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W. BENGAL FIGHTS ON

NEW AGE

COMMUNIST PARTY WEEKLY

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From J. B. MOITRA

CALCUTTA, September 16

Addressing a Press Conference yesterday the Price-Increase and Famine Resistance Committee (PIFRC) leaders rejected the Government statement of September 11 as utterly false and slanderous and designed to cover its leonine violence against the people. They showed point by point that the contentions of the Chief Minister in his reply to the memorandum of the Opposition M.P.s were flimsy and ridiculous.

REITERATING THE LONG-STANDING DEMANDS OF THE PIFRC, THEY EMPHASISED NEW DEMANDS THAT HAVE ARISEN IN THE COURSE OF THE MOVEMENT, NAMELY, THE RESIGNATION OF THE FOOD MINISTER, PUBLIC ENQUIRY INTO POLICE SAVAGRIES AND THOSE REPORTED MISSING, COMPENSATION TO THE FAMILIES OF THE DEAD AND MAIMED, RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND WITHDRAWAL OF ALL CASES.

They also demanded a searching enquiry regarding the responsibility of the Cabinet, specially of the Chief Minister and the Police Minister in dealing with the food movement and issuing of orders to attack the people.

They maintained that given goodwill, these demands could be immediately conceded. But if the Government clung to a false sense of prestige, the PIFRC has no option but to continue the struggle.

Programme For Next Stage

Besides violation of law in the districts, the PIFRC has decided to hold a series of mass and street-corner meetings in Calcutta and organise a mass deputation from Calcutta and neighbouring districts to the State Assembly on September 21 when the session commences.

But the law will not be violated. On the same day in mofussil centres mass deputations to local government officials will be taken out without violating the law. If there is no settlement reached, violation of the law will begin from the next day. Special days will be fixed for students, workers and others.

On September 26, a mass procession will proceed to the Wellington Square to erect a monument for the martyrs and the PIFRC will seek the permission of the Corporation for a permanent structure. The Committee emphasised the need for a public enquiry by prominent citizens on the activities of the police and Cabinet members and the number of casualties.

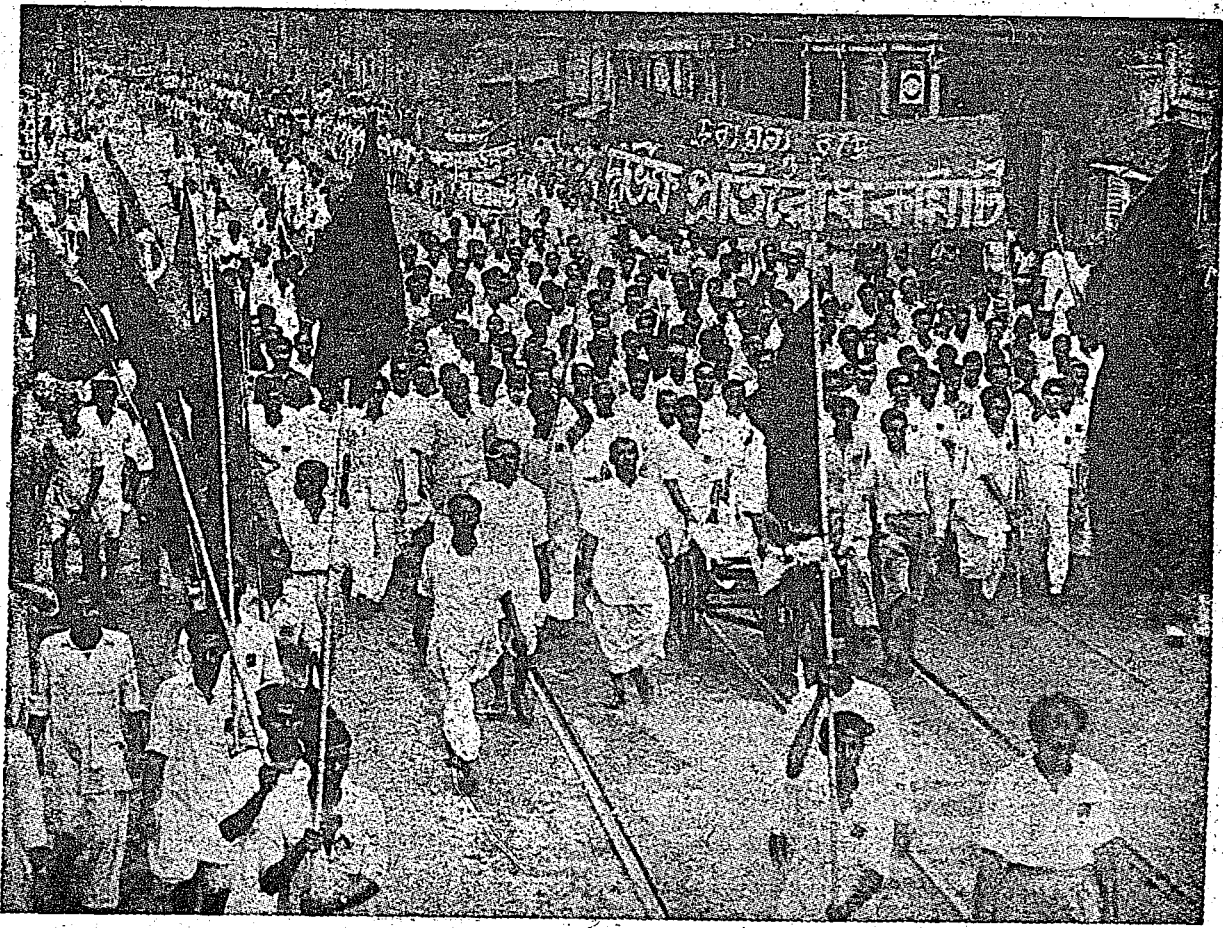
An impressively large public meeting was convened by prominent citizens in the University Institute yesterday adopted a resolution severely condemning savage police violence and demanding an impartial public enquiry and the release of all political prisoners and compensation to the families of the killed and injured. It was presided over by Gopal Chandra Neogy, Editor of the daily Basumati.

In a voice quivering with emotion, Vivekananda Mukherjee, Editor of the Yugantar daily declared that the

* SEE PAGE 13

HARIPADA GUPTA, 22-year-old worker, was hale and hearty when he was arrested by B. C. Roy's police. This is his dead body which bears innumerable marks of injuries. How did he meet his death?

BELOW: A view of the Silent Procession in memory of the martyrs in Calcutta on September 13.



1st OCTOBER

Demonstrate For India-China Friendship

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India has in a statement to the Press called for celebrations on October 1 for India-China friendship.

OCTOBER First this year will mark the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. It was an event which decisively shifted the world balance of forces in favour of peace, national independence and Socialism. It was an event which has had an enormous life-giving impact on the peoples and countries of Asia. The astounding social and economic advance registered by People's China in this brief span of time has electrified and inspired countless millions.

During all these years, the friendship between our country and China has been strong and of great mutual benefit and gave Panch Shila to the world. This friendship has been the bedrock of Asian solidarity, the firmest guarantee of the freedom of the newly-independent States in this continent and the best safeguard against imperialist intrigues to break the peace and smash the freedom of the Asian countries.

In the past months, this precious friendship has come under a cloud caused by the regrettable border incidents. Big efforts are being made by the reactionaries in our country to damage further and totally undermine this friendship. Imperialist circles in the West have tried to exploit this situation for their own ends.

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party of India calls upon all Party Committees, units and members to make preparations immediately to fittingly celebrate October First. The Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China must see the widest possible mobilisation of all in our country who are anxious to further strengthen and advance India-China friendship. Through meetings, demonstrations, exhibitions, discussion conventions and other forms, all patriots and peace-lovers must come forward to call out for all the world to hear—HINDI-CHINI BHAI-BHAI!

★ New Age of October 4 will be an extra-page special to mark the occasion.

Problems & Perspectives

THE meetings of the Import and Export Promotion Advisory Council, held over the week-end, brought forth quite a few significant observations from Commerce and Industry Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, in respect of the problems facing India's foreign trade.

To readers of New Age these observations will certainly have no novelty, since they have been reading quite often about the factors hindering India's commerce. But for a Minister of the Government to talk now in the same vein is a different matter, for, he could not have said what he did, if the circumstances were not really compelling.

What are these circumstances, however?

FIRST, the failure of the Government's measures to bridge the ever-increasing gap between imports and exports, which even in the first half of 1959, was bigger at Rs. 180 crores than Rs. 128 crores deficit in corresponding period of the previous year.

Moreover, even as these measures have been multiplying, the traditional items of exports like tea, cotton piece-goods, jute manufactures and manganese ore have been showing decreasing returns, with their aggregate quantum in January-June 1959 at Rs. 109 crores falling short of corresponding figure for the previous year by as much as Rs. 41 crores.

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

SECOND, the countries of the West to which India still sends the bulk of her goods, refuse to change their restrictive practices which "either in the way of heavy import duties or import restrictions are often discriminatory in effect, if not in intention."

As a direct offshoot of these circumstances trade with both Sterling area countries as well as the United States was averse to the tune of Rs. 12.5 and Rs. 30 crores respectively during the first five months of the current year, while the deficit with West European countries (members of the OEEC) attained a magnitude of Rs. 71 crores.

As against these deficits—inherent in over-dependence on fluctuating capitalist economies of the West—trade with the East European countries recorded a surplus of Rs. 15 crores during the same period. These have also been the countries whose policy of linking imports of their capital goods with exports

of India's primary commodities helped the foreign exchange situation look "appreciably better."

Compelled by these circumstances, and encouraged by the prospects of increasing trade as a result of the agreement concluded with the Soviet Union on Saturday, the Minister as well as the Director-General of Foreign Trade talked about making one last effort to impel OEEC countries to give up their restrictionist practices and increase exports from India, before she decides to get from elsewhere goods for which she had so far depended on them. Even the representatives of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry suggested concerted action to make India's opinion on the adverse implications of the European Common Market felt in the councils of the GATT and other organisations.

DEFERRED PAYMENT

Another candid statement of the Minister concerned his disapproval of the practice of importing capital goods on "conventional deferred payment terms" since it only adds to the heavy load of repayments falling due during the Third Plan period. Earlier, when this aspect of the problem was pointed out to the Government, especially in relation to various foreign collaboration arrangements entered into by the private sector, it was dismissed as of no consequence, with the result that debt liabilities, particularly in respect of countries not accepting repayment in rupees or Indian goods, went on mounting up. In relation to the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries, however, this difficulty did not arise since they had agreed to repayment through increased exports rather than in foreign exchange.

The latest indication of this beneficial character of import deals with the USSR was provided on the very day the Import Advisory Council commenced its session. Under an agreement apropos terms of the Soviet credit offer of Rs. 180 crores the USSR agreed to accept in Indian goods repayment not only of this credit but also of previous loans which India had to repay in sterling. As result of this agreement, and also the fact that Soviet economy, unlike the economies of Western capitalist countries, is developing at a fast rate, India's export trade is assured of a stable market for a number of items. These include mica,

castor oil, raw wool, tea, shellac, jute manufactures and hides and skins. No wonder, with the terms of the agreement being so favourable, K. B. Lal could safely assert that Indo-Soviet trade could go up from the present Rs. 23 crores per annum to as high as Rs. 35 crores.

Apart from this pragmatic realisation of the importance of Indo-Soviet trade—which is welcome trade—which the Government's trade policies continue to be essentially hidebound by past approach. Thus, even in face of the private sector's failure to utilise to the full the opportunities of trade with the Socialist countries, the Government refuses to enlarge the scope of the activities of the State Trading Corporation. Simi la r i y, even knowing full well that mere quantitative changes in customs imports do not increase the acceptability of their export goods in a largely inelastic Western market, it continues to rely on their new permutations and combinations to work some miracle.

Moreover, as Lal Bahadur Shastri has again made explicit, reliance on external assistance, especially from Western countries, to bridge the gap in balance of payments, is still an essential part of the Government's policy. And this when the futility of such aid to raise the level of either industry or trade has been known to the Government, at least since the Reserve Bank's Report in Currency and Finance was published a month ago.

REVEALING ADMISSION

An apt commentary on the futility of foreign aid, especially aid from the USA, has also come our way this week through the British owned financial weekly, Capital. In an editorial dealing with a comparison of "Efforts of Donors" which "all include a certain inevitable amount of guesswork and arbitrary evaluation" it says that "the bulk of American aid (which is) determined by private firms, and by the Pentagon... often flows to activities which are not always the most deserving—in any sense, political or economic."

A similar conclusion is drawn by the annual report of the Reserve Bank's Board of Directors which was also released in the past week. Factually, only a rehash of the Bank's earlier report it does not cover much fresh ground. Still, its mention of a falling rate of production despite all the foreign assist-

RALLY TO SUPPORT WEST BENGAL'S FIGHTING PEOPLE

Editorial

FOR A MONTH now the storm of the people's struggle for food led by the Price-Increase-and-Famine-Resistance Committee, has raged in West Bengal. It is a struggle the like of which India has seldom seen. It is a struggle whose glory and heroism will forever be a part of the legend and the history of our country and our people. The people of West Bengal are fighting today in a manner which inspires the whole country.

It is an unique movement in many ways. Before our very eyes we saw the shape and form of popular unity. The working class through its general strike, its great participation and the lives of its sons, gives immense power to the movement. The peasants by their satyagraha, their march to Calcutta, their innumerable processions and again their lives give it a umberable character. The middle classes—employees, teachers, students, lawyers, journalists—suing fully in and lend it all their elan. The districts, no less than Calcutta, are the scene and venue of this unprecedented upsurge. All Bengal and all in Bengal are the movement, its magnificent strength and daring.

