as the representative of and from

amongst the 12 lakhs of people for the advancement of political reforms as well—also seems to be sleeping over the question. For the first time in the annals of Cochin there came into existence two political parties, one the Cochin Congress and the other the State Congress. In essentials these two parties do not differ either in their outlook or in their constitution only the State Congress maintains that it is striving for the enforcement of communal representation. The representatives, of the Cochin Congress, on the other hand, proudly declared that their party is modelled on the lines of Indian National Congress, and is identical with its policy and programme.

After a keen contest in the elections, the Cochin Congress narrowly won over the State Congress and elected the Minister. Both these parties had promised to the masses many useful reforms but not one such promise has been redeemed so far. Though the Cochin Congress loudly proclaimed that it would not tolerate communalism, any impartial observer will say that it has not been quite free from the taint.

It is a matter for regret that the existence of neither of these parties has been justified, although to the casual observer both the parties exist as they should. With the election to the legislature their activities came to a close and since then the existence of the parties has been anything but nominal.

It will be recalled that at the time of forming these parties, their organisers had pledged to work independently and zealously for the betterment of the ryots, but now those pledges have virtually become so many dead letters. All that they are doing now is simply to watch the moves of the Government and it is lamentable that neither of the parties has raised its little finger against the actions of the Government in having rejected the many bills passed by the legislature. Both these parties prepared a bill each for the relief of indebtedness of the agriculturists, but the Government rejected both and introduced another on its own initiative, ostensibly for helping the poor ryots, but really favouring

the *jemis* (landlords), and it is to their utter discredit that neither of these parties had anything to say against this mischievous move of the Government. Even at the time when the Government passed the Agriculturists' Debt Relief Bill, people had no illusion as to its effectiveness for saving the poor agriculturists and as a cap-up another bill with the high-sounding name of *Verumpattam Kudian Bill* (bill for the benefit of the ryots in immediate possession of land) was introduced by the Government themselves, which also would do little to alleviate the distress of the poor tenants. The Government having realized the futility of the bills introduced by them, promised the introduction of credit bonds and, as usual, it remains yet to be done. The Government unabashedly say that the international political situation does not justify the issue of credit bonds at the present moment. All the measures taken by the Government, ostensibly for relieving the poor indebted, have ended in worsening their conditions. Asked in the legislature whether these bills could not be made a little more radical in their outlook, it received the gracious reply that the Maharaja's Government had to look after and safeguard the interests of all sections of its subjects which virtually meant that the Government were prepared to sacrifice the interests of the multitudinous tenants for the welfare of a handful of *jemis*.

The *Namboodiri Bill* brought by the representatives of the community in the legislature for the social and economic advancement of the *Namboodiri* (Malayali Brahmin) community as well as for raising the community from its degrading position, was rejected by the Government. Innumerable objections and protests proved futile and finally the Government, on their own initiative, introduced a bill which could do little to the community. Even now radical members of the community are often persecuted by the Government for violating the orthodox customs and formalities prevalent in the community.

More glaring is the retention of the Press Act, the abolition of which was

urged many times by the legislature, but which the benign Government found to be an absolute necessity. Curiously enough, Cochin, which boasts of responsible Government, forbids freedom of speech and the right of criticising the Government or even the Harijans' demand for entry into temples. The Government, without even caring to sound the representatives of the people, have graciously contributed a very big sum towards Britain's War Fund. The political parties, especially the Cochin Congress, in tune with the Indian National Congress, and the Hon. Minister kept mum over the matter and had nothing to say against the action of the Government.

It will not be out of place to say a few words about the various political parties now existing in the State. Due to the irresponsible methods adopted by the Cochin Congress, it has now become the sorry butt of people's aversion and to make matters worse, its policy forced its Vice-President, General Secretary, Parliamentary Party Secretary and many others to tender their resignations. The irresponsible moves of Dr. A. R. Menon, Minister, in the legislature culminated in the resignation of some of its members who joined hands with those who resigned from the State Congress Party and founded the Progressive Party. This new political Party was constituted mainly for the reason that the parties from which this new group sprung had failed to do anything progressive or radical so far. It remains to be seen how far this Party's actions will be radical but it is a truth for all times that the success or otherwise of a political party depends on its ability to keep in touch with the masses and never in its sole absorption in elections.

