

In these days readers are aware of the 'war-quality' printing. But in this volume the mistakes are unusually very large. We have attempted only a few corrections, and beg of the readers to excuse us for the inconveniences felt.

PUBLISHER

Your opinion on this volume and particularly your views on our idea of 'Gana-Panchayet' will highly oblige us.

Democratic Vanguard,
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REVOLUTION MARCHES ON

(Report of the Secretary ^{J. L. Chatterjee} as accepted by the Democratic Vanguard Conference, Second Session, held in Calcutta on the 19th and 20th Sept., 1944, under the presidentship of Com. Surendra Chandra Mazumder)

The D.V. a Non-party Organisation—Why ?

Ours is a combination of friends, organised for the fulfilment of the task of Democratic Revolution in India in a world of Democratic Freedom. It is not a party. This non-party character of our organisation is not understood by many, misunderstood by some and mis-interpreted by the interested. But to us it is the most vital thing and essential requirement of our task. Formation of a party here and now will mean negation of the possibility of the growth of the subjective factor in the maturing revolutionary situation. It is apparent to all thinking minds that all the existing parties are not only off the track, but, even if they can retain their influence over the people till the situation matures, they are bound to harm the cause. Objective forces with all the enormity of their complexities have their dynamic swiftness too fast to be understood by many. Subjective factors working within the old structure, with psychology of the old still persisting in various degrees, cannot keep pace with the objective developments. The failure of the previously formed parties has been mainly due to this. A new party formed here and now is sure to meet the same fate.

In Europe no subjective factor in the shape of the previously formed parties, may be counted upon for the expected success of the coming revolution. The fight for liberation against the Fascist Powers has been, through its process, bringing into existence the subjective factor appropriate for the cause of revolution. Liberation from political bondage will bring the liberators face to face with the problem of starvation and death. And the solution of the problem will be through economic freedom of the people. An entirely new combination emerging out of the struggle against the Fascist Powers will provide the subjective factor in Europe. Its training and tradition will be no other than those obtained through the present struggle of liberation. Its combination can never be a previously formed party organisation with all its limitations, training, tradition, structure of organisation, and previous commitments including dogmas evolving therefrom.

India too could have the advantage of such a subjective factor emerging. But her leaders failed her. Purposeful participation in this war against the Fascists would have enabled her to share the victory and she could have wrought her own freedom. Instead of asking the people to build up their own freedom, they persuaded the people to believe that their leaders would get them the millennium, if they could, through a bit of sufferings, increase the bargaining power of their leaders. This is how they thought, they could take advantage of this war. No doubt, the vast majority of our people did help the war efforts, but they did so with a different spirit—it was slavish co-operation of conscious sinners done for the sake of the poor belly, instead of co-operation for destruction of the forces of counter-revolution represented by fascism. Thus a tremendous opportunity was missed. We have, however, another form of struggle answering the same purpose. But together with the one not taken advantage of, the prospect of this form of struggle would have been far better; even the one in which all are now involved, cannot be properly worked out, if it is taken out of the context of our general struggle against international forces of counter-revolution. The struggle, we are willy-nilly involved in, is our struggle against priva-

tions, sufferings, starvation and death. This has brought us unity, has compelled mobilisation of all, has shown us the way as to how to struggle for existence and has endowed us with the very rich experience that the power to exist must be wielded by all, if all are to live. The struggle has been continuing most vigorously with many sharp turns necessitated by equally sharp turns of events. Disruptions and disintegration in every sphere of life touching everybody, are being counterpoised by new types of unity and new realignments. Through all these, the subjective factor has been emerging imperceptibly for many. The struggle to live will end victoriously only after building up power of the people to live, by organising the strength of all, and bringing all resources at the command of this organised strength of the people. This is people's power, which implies liberation from political and economic bondage of the people.

Any party, trying to monopolise control over the vast forces of liberation as manifested through the struggle of the people to exist, is bound to come to grief and is likely to commit political suicide by either going astray in desperation or by feigning to believe that the power will be and can be transferred to democracy. Spreading of this illusion has already been causing incalculable harm to the cause. Hence the need of the slogan: "NO PARTY NOW, STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE TO EVOLVE ITS OWN LEADERSHIP".