Uniquely, too, the B. C. Roy Government met the movement—point blank refusal to negotiate to get the universally despised P. C. Sen to resign, to concede a single demand, to convene the Assembly or to hold any other form of discussions: Instead it let loose the police and the army to wreak such barbarism as defies description. Over 18,000 have been arrested. At least 30 have been shot dead. Over 200 are missing. Three thousand are wounded, many maimed for life. Whole areas have been the scene of savage "mopping-up" operations in the best fascist tradition. The people will not forget nor forgive.

While all the best surge forward in this remarkably organised, united and peaceful movement, the Congress Ministers do not scruple to use social scum and professional goondas to attack it nor do they hesitate to try to stir up communal passions, Bengali-Bihari conflicts and the like. Even the dead are dishonoured, being whisked away to be burnt furtively at night. Seldom has even a Congress Government stooped so low.

In spite of all its arrogance the B. C. Roy Ministry has had to bow its head before the people's hate and wrath. The release of some of the arrested, the withdrawal of Section 144 and of the military are no doubt popular victories. The promise of the extension of the modified rationing to the categories A and B in the rural areas is undoubtedly a concession won by the movement.

The great movement thus must and does proceed unabated strictly in accordance with the instructions and programme of the PIFRC in the third phase of the struggle. The people of West Bengal will go on to write fresh chapters of heroism, unity and determination to win their other unfulfilled demands.

But it is not their struggle alone. Already warm statements of solidarity have reached from almost all the States of India. Meetings and rallies have taken place in a number of cities and towns throughout the country. Far from enough, however, has been done. It is imperative that immediately all members, units and friends of the Communist Party, all democrats, all who want that food must reach the people, should hold meetings of solidarity with West Bengal and demand that the West Bengal Government yield to the people. The seriousness of the issues and the greatness of the movement demand no less. This is the way the rest of India can reinforce the struggle of the people of West Bengal, who battle so valiantly for all of us.

ance doled out by the West holds out a moral which the country can ill-afford to miss.

But this is about all for which the Report can take credit. For the rest, it reads more like a propaganda pamphlet of the Swatantra Party than a survey by an important limb of our "socialistic" administration. Shortage of food-grains in the market it ascribes to announcement about State trading. For

preparing the country to attain the stage of "self-sustaining growth" it pinpoints the necessity of stimulating the flow of foreign private capital. For control of inflationary trends—especially of runaway prices—which to it is essentially a monetary problem—it suggests resort to new variants of the old policies. A shameful performance.

—ESSEN

People's Might Makes B. C. Roy's Govt. Begin Climb-Down

★ FROM JNAN BIKASH MOITRA

THE arrogant Roy Government has been forced to bow before the most massive demonstration of mass indignation ever witnessed in this State.

The streets were still reeking with the warm blood of the martyrs when new demands, echoing the sentiments of millions of people, emerged out of the food movement and became its vital issues. Powerful voices were raised from every quarter that the Government must publicly account for its brutalities since August 31, that police atrocities must stop forthwith, that the families of the dead and those disabled must be compensated for.

FACED with this situation, the Roy Government began to retrace its steps. The military was withdrawn from Howrah; Section 144 was lifted from Calcutta and Howrah. Then on September 11, the Government announced in a Press-Note that orders had been passed for the release of those detained, arrested or convicted in connection with the food movement excepting those "involved in violence or contempt of court."

Couched in arrogant language, the Press-Note laboured hard to justify the police brutalities and even went to the length of claiming that "as a result of the steps taken by the Government the situation has rapidly returned to normal!" But surely, arrogance and ridiculous arguments cannot cover up the Government's loss of face.

In another Press-Note on the same day, the Government announced that all persons in rural areas, belonging to "A" and "B" categories or having less than four acres of land, would be covered under modified rationing. Thus the total number of people to be covered in Greater Calcutta and rural areas would, according to official calculations, be about 18,400,000. It will be recalled that on August 14 last, the Government had offered to increase the number of ration card-holders from 13,300,000 to 14,800,000.

Demands Yet To Be Won

Despite this partial victory, the people have yet to win other important demands. These are:

- 1) Public enquiry into the police savageries, the fate of those still untraced;
- 2) Payment of compensation to the families of the dead and to the maimed;
- 3) Release of all prisoners arrested in connection with the food movement;
- 4) Resignation of P. C. Sen, the Food Minister;
- 5) Fulfilment of the economic demands, the most important of which are: i) disbursement of agricultural loans amounting to three crores of rupees; ii) fixing of the prices of paddy and rice at Rs. 12 to 13 and Rs. 20 to 22 per maund respectively and iii) internal procurement by Government of five lakh tons of rice.

The programme announced by the PIFRC on September 6 for the third phase is being carried out in Calcutta as well as in the districts. It includes in-

tensification of the movement for the violation of the law in mofussil areas, satyagraha in law courts in Calcutta and mass mobilisation behind the demands of the PIFRC. The mass response has been more pronounced than even what it has been so far. Now that all the leaders of the PIFRC have been released, the Committee is expected to meet in a day or two to review the whole situation and decide the future course of action.

Martyrs' Day

The depth and intensity of the people's feelings for the martyrs was demonstrated on an unprecedented scale on September 10 — All-Bengal Martyrs Day. Lakhs upon lakhs of people throughout the State paid their homage to the dead by wearing black badges, placing wreaths and flowers on the martyrs' columns, hoisting black flags and observing two minutes' silence at 12 noon.

Despite torrential rain, over two hundred martyrs' columns were erected in different mohallas and factories in and around Calcutta, and everywhere people came out in their thousands to place flowers and wreaths on the columns. There was not a single mohalla where the mothers and housewives did not pay their homage at the martyrs' columns. Over five lakh badges had been distributed. Besides these black armbands were worn by many people.

Shortly before the clock struck twelve, the machines in innumerable factories came to a dead stop. The workers gathered around the black flag flying over the martyrs' column to observe two minutes' silence. Several thousand employees in the offices in Dalhousie Square area stopped work and stood in silence.

Dr. Triguna Sen, Rector of the Jadavpur University, hoisted the black flag and observed two minutes' silence along with the students of the Engineering College.

The day was also observed by political prisoners in Alipore and Dum Dum Central Jails. At the offices of the Swadhinata and the State Council of the Communist Party, black flags were hoisted and the Red Flags were flown half-mast.

In the afternoon, people from every walk of life visited different hospitals in the city to distribute fruits and flowers to those injured in

police firings, and lathi-charges.

Parts of Calcutta were hushed into silence on the afternoon of September 13, when thousands of citizens joined a silent procession organised by the PIFRC to pay homage to the martyrs. As the procession moved along the eight-mile route, thousands of men, women and children came out on the streets and balconies and watched it in respectful silence. There were no slogans; no one talked. Even little children, who did not understand anything, asked their elders in whispers what the procession was about.

Calcutta was mourning the dead. Yet, the hushed silence had a language of its own. It spoke more powerfully than any words. The portraits of martyrs and slogans and quotation in innumerable posters, carried in the procession, and the grim faces of the people were eloquent expression of their sentiments. "We demand P. C. Sen's resignation" was the caption of some posters. Some others bore the famous lines of Poet Tagore: "This blood of the heroes And mother's tears— Will all the value of these Be lost in the dust?"

Pablo Neruda's words, inscribed on many posters, seemed to have been written in the blood of the martyrs: "Under this open sky Where the blood of martyrs was split, Under this open sky We want the punishment of the criminal murderers." And the depth of the people's feelings for the dead was vividly expressed through the lines: "Beyond the shores of the ocean of death You are immortal— We remember you—"

The procession was headed by the leaders of the PIFRC. A martyrs' memorial column, flanked on both sides by black flags and lowered Red Flags, was carried in front of the procession. When it terminated at Desapriya Park, a minute's silence was observed.

Jyoti Basu Meets Press

Within a few hours of his coming out of hiding on September 12, Jyoti Basu, Secretary of the West Bengal State Council of the Communist Party and a representative of the Party on the PIFRC, stated at a Press Conference that on his return from Assam tour he had

DOUBLE STANDARDS

ON September 11, in the Rajya Sabha Bhupesh Gupta sought to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the police brutalities in West Bengal.

BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I gave notice of a Motion for Papers for calling the attention of the Prime Minister to the wanton police firings and beating that took place during the first few days of this month as a result of which, according to information available to us, nearly 80 people had been killed. Dead bodies are being discovered even now. It is also reported that at burning ghats dead bodies are being cremated at night, and about 200 people are untraced since those days.

CHAIRMAN: Order, order. BHUPESH GUPTA: Now, Sir, the Prime Minister is silent and in Bengal the great historian, Surendranath Sen—you must be knowing him—Tripurari Chakravarty, an outstanding professor and Atal Gupta, an eminent jurist and many other citizens have demanded a public enquiry. I should like the Prime Minister to accept their suggestion and advise the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. B. C. Roy, and others to institute a public enquiry at least to show that he does not observe double standards in this matter.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, that will do. BHUPESH GUPTA: Only one thing more, Sir. Whether you will make a statement, I do not know. I am somewhat astounded that

been underground in Calcutta since August 24.

He emphatically said that police savageries in Calcutta and Howrah had been perpetrated under instructions from Dr. Roy and his Cabinet. He demanded immediate public enquiry into all the incidents since August 31 and compensation for the families of the dead and the maimed.

He pointed out that the resignation of P. C. Sen had become a demand of the entire West Bengal people. Yet Dr. Roy considered him to be "indispensable." Answering a question, Jyoti Basu indignantly said that Dr. Roy's remark that the food movement had passed into the hands of hooligans was a mischievous piece of slander. At no stage, he emphasised, had the movement gone into the hands of hooligans. If this had happened, there would have been large-scale looting. There were a few unfortunate incidents. But these also must be enquired into.

Referring to the forthcoming session of the State Legislature, which commences from September 21, he said that a conspiracy was being hatched to prevent a thorough discussion of the food situation in the State.

The constitution of the Committee has been very timely. The interviews and the letters of eye-witnesses that are appearing on the pages of Swadhinata make it abundantly clear that the atrocities committed by the police between August 31 and September 6 were far more savage than generally known. The enquiry committee will collect many more shocking accounts regarding the mass killings.

Growing Protests

On September 10, 215 professors of various colleges and universities in Calcutta issued a statement indicting the Government. Among the signatories are the Heads and Readers of several Departments of the Calcutta and Jadavpur Universities and Vice-Principals of some colleges.

Meetings and demonstrations are being held in every district, protesting against police atrocities in Calcutta and Howrah and demanding a public enquiry into the incidents.

The Commissioners of Burdwan Municipality and the Mukhtear Bar Association passed resolutions condemning police savageries and demanding public enquiry. At Behram-pore, the Local Self-Govern-

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DARK CLOUDS LIFT

INDIA-CHINA relations had come under the clouds. Relations that were sweet were turned bitter. Mutual trust was transformed to tension and it was cunningly and consistently being directed towards the breaking point.

Indian reaction ran its dirty hate-China campaign, with gloves off. The gang was the same that ran the anti-Kerala campaign, that hailed Thimayya as the hero and wanted Krishna Menon out—in the interest of "national security," that campaigns against the Nagpur resolutions in the interests of "food production" and every evil cause that needs campaign to pressurise the Nehru Government to listen and yield.

Imperialist circles were the happiest and were breathlessly watching how far India shifts towards their camp, away from its independent foreign policy, and the path of Asian solidarity and India-China friendship.

Mistrust and tension between the two countries are in the interest of neither. We just cannot afford to break. Despite all that reaction did the dawn of sanity is emerging and on the initiative of the two Governments concerned. After the resolution of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress (Parliament) even the Reuter Correspondent had to note, "Prospects of talks between China and India about their border dispute seemed bright." Pandit Nehru's speeches in the two Houses of our Parliament leave no doubt about Indian responsiveness.

The situation in India had deteriorated so much that the Prime Minister himself had to take the cudgels against the slogans of the anti-Chinese lobby and reiterate afresh the policy of the Indian Government.

NO REASON FOR WAR

Speaking in the Rajya Sabha he emphatically declared, "Of course, there are no objective, no practical reasons, no sensible reasons, no reason whatsoever of any kind for war. It will be a folly of the extreme type for us to fight over such matters."

Answering those who were falsely campaigning that we do not want to fight but the Chinese were out for aggression, he stated in his monthly press conference the next day, "I do not expect at all any sudden development which would lead to any kind of conflict, even a small one."

To those who challenged the policy of India-China friendship, he answered on the floor of the Rajya Sabha: "I think we were right in working for their (Chinese) friendship and may I repeat that we shall continue to work for it... I try to look into the future. The future is dark if it is to be covered by continuous hostility between India and China."

He brought the real issue down to earth by stating in the Rajya Sabha: "To imagine that India could push China about was silly, to imagine that China could push India about was equally silly. Therefore, the idea of settling things by compulsion of force or threats and bullying was wrong. We must accept things as they are." This was a plea for respecting and starting

with the status quo to normalise and improve our mutual relations.

The stand of the Chinese Parliament and Government is also positive, reasonable and realistic. The latest resolution of their Standing Committee states:

"The Chinese Government has consistently held the view that an overall settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question should be sought by both sides, taking into account the historical background and existing actualities and adhering to the Five Principles, through friendly negotiations, conducted in a well prepared way and step by step."

"Pending this, as a provisional measure, the two sides should maintain the long existing status quo and not seek to change it by unilateral action, still less by force."

"We believe that through the friendly efforts of the Governments and people the two countries will certainly be able to achieve a reasonable solution of their differences on the boundary question in accordance with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and their desire for mutual friendship, thus defeating the schemes of their common enemies and consolidating their great friendship."

The above policy statements of each side have been duly welcomed by the other. This is a new, hopeful and healthy sign. They must help the two Governments to start talking and negotiating as good friends. They will certainly help to unleash new popular initiatives to keep the peace on our common borders, and safeguard our common friendship against our common enemies.