The reforms in Cochin have called forth praises from different quarters. Friends and well-wishers of the Dewan, remnants of the old Justice Party, vere imported into Cochin, whose only business it was to praise him and sing full-throated panegyrics of the reforms, till praise ceased to have any particular meaning. The readers may be curious to know what in effect was the result of the reforms. The reforms, briefly speaking, re-formed the Government into a Diarchy. Elsewhere in British provinces it was a failure and even at the time of the introduction of the reforms eminent politicians had foretold

the actual result the State was going to reap. Strangely even Dr A. R. Menon was unstinted in his praises of the Dewan for introducing such reforms. But in fact these reforms helped the Government in its course of irresponsible administration as also in sowing the seeds of dissension in the enlightened masses of the State.

Reputed to be a State intent on the uplift of the Harijans, it is strange to observe that they are denied even entry into the temples of the State. The legislature passed measures for weeding out the evils of untouchability and unapproachability but the orthodox Government still affords protection for its maintenance and under its welcome patronage, it flourishes to an abnormal extent in some places.

There is no freedom of press as mentioned before. The papers published from the State are allowed but to echo the opinions of the Government. The *Ezhava* community of the State, the largest community, is socially and otherwise, entitled to a better treatment at the hands of the Government. But it is lamentable, however, to note that they are labouring under many disabilities for the very reason that they are labelled as

a backward community. The Government, though proclaiming that they would look into equitable communal representative in the matter of appointments, are now pursuing a different policy. The high offices of the State are monopolised by those who are near and dear to the ruling authorities and their henchmen. Ninety-nine per cent of high officers, especially heads of departments, are *savarnas* (high caste). This and such other acts of favouritism have called forth wide dissatisfaction in other communities, especially in *avaras* who number fairly more than half the population of the State.

Labour and Kisan movements are in a pitiable plight. There are no Trade Union Acts or such other measures to alleviate the sad plight of the working classes—neither do the Government afford any protection to them. If due to the pitiable state in which they labour, the working classes voice any protest and put forth any prayers to remove such disabilities, the Government have no scruples to resort to severe forms of repression. Unemployment is increasing day by day in the State. Although conditions are so bad, it is curious to observe that neither the Government nor the political parties have so far cared to make any honest attempt for the removal of such disabilities nor for the introduction of full responsible government. The real result of the reforms has been to create a deadlock and until such time as the people realize the present pitiable state and strive for bettering their conditions, it is sad to say their future would remain where it now remains.

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Book Reviews

Six one Act Plays by S. V. Kamat, B. A., S. T. C. D. Published by the Author at Sirsi.

These short dramas have some of the current problems of India to-day as their subject-matter. They deal with illiteracy, beggar problem, honest journalism, canker in religions, etc. Though the purpose of the author is laudable and he has been actuated by evident sincerity, the dramas, as literary pieces, have not been much of a success. Print and get up too, leave much to be desired.

Who Hitler is—By R. C. K. Ensor
National Socialism and Christianity—By N. Micklem. Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs.

In the first booklet under review the story of Hitler's meteoric rise to power has been described with considerable critical acumen, brevity and lucidity. There can be no denying the fact that Germany's Nazi Dictator is a terrible human riddle. A desperado and a coward, a thoroughly ruthless man who bursts out into sobs at times, a natural leader of men who occasionally becomes utterly helpless—what other character can be more bafflingly complex than Hitler's? Psychologists have tried to reach the core of his personality through puzzling mazes and have yet failed. Leaving his inner self to the future researches of psycho-analysts, we can take Hitler as a diplomat and a ruler of men. With not much of education, he has confounded a whole nation of enlightened men and women and mounted the topmost position in the country. It will not do merely to say that the terribly unsettled condition in post-war Germany swept him to this supreme position on its crest. Hitler was not a passive agent in an eddying and swirling diplomatic game. A consummate political architect as he is, he has built up his career brick by brick, till it has reached a staggering magnitude. What is the secret of his success? The author has given a very acute reply to this question with which we find ourselves in full accord. 'This is what he has said :

Wary and ingenious as he is, there is something at bottom simple in Hitler's nature. He sees political issues, as the unsophisticated see

them, in black and white, not in brown and grey. He has surprised and baffled statesmen, both in Germany and Europe, by straightforwardly doing what he openly prepared to do, and not (as they would have) something less obvious.