We have before us only this objective possibility of the subjective factor. We are fully conscious of the pitfalls and dangers involved in such hastily formed collective leadership with no previous training and discipline. There being no other possibility, we can only exert ourselves to the maximum of our capacity to steer it clear off the dangers and pitfalls. To bring about any revolutionary change in a society without facing any risk is an absurdity. When revolution is a necessity and the subjective factor is an indispensable part thereof, there cannot but be a possible way of its evolution. And when the only possible way is found, it must succeed if conscious attempt of the

necessary quality and quantity is forthcoming. Dangers and difficulties there must be; to over-emphasise them is the way of the cowards and the brave of the Camp of Revolution must abhor it. What we apprehend is not opposition based on any reason for its rejection, but the dogmatic persistence of an accepted theory of the subjective factor obtained through the experiences of previous revolutions. Previous experiences must continue to help us greatly in many matters, but we cannot reject our own experience of an entirely new development with vast complexities and richness. Dogmas we must bid good-bye to, and must be guided by our knowledge obtained in the field. That is the only correct procedure.

Mainly guided by this consideration a number of friends thoroughly imbued with the spirit of revolution, have formed themselves into a combination and given it the name of DEMOCRATIC VANGUARD. Its first Manifesto was accepted by them, meeting in a conference in Calcutta on the 28th. Oct., 1943.

Our Activities—

Democratic Vanguard not functioning as a party and not taking to the usual method of setting up of units through manipulations, has to develop its own technique of actions. From the very start it had its units in Calcutta and some nuclei in various parts of the country. We could function only through them. After a thorough analysis of the situation and calculation of the likely course of developments, line of action is chalked out, not only for ourselves, but also for all vanguards rising from movements of the toiling masses; the line thus chalked out, however, is for us obligatory and for the rest recommendatory in the form of our suggestions, as a process of exchange of experience. We have sent our views to all anti-fascist parties and organisations, we have suggested to them, from time to time the necessity of joint actions on specific issues. But we are sorry to note that excepting the Bolshevik Party of India none else responded. Rank and file members of some parties, however, when approached appreciated our spirit and expressed dissatis-

faction at their leaders not even showing the courtesy of reply. Our units and nuclei did carry out their own part of the job.

When the Fundamental Principles of the future Constitution of Free India were raised in the Central Assembly, besides asking others to give opinion of their parties and organisations, our Calcutta units held about a hundred street-corner meetings, where citizens assembled and supported the resolutions under discussion in the Assembly. Our posters and chalk-writings throughout Calcutta made a profound impression in the city. It is regrettable that the resolution was not formally moved for reasons yet to be known. But all the same, even within this limitation, we have been able to mobilise people's opinion in favour of their own freedom and some still now posing as people's own men have been exposed.

Through our street-corner meetings, posters, chalk-writings, group meetings, and through special arrangement of contact, we have been preaching our views on all important issues before the country. Our labour workers secured the approval of a number of trade union workers for the line we propose to pursue in the working class movement. Our activities in the trade union movement, even though in its infancy, have been able to secure a number of working class people for the Democratic Vanguards. We had a number of study circles held in different parts of Calcutta and Dacca, and the workers are found to take much interest in them. In the domain of cultural movements our achievements are not mean. Our student comrades are moving in their own educational institutions to set up our training centres; it is however only the beginning, and much ground has to be covered. We have, by congratulating the Fighting Forces—the Anti-Fascist Fighters—set up an ideal before them, which, if they are able to assimilate will be of much use for building up of the New Order. We have a number of Nuclei in various places throughout the country, — Delhi, Allahabad, Benares, Jamshedpur, Purulia, Asansol, and Dacca, Mymensingh, Coomilla, Faridpur,

Chittagong, Rajshahi, Coochbehar, Twenty-four Parganas, Howrah, Hooghli, Burdwan, Midnapur and Nadia are the places where we have some of our friends functioning as Nuclei of the Democratic Vanguard. It must, however, be clearly understood that all of them are not equally active, and the progress so far made is not to our satisfaction. It is far from being so. We believe that much more progress would have been possible had our comrades taken more care of the task that we have to perform. It seems, some time we lose heart at the sight of the task confronting us. This may be due to wrong appreciation of the technique we have adopted. We do not propose to monopolise for us with our present strength, the leadership of the revolution to come. We visualise that Vanguards are growing everywhere in all movements throughout the country. They, together with us, will constitute the leadership. Ours is the task of coming closer to them and through co-operation and actions, and exchange of experiences help them come up. When this is clearly understood and it is expected that this conference will greatly help us in this regard, our comrades will show their mettle hereafter. In this connection it can be hardly emphasised that regular correspondence should be maintained with the head office in Calcutta. We do not have the advantage of the Press, generally owned by the rich, nor have we any organ of our own to keep our comrades and others posted with facts regarding ourselves and our activities. The restriction on paper consumption and the ordinance have made us the worst victims. Perhaps this is the test of things to come, when Ardeshir Dalal & Co. will have the entire show at their management: we have only a beginning of it just after he has been taken in only as a junior partner. It may be that he has not got a direct hand in the restriction order which has well-nigh strangled cultural and educational progress, but certainly he cannot shirk his share of responsibility.