The Tass statement has been warmly and publicly welcomed by the Indian Prime Minister. To the China-baiters it came unexpected and unwelcome, badly upsetting their diabolical plot. It expressed the "confidence of Soviet leading quarters" that "the two Governments will settle the misunderstandings that have arisen taking into consideration their mutual interests and in the spirit of the traditional friendship between the peoples of China and India. This will also help to strengthen the forces coming out for peace and international cooperation." On the eve of the Khrushchov-Eisenhower meet the great urgency of the appeal of the tried and trusted friend of both India and China has exerted an electrifying effect.

Such pleas have not come from the USSR alone. Cairo daily Al Shaab in its September 5 editorial wrote: "India and China, Asia's big two, being the axis of the continent's security have always been a target of imperialist designs to create enmity and a kind of cold war between the two countries? And what has become of Bandung?"

The largest circulated Indonesian paper Sin Po wrote on August 31 when the tension was at its height, "No reasonable Asian will be happy at the prevailing tension between China and India. It pleases only the imperialist Powers which have been playing upon the differences of the two countries. These imperialists desire to reimpose their domination in Asia. Still nothing has been lost. There

NOTES OF THE WEEK

are many ways to find a solution through methods other than the use of guns."

The Bandung friends appeal to us to uphold the Bandung banner, in unfurling which India took a leading part. The mightiest peace power of the day, the great USSR reminds us of the cause of world peace, towards which we have made and have yet to make significant contributions. All our good friends abroad are earnestly pleading us to restore, and consolidate India-China friendship for on it depends not only peace on our own border but Asian and world peace.

CLEAN UP OUR SIDE

It is very true that good friendship needs real confidence as its base and that it is a two-way traffic. It is equally true that there is a tendency to be self-righteous about ourselves and ultrasuspicious of the Chinese on the Indian side.

Let us take the case of the Dalai Lama. The question was posed not by the Communist M.P.s alone but also by the Congress M.P.s. Suppose Sheikh Abdullah escaped to Peking and from there spoke and acted against India as the Lama is doing against China from India—how would we have reacted? There was no answer from the Prime Minister to this awkward but very appropriate question.

The Dalai Lama is acting as no holy refugee grateful to us for the asylum graciously given but as the head of an exile Government using our Press, platform and public resources against our international commitment to People's China. He has broken his commitment to our Government not to engage in political activities. Why should not our Government ask him to quit our country? We cannot keep the Dalai Lama, let him carry on the way he does and yet expect the Chinese to trust us!

The Prime Minister has publicly stated that the Dalai Lama does not listen to his advice. It is no secret that his trusted advisers and his cause are the American Lobby in our country, leaders of the PSP, Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party and also the Rightist Congressmen disloyal to the policy of their own Government. One has only to read their Press, listen to their speeches in Parliament, attend their meetings to clearly realise that the so-called 'cause of Tibet' and the Dalai Lama is the U. S. Lobby's much-prized instrument to challenge the independent foreign policy of the Government of India and malign the principles of Panch Shila.

"Dalai Lama not to move HQ out of India" is the Statesman (September 14) headline, and its well-informed Political Correspondent, after an interview with the Lama, has spelt out the reason that it is only from India that he can maintain "continuing contacts with his people." What else is it except using India as a base for the furtherance of his reactionary rebel cause against People's China? It is the grossest mis-

use of our national soil by a foreign refugee.

Dalai Lama is not just a living Buddha but a living eyesore and danger to our Chinese neighbours and a living instrument in the hands of the enemies of India's independent foreign policy. He is a danger not only to China but to India as well. He must go.

RIGHT RUNS AMOK

The artificially worked up Indo-Chinese tension has damaged not only India-China friendly relations but it has also queerly India's national-political pitch.

The American Lobby despite its financial resources and upper-straits contacts could on its own never have succeeded in working up political hysteria against China. It is only when the Prime Minister exaggerated a few border incidents into the threat of aggression against our country and also made some angry, unrealistic and unwise statements against the aims, policy and activities of the Chinese Government that all the pro-imperialist reactionary elements come out in the open and ran wild without the bit in their mouths, spreading anti-Chinese slanders, and stoking up war hysteria. The situation went so bad that the Prime Minister in the Press Conference warned against using poisoned words and indulging in open hostile activities against China which cause "war psychosis" and constitute "cold-war" activity. But it is very much worth taking stock of the damage caused, to retrieve the situation.

Reviewing the Parliamentary debate, the Statesman (September 16) commentator writes: "There was anger on all sides and some of the severest attacks on India's foreign policy came from the Congress benches... India's foreign policy, which is basically one of non-alignment, was under frontal attack for the first time... There is a limit to Mr. Nehru's capacity to sustain such criticism."

The same dangerous phenomenon has been noted with obvious glee by Robert Trumbull, political commentator of New York Times (September 6): "It can now be said, possibly for the first time that Mr. Nehru is losing followers among all shades of political opinion... In the sphere of foreign relations at least." The anti-Chinese campaign has become a danger to Nehru's own foreign policy.

The earlier tension is thawing. Public opinion in India is feeling greatly relieved after the latest gesture of amity and pleas for talks that have come from both sides. How do the spokesmen of the pro-American and anti-Chinese Lobby view the new situation?

Hindustan Times Editor Mulgaonkar in his weekly column writes: "Peking is pipping down. It appears a safe conclusion that we are entering a period of detente... It would be fatal to ease our preparations to man the northern border in as great force as we can muster... If there is no room for panic, there is less for returning to the emotional pipe-dreaming of

Panch Shila fed by bad history and worse logic... Here is no victory for the spirit of Panch Shila. If victory it is—it is a victory for our regained sanity and firmness."

A week earlier seizing upon the Prime Minister's statement in the meeting of Congress M. P.s that "the Chinese will not attempt a large-scale military adventure in India because to do so would provoke a world war," he ramméd home the value of shifting our allegiance to the U. S. side in the interest of our own security!

Making the obvious point that it is only American forces in the area which are "in a position to deal easy and effective blows against possible aggression from China," he goes on to stress: "It is no thanks to us that these deployments (U. S. bases around China and within range) are there. We have done our best to dismantle the defences set by others against the only expansionist powers of the postwar world."

Making the argument that we must get rid of our policy of non-alignment or else "in the foreseeable future remain helpless without friends against the massive military build-up of the Chinese. We have no right to tempt the Chinese to aggression by our continued appeasement."

Seizing upon the same statement of Pandit Nehru, M. R. Masani's comrade-in-arms A. D. Gorwalla writes in the Indian Express (September 14) that India is safe only "if the Western Powers were to come to India's aid on her being attacked in strength. If Mr. Nehru has any assurances on this point, it would be advisable to let them be widely known. If he has not, he had better both get them and publicise them immediately."

This is how the propagandists of the U. S. Lobby are exploiting the weakness and contradiction of Pandit Nehru's own stand. Pandit Nehru has himself seen this danger. He roundly denounced similar spokesmen of the U. S. line inside Parliament.

WHOSE OPINION?

It deserves to be widely known that the New York Times (September 9) has editorially opined that Pandit Nehru is "lagging behind public opinion" vis a vis India-China relations. It is the public opinion sought to be created by Birla and Goenka organs, with friendly U. S. aid that this influential organ of U. S. imperialism wants our Prime Minister to pay heed to!

The whole country and, above all Congressmen themselves, have to be made to realise the pro-imperialist direction in which the anti-Chinese campaign is being directed.

Restore and raise high the banner of India-China friendship. India's peace, Asia's peace, world peace are safe if Hindi-Chini remain Bhai-Bhai.

This is India's true call which our Party will broadcast among the people on this October 1.

—P. C. JOSHI

(September 16)

SEPTEMBER, 20, 1959

SINO-INDIAN BORDER

ISSUES

On September 10, the Rajya Sabha discussed a resolution moved by Dr. H. N. Kunzru: "that the present relations between India and China be taken into consideration."

At the very outset, the Chairman, Dr. Radhakrishnan, very correctly remarked: "It is a difficult and delicate subject. The Prime Minister on the floor of this House indicated the dual approach—to take every step necessary for protecting the integrity of the country and to seek every means for a peaceful settlement of outstanding differences. Angry words do not help; they only add to the trouble. Members, I hope, will discuss the problem with their usual dignity and restraint."

In his long and rather rambling discourse, Dr. Kunzru, apart from quoting from the Government of India White Paper, made certain revealing statements. He openly stated that the present Sino-India dispute "has virtually thrown our foreign policy into the melting pot."

He then went on to put the matter even more bluntly. "I am afraid Panch Shila has been used as a slogan in recent years. I may almost say that it is used as an opiate to lull both the Government and the people of India into a sense of security."

Sniping At Foreign Policy

As a matter of fact, both in the debate in the Rajya Sabha and in the Lok Sabha two days later, some members took their cue from these remarks of Dr. Kunzru—use the border incidents to snipe at our national foreign policy of non-alignment and to undermine Panch Shila.

The next speaker B. K. P. Sinha (Congress) began by referring to the historic friendship between India and China and stated: "Any disturbance of this friendship is likely to lead to consequences which would be grave for the two countries concerned and grave for the world at large." He called for a settlement on the basis of the status quo "but it should be the status quo that obtains today, not the one that harks back for fifty years or half a century," and was critical of the approach of the Chinese Government.

Dr. Z. A. Ahmad, despite repeated heckling which was sharply condemned by the Chairman, expressed deep regret that border incidents—"I would not like to call them acts of war or acts of aggression"—were making these two great countries "drift gradually and despite themselves, into a state of what may be called cold war."

Stating that he appreciated that strong feelings had been roused over the border incidents, which arose out of a very complicated background, he went on to warn against certain persons and parties, "who would straightaway take up this question and start shouting from the housetops that invasion is going to come, that war is imminent and so get ready to fight the Chinese... I would say clearly and categorically that friends who are doing

added, "I hope my friends of the PSP will pardon me when I say that I do not subscribe to the view that Tibet is a question which has entirely nothing to do with the border incidents."

While agreeing with the Government of India's position that Tibet was an integral part of China, he stated that the Dalai Lama's activities in our country "give rise to certain feelings in the minds of the Chinese Government that perhaps we are not quite fair to their sovereignty, that we are not fair to what we profess. A kind of feeling has, perhaps, entered into their mind that the NEFA border, through which the Tibetans have entered this country, is the one which is being used for purposes other than normal... Now, sir, it is in the NEFA area—the MacMahon Line—that the real tension started."

As for the way out, he suggested three steps. First make absolutely clear that we recognise China's full sovereignty over Tibet. Secondly, "I would like to say that we should not try to rush into military alliance like the SEATO... I was rather unhappy to read about some talk... about some suggestions of India and Pakistan entering into a common Defence Pact..." Third, we

must be vigilant and be firm about the MacMahon Line.

Nehru Reiterates Non-Alignment

Replying to the debate, Nehru was quite sharp in dealing with Kunzru's attack on the basic principles of India's foreign policy—"these principles are right and I do claim they are right... the present Government will hold to non-alignment, because it is a matter of principle, not of opportunism or the convenience of the day."

He further declared: "Dr. Ahmad said that there are no objective reasons for war. Of course, there are no objective reasons, no practical reasons, no sensible reasons or no reason whatsoever of any kind. Which-ever way you approach it, it would be folly of an extreme type for us to fight over such matters..."

"The fact of the matter is that nothing can be more amazing folly than for two great countries like India and China to go into a major conflict and war for the possession of a few mountain peaks, however beautiful the mountain peaks might be, or some area which is more or less uninhabited."

Nehru reiterated the Government's stand on the MacMahon Line as the frontier by and large, though some minor adjustments could be made.

Nehru agreed that Tibetan developments "have angered

and soured the mind of the Government of China very likely... And perhaps they have reacted strongly to what we have done, I mean, to the asylum we have given to the Dalai Lama and to certain other factors... We respect the Dalai Lama... That does not mean we agree with him in everything. In some ways, he is acting wrongly today. In so far as our advice was taken, we have strongly told him that he is acting wrongly and no good can come if he goes to the United Nations on Tibet."

In conclusion, he stated: "We have to be firm, we have to hold to our position. I shall try to do that. But I shall try always to find a way for peaceful settlement because I try to look into the future, and the future is dark if it is to be covered by continuing hostility between India and China."

The Lok Sabha debate on the White Paper revealed much the same contours, though some of the colours were more darkly etched.

P. K. Deo (Ganantra Parishad) moving the resolution was quite venomous in his

He concluded with the call for an end to all restraint and for a radical modification of India's foreign policy, which he alleged, has failed "at the level of strategy and tactics."

Dr. Ram Subbha Singh (Congress) backed up the Acharya with a surprisingly rabid speech, where he called for bombing of Longju and other warlike measures. He, too, had several flings at the Defence Ministry. He ended with an appeal to the Prime Minister that "there should be a reappraisal of our entire policy."

The Right Approach

S. A. Dange began by declaring: "The problem that is here before us is certainly very serious from all points of view and, therefore, our attempt should be to see that the seriousness does not evolve into a disaster for either country, either for us, or any other country, or the world. Therefore, the approach to the problem must be one of settlement and not that of whipping up a war atmosphere."

Ridiculing those who wanted Nehru to imitate Dulles, he stated that the border incidents were "a problem between countries who have a standing agreement of friendship."

Dange called for a restoration of the disturbed political relations between the two countries and, in a calmer atmosphere, to settle the boundaries by delineating and demarcating them. When, at this stage, somebody tried to suggest that he was not an Indian, Dange turned on him so sharply that the insult had to be withdrawn.

He continued: "Any two countries, when they argue questions of border, always have their two positions, and that is why the trouble arises... After the statement that the Prime Minister has made here, in the Press Conference, after the statement, he has made in the Rajya Sabha and after the receipt of Mr. Chou En-lai's letter on the basis of Panditji's (March) letter, if these four are taken together, there is a basis for settlement without going to war or talking about war."