There are other factors contributory to his success which the author has dealt with. This penetrating study of one of the most dazzling figures of the modern world will, we hope, prove immensely interesting to the reading public.

The second book is allied with the first, it too, deals with modern Germany in one of its aspects. This brochure from the pen of the distinguished writer and a recognised authority on the subject has thrown a flood of light on the conflict between Christianity and Neo-Heathenism, represented and sedulously fostered by the Nazi party in Germany. The two cults can never find themselves in tune, for the one is wedded to Love and the other to Power. The Nazi Germany has drawn and fed on the doctrine of force preached by Nietzsche and Bernherdi. So Rosenberg has summed up its attitude to Christianity as a 'blow to the soul of Nordic Europe. The key-note of the whole booklet has been struck in the opening chapter where it has been laid down that National Socialism is itself a kind of religion, which means that in Hitlerite Germany the country has come to be looked on as a God. In the following chapters has been described graphically the persecution of Christianity in Germany. In conclusion the author has noted :

National Socialism in Germany is doomed, for Herr Hitler's regime will not survive the war. Germany, as we may suppose, will either go Bolshevik or revert to Christendom.

What will become of Chamberlainian England which is spiritually: much akin to Germany, though it is sailing under the deceptive colours of Democracy? Will it survive in its present form?

B. S.

Subhas Chandra Bose (The Story of His Life) By H. R. Aiyar. Published from C. S. Raja & Co. Baroda. 4 as.

The publishers of this booklet have been bringing out a series entitled "Men of Today Series." The author in this

case has pressed within a short compass the outstanding events of Mr. Bose's life. As he has shown, Mr. Bose has been somewhat extra-ordinary from his very boyhood. The boy, who in his teens became a *sannyasin*, was expelled from college, become an I. C. S. only to throw up the immensely coveted job, is today generally acclaimed as the foremost radical leader of the country. The life-story of this leader has been beautifully narrated, but we are of opinion that the author should have devoted a short chapter to the very essentials of his personality which found such diverse expression under the stress of different circumstances. Besides, there are some inaccuracies of information as well, which, we hope, will be corrected in the next edition. For example, Mr. Subhas Bose was the Manager of *Forward* and not the Editor of the paper, as has been noted down here. Again, he is not the youngest son of his parents as appears in this book. But these are minor things. The author has rightly laid considerable emphasis on the present phase of Mr. Bose's political career, viz, as the leader of the *Forward Bloc*. This is the most important, glorious and the promising phase of his life. We commend this well-written book to the attention of Mr. Bose's innumerable admirers not only in India, but also outside the country.

Bengali

Majuri O Puji—Marx. Translated by Brajabehari Burman. Burman Publishing House. 72 Harrison Road Calcutta, six annas.

The booklet under review is a translation of *Wage, Labour and Capital* by Karl Marx. Fundamentals of Marxian economics are discussed by the author and the introductory essay by Engels is instructive since it contains the message of new life and society based upon the principle of equality. Bengali readers would find the booklet useful.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RIGHTISTS WOULD NOT FIGHT

To
The Editor, Forward Bloc

SIR,

It would be only a truism to say that the present Grand Council of the Congress has altogether drifted from its long-accepted resolution of attaining Purna Swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means. The inauguration of the new constitution was an ingenious device for Britain to rob the Congress of all its revolutionary zeal. The moral voice of the Congressmen has been toned down, the dynamic urge for the attainment of Purna Swaraj has been given a good-bye.

This drift toward constitutionalism has altogether changed the political outlook of the Congress. It is still fresh in our minds that on the eve of his historic march to Dandi, Mahatmaji exclaimed, how very optimistically, that when he would be starting the offensive, Hindusthan would be overwhelmed with enthusiasm and would fall in line behind him. But, sorry to say, we hear quite a different tale from Gandhiji about the ensuing struggle for which the masses seem to be so much full of zeal. Office acceptance, I must say, has wrought a mighty change in the psychology of the Congress. Congressmen are to-day vacillating and positively thinking in terms of a compromise, they dare not start the struggle lest they might not be on the crest of the movement and their leadership might slip off their hands and pass away to the real fighters of the Congress. On the pretext of discipline, they banish to-day the upholders of the old revolutionary programme of the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi saw some new light in Rajkot and wanted to have some new technique. But we, as Mr. Kunath has aptly remarked, do not want to have any new technique. The old technique of Mahatmaji seems to be just what is needed today. But the present leadership, with its packed majority in the A.I.C.C., would not take to a fighting programme on grounds of fancied violence and unpreparedness. What preparation, one might naturally ask, do these great followers of the greater Mahatmaji expect from the country? But there is no need of sidetracking the issue, the answer is not far to seek. Negotiation has been