Our progress has been hampered very much on account of our scanty resources. Poor men representing poor men's cause and refusing to play at anybody's hands, we cannot and must not expect any monetary help from those who

have a stake. We shall have to rely only on our own resources and on those of our friends who have confidence in us. With so bright a prospect before us, it is expected that friends will not spare any pain to finance our activities. It is really regrettable that some of our best workers are forced to spend their valuable time and energy in the services of others which is neither interesting to them nor helpful to the cause. On the other hand, our work suffers. They must be released from the present drudgery and given the scope of serving the cause for which they crave. We must also have sufficient funds to attend to other requirements of our task.

Press-Blockade

We have a number of difficulties to overcome; but difficulties regarding publicity are baffling. The press in India seems to be determined to suppress all news that are calculated to help the cause of the toiling masses as against the interest of the rich. They have gone to the extent of refusing to insert news even without any colour, and hence without any propaganda value attached to it. All important street-corners of Calcutta presented fairly good gatherings of citizens in about a hundred of meetings during the course of a week last year, to support the Fundamental Principles of the Future Constitution of Free India. This is a happening which they may not like, but having a news value of its own should have some publicity. News paper readers pay primarily for news, and the refusal of the press to publish it was really cheating the readers. The plea that there was no space enough to publish news regarding the opinion of the citizens of Calcutta in respect of a resolution under consideration of the Central Assembly, when death of a number of vultures in an accident in a Railway line finds one-fourth column in a news paper of Calcutta, seems to be preposterous. This Conference will have to tackle this important problem. We may begin with an appeal to the journalists; failing, we may have to go directly to the people, the readers and the advertisers. Still we may not have any success with

those who seem to be determined. But in the process, we may be able to solve the problem in quite a different way. We must get the people's voice have a vehicle to move effectively. Let none of the enemies of the people have the satisfaction of suppressing us in the way they have been doing it upto now.

Sectarianism Exposed—

Our nuclei at Dacca, Munshiganj and Kalma have been able to organise three local Units, and they have been able to develop a number of new Nuclei in other places. In the Sub-division of Munshiganj the movement of Gana-Panchayets is being very creditably conducted by our comrades of these Local Units. Our lady comrades in Munshiganj have been working through the local Mahila Samity organised by them a few years back and through their Sangha Mitra. The C.P.I. have been playing their old game by setting up their own Pocket Committee which they have named Mahila Atma Raksha Samity instead of functioning through the existing one. All works done through these organisations in relation to Relief Work, Milk Canteen and the like must be put to the credit of these organisations; but as organisers and leaders, our comrades also have a proud share of their achievements. And it must be remembered that the Democratic Vanguard proposes to do all public works only through such bodies. Relief Committees, Children's Homes, Food Committees etc. are to be used as instruments to relieve the distress of the people. Our Dacca comrades, even before they organised their formal Unit, were doing everything possible in this line. Our Calcutta comrades were fighting against odds as they started their struggle against hunger and death due to starvation. Co-operatives were not given any chance worth the name, other parties refused to co-operate even in respect of such an issue, meant for saving the lives of human beings, which does not admit of any difference of opinion. We however continued to appeal and it was appreciated by all right thinking people. In one particular case some citizens of Calcutta when approached agreed to accompany us to a meeting where there was to be an

election of Mahalla Committee. In the meeting itself some public men suggested the names of a few of our comrades for election to the committee. Some organisers of the meeting who happened to be members of the Communist Party of India, privately requested the proposers of our names to withdraw the same as we were the members of the Democratic Vanguard. This exposed the C. P. I. and their pretension that they do not use such public movements for any sectarian purpose. The proposers protested and wanted to quit. But our comrades wanted them to stick on and do their part of the job.

Ourselves X'-Rayed

It must however be admitted that as ours was an organisation too young then, with very scanty resources at its disposal and ourselves much engrossed in the process of its formation, we could not do what we should have done. The crisis started in its worst form, before we could form ourselves into a formal unit. Our comrades discussed informally as to what they could do. There was certain amount of hesitation and indecision due to the condition we were then placed in. The initiative thus lost, it was very difficult to have any more scope to be of service to the extent we are capable of rendering, so far as Calcutta was concerned. This is a very costly experience and we may not fail to profit by it.