Turning to the problem of Tibet and the Dalai Lama, he stated: "Can we in a free country like ours, allow on our soil, with the subsidy from the Government of India, a person to propagate war against another country and involve this country in it?"

"If that gentleman's (Dalai Lama's) request is to be granted by the U.N., where will the troops go through except through Indian passes? Where will intervention come from, and what will our neutrality be?"

He called for vigilance: "We must be on guard. Against

* SEE PAGE TWELVE

PAGE FIVE

STATE TRADING IN FOODGRAINS

Looking back we find that during the last ten years food prices in India have displayed a remarkable degree of instability. In 1950-51 the country was facing a serious food shortage and prices were ruling at high levels. This was due mainly to a sharp fall in the output of cereals in that year, though latent inflationary pressures which were operating in the economy as a whole and the short lived Korean boom also contributed to pushing up the foodgrain prices, which touched an all-time peak of 421 per cent above the prewar level.

DURING the following two years, foodgrain prices continued to register a downward trend as a result of better crops, release of government stocks and a tighter monetary policy. But in 1953-54, there came a sudden crash in the prices of all cereals caused by the exceptionally good crops of that year. The impact of this increased production and the pressure of existing stocks kept on accelerating the decline of prices until the middle of 1955, when the price index of cereals fell to 67 (base 1952-53 = 100).

Beginning Of Price-Rise

With the failure of the millets crops in the autumn of 1955 the prices of all foodgrains suddenly started taking an upward turn, and rising prices continued to gather momentum throughout 1956. Even the substantial increase in production in 1956-57 did not check this tendency to any appreciable measure. Thus the price index of wheat which was 58 (1952-53=100) in May 1955 rose to 90 in 1957. Rice index rose from 72 in April 1955 to 101 in April 1957, whereas Jawar from 51 to 124 in the same period.

The year 1958 saw a further accentuation of rise in food prices, occasioned mainly by a substantial shortfall in the production of that year as compared to the previous year.

All this would indicate how unstable food prices are in a marginal agrarian economy like ours.

The Foodgrain Enquiry Committee (commonly called the Asoka Mehta Committee) appointed by the Government of India in 1957 made certain very important recommendations for stabilising foodgrain prices. In its Report, the Committee stated:-

"We would like to emphasise here that until there is social control over the wholesale trade we shall not be in a position to bring about stabilisation of foodgrain prices. Our policy should, therefore, be that of progressive and planned socialisation of the wholesale trade in foodgrains."

Buffer Stock Operations

The Committee recommended the formation of a "Foodgrains Stabilisation Organisation" and defined its functions as follows:

"The most important work which this organisation will be required to undertake is what are commonly known as buffer stock operations. In our view, buffer stock operations can be a most effective instrument for the stabilisation of the prices of foodgrains. The main idea of such operations is simple.

Whenever prices tend to fall, even if such fall is not general but is confined to a particular locality, this organisation should step in and start purchasing at reasonable prices. Similarly when prices tend to rise, this organisation should sell at reasonable prices."

For nearly one whole year the Central Food Ministry refused to take any cognisance of this basic recommendation of the Foodgrains Enquiry Committee. It kept on deluding the country that matters would take a favourable turn after the next harvest. But in the meantime the food situation started deteriorating rapidly throughout the country and there was unprecedented discontent against Government's food policy, which in some States as in U.P. and West Bengal developed into popular mass struggles.

Naturally there was widespread demand for control of prices and provision of cheap grain shops on a much larger scale. Central stocks were also being rapidly depleted by persistent demands made by State Governments. The State Governments generally felt that they would have been better off if they had some stocks of their own and had not to depend entirely on Central supplies which were not always available in adequate measure.

Half-Hearted Measure

Compelled by these circumstances the National Development Council accepted the idea of State trading in its meeting of November 8 and 9, 1958 and appointed a Working Group to chalk out the details of a scheme. The Scheme was finalised in April 1959, but Government's purchases of rice were started from about December 1958 in accordance with the decision already taken by the National Development Council. Wheat purchases were started after the rabi harvest in May 1959.

The scheme of State trading as it was finally implemented by the Government of India had hardly anything in common with the recommendation for the establishment of "Price Stabilisation Organisation" made by the Foodgrain Enquiry Committee. It was, in fact, a halting and a half-hearted measure.

The Government of India admitted in a statement placed before Parliament on April 2, 1959, that it was not a full-fledged scheme of State trading. The object of the scheme, according to the statement was "to provide for an orderly transition towards the assumption by the State of wholesale trade in foodgrains without suddenly dislocating the existing channels of distribution or throwing excessive burdens on the administrative machinery of the Central and State Governments".

The statement assumed up the functioning of the Scheme in the following words:

"In the interim period the wholesale traders will be permitted to function as licensed traders who will make purchases on their own behalf but shall pay specified minimum prices to the farmer. While the Government will have the right to acquire the whole or portion of the stocks from the licensed traders at controlled prices, the trader will be at liberty to sell the remaining stocks to the retailers at prices not exceeding the

of transactions by them to points away from the market centres."

A considerable volume of evidence to this effect is obtainable from all other States and yet the Central and State Governments have, in this period, refused to set their administrative machinery into motion for de-boarding on any appreciable scale. They have also spurned popular cooperation and doggedly set their face against associating non-official popular agencies in the work of unearthing illegally held stocks.

The pattern of procurement is not uniform in all States. But it is noteworthy that a very small percentage of the total procurement is made directly by the Government from the cultivators.

In U.P. the State Government tried the experiment of imposing a levy of 50 per cent on the total purchases made by the whole-salers at controlled prices. The Punjab Government, on the other hand, has neither enforced price control nor levy. But all government purchases in the Punjab are made through a syndicate of wholesale traders. In Orissa, the Government has appointed its purchasing agents from amongst big grain dealers with whom Government enters into contract for the supply of stocks at controlled prices. In Madhya Pradesh, the Government purchases on the basis of voluntary offers at maximum

by DR. Z. A. AHMAD

controlled prices. They will be required to maintain proper account of their purchase and sale transaction and of their stocks and submit periodical returns to the State Governments."

In practice, the Scheme has become much more restricted in character than what even this statement would indicate.

Let us enumerate the various measures that the Scheme provides for. They are:

A. Licensing of all whole-salers;

B. Appointment of these licensees as Government's purchasing agents, without restricting their right to carry on private trade;

C. Imposition by Government of levies on purchases made by wholesalers at prices fixed by the Government;

D. Declaration by State Governments of controlled prices at which the Government and private traders would buy from the cultivators;

E. Declaration of controlled prices at which the whole-salers would sell to the retailers;

F. Running of cheap grain shops by the State for the sale of limited quantities of foodgrains to the consumers at fixed prices;

G. The above measures to be applicable only in the case of wheat and rice and no other foodgrain.

Why The Failure

The scheme now has had a run of one year and by all counts it has failed to achieve even its own limited objects. In fact it is collapsing at all ends. The question is: what is inherently wrong with it and why is it foundering?

The answer to this question lies in the basic set-up of the scheme, which though claiming to be a scheme of State trading is nothing more than an arrangement made by the Government with big grain dealers to procure for the Government certain quantities of foodgrains

returns in time. The local administrative machinery of the food department which is as inefficient as it is corrupt abides only by forms which the hoarders know how to observe. It is a notorious fact that concealment of stocks and submission of wrong returns has been very widely practised by big traders in all parts of the country in this period.

Even official reports recognise this fact. In a recently held enquiry at the instance of the Central Food Ministry into the pace and pattern of market arrivals in Andhra Pradesh after the introduction of licensing system it was admitted that "In Andhra Pradesh, the information supplied by traders and millers about their purchases and sales is not reliable. There is considerable evidence of concealed trade and smuggling to areas outside the Southern Zone."

A similar enquiry held at the same time in West Bengal came to the conclusion that "In West Bengal a tendency towards underground transactions became widespread to evade government procurement and price control. Consequently visible market arrivals and supplies became very poor. Maintenance of two record books and concealment of arrivals and despatches was the most common practice. An important feature of the traders' behaviour in this State has been the dispersal

controlled rates made by the traders and dealers of paddy.

In West Bengal and Bihar, levy and price control orders were sought to be enforced in the beginning but were withdrawn in June 1959, leaving the grain market totally unregulated. The Madras Government has also tried to procure through levies on the private purchases of millers and other whole-salers. Thus, in one way or another all the notorious big grain dealers, who have long records of hoard-

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TOUGH BARGAINING FOR SEATS IN KERALA

★ FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

As had been foreseen it was tough bargaining that went on in Ernakulam last week when representatives of the Congress, the PSP and the Muslim League met in the presence of Lal Bahadur Shastri, Asoka Mehta and Sadiq Ali to forge the anti-Communist front to face the mid-term elections in Kerala.

THE acuteness of the wrangles became evident when it was announced on September 10 that the talks which began the previous day would not conclude as scheduled on that day but would continue on the 11th. Lal Bahadur Shastri had to postpone his departure by a day to be able to announce the agreement that had been reached.

But the three days of constant talks and high-level negotiations—Lal Bahadur Shastri met representatives of the three parties jointly and separately—have not resulted in anything more than an agreement on the division of seats to avoid triangular fights. No headway could be made either in the matter of a common programme or the question of continuing this unity after the elections.

Lal Bahadur Shastri, speaking to Pressmen at Ernakulam airport, said that the three parties "would have a joint election campaign" though they "would maintain their independent entity and work for their own parties." He said that "at this moment, they did not think it necessary to consider the question of post-election arrangement, because their first objective and main concern was to have a 'big victory' in the coming elections."

Conflict Of Interests

But details available of what happened behind closed doors indicate that it was not so much a question of "their thinking it not necessary" but the serious differences and the conflict of interests between them that prevented anything more than just the agreement on the division of seats. The door has actually been left wide open for future quarrels and bargaining for loaves and fishes.

According to the present agreement, the PSP is to contest 35 seats (nine members in the dissolved Assembly), the Muslim League is to contest 12 (eight in the last Assembly), leaving 79 seats to the Congress (43 in the last Assembly).

But the Congress will have to accommodate the RSP and the KSP, parties which did not have any members in the dissolved Assembly, but are now bargaining for seats on the strength of the politics of united opposition to Communists.

Lal Bahadur Shastri said that a representative of the RSP had met him and he had found the party in a co-operative mood. Shastri had also met Mathai Manjooran of the KSP and said the KPCC President would conti-

Devicolam, a number of seats had been allotted to the PSP in which, according to Pattom, the Congress was afraid of putting up its own candidates. At this stage another PSP leader, C. G. Janardhanan, who was standing next to Pattom, whispered something into his ears, an audible whisper which was meant to warn Pattom that there were Communists among the Pressmen. In answer Pattom made an impassioned speech almost of how he had never had any secrets, that truth was nobody's monopoly and there was no harm in the Communists hearing it and that the

secret of his life's success(?) was that he always spoke out what he felt, etc., etc. Now that the division of seats between the parties has been fixed, the fight for the allotment of the Congress seats has begun. The Archbishops of Varapuzha, Ernakulam and Changanassery met Lal Bahadur Shastri and are reported to have impressed on him the need for adequate Christian representation in the Congress list.

Meanwhile, a spokesman of the KPCC has said that the question of "what after the elections" had not been discussed. The "understanding" among the parties is that

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IN ERNAKULAM

post-election matters can be considered "according to the conditions then prevailing."

From the present division of seats, it is clear that even if the anti-Communist front is able to do the impossible and block a Communist victory, none of the parties of the front will have a clear majority in the Assembly. And they have no common programme or manifesto either.

What will be the fate of the State then? Internal quarrels, desertions, blackmail, etc., which were the methods of the Congress and the PSP till the Communists came to office with a majority will again become the methods in the anti-Communist front. In plain language, this means that none of the parties of the front will be able to give an assurance to the people of a stable Government or a programme of progressive legislations.

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NEW AGE

PAGE SEVEN

THE THIMAYYA AFFAIR

by P. C. JOSHI

The resignation of General Thimayya was no bolt from the blue but a vital link in the chain of ominous developments that are taking place in our country, upsetting all serious democratic elements within and causing deep concern to all our good friends abroad.

PRIME Minister Nehru got the resignation withdrawn and asserted the supremacy of civil power over the military. This certainly averted the immediate crisis but did not liquidate it.

The Prime Minister has not taken the country into full confidence. He has characterised the reasons for the General's resignation as "trivial". The Army Chief of Staff indulging in trivialities and producing a major political crisis just makes no sense.

The Prime Minister also stated that the differences between the Army Chief and the Defence Minister were "temperamental". General Thimayya was trained and groomed by the British militarists and is used to masters much worse than any temperamental Indian Minister can be.

The Prime Minister's explanations have failed to convince either the Press or public opinion. The real issues involved are, however, no more secret. The Army Chief on his own, in independent and democra-

tic India, dare not challenge the supremacy of civil power. Who were then the influential politicians from whom the General drew his inspiration and strength for his adventure? They too have shown their hands which have yet to be caught.

Secondly, what was the aim of the General and his political patrons? This, too, is no secret but by now public knowledge. They had set out to force the resignation of Defence Minister Krishna Menon and therewith change the defence and foreign policies of our country, divert the very course of the development of our nation.

When the Prime Minister told the Opposition leaders that "no policy matter" was involved in the Thimayya episode (Times of India, September 12) he was only attempting to hush up the ugly reality, underplaying the danger of a reactionary military-cum-political coup which the Thimayya incident and all that followed undoubtedly revealed.

The congenital temporis-

ing of the Nehru Government has become proverbial. Both General Thimayya and Krishna Menon remain where they were. The ruling class has added another big skeleton in its cupboard and seeks to carry on as before. The country can ignore the anti-national reactionary moves this crisis has revealed at its own peril.

The Plot In Operation

It is very necessary to study the various elements of the plot and the modus operandi of the plotters. The tale is self-revealing.