definitely chosen to be the Congress instrument to replace action. This became patent in the A.I.C.C. sitting in Bombay when the character of the Congress was sought to be changed through constitutional handicaps that would operate against the masses and the mass workers, through the ban on the criticism of Ministry and on launching Satyagraha. As this draft was unacceptable to masses, and as the Leftists raised their voice of protest against this resolution, the High Command of the Congress banished the revolvers from the Congress on the charge of deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline.

The resolution passed by the Working Committee as well as the punishment meted out to those who felt called upon to protest against it, clearly indicated which way the wind blew in the Congress circles. It, therefore, appears certain that it is the present leadership and not the masses that is unprepared at this hour of great national trial. Examples can be cited to any number of the unwillingness on the part of the Rightists to launch any movement. But may we not demand of the High Command why do they not abdicate in favour of more efficient leaders?

So far as the much-talked of compromise is concerned, we like to confess that we are not of the same way of thinking as our leaders in the matter. Gandhiji visualised germs of settlement in the recent speech of the Viceroy which went no further than vaguely speaking of Dominion Status to be conferred on India at an uncertain date on the termination of the present world crisis. Mr. Chamberlain and his faithful crew are obviously anxious for a compromise with the Indian National Congress. The reasons are that they want firstly, a peaceful India, secondly, India in the British orbit of world politics, thirdly, the support of such moral forces as the Congress represent, fourthly, an opportunity to utilise the industrial, agricultural and economic resources and last, though not least, the man-power of India, for the Allied cause in War. But the question is, whether the Congress by settling with British imperialism will lend the Government its moral support, allow it to use us as a pawn in its power-politics, permit it to exploit our country's resources, co-operate with His Majesty's Government and in short, constitute ourselves into an ally of imperialism and barter away all that we have earned by the strenuous labour, undaunted perseverance, innumerable sufferings and sacrifices of two generations. We must not allow a free hand to the Congress in this matter and must extend our congratulations and support to the organisers of the Anti-Compromise Conference which was held simultaneously with the Ramgarh session of the Congress.

ONLOOKER

Sj. SUBHAS BOSE'S STAND

To
The Editor, Forward Bloc
SIR,

The Leftist Gandhi of 1920 is bent on making compromise with the British Government at present. The rightists, i.e. the official group of the Congress, have naturally fallen in line with the Mahatma. And here lies the difference between Sj. Subhas Bose and the so-called rightist group of the Congress. Since the acceptance of office by the Congress the revolutionary urge of the great national organisation has gone once for all, and compromise mentality has come to stay. This was noticed by Sj. Subhas Bose when he first became President, and at that time whenever there was any talk of struggle in the inner circle of the Congress, it was either cleverly evaded or directly whistled down by the rightist leaders. From that time Subhas Babu realised that it would be impossible for him to work in co-operation with the rightists, and they also felt that Sj. Bose would not be their yes-man. The actual split in the Congress occurred in the year 1939, how it does not require to be told once again. Subhas Bose, who has realised that the key problem to-day is of independence, the struggle for independence, cannot rest until and unless that goal is achieved. He does not know any hide-and-seek policy, duplicity and this transparent sincerity has cost him the good graces of the rightists, who have brought the Congress machinery to a stalemate. Subhas Babu's bold and courageous stand and his constant appeal to the masses for launching an immediate fight has imparted a new life to the mass movement and has released their latent energies. The Congress, built upon the foundations of sacrifice and devotion of our martyred and repressed national workers, cannot now betray the national cause and sit with folded hands until complete independence is achieved. Some of our Leftist leaders have turned a somersault but Subhas Bose stands as a mighty rock with his towering personality. Now in this grave crisis of the nation we should, leaving aside all hesitation and vacillation, stand solid behind our great leader and his living words, "we cannot sing our way to Swaraj, nor spin our way to Swaraj. We must fight our way to Swaraj. Purna Swaraj is our goal; satyagraha is our method", will be our motto.

A. D.

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