We have really a proud record of our services in the course of the short period at our disposal. But we must admit, we have our own faults. The task, that we have, is too vast to be satisfied with the total output of our work. Sometimes it seems that our comrades lose heart in face of the gravity of our task and its enormity, and the energy and enthusiasm we are capable of releasing do not have an easy flow. Sometimes discipline is not cared for, sense of responsibility is out of all proportion to our requirement. It is sometimes conveniently forgotten that we, the Vandguards cannot afford to shirk responsibility fixed on ourselves. It is surprising again that the Democratic Vandguards can behave like members of other organisations and treat

their own resolutions as if they are only meant to be framed and not expressive of determination, to work out the plan chalked out. For sometime they suffered from a feeling that as a non-party organisation membership has no rigid discipline to maintain and obligation for them, there was none. We have however, passed that stage and to-day we may claim to have a cadre of workers whom any party may be proud of. Still we have to cover much of our lost ground. The convening of this Conference is a proof positive that the membership, who decided in favour of holding it in view of the coming crisis of victory in the anti-fascist war, has developed keen sense of reality and their responsibility thereto. Here-after, it is expected that the decisions we arrive at and resolutions we agree to accept, will be carried through with all the enthusiasm and energy we are capable of. To this end, it is essential that the technique and the line of action, the Democratic Vanguard has adopted, is thoroughly understood by all; for otherwise the enormity of our task without thorough understanding of the technique and line may cause depression to some hearts. So it is necessary to give more importance to the problem of theoretical equipment.

The Disaster—Food Crisis

The most important event that occurred during the short period of our existence was the terrible toll of human lives in Bengal. It has hardly any parallel in history. What a terrible ordeal! Hungry men and women belonging to all castes and creeds wanted any food to eat, and when none was available, they were eating themselves out and died not by hundreds but by lacs! Food was not available and whatever of it could be had in the black-market was certainly not meant for them. Yet there was a Govt. that was supposed to be functioning and had a total-war to take care of. Men, if they are to be helpful in respect of the present war, must live; must have sufficient physical strength to work hard for the victory in this war. Among a number of causes that hampered the war efforts in India, this hopeless handling of the food problem happens to be

of the worst nature. It was within the possibilities of the authorities to give much better account of themselves. They have failed not only as rulers of this unhappy land, but they have immensely injured the cause of the anti-fascist war and the fighting forces in different countries. Humanity's loss, however, is incalculable.

In a society where all production and distribution are based on profit motive, where all are having a war against all, where exploitation of man by man is permissible and legal and where scarcity of food was of the nature that we had, no wonder hoarders and profiteers will behave like scoundrels. When men died by lacs, the black-market of rice thrived over the corpses of our own countrymen. These hoarders and profiteers behaved like beasts and wanted to escape public notice of it laying blame exclusively on others, who too have their own share of guilt. But, however they may try, people do know them thoroughly well and the lesson may not be forgotten. The sabotage movement had its due share, as it hampered the movement of foodstuffs in a period of such grave a crisis. And there is no knowing yet as to what part did their instructions to conceal and if necessary, to destroy food stuffs, played in reality. Anyway, these instructions contained in some of their Bulletines did provide the so-called moral justification for what the profiteers did.

Staggering Revelation

But recently a staggering revelation has just come to light. It is reported that a huge quantity of food stuffs supposed to be stocked by the authorities have been allowed to get rotten, and to-day far from being of any use to the starving humanity, they have been reported to be reduced to a danger to human lives. We may not get back those of our fellow beings who died for want of these stuffs; their lost vigour and strength and shortened longevity may not be recovered, and those who have fallen easy victims to diseases due to starvation, underfeeding and ill-feeding may not come back, but we must know who were responsible for such a disaster.

These and many other factors contributed towards the disaster that the country had to run through. None has the satisfaction of having done what was warranted by the requirements of the hour. No doubt, some Relief Committees were run; no doubt, the Government also started some relief works; no doubt, but for these relief centres people's suffering would have been much more aggravated and many more lacs of human-beings would have perished, but, after all, a man-made disaster taking so heavy a toll of human lives could not be prevented, nor could we, after the disaster has done its worst, be able to create conditions to guarantee against its recurrence.

Search for the Remedy

We are conscious of the present limitations of our society, which does not permit any final solution of the problem. Still, within these limitations there was much to be done. Our comrades, long before the crisis set in, could see the trouble ahead and took initiative in sending a comprehensive plan of action to deal with the situation over the signature of a number of public men of Munshiganj, Dacca, and repeated the same on various occasions by parts or in full. It gave reasons for which the trouble was apprehended, it dealt with the problem of procurement, of transport, of agency of distribution, of production for self-sufficiency, of diseases and their treatment. The main principle of the plan was the creation of democratic institution of the people built up by themselves on non-party and non-communal basis. Other agencies having no chance of success, it was proposed by the plan that whenever people formed their own Panchayets, they should be entrusted to do their own job, the Government retaining only those parts of the services which local Panchayets could not do. But nobody cared for the suggestion. An ideal Defence Committee with all the possibility of being developed as an ideal Panchayet at Munshiganj was nipped in the bud by the Government of Bengal with a view to organise Home Guards. We have a number of Panchayets even now functioning in the district of Dacca. In some cases the