The Army Chief resigned on August 31 but the threat failed to move the Prime Minister and it was tamely withdrawn the same day. It was a closely guarded top secret confined to two persons alone. We have the Prime Minister's own words before Parliament that he did not even inform his Cabinet colleagues of the affair. Yet the resignation story was in the Press the very next day, with the withdrawal part duly deleted.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the leak to the Press was through the General himself, the

only other person in the know. The leak was an appeal to the Press and the country over the heads of the Prime Minister and the Government. It was no ordinary breach of military discipline but a necessary stage in the political game as it unfolded itself.

The two papers chosen to carry the story were the Statesman and the Amrit Bazar Patrika.

The Statesman story stated that General Thimayya was not alone but Vice-Admiral Katari and Air-Marshal Mukherji "are also likely to follow suit." Shridharani in the Patrika put the same story in more menacing words that the country has to choose between "the resignation of one man on one side and three men on the other." The grim picture of all the defence services on one side and the lone Defence Minister on the other was thus sought to be laid thick.

There was no resignation, the Army Chief had already withdrawn it in face of the Prime Minister's firmness. Yet a completely false story was published in the Press to heighten the crisis atmosphere in the country and give the men behind the General another chance to rush the game through.

missed with disgrace or made to face a court-martial. In our country, however, something radically different happened. The General's cause was taken up inside Parliament. The purpose of the Press leak was served, parliamentary pressure was set in motion. And the parliamentary debate brought to the fore the reactionary politicians who were behind the General.

The Timing Of The Plot

The very timing of the resignation, its leak and the Press campaign that followed disclose the reactionary political nature of the plot that was behind the resignation.

● The resignation was timed when India-China relations were tense, when border incidents were being played up as aggression, when the story of top Defence Chiefs being hindered from organising the defence of the country by a Defence Minister who was a near-Communist could be very handy and effective. "The defence ideology of India should be split out in no uncertain loyalty before we can tackle an enraged China," stated Shridharani in his Patrika story.

● The resignation was timed on the eve of General Ayub's "fuel halt" with his plea for an Indo-Pak defence alliance against Chinese aggression and what could be a better background music for this Anglo-American song than a virtual defence crisis within India itself!

● The resignation was timed on the eve of Krishna Menon's departure to the U.N. as the head of the Indian delegation. It was known, from the Prime Minister's own statements, that his brief was to plead for the admission of People's China despite all the differences between the two Governments. The Statesman story prematurely forecast that his "departure may be delayed if his trip is not entirely abandoned." The gang sought to prevent Krishna Menon's going and speaking for India at the U.N.

The resignation was a political time-bomb that misfired. But it is clear

enough that the General and his political backers sought to exploit national sentiment to push forward an aggressive provocative line against China and shift the independent foreign policy of our country, give it a pro-Western orientation.

The first target was the Defence Minister who, according to the Prime Minister, has been the most successful Defence Minister the country so far had and whom the whole peace-loving world knows as a bold champion of Indian foreign policy.

The resignation of the Army Chief was serious enough as constituting military pressure on the civil Government. Its leak to the Press made it a crime, part of a political game. In any democratic country, such a General would be instantly dis-

palani and others to move their adjournment motions. The reptile gang from inside the Praja Socialist Party, the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party began shooting their poisoned tongues.

The Congress M. P.s sat sullen and silent. The pro-American Right-wing lobby inside the Congress Parliamentary Party had been specially active. The Special Correspondent of the Japanese Kyoto news-agency wired back home from New Delhi that the Right wing of the Congress Party headed by Morarji Desai was the instigator behind the Army Chief of Staff in order to get rid of Defence Minister Menon. Over a hundred Congress M. P.s had signed a requisition demanding an emergency meeting. The personal failings and idiosyncracies of Krishna Menon had thrown

the plot that failed now succeeds next time. Birla's Eastern Economist has literally echoed Asoka Mehta. "It is for the Prime Minister to recognise that the public mind—and not the Prime Minister—will in the last analysis decide whether or not his choice of the Defence Minister is in the national interest." (September 4)

The Hindustan Times (September 2) had advanced the slogan "Krishna Menon Must Go!" and its Editor writes: "Where Mr. Menon brought himself to the point of being a liability not in the defence job alone but in any Cabinet job was the suspicion that attached to his political leanings."

Karaka's Current (September 9) carries the headlines, "We must feel sure that the man entrusted with the De-

many, honest elements into the arms of their own Right, whose campaign slogans were—defence in danger, the integrity of the armed forces, the unreliability of Krishna Menon.

The situation was so critical that on the evening of September 1, Parliamentary circles took it for granted that Krishna Menon was doomed and the thinking ones were anxiously asking: What else will follow?

The situation was saved the next day by the Prime Minister who boldly asserted the supremacy of civil power over the military, publicly expressed confidence in the work and worth of his Defence Minister and in mild but meaningful words castigated the Army Chief.

ign Minister, a new Defence Minister and a new foreign policy."

These are the very ideas and slogans with which the Anglo-American imperialist Press is full.

What should destroy all complacency in our country is that the influential imperialist circles abroad knew beforehand of the crisis that was brewing, their sympathies were marked and their aims also writ large.

Let us take some evidence from the British Press.

The London Daily Express, on August 31, i.e. the very day General Thimayya resigned, wrote, "India's army goes into action against the Chinese invaders. For one man it is the hour of shame. He is Krishna Menon, India's Defence Minister. No man has done more to leave his country defenceless. For he has isolated it from the very friends on whom India may have to rely against the threat from the North."

The Daily Mail (September

2) headlined its New Delhi story by Noel Barber, "Nehru Facing Crisis—Generals in Revolt over Menon" and stated, "Politicians are openly looking to the army for leadership." This was before the Parliamentary debate.

We get a closer view of the politicians behind the Generals and also the impact in Britain of the Parliamentary debate from the Guardian (September 3) which wrote from obvious inside knowledge: "It is regrettable that politicians—members of the Congress and members of Mr. Nehru's own Government—have left it to the C-in-C to put their misgivings about Mr. Menon. If they believe as many of them undoubtedly do, that India has to be defended against its own Defence Minister, then it is they who should have offered their resignation. But since they

did not, General Thimayya quite properly sought to end the impossible situation (for Mr. Nehru will not convince many people that the differences were trivial) by offering his own."

The General, thus, was only the cat's-paw of the politicians indicated above.

Now let us have a look at the columns of the most influential organ of U. S. imperialism, the New York Times and its evidence is devastating.

It obviously knew of the Thimayya move and was assured of its success. A few days before the resignation, on August 29, it introduced General Thimayya under its famous column "Man of the News" where recalling his past as the Chairman of the

Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea it wrote: "The Communists wrote to their sorrow that 'neutrality' in General Thimayya's case did not mean weakness, while the U. N. Command learned to respect General Thimayya for a job well done under appalling conditions."

General Thimayya permitted thousands of Korean prisoners of war who would have normally gone North to be misled and abducted by the Syngman Rhee gang. It is no wonder that the Americans expected this General to do another dirty job equally well and they have put it down in black and white.

"Lt. General K. S. Thimayya, Chief of the Staff of the Indian Army, is an old hand at difficult situations. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's action on Friday in placing the NEFA agency under military control as a result of mounting Communist pressure brings the well-seasoned

Here is the authentic voice of the real masters of Asoka Mehtas and M. R. Masanis:

The first target is Krishna Menon and Nehru's progressive policies. It is not at all a question of personalities, but the policies they embody—the sovereignty of Parliament with the supremacy of civil power over the military, the policy of independent foreign policy with neutralism as its core, the policy of peaceful settlement of differences with China and of enduring India-China friendship, the policy of using the Indian Army for national defence and world peace and not aggression against any other country, the policy of self-sufficiency in defence equipment.

A stage has come when the foreign imperialists are openly and desperately encouraging the reactionary elements in our country to come on top of our national life. If we miss the warning signals, we will be caught napping. India is passing through a very critical stage in its his-

toric development and crisis within crisis is growing. The Thimayya affair was one such important crisis.

The Lessons

It inevitably brings to mind the experience of our neighbouring countries where such military intervention in national affairs has led to the liquidation of democracy and installation of dictatorship, military alliances with imperialist Powers and loss of national sovereignty.

It is true that India is not Pakistan. But let us not remain blind to the danger, but understand and face up to it. Let us see where our real strength lies and rally it.

The Thimayya resignation was undoubtedly an attempt by the General to influence the policy and composition of the Government of our country. It was an illegal attempt to challenge the authority of civil power, the sovereignty of the people and the supremacy of Parliamentary institutions. It was a breach of his own oath of office.

As against this, India's strength lies in the fact that the Indian Army has noble traditions, our Jawans are intensely patriotic and have democratic sympathies. These are valuable assets which must be activated so that our army may play its worthy role in the service of Indian democracy as its loyal armed organ.

In the Indian situation a handful of reactionary Generals have not the base either inside the Army or the ranks of the people to pull off a coup. They can operate only on the basis of support from some of the politicians. It is a gross breach of military discipline and the oath of his office for the Army Chiefs to build clandestine contacts with political leaders.

It is similarly an outrage against parliamentary democracy for politicians to secretly link up with the Army Chief for their own political ends.

It was the link-up of a pro-imperialist reactionary and ambitious General with pro-imperialist reactionary politicians that this crisis revealed that constitutes the real danger to Indian democracy and all it stands for.

It is urgently necessary to take the people into confidence, plainly tell them all the facts of this shameful attempt, its pro-imperialist political aims and anti-national implications.

Our patriotic people have routed imperialism and reaction many a time. They will do so again.

There is no room for complacency nor for any panic. Let us soberly take stock of the dangers lately revealed and determinedly set out to face them.

Let us all together see who and where the real enemy is—the enemy of Indian democracy, sovereignty and independent foreign policy and learn to unite and fight to defend India of our dreams, the India we seek to serve and build into a great independent progressive democracy!

(September 15)

... THE MEN BEHIND

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FOR STATE TRADING TO SUCCEED . . .

ing and blackmarketing since war days were sought to be used as the agencies for procuring foodgrains for the Government.

In this set-up what was inevitable has happened. These big grain dealers on whom the Government depended entirely for its own procurement in collusion with the richer landowners, blew up the whole procurement scheme by drying up market arrivals immediately after the harvest of 1959 when the bulk of procurement for the year was to be made. This development was naturally more marked in surplus areas, such as West Bengal, Bihar, U.P., Rajasthan, etc., where the prevailing market prices were much higher than the controlled wholesale prices fixed by the Government.

Despite Good Harvests

In surplus States, like Orissa and Madhya Pradesh production this year was so good that the market prices often went below the controlled prices and big grain dealers consequently stood to gain by supplying the Government at prices higher than those at which they bought from the peasants. But in another surplus area, the licensed wholesalers, who are also Government purchasing agents have managed to restrict supplies to the open market in such a way as to cause a considerable rise in the price of rice which despite a good harvest is higher today than what it was in the corresponding period last year.

We quote below from the conclusions of the reports on the enquiry into the pace and pattern of market arrivals in the 1958-59 crop season conducted by Agro-Economic Research Centres in July 1959 at the request of the Central Food Ministry.

In regard to wheat arrivals in the main markets of U.P., Punjab and Madhya Pradesh the reports came to the conclusion that, "The volume of market arrivals of wheat in the post-harvest months of the current year has been much smaller than in the corresponding months of the previous year in the States of U.P. and Punjab. In Madhya Pradesh the situation differs from market to market, but in the area covered by the survey, market arrivals in the current crop season have been less than in the corresponding period of the previous year. In the Punjab markets, wheat arrivals have been reported to be approximately as much as ten to 40 per cent less during the period April to mid-July, 1959 than in the corresponding period of last year.

"In U.P., arrivals have been only a small fraction of the normal. . . . In U.P. arrivals were significant only up to May, 5, 1959, the date on which the Food and Civil Supplies authorities of the State Government raided the various markets under the provisions of the U.P.

Wheat Procurement (Levy) Order and the U.P. Wheat Price Control Order. After this wheat arrivals diminished considerably and at many markets became just negligible."

With regard to the market arrivals of rice in different States, the surveys revealed that in Bengal, "the level of market arrivals up to March 1959, though lower than in the corresponding period of the last year was not below expectations, particularly in view of the low level of production. Marketings by small farmers must have kept up to level of supplies up to this period. It was only from the end of April or the beginning of May that the volume of arrivals in the market began to dwindle. . . . In fact, it was the failure of arrivals to come up to expectations that led to a scramble for purchases by the millers and dealers who were eager to build up their stocks against the lean months of the rainy season."

In Bihar, "the level of market arrivals in the first two quarters of 1959 (January to June)

Government circles usually lay the responsibility for low market arrivals at the door of the producers, who, it is argued, had withheld their stocks in order to secure better prices later on in the season. They generally tend to exonerate the traders. This is, however, denying the realities and the decisive role that big traders and their agents play in determining conditions. While it is true that landlords and the richer cultivators did tend to withhold their surpluses, the poor and middle peasants, who constitute over 80 per cent of the cultivators, having no sustaining power, could not possibly hold back their produce from going into the market for any length of time after the harvest.

Smuggling, Profiteering

It is well known that the traders this year have carried on their business operations in a dispersed manner, mopping up available stocks directly in the

ment fixed by the Central and State Governments have failed to materialise fully. The target fixed for rice procurement by the Central and State Governments put together was two million tons, that is 60 per cent was procured by the beginning of June 1959, by which time the bulk purchases of rice are over. In regard to wheat the total procurement this year has been only 158,000 tons.