authorities were helpful, but not to the extent they should and could have been. Other agencies were tried. Krishak Samity was tried in some places, but the leaders of the organisation were believed to have made an initial mistake by utilising the opportunity for forced increment of its membership. Janaraksha Samity in the town of Dacca suffered in its reputation for forced donation to a party fund. Parties are busy in their usual way to reduce these popular institutions into their pocket organisations. Sometimes it is done in the name of elections but in reality through manipulations, sometimes people's backwardness in matters political is taken advantage of, and some party resolutions are thrust on the popular institutions though the resolution may not have any practical bearing so far as the local and immediate issues are concerned. Such sectarianism may satisfy the vanity of any party or group, but is likely to cause immense harm to the people's interests.

Panchayets alone can Save

It must, however, be clearly understood that in spite of all these defects, those popular institutions do have a proud record of service which other institutions of arbitrary nature could not, when they worked independently without the help of popular institutions, even approach the standard. It is desirable and necessary that our conception of the Panchayets should be put very clearly before the people and even our comrades must also have very clear idea about it and must know how it will function. For, let us have no doubt in our mind that the protracted crisis is yet to continue with its intensification at short intervals and the last one yet to come, will be of so great an intensity that we have not its parallel in the history of our land. Institutions like the Panchayets alone can then function and be effective. If it is organised in the right way and if it functions properly, people will be saved to the maximum extent and in the process, people will build up their glorious future.

Democratic Panchayets
and Not Parliamentary Democracy

Panchayet is the organ of power of the people : this power implies that all strength of the people is organised to commandeer all available resources for serving their needs and wishes. Such an institution to serve the needs and wishes of the people is therefore bound to be a democratic institution of the people of the locality. Maximum service, which has got to be the wish of the people, demands the rejection of the luxury of parliamentary democracy where there are somebody to legislate with no sense of responsibility to discharge, some to have the responsibility to execute, some to support those who are in power, while there will be others to oppose them, a graded staff of officers to blindly obey their superiors for carrying out the Executive orders and an armed force isolated from the people as sanction for the system. The parliamentary system fails to satisfy the needs and wishes of the people because of its content with its quality and because of its arrangement of action which precludes the possibility of being used to serve the needs and wishes of the people. The people's own Panchayet has for its content the strength of the people with all available resources and for the utilisation of these, an arrangement of delegation of responsibility elected by the people themselves while effectively retaining power of removal, recall and re-election and control. Elected representatives will collectively plan, execute and be responsible to the people and work it out along with all others involved. Here under the ideal system none of the voters will be an economic slave, as the Panchayet with all the available resources is a sure guarantee against economic slavery and misery. The entire institution will have for its sanction the entire strength of the people as represented by the youth organised into a Panchayet-Bahini.

Whom the Power Serves

Today we cannot have everything we want. But we have the strength of the people, and can have whatever

is possible to obtain under the given conditions. It is only on this that our people can have any reliance. With this little power that they can build up, the people could get the maximum amount of their needs and wishes served. Others having the power cannot do it. As a matter of fact the power serves him first and foremost who happens to possess it. The people must have power to themselves if their cause is to be served. It has been the experience of almost all of us that when any individual is selected to exercise the power of distribution of, say, kerosene oil, it is so common with the distributor everywhere that since he has the power, light is often seen burning in his house even during the daytime, whereas his neighbour has scarcely any oil even for a few minutes of the night. The terrible and very costly experience of those days when they died by lacs had the same pointer left to us. If you want to live, you must have the power to live. We, all of us want to live and we all must have the power to live. That power comes from our combined strength plus whatever materials we can obtain through that combined strength. We are thus with the keen sense of reality to help us, forced to the view that if we are to survive this crisis, for its requirement, we must form our local Panchayets ; in course of our attempt at fulfilment of our task, co-operation with other Panchayets will be abiding. And the arrangement of co-ordination will, in due course, evolve higher Panchayets. Village Panchayets in villages, Mahalla Panchayets in cities and towns, Mazdoor Panchayets in factories and Bustees will cover the entire country, while they themselves will be linked up by higher Panchayets and they with still higher ones, till we get the Supreme Panchayet at the centre. The power of the people thus organised, people will be in a position to feed themselves, clothe themselves, shelter themselves, make arrangement of their own education and culture, protect themselves and be able to live as human beings.

This, in short, is our idea of Panchayets. You do require it to-day, for immediate safety ; you do require it for

to-morrow, if you want to live as human beings. Give any name you choose, but do build it up for humanity's sake.

Today, Panchayets can function only within the limited possibility of the conditions we are in. And as such, we cannot expect it to bring the Millennium. But what else can do better? Distribution of food stuff, when the supply is not plenty, can be best arranged by those for whom it is intended. Anybody else having the power of distribution in the present-day society is likely to utilise even this power primarily for his benefit. Due to the scarcity of food stuff and difficulty of transport, more food should be produced in every locality according to a local plan to suit the requirement of the people. Commandeering of the necessary plot of land, planning according to the requirement of the people, energy and enthusiasm needed to work it out and subsequent distribution will not be possible unless consent on this behalf is obtained from the people; and it is possible only when they have a collective determination and a democratic organisation of the type of the Panchayet. The ravages of diseases can be effectively checked, if all medical knowledge, all medicines, all possible attendance, all available sick diet are mobilised and aids are distributed according to a plan. Measures to check diseases have also got to be similarly treated. Then, in these days of hardship, rowdies will constitute a source of danger and existing police arrangement will not be there of much help for protection. Here again, only a democratic organisation of the people capable of mobilisation of the entire physical strength of the people alone can be effective. So even with the present limitations, nay, particularly for these limitations, the Panchayet will be the most suitable instrument of the people in the hour of this crisis.

Of late, a substitute has been sought to be improvised. But it is for a very limited purpose, with limited scope, and qualitatively it suffered from the defect that determines its unsuitability. It is the Food Committee. It is mainly a committee to see to the distribution of food available from Government sources. The Govt. scheme of rehabilitation and relief work are also being tried. Distribution of

medical help in co-operation with the committee is being arranged. There is no doubt that other welfare works may be slowly added to its scope. But it started with an organisational scheme, a name and restricted scope which are not conducive to its growth. Besides, it is not started with the initiative of the people and consequently suffers from reputation. Even then, it has a number of advantages which may be turn to good account. It is possible to do so, only if these committees are developed with the real content of Panchayets. This, again, is possible if vanguards functioning in these committees have a plan of action appropriate for the purpose. We, however, believe that attempt at rectification from within, even when helped from outside may be frustrated by powerful agencies and they may break at the repeated assaults of further intensified crisis. But it is likely to provide us with some experience and some amount of mobilisation. We firmly believe that the Panchayet is the only solution. They must be organised by the people to help, supplement and ultimately absorb or replace the Food Committees.

The Scramble for Power.

As the war has been closing, people have got themselves busy to think in terms of power. Individuals seek it for their personal aggrandisement, classes are doing the same for their class-interest. It is only natural. In India we find that big business interest could realise early, that their past support and encouragement to the August movement were of no avail, that the movement did not only fail but nothing more could be had out of it and that their Pound of Flesh may suffer even to the extent of total extinction, if the same policy is further pursued. So they were in a great haste and did not even think of consulting the Congress. A Plan was hurriedly formulated, with some more exhibition of the spirit of co-operation. The Government in this turn responded with amazing swiftness and accepted the principles of the Plan, created a new portfolio in the centre, and appointed one of its authors as a member of the Viceroy's Executive with the portfolio of attending to the preliminaries, presumably for the execution of the Plan. "National

Government" happens to be one of the principles enunciated by the Bombay Masters. There was hardly any time for anybody to give any considered opinion. In this connection it must be remembered that the principles of this Plan were accepted after rejecting another, which was hatched out at the instance of the Government, when the Government had no friend in the country and could get only Roy as a substitute whom they requested to prepare a post-war plan of reconstruction. He did it and the Government by sending the same to the Pacific Relations Committee must have something good to say about it. This was long before the Bombay Plan made its appearance. But to-day, Roy's Plan or its elaboration, the so-called "People's Plan" has no place in their scheme of things. Without anticipating the opinion of this conference, it may at once be told that these two Plans are intended for power in the post-war period by two sets of people. One set, conscious of the coming danger common to themselves and their class in Great Britain, and also conscious of their own capacity to win over the Indian masses, comes to the bargaining counter avowedly with terms favourable to themselves, of course, in the name of the country; another set goes to the counter with the consciousness of their weakness and offers terms favourable to British vested interests and what is left thereafter is to be equitably given over to all concerned in varying proportions, but all in the name of being suggested for the toiling masses. In the former case, power is to go to the rich through legislature with parliamentary opposition eliminated and the other proposes to have this power in the name of Indian Democracy, with the help of the present Government acting as agent of the 'British Democracy.'