Restricted Scope

It is in these figures that one can see the seriously restricted scope of State trading operations as contemplated by this scheme. With a total production of 73 million tons of cereals this year, no less than 30 million tons would be the marketable surplus, of which the Central and State Governments taken together have purchased only about 1-12 million tons of rice and wheat. With such meagre stocks at its disposal, the Government cannot possibly undertake any buffer stock operations for influencing the market and stabilising prices. Thus this scheme, from whatever angle one may look at it, has proved to be nothing short of a travesty of the idea of State trading. The objectives of State trad-

dertake to purchase at least 50 per cent of the marketed surplus of all major foodgrains and for this purpose a proper administrative machinery for making direct purchases by the Government from the cultivators should be set up. This implies that not only will the Government have to operate with much larger funds at its disposal, but also that it will have to control and restrict the business operations of the big traders and monopolistic concerns by prescribing the maximum stocks that any one of them can purchase in one season, by meting out severe penalties in cases of violation of law and by strictly enforcing control of wholesale prices. The small business interests displaced by the expansion of State operations should as far as possible be absorbed in the Government's administrative machinery for trading.

Both wholesale and urban retail prices, not only of wheat and rice but of all major foodgrains should be controlled simultaneously.

A proper machinery for price stabilisation should be evolved both at the Centre and in the States. The arbitrary manner in which the prices were sought to be fixed by Government officials this year, with the results which we have noted above, underlines the need of setting up a more stable, flexible and

PRESENT SCHEME MUST BE RADICALLY AMENDED

was lower by at least 30 per cent than in the corresponding period of 1958." Even in Orissa, the reports state, "the pace of arrivals has shown a steady decline month by month after April this year." In Madras State, "between February 1959 (the month in which the State Government enforced price control and levy) and June 1959, business activity in certain markets fell short of that in the same period of 1958." In Andhra Pradesh, "after May 1959, the producers' sale according to available evidence diminished very much and were much below the sales in the corresponding period after May 1958."

Hoarders' Conspiracy

This conspiracy of the urban and rural hoarders to defeat the whole scheme of procurement was facilitated by the unimaginative and arbitrary manner in which the maximum wholesale controlled prices for wheat and rice were fixed by the Central and State Governments. In fixing these prices at a level which was much lower than the level of prices prevailing in the open market on the eve of the imposition of the control orders, the Government played directly into the hands of the vested interests in grain trade.

The enormous difference in the pre-harvest peak prices of different varieties of wheat and the controlled prices imposed by the Government after the harvest in 1959 in various States is shown by the following Table alongside.

villages, hoarding them in out of the way places and deliberately obstructing the flow to market centres by circulating false panicky reports about Government's intention to forcibly seize all stocks coming to the markets at very low prices. The big trading interests have thus succeeded in completely blowing up price controls, which, on the admission of the Government, no State Government was able to enforce effectively. Bengal and Bihar in fact withdrew the Central orders in June 1959. In all other States controlled prices have remained only on paper. It may be noted, furthermore, that in this period, the bigger grain dealers have augmented their profits through large-scale smuggling across Zones and through unrestricted hoarding and profiteering in other cereals which are not affected by this scheme.

It is in this manner that even the limited quotas of procure-

in the real sense of the term, that is, ensuring proper distribution of foodgrains to all parts of the country and stabilising and controlling prices at levels which are fair to the consumer as well as to the producer, cannot be fully realised without the State taking over the entire wholesale trade in foodgrains. But pending this, if prices are to be stabilised in any measure, the Government has to enter the market as the biggest trader, displacing monopolistic trading interests and mopping up a big part of the marketed surplus. The point is that the grip of monopolistic trading concerns over the market has to be broken and the Government itself has to become the biggest purchaser and seller of foodgrains, chaser and seller of foodgrains, only then can prices and other market conditions be controlled and regulated. The Government, because of its class affiliations, refuses to recognise this basic truth.

The Government should un-

State	Pre-harvest peak wholesale prices	Govt. Controlled wholesale prices
U.P.	Rs. 22.86 to 27.59	Rs. 13 to Rs. 17
Punjab	Rs. 21.75 to 27.59	Rs. 14 to Rs. 15
Rapasthan	Rs. 18.75 to 24	Rs. 13 to Rs. 15
Madhya Pradesh	Rs. 26	Rs. 13 to Rs. 16

In the case of rice the disparity was no less as illustrated by the figures given below:

State	Variety of Rice	Pre-harvest peak of wholesale prices	Govt. Controlled wholesale prices
Andhra	Akkulu	Rs. 22.40	Rs. 16.50
	Sali	Rs. 21.25	Rs. 10.50
	Raipur	Rs. 22.50	Rs. 14.70
Madhya Pradesh	Coarse	Rs. 23.22	Rs. 15
	Coarse	Rs. 20	Rs. 15
Mysore	Coarse	Rs. 20	Rs. 16
	Coarse	Rs. 20	Rs. 16

N. S. KHRUSHCHOV ON PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

Against the background of the forthcoming Khrushchov-Eisenhower meetings, Khrushchov's article in the American magazine "Foreign Affairs" on "Peaceful Coexistence" is of crucial value. Below are some extracts from the article.

ONE does not need to delve deep into history to appreciate how important it is for mankind to ensure peaceful coexistence, although, the Europeans might have benefited a great deal in their day if, instead of organising senseless crusades which invariably ended in failure, they had established peaceful relations with the differently minded peoples of the Moslem East.

Let us turn to facts concerning the relatively recent past when the watershed consisted of different religions, creeds and customs, but of much deeper differences of principle relating to the choice of social systems.

The principle of peaceful competition does not at all demand that one or another State abandon the system and ideology adopted by it. It goes without saying that the acceptance of this principle cannot lead to the immediate end of disputes and contradictions which are inevitable between countries adhering to different social systems.

Representatives of the bourgeois countries reason in this manner. They say: The Soviet leaders argue that they are for peaceful coexistence. At the same time they declare that they are fighting for Communism and they even say that Communism will be victorious in all countries. How can there be peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union if it fights for Communism?

It is often said in the West that peaceful coexistence is nothing else than a tactical method of the Socialist States. There is not a grain of truth in such allegations.

No Tactical Measure

Our desire for peace and peaceful coexistence is not conditioned by any time-serving or tactical considerations. It springs from the very nature of Socialist society in which there are no classes or social groups interested in profiting by war or seizing and enslaving other peoples' territories. The Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries, thanks to their Socialist system, have an unlimited home market and, therefore, they have no need to pursue an expansionist policy of conquest and the subordination of other countries to their influence.

Contrary to what certain propagandists hostile to us say, the coexistence of States with different social systems does not mean that they will only fence themselves off from one another by a high wall and undertake the mutual obligation not to throw stones over the wall or pour dirt upon each other. No, peaceful coexistence does not mean merely living side by side in the absence of war but with the constantly remaining threat of its breaking out in the future. PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE CAN AND SHOULD DEVELOP INTO PEACEFUL COMPETITION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SATISFYING MAN'S NEEDS IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY.

Basis Of Soviet Policy

From its very inception the Soviet State proclaimed peaceful coexistence as the basic principle of its foreign policy. It was no accident that the very first State act of the Soviet power was the decree on peace, the decree on the cessation of the bloody war.

What then is the policy of peaceful coexistence?

In its simplest expression it signifies the repudiation of war as a means of solving controversial issues. However, this does not cover the entire concept of peaceful coexistence. Apart from the commitment to non-aggression, it also presupposes an obligation on the part of all States to desist from violating each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty in any form and under any pre-

Compete Without War

We say to the leaders of the capitalist States: Let us try out in practice whose system is better, let us compete without war. This is much better than competing in who will produce more arms and who will smash whom. We stand and always will stand for such competition as will help to raise the well-being of the people to a higher level.

ings are actively fighting for peace.

SECONDLY, the peace policy enjoys the powerful support of the broad masses of the people all over the world.

THIRDLY, the peaceful Socialist States are in possession of very potent material means, which cannot but have a deterring effect upon the aggressors. . . .

Continue The Struggle

But if we say that there is no fatal inevitability of war at present this by no means signifies that we can rest on our laurels, fold our arms and bask in the sun, in the hope that an end has been put to wars once and for all. Those in the West who believe that war is to their benefit have not yet abandoned their schemes. They control considerable material forces, military and political levers, and there is no guarantee that some tragic day they will not attempt to set them into motion. That is why it is so much the more necessary to continue an active struggle in order that the policy of peaceful coexistence may triumph throughout the world not in words but in deeds.

THE PROBLEM OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE BETWEEN STATES WITH DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS HAS BECOME PARTICULARLY PRESSING IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT SINCE WORLD WAR II THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES HAS ENTERED A NEW STAGE. THAT NOW WE HAVE APPROACHED SUCH A PERIOD IN THE LIFE OF MANKIND WHEN THERE IS A REAL CHANCE OF EXCLUDING WAR ONCE AND FOR ALL FROM THE LIFE OF SOCIETY.

War Can Be Averted

How can this be done? The new alignment of international forces which has developed since World War II offers ground for the assertion that a new world war is no longer a fatal inevitability, that it can be averted.

FIRST, in our days not only all the Socialist States, but many countries in Asia and Africa which have embarked upon the road of independent national Statehood, and many other States outside the aggressive military group-

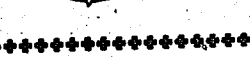
Of much importance, of course, is the fact that this policy has in our days merited not only the widest moral approval but also international legal recognition. The countries of the Socialist camp in their relations with the capitalist States are guided precisely by this policy. The principles of peaceful coexistence are reflected in the decisions of the Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries. Furthermore, many countries of Europe, Asia and Africa have solemnly proclaimed this principle as the basis of their foreign policy. Finally, the idea of peaceful coexistence has found unanimous support.

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Khrushchov On Coexistence

★ From Overleaf

port in the decisions of the 12th and 13th sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.

We regard the liquidation of the consequences of World War II and the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two German States—the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany—as the question of questions.

Indeed, fourteen years have already passed since the war ended, but the German people are still without a peace treaty. The delay in a peace settlement with Germany has afforded wide scope for renewed activities of the West German militarists and revanchists. They have already proclaimed their aggressive plans, laying claim, for instance, to lands in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Of course, the German revanchists are thinking not only of a march to the East, they also know the way to the West. From the history of World War II we know that the Hitlerites occupied Western Europe before advancing against the Soviet Union. . . .

people are unduly sensitive. Can one assume that West Germany is now in a position to precipitate another world war?

Those who put the question thus forget that West Germany is at present active in the world arena not alone but within the military North Atlantic bloc. She plays a paramount role in this bloc. And more than that, life has shown that the North Atlantic alliance is being gradually converted into an instrument of the German militarists, which makes it easier for them to carry out aggressive plans. It is not at all impossible, therefore, that West Germany, taking advantage of her positions in the North Atlantic alliance, might provoke a war in order to draw her allies into it and plunge the whole world into the chasm of devastating war.

All this indicates how timely and realistic are the proposals of the Soviet Government for the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and for bringing the situation in West Berlin back to normal. . . . It now seems that no sober-

am convinced that Germany will be united sooner or later. However, before this moment comes, and no one can foretell when it will come, no attempts should be made to interfere from outside in this internal process, to sustain the state of war which is fraught with many grave dangers and surprises for peace in Europe and throughout the world. . . .

Obvious Fact

We should start from the obvious fact that two German States exist, and that the Germans themselves must decide how they want to live. Inasmuch as these two States, the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany do exist, peace treaty should be concluded with them, because any further delay and postponement of this exceptionally important act tends not only to sustain the abnormal situation in Europe, but also to aggravate it still further.

As for Germany's unity, I

ed social and economic systems exist in the world today side by side, and that the Socialist system, in spite of all the attacks upon it, has grown so strong, has developed into such a force, as to make any return to the past impossible. . . .

It is readily seen that the policy of peaceful coexistence receives a firm foundation only with increase in extensive, absolutely unrestricted international trade. It can be said without exaggeration that there is no good basis for improvement of relations between our countries other than development of international trade. . . .

Commercial Relations

We make no secret of our desire to establish normal commercial and business contacts without any restrictions, without any discriminations, with the United States as well. . . . Striving for the restoration of normal trade relations with the United States, the Soviet Union does not pursue any special interests. In our economic development we wholly rely on the internal forces of our country, on our own resources and possibilities. All our plans for further economic development are drawn up, taking into consideration the possibilities available here. As in the past, we outline these plans proceeding only from our own potentialities and forces. Irrespective of whether or not we shall trade with Western countries, the United States included, the implementation of our economic plans will be not in the least impeded. . . .

Trip To U.S.A.

I believe that my trip to the United States next September and the subsequent visit of President D. Eisenhower of the United States of America to the Soviet Union will afford the possibility for a useful exchange of opinions, for finding a common language and a common understanding of the questions that should be settled. . . .

Incorrect Impression

About violation of this line, he declared: "I am stating the fact that there are no Chinese troops on this side of the MacMahon Line anywhere, except in two or three, or maybe four miles of Longju, there is a small detachment there. An impression seems to have grown that there are masses and masses of Chinese armies perched on the frontier. That is not a correct impression."

He also refuted the gossip that the Chinese had built airfields on Indian territory. He also did not believe that the situation on the frontier was going to worsen suddenly but was obviously annoyed with the Chinese maps and the territories included therein. . . .

He concluded by requesting that ideological issues of Communism and anti-Communism be not imported into the controversy and welcomed the statement of the Soviet Government "which is taking a calm and more or less objective or dispassionate view of the situation. . . . It is not for us to divert this major issue between these two great countries, China and India, into wrong channels; it will be completely wrong for us to do that and we must maintain our dignity and at the same time, deal with the situation as firmly as we can."

—HOHIT SEN

NEW AGE

GHASTLY STORIES OF POLICE BRUTALITIES

* FROM FRONT PAGE

resurgent forces of West Bengal could not be muzzled with lathis, tear-gas and bullets. He warned the rulers: "You will not escape the nemesis of history." Countering official propaganda, he said that goon-damism was resorted to by the Government and its provocateurs.

He feelingly appealed to all sections of the intelligentsia to rally behind the people as the only course open to men of honour and conscience. He moved the audience to tears and visible anger by his impassioned oration.

He warned Nehru that he was pursuing a dangerous course by encouraging all manner of reactionary trends in the country. "One future day long before humble persons like me are touched, he himself may be swept away by these forces."

Listening to his speech I wondered how to give my readers a glimpse of the bestiality of the B. C. Roy Ministry. Let this story then be read of Haripada Gupta, a 22-year

old Hindustani worker. He was arrested by the police from the streets at about 9.30 p.m. on September 1. He was pale and hearty when he was picked up, but he died in the Bangur Hospital, Calcutta, on September 12. But how?

Worried over his absence, his younger brother made enquiries at the Bartola Police Station and then went to Bankshall Court, where he found Haripada standing in the dock with his right arm bandaged. Haripada was so sick that he could not even lift his head to talk to his brother. His bail application was refused.

On September 4, the police sent information to Haripada's relatives that he was lying in a grave condition in Bangur hospital and that they could see him there. On arriving they found that he was unconscious. For full seven days he lingered in agony but speechless.

It is now learnt that he was removed to the hospital by the police in a very critical condition after 9 p.m. on September 3. The whole body bore marks of injuries, which was also noted in the hospital records. He was in Alipore Cen-

tral Jail, and the report of the jail doctor says that he had been given an anti-tetanus injection, although he was quite fit before his arrest. Why?

No death certificate signed by a doctor, as required under the law, was available. Only a printed form was given. Besides the name and address of the deceased, it contained the following cryptic remarks: "PM No. 412." The entry in the Death Register at Nimtola Crematorium ground was a little more explanatory. It stated: "PM done. No. 727." "PM done" means "post mortem done." The cause or causes of death were not shown in any of these "certificates."

Under the Calcutta Corporation's rules, no dead body is permitted to be disposed of unless it is accompanied by a valid certificate from a doctor, mentioning the cause or causes of the death. Why was this not done? Why a post mortem if his death was a natural one? The people enraged ask these questions about Haripada, who was done to death. They will yet force B. C. Roy and his gang to answer.

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SEPTEMBER 20, 1959

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(Daily up to November 9, 1959)

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PAGE TWELVE

SEPTEMBER 20, 1959

FOOD SITUATION

SHEER GOVT. BUNGLING SENT PRICES UP IN RAJASTHAN

★ ★

RAJASTHAN had all the factors favourable to keep food prices low, but sheer bungling by the Government and its refusal to implement the policy of State trading have sent prices soaring again.

The first favourable factor was a very good crop of wheat and gram in last year's rabi. Together with this came the decision of the Government of India, obviously at the instance of the State Government, to declare Rajasthan into a separate zone for wheat; which naturally led to a ban on the movement of wheat outside the State. A little prior to that export of bajra from three districts had been banned.

Simultaneously, discussions for the State taking over the wholesale trade in foodgrains were going on and a decision was being expected any moment. That made the traders also a little cautious.

All these factors led to a situation where prices of foodgrains started coming down. The decline started from March. By the first week of April offtake from cheap grain shops had declined to about 20 per cent of the normal, due to the fact that hoarded stocks had started out, and prices of local wheat had come to almost the same as wheat price of Rs. 14-8 per maund in the cheap grain shops.

Opportunity Not Seized

This situation continued and even became better with the arrival of the new harvest which sent prices down still further. In some of the big producing centres like Alwar and Sawal Madhopur, where the kisans were in no position to hold back the stocks, prices immediately after the harvest came down to as low as Rs. 12 per maund and at no centre did it exceed Rs. 16 per maund.

Had the State Government really adopted the policy of taking over the wholesale trade, had it started a big purchasing programme at that time, the peasant probably would not have been forced to so much undersell his wheat and the State Government could have easily built its own stocks to be supplied to the urban areas.

But the State Government did nothing of the kind. It sat quiet "thinking" that the above factors alone would "control" the market. It was in a way consciously trying to avoid State trading in foodgrains.

The situation of low prices could not last long in the absence of a proper policy. The traders saw the Government would not act. They first cornered all the crop at the cheap prices and then started

making attempts to "smuggle" the wheat out.

There was no restriction on export of bajra and maize and these were freely exported to the other States. Even wheat was "sent out" despite restrictions. The method was simple: wheat would be booked to a place in Bharatpur District and from there in the night it would be taken across the border to U.P.

After a month or so of this, prices began to rise. By July the price of wheat at the big urban centres had come up to about Rs. 20 per maund. At some places like Jaipur and Bikaner they rose to Rs. 22 and Rs. 24 per maund. The upward trend was sharp and noticeable.

Procurement Farce

At this stage the Government suddenly woke up and announced that the State would purchase about 80 lakh maunds of foodgrains, out of which 50 lakh maunds were to be wheat. Even this stock was inadequate, even to maintain a skeleton supply to the urban areas the State Government would need about eight lakh tons.

The State Government's targets were very low and even this the State Government did not try to fulfill. When it made the tall announcement, it had not even set up any machinery to make the purchases. A few days after the announcement, the Food Minister went to Ganganagar and called a meeting of traders and "appealed" to them to help the State Government to make the purchases. He even indirectly "assured" them that in case the targets would be fulfilled the State Government would be prepared to consider the question of permitting unrestricted export.

But the traders knew better. They knew they had the whip-hand since the State Government had no stock and they had it. The only result of the Food Minister's attempt at "persuasion" was that prices of wheat in the Ganganagar market shot up by another two rupees per maund, all bookings to Bikaner were stopped, and the prices rose in Bikaner to about Rs. 26 per maund leading to a demonstration of the citizens for cheap grain.

And with all the appeals, the State Government has so far succeeded in purchasing only one lakh maunds of foodgrains, one-eighth of the very low target.

Meanwhile, prices continue to rise. In big cities like Jaipur and others they are already about Rs. 24 per maund, at other places between Rs. 20 and Rs. 22 per maund. The tendency is upward. There is demand everywhere for cheap grain shops. At some centres the cheap grain shops have run out of the quota

given by the Central Government out of the imported wheat, but are somehow holding the line. Indications are of a serious situation developing.

Almost a similar situation is now developing for the Kharif crop. That crop will come into the market next month. The bajra crop is reported to be very good. In some districts like Barmer and Jalore, forward trading prices of bajra are Rs. ten per maund.

This is the time for the State Government to announce a fair price to the kisan and purchase the stocks from him. There is, however, no indication that the Government has learnt its lesson. The result will be that this crop will also pass into the hands of the traders and will be mostly exported to Bombay and Saurashtra, and after that the trend of rise in prices will reappear.

The coming of the rabi crop into the market may

hold the line for the time being; but if during this period, too, the State Government does not do anything to build its stocks, from November onwards, the prices of not only bajra but of wheat also will rise steeply, plunging the State into a very serious food situation.

Sugar Muddle

The position in respect of foodgrains will not be complete without a reference to the position in respect of sugar. Almost from May this year the sugar problem has become serious. Prices have gone up, the market rate is Rs. 1.50 per seer, whatever the authorities may say to the country. Efforts to supply sugar at the controlled rate have miserably failed, one reason being the low quota fixed for the State.

This bungling and of being mild to the trader and the hoarder, have led to a serious situation, naturally evoking strong discontent. Local protest movements are mounting. Trade unions and other bodies have adopted resolutions demanding that the Government take over stocks and aid open cheap grain shops. The State Committee of the C.P.I. at its meeting at Pali severely criticised the State Government for its failures and demanded the following immediate measures to ease the situation:

Immediate Demands

- Seizure of all stocks from the traders, jagirdars and big landowners to create a stock of eight lakh tons;
- Open cheap grain shops at every place with a population of 3,000 and more;
- Arrange for distribution under supervision of all parties Committees and wherever possible through consumer cooperatives.
- Similar measures to ensure sugar supply.

Local protest movements in the form of meetings are developing at the various places on this all important question.

—H. K. VYAS

Smug, Pro-Hoarder Policies Create High Prices, Scarcity In Assam

THE Food Minister of Assam admitted at last that everything was not well with the food situation in the State when he told the National Development Council that Assam had a total shortfall of 60,000 tons of rice.

At the beginning of the year, he had said that Assam might expect a year of normalcy in respect of food. As late as July 1959 the Government of Assam had placed last year's production (rice) at 16.19 lakh tons (1958-59) with an expected total consumption of 14.20 lakh tons, which ought to have left a surplus of about two lakh tons.

But now, after the harvesting of the ahu crop (a part of which, of course, had been lost due to the devastating floods), the Minister has made an admission, however grudging, of the crisis.

Expectations Belied

What are the facts about the food situation in Assam?

With about 38 lakh acres under paddy cultivation now, rice production ought to be nearly four crore maunds gross. The Government claims that 1958-59 production of rice was a little more—16.19 lakh tons or nearly 4.20 crore maunds. This rice plus other foodgrains produced in the State and the foodgrains obtained every year from out-

side ought to have kept the market under control. The calculation of the State Government was the same when it claimed that the market would remain normal this year.

But this was not the way the situation developed. Step by step with the advent of the lean months, prices began rising. Rice prices started rising from the end of May this year and by the middle of June, they were already Rs. 28 to 30 per maund in some areas, and the average rate throughout the State was Rs. 23 to 25 a maund.

Scarcity In Many Areas

After the floods in mid-June, the prices struck a new high with Rs. 29 to 32 at Gauhati and up to Rs. 40 in the Cachar District. Simultaneously, the prices of other food items also shot up.

Not only were prices soaring, scarcity was also being reported from many areas of the State. In the post-flood weeks, in the Congress Press itself appeared reports of starvation deaths. In one district alone, at least six deaths were reported.

Official callousness and profiteering by the hoarders became so brazen that in one place in Cachar District, Katlichera, the people seized a truckload of paddy which was being removed at dead of night and after notifying the local police station, distribu-

ted the same at controlled price.

By the beginning of July it became clear that excepting few areas, the food situation in Assam was serious and that the Government had practically lost control of the market to the big traders, millers and the landlords.

Government policy alone has been responsible for this situation. Last year, State trading was announced as an all-India policy. Pompous declarations were made by the State Food Minister about the Government's intention to curb the profiteer and hoarder and make State trading a success.

How did the State Government set about this task?

It chose Nowgong, a surplus district, for direct purchases. The price fixed for the producer was Rs. 8.4 to 9.00 a maund. The Government-backed Central Cooperatives and Trading Societies were given the monopoly of procurement.

Profiteering Racket

As a result, procurement became a racket for some Congressmen and profiteer elements who succeeded in procuring a few lakh maunds, a big part of which promptly went underground and passed into the hands of the big traders and millers. Recently, the Food Min-

* SEE FACING PAGE

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* FROM FACING PAGE

ister himself had to admit that direct procurement had been a flop due mainly to corruption, but he was pulled up afterwards and had to swallow his own words.

In other districts, the Government entered into contracts with the millers' associations or the licence-holders and big traders for a stipulated quantity of stock at controlled price. The traders and millers supplied nominal stock to the Government, while keeping for themselves huge stocks obtained from the peasants at the uneconomic control price fixed by the State Government.

The Government failed to make these elements respect their contract or disgorge their stocks. A soft policy was pursued all through towards the blackmailing tactics of the monopoly traders and millers. As a result the Government failed to build up adequate stocks, either State-wise or districtwise. In Cachar, three lakh maunds were the target, but actual procurement was about 20,000 maunds through the traders up to April 1959. The Government afterwards procured some 40,000 maunds, but the target was never reached.

Thus, while the Government talked of State trading, it left the market almost fully in the hands of the anti-social elements in the rice trade in Assam, who cornered the main part of the surplus and took control of the market.

Pro-Hoarder Distribution

Not only procurement, but distribution also was pro-hoarder. Cheap grain shops were closed in February and this removed the only safety valve against the price-rise. The plea that prices were bound to remain normal was belied in two months. Even then the grainshops were not reopened on a large scale. Only when the prices touched a new high after the floods were the grainshops again opened.

Cheap grain shops were few in all the areas, except perhaps the main towns, supply to the shops was inadequate and irregular, prices were arbitrarily fixed at the profiteer's rate. Government itself making a profit of Rs. two to four per maund. To add to all this, the Government kept in cold storage the Foodgrains Control Order which empowers it to deal with anti-social elements.

No wonder, with all this the Government completely failed to keep the market under control.

The ahu crop has now been harvested. The result is that the producers' price for paddy has gone down to eight rupees a maund and even lower. While the rural consumers in certain ahu-producing areas got the benefit of the lower price for a while, the price of rice for the bulk of the consumers remains almost as high as Rs. 25 to 28 a maund in most of the places in the State.

Assam is to get 25,000 tons of rice from the Centre, that is about 7½ lakh maunds. This is not adequate to meet the deficit. It is doubtful whether it can influence the market even.

The Government's crime becomes all the more glaring

SEPTEMBER 20, 1959

SECURITY COUNCIL DECISION ON LAOS

INDIA, CHINA, USSR, NORTH VIETNAM HAVE SIMILAR STAND

ON September 8, in a hastily held Security Council session, the U. S. representative got the Council to adopt in a midnight vote the three-Power Western resolution "to appoint a fact-finding committee of the Council". The composition of the Committee—Italy, Japan, Argentina and Tunisia—is itself an indication of what the West expects from it.

In this connection, two facts must be noted. ONE, that there is striking similarity in the position adopted by the Governments of India, the Soviet Union, China and North Vietnam, vis-a-vis this resolution of the Security Council.