Pakistan Issue in the wake of this Scramble

In this bid for power, the Indian National Congress had a different line. They were for transfer of power, and on the assumption that the masters, though unwilling, might be coerced, they thought of creating sanction to compel the Rulers to agree. But their latest move failed. Still they suffered from the illusion that the Rulers not being as energetic, they can yet attain their object. This is why

Gandhiji is believed to have stated that the August resolution was his "Life's breath." But the reality of the situation slowly dawning, here is now a conscious attempt at rectification. The power behind the Congress was not slow to move; they met Gandhiji and the subsequent events go to prove that the "Life's breath" does not really exist. There is no longer the quit order, only a part of Cripps' offer can satisfy at the centre, but it must accompany a promise to give freedom after the war, a promise that could not be relied on at the time of the Cripps' offer. Vivisection of India previously proposed to be resisted with life is now very hurriedly agreed to, re-opened and reconsidered, if that can increase the bargaining capacity. Mr. Jinnah whom Jawaharlal described as impossible seems to be pliable and fairly determined to bring about a compromise to serve as a ladder to power. Many others have been scrambling for the power, or at least for its shadow and crying hoarse to attract notice.

It must be said to the credit of the C. P. I. that after they have accepted the Pakistan plan of M. N. Roy, they have carried it through, of course as usual, without acknowledging indebtedness. They have, during this crisis accepted the theory of 'Decolonisation' so stoutly resisted for a period, for there is no other sense in their so-called demand for National Government, which means power to the Indian rich with parliamentary opposition eliminated, Congress-League unity on the basis of Pakistan demand to form National Government as a stepping stone towards freedom to be given by the British rulers. This is their present line. It has yet to be seen how they behave hereafter, now that they have been playing the second fiddle with so much of zeal and fanaticism. Perhaps they harbour the desire to share power with the rich.

The Issue of Pakistan

We should, however, be very clear regarding our attitude towards the issue of Pakistan. To us it is based on the principle of self-determination, the essence of freedom and freedom movement. If a large body of men want

separation, it must be conceded, and there was a time when this formal concession could have served as a lever to unite the toiling masses without whose unity no people's freedom is ever possible and unity was made impossible by the quarrelling top leaders. Then the Congress leaders as well as the C.P.I. refused to move an inch. To-day the people have cemented their unity as they died of starvation and in their struggle to save themselves from it. They did not wait for anybody's command. They have learnt at tremendous cost that the top leaders may afford to watch and wait even when men were dying by lacs, and even to use such a disaster to increase their bargaining power. To-day, the principle of self-determination is being proposed to establish top-unity and with its help to bring the top leaders to power. This will mean a danger to the toiling masses, for, if they do not have the power in the course of the coming crisis, it will be a disaster for them.

So our point of view is that the issue of self-determination should be agreed to on its own merits with the provision that the real people will have the determining voice. And we should on no account be a party to this principle of self-determination being used for the purpose of consolidation of the vested interest in India.

A note of warning, however, should be sounded to friends interested in the demand of Pakistan. The demand of Pakistan grew out of the movement of those who were deprived of their share of employment in the Government services owing to varieties of causes but concretised in the shape of a demand by those who wanted to utilise this real grievance of a section of the people to help themselves to power, so long as the possibilities of employment remain restricted, and so long as many people have got to go without employment, monopoly of employment for any particular section cannot be tolerated and it has got to go; when other attempts failed, the issue of Pakistan caught the imagination of the people. But now that we are thinking of a new world where unemployment will no longer exist and it will be considered as a crime of the state. So, now the

scheme of Pakistan is no longer necessary for the original purpose; it will, for some time and only for some time, help a few to ride up the ministerial *gadi*. Poor people's interest as also the interest of production is likely to suffer under the proposed arrangement of dividing India into separate countries. The causes of conflict cannot altogether be eliminated between separate states. This will require perpetual preparedness and will be a very costly affair for the toiling masses who after all will have to pay. Even an out and out capitalist regime in India will find separation costly and unprofitable. A people's government will not only not like to divide but rather may seek fresh alliance with the rest of the human society.

What is to be done then? The demand of Pakistan has been made a live issue. It has become popular to many. To give it up now without any ceremony is out of question. The persistence in its opposition has to go first. The people must be told that they are the makers of their own destiny. An entirely new situation will be created. All will then be in a mood to re-examine the issue on its own merit, Capitalist's interest irrespective of any communal feeling is likely to oppose it. Toiling masses for their own interest will refuse to suffer for the interest of a few. Unemployment being totally absent, the middle-class demand for separation will be ineffective. And instead of Pakistan we may have a united country managed not by any section of the people but by the entire body of the toiling masses, with freedom of worship constitutionally guaranteed for all.