TWO, that by adopting this resolution, the Security Council

ing when it is seen that there is still plenty of rice in the State which can be had at blackmarket prices. The Assam State Executive Committee of the Communist Party and the State Kisan Sabha, as early as the last winter harvest, had asked the Government to change its food policy and to pursue a policy of directly acquiring enough stocks at the fair price of Rs. 12 per maund to the producers. That was a fair price to the producer and would have made procurement easy. The Food Minister ridiculed this proposal then. It is evident now that the Government was not the victim of any mistake or miscalculation, but of its own pro-hoarder, anti-people food policy.

Protest Movement

As the food crisis resulting from the Government's policies is being more and more felt, the Communist Party's demand for a change in food policy is drawing wider and wider support. The Communist Party held a number of meetings and demonstrations during the months of June and August last against high prices and scarcity and black-market. The State Council of the Communist Party has fixed September 21 as the All-Assam Day of "Scarcity and High Prices Resistance Day" and has given a call for united action.

The RCPI has planned a mass demonstration on September 18 on the same issue. The leaders of the State PSP denounced the Government's food policy at a public meeting last week.

In Cachar District, in one thana area, over 3,000 people, men and women, demonstrated against the food policy. The discontent has now become widespread. Already mass actions have taken place on a local basis in many of the districts. The important task now is to co-ordinate these local actions into a Statewide movement for food and lower prices.

—ACHINTYA BHATTACHARYA

cil has embarked—first and foremost the U. S.—on the dangerous path of violating its own rules of procedure as laid down in the United Nations Charter.

First, as regards the positions of India, the Soviet Union, China and North Vietnam:

● Nehru, addressing his Press Conference on September 11, has stated categorically that this Security Council's resolution on Laos amounted to "bypassing completely the Geneva Agreement."

In his characteristic soft notes, Pandit Nehru expressed the fear that, because of the procedure adopted at the Security Council concerning Laos, "the whole structure built by the Geneva agreements may not be lost." He was of the view that the success of any solution depended on the agreement between the parties concerned in Laos.

● China's Vice - Premier Chen Yi, in a speech on September 9, has declared that "any attempt to interfere with the question of Laos by means of the U. N. will only aggravate the tension in this area and will not be in the interest of the settlement of the question of Laos." He further pointed out that "the question in Laos is that the Laotian authorities should correctly implement the Geneva and Vientiane agreements" and that "the International Commission in Laos under the chairmanship of India should also resume its activities at once to safeguard peace in Laos."

● The Foreign Ministry of the Vietnam Democratic Republic in a statement (September 9) on the U. N. Security Council resolution, declared: "The Government of the Vietnam Democratic Republic reiterates that the only way to solve the present Laotian tension is to respect and strictly implement the Geneva agreements on Laos, to resume immediately the activities of the International Supervisory and Control Commission in Laos and to put a timely stop to the provocative schemes of U. S. imperialism and the Phou Sananikone Government."

In a speech, Soviet delegate Sobolev declared in the Security Council that the Soviet Government firmly stood for the strict observance of the Geneva agreement and believed that the only way of normalising the situation in Laos was to revert to a strict undeviating observance of these agreements.

Imperialist Intrigues

The similarity in the views on this question, referred to above, shows that world opinion, particularly Asian, is alert to imperialist intrigues. We have had the experience of imperialist intrigues—in Korea, in Indo-China, in Egypt, in Lebanon. We also have learnt that a necessary condition for giving a decisive rebuff to such intrigues is the growing friendship and solidarity among the Afro-Asian countries, the solidarity

and friendship which is embodied in the historic phrase, "the Bandung Spirit." This needs now to be activated and strengthened further.

Revision Of Charter

The Security Council resolution on Laos not only aggravates the Laotian situation but has faced the U. N. itself with a fresh danger.

What has happened at the Security Council? In order to circumvent the Soviet veto, the western Powers presented the resolution as of a procedural nature. But, according to the Council's rules, the question whether an issue is procedural or substantive, is itself subject to veto. The Western Powers have now denied this right, which means that hereafter it is sufficient for any member of the Security Council to have its resolution characterised as procedural to give the go-by to the principle of unanimity of the Five Great Powers in the Security Council.

The Western Powers are, therefore, forcing a U. N. body to act upon a resolution which in fact has no force of law.

The Soviet delegate was, therefore, right in sounding the warning: "We have just witnessed the beginning of the revision of the Charter—the factual revision, if not the verbal revision." Finding the U. N. Charter in their way, the U. S. ruling circles are out to violate it as well.

Only The First Step

The U. S. plan of sending a "fact-finding" Committee to Laos is but the first step. The second would be to have the U. N. adopt a resolution to despatch a U. N. "emergency force" to Laos. And the third, would be to enable members of SEATO to send their armed forces to Laos, under the U. N. shield.

Reports of U. S. weapon airlifts to Laos are pouring in. Thailand's military mission is on its way to Laos. Afro-Asia must at once express its unity and defeat this latest imperialist manoeuvre against their independence and the peace of the area.

—RAZA ALI

(September 15)



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NEW AGE

NEW AGE

BIHAR: The Struggle Begins

From ALI ASHRAF

PATNA, September 15

More than two hundred persons were arrested in different district headquarters towns in Bihar on September 14, the first day of the satyagraha launched by the Bihar Anti-High-Prices-and-Tax Committee (AHPTC).

REPORTS so far received indicate that 35 satyagrahis were arrested at Arrah, 38 at Monghyr, 21 at Muzaffarpur, 20 at Gaya, 65 at Darbhanga. Exact figures from Bhagalpur and other districts are not yet available. At Chapra and Motihari a number of satyagrahis were arrested but were let off later in the evening.

Among the arrested is Chandrashekhar Singh, a member of the Bihar State Executive of the Communist Party of India, who led the first batch of satyagrahis at Monghyr. Tumaria Baba, a noted kisan leader and a colleague of the late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, was arrested at Gaya. At Muzaffarpur they were led by Communist Councilor Arun Bose.

LATHI-CHARGES

At Arrah the satyagrahis were accompanied to the District Magistrate's Court by a demonstration of more than two thousand. The police twice attacked it with lathis. There was complete hartal in the bazar. At Darbhanga the demonstration was twice lathicharged. Hartal was also observed in several towns like Lalganj in Muzaffarpur, Barajamda in Singhbhum, Maner and Mokamah in Patna District, Sonapur and Gopalganj in Saran. In Patna City there was partial hartal.

Before launching the satyagraha, the AHPTC made a final bid to reach a peaceful

settlement on the people's demands so that resort to direct action may not be necessary. But the arrogant and unceremonious rejection by the Chief Minister of all the demands left no other choice before the AHPTC.

The rejection of the demands by the Government came at a time when the food situation in the State had started deteriorating fast. Due to failure of the monsoons, transplantation of paddy could not be undertaken—variously from 40 to 80 per cent in vast areas in the State.

In the words of Sri Harinath Mishra, former Minister of Supply, the District of Darbhanga is faced with a famine the like of which had not taken place during the last fifty years. Agricultural labourers and poor peasants are already experiencing mass starvation and exodus has begun of thousands in search of food and work in the neighbouring districts of Bihar and even of Bengal. Even the Darbhanga District Congress Committee had drawn the attention of the Government to the serious situation there.

Yet the Chief Minister arrogantly turned down the demand of the AHPTC for immediate relief, hard and light manual labour scheme to provide employment to the agricultural labourers and more cheap grain shops with assured supply of grain. Food Minister B. C. Patel complacently expressed his full satisfaction at the food

situation in the State and even refused to appoint all-parties food committees at all levels, a suggestion that had emanated from no less a person than the Prime Minister himself.

Regarding the new taxes, the Chief Minister trotted out the all too familiar argument of national reconstruction but refused to discuss alternative sources and the economy measures suggested even in the Report of the Economy Committee of the Bihar Legislative Assembly.

Together with its refusal to consider any of the demands, the Government took measures to face the movement. In the first place it made elaborate police arrangements.

DISRUPTION

Simultaneously it mounted a big political offensive in order to disrupt the unity of the different sections of people in the AHPTC at Patna and in the districts. This had two facets. A campaign of intimidation started. It was said that a situation like Calcutta would develop and violent clashes and mass firing, etc., would take place.

At the same time, the India-China border dispute was brought in with an appeal that in this situation of national emergency nothing should be done to embarrass the Government. And naturally, a tirade was let loose accusing the Communist Party of deliberately choosing this moment in order to weaken and sabotage the country's defences.

Bihar Congress President A. Q. Ansari issued a statement. Mandal Congress Committees

were mobilised in the campaign. Leaflets were distributed in lakhs. Congressmen and officials went round the shops forcing shopkeepers to sign a declaration that they will not observe hartal on September 14. Policemen went round the rickshaw khatalis in Patna early on September 14 forcing the small owners to bring out their rickshaws. In Arrah, for days together there was a veritable battle of microphones on the streets.

Not sure of success on its own, the Congress also utilised the PSP to break popular unity and the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha which have some influence on sections of the business community in the towns.

The role of the dominant section of the PSP was specially nauseating. State PSP Chairman Basawan Singh, known for his alliance with the ruling clique in the Bihar Congress, acted like an ordinary strike-breaker.

Though the PSP had accepted the genuineness of the demands by itself calling an anti-tax hartal on July 1 and by proposing to launch a Statewide movement, Basawan Singh, just one day before the satyagraha, issued an appeal to the people not to participate in the satyagraha and not to observe hartal on September 14. His main argument was that this was a Communist-inspired movement with the sole aim of weakening the country's defence. He sent his followers in the PSP to openly work against the satyagraha. That the arguments were

spurious and dishonest was underlined by the resolution of the AHPTC that the moment a state of emergency arose in the country it would suspend its movement and devote its entire energy to the defence of the motherland.

The Congress and the PSP jointly mobilised Jaiprakash Narain to oppose the movement. Meetings under the auspices of the Sarvodaya banner were held in Bankipore and Patna City and Jaiprakash used them for his tirade against the Communist Party to the extent of suggesting its illegalisation. He appealed for strengthening the hands of Bihar Chief Minister S. K. Sinha with whom he was engaged in an acrimonious correspondence only a year ago.

Jaiprakash, however, proved more useful in other ways than in his appeals to the public. He was taken round the different towns of Bihar persuading people to break away from the AHPTC. At many places he got ready rebuffs, as for example, from the President of the Gaya District AHPTC, Mahamaya Prasad, who was already bereaved by his daughter's death, was so much disgusted that he resigned not only from the presidency of the State AHPTC but also from the PSP.

Despite this concerted offensive by the Government, the Congress, the PSP and the other reactionary and communal bodies like the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha, people's unity and their will to fight peacefully for their demands remain unbroken.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY

MONDAY LAST WAS REALLY DAY OF THE MOON

BY CABLE FROM MASOOD ALI KHAN

MOSCOW, September 15

THESE were three days of great excitement, great joy, pride and hope in Moscow. News of the launching of the second space rocket thrilled the whole country. All Sunday, people did nothing but follow the news of this wonderful flight. Street corners, buses and Metro stations turned into reading rooms and discussion centres where proud Soviet people studied the latest news of "heavenly developments" as if from now on they were the personal concern of every Soviet citizen.

"Well, how are things up there in our cosmos?"

"Fine, we are flying, of course," came the reply.

Yes, the whole people had worked for this day and now they were all taking part in the flight.

And then came the news of the world's first atomic ship starting on its maiden voyage. The Soviet ice-breaker, the Lenin, glided down the river Neva as thousands in Leningrad greeted it. The atom-pow-

ered ship majestically went past Obelisk which marks the place from where just 42 years ago cruiser Aurora had fired her guns and announced to the world the beginning of the new era of Socialism.

All of us crowded round our sets as every hour the latest news was announced. At 7 in the evening, the radio told the world that the rocket was still flying on course and was due to touch the moon just after midnight.

Of course, no one went to bed that night; all windows showed the lights that were on. The whole country waited with bated breath as the great moment drew nearer. As the announcer on the radio counted the last seconds, they seemed longer than minutes.

And then, like every other midnight, chimes of the Kremlin Tower rang out. And like every night, after the chimes the anthem of the mighty Soviet Land was played. And at this very moment, the Soviet-made miracle ship touched the surface of the moon.

Nothing could have been more symbolic, more thrilling, more awe-inspiring and dramatic. This was the triumph of man and his finest hour. People embraced and congratulated each other. Outside the Great Moscow University, students of many lands danced with joy.

The day was Monday and for the first time in human history, it really justified its name. Yes, this was the real Monday. There was no other topic than the moon. People studied her mountains and valleys, words like the Sea of Clarity and the Sea of Tranquility were heard everywhere as if they denoted suburbs of Moscow.

In the afternoon, leading Soviet scientists gave further information to an excited and eager crowd of journalists. What feat of human genius, what accuracy! The rocket had really become a precision instrument in Soviet hands.

And now, while I write these lines, the whole Soviet people follow another flight with pride and joy. Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchov, head of their Government, is on his way to

Washington with the message of hope. "Steel Dove of Peace" somebody remarked as the TU-114 took off on its non-stop journey this morning from Moscow airport. It also carries a model of the pennant

which the Soviet rocket deposited on the moon. Thus the affairs of the cosmos become affairs of man as humanity takes another great step forward and demands complete victory of reason on earth.

CPI HAILS LUNIK

The Secretariat of the National Council of the Communist Party says:

"Humanity is prouder today for the new stride taken in man's conquest of space. The Lunik that has landed in the Moon carried the Soviet pennant, but it is an achievement of the entire mankind—the greatest so far accomplished by Man since he began his struggle with nature in his primitive days.

It is no accident that it was Soviet hands that launched and so accurately guided the Lunik in its epoch-making flight. It is no accident that a system which is only forty-two years old has advanced so fast leaving the centuries-old capitalist system lagging behind.

The hammer and sickle in the Moon has again proved the superiority of the Socialist system, it has again shown that it is under Socialism that technology and living standards advance uninterruptedly and rapidly.

What new vistas have been opened up for mankind in its pursuit of peace and plenty for all!

ALL GLORY TO THE LUNIK!