National Government, and Roy's Quack Remedy—the Coalition.

To revert to the issue of National Government, our opinion is that the people must withdraw their support from it and do what is possible to resist it.

Our old friend Mr. M. N. Roy, though initiated the movement against National Government in right earnest has been trying to escape from the show through the back-door. He believes, or at least he declares

that he does, "The only possible government will be a coalition government, and we shall be there". A coalition government cannot but be a government composed by more than one party. And as Roy finds all other parties except his own, parties of the vested interests, he then agrees to come to terms with the Indian vested interests also. With all his professions of being the man of the toiling masses and of being implacable enemy of the exploiting classes, he says, "We want good relations with the British employers in this country." And for this good relation he chastised his comrades of the Radical Party and by implications he proposed to pay heavily for purchasing this friendship by adding, "But we have been waving the red flag all these years and are doing so even now. They are naturally afraid that we have something up our sleeves. We have the red flag not only to compete with others, but also to square our conscience". We always thought that the red flag they used to wave was to signify their determination of being on the van of the working-class movement that has earned this insignia at a tremendous cost. When Roy's purpose suited, he proposed to sacrifice the interest of the working class to appease the British vested interest in India, and the implication of the proposal to form coalition with Indian vested interest after the war, another course of appeasing the vested interest. We know that even for such a case defence will not be wanting; we will be told that such coalition will be agreed to if only the party concerned accept their 18 points of the fundamental principles, and there is sufficient security of compelling the party to work it out. Such argument however will be either for the satisfaction of the conformists who have to face the music in the field or for the political children. So, Roy's opposition to the National Government has now boiled down to this, as he cannot find his place in the National Government, he must have another combination with the Indian capitalists that will agree to take him in. Again, as it now stands, no group of capitalists in India will think it worth-while to take Roy. So, he has been crying hoarse imploring the Viceroy and the other British capitalists to arbitrarily form a provisional government at the centre with himself or his nominee as members, or how else the democracy is to be represented.

Even the much talked of 18 Fundamental Principles have been given goby. For K. K. Sinha, one of Roy's lieutenant says, "When we elaborate the Fundamental Principles, these remain only a matter of propaganda", when they have planned abolition of Zamindari system with compensation when they plan to establish people's government and think of bringing power to the democracy with the established government remaining in tact. And the ground is set for the next somersault accommodating the Indian exploiters in the camp of Roy or perhaps, it will be more correct to say, Roy's entry into their camp.

It is only we, who are now left to do what is possible in this regard. However feeble this voice may be to-day, we have seen how all the toiling masses enthusiastically respond to the call. Whenever the implications of the National Government are explained they cannot simply believe that such show can be advocated as a means to serve the cause of the people.

The Way Out—People to Build up Power

But our positive plan of action will have to be more vigorously emphasised and preached to counteract the most deceptive and dangerous slogan of the National Government. Our slogan is "Gana Panchayet" as the people's government. We now do claim that there are certain parties and individuals in parties, and outside them who have agreed to raise this slogan independently. We may fail, for it is not likely that the people will be able to know what is their best interest before they learn it through their own experience. Our propaganda, agitation and mobilisation will make a large number of converts, and if we have a raging and tearing agitation against the National Government now, it will serve as a factor, and the most important factor at that, to help quickening the experience of the people. In the meantime, the formation of the local Panchayets, which is not dependent on any remote issue and which has to be carried on also for the immediate requirements of the people, will give us such strength as will guarantee our security against dangerous inroad into the fighting capacity of our people through administrative

actions of the National Government. Hence we must fight the National Government before it is agreed to, after agreement is reached and even after the formation of it, in every possible way. Elections and legislatures may be utilised for the purpose, but we should never be guilty of creating the illusion that the present system can serve the needs, and wishes of the people, or, that even within the present structure people, or their party can through elections come to power. Ours must be a policy to expose and isolate the present leadership from the masses. Our tactics will vary, but on no account this essential requirement will be missed.

This brings us to a very urgent problem demanding immediate solution. There are a number of our friends who accept our views in general, but still do have a lingering hope that the Indian National Congress or the parties they belong to, will not fail the people at the crucial moment. Some again, some-how believe that these organisations or parties may be corrected, given the determined effort in this behalf. To us it is unrealistic optimism and we can only see vast wastage of energy through such attempts. Now it is for us to decide whether we should ask such friends to try to rectify their respective favourite organisations and in the process, correct us or get themselves disillusioned.

But we do not know what can we do with friends who believe that to get rid of the foreign exploiters will mean to finish half of our battle and the other half will be very easy under the domination of the native exploiters, and propose to do everything possible to bring the Indian vested interest to power. We have the only thing to do is to argue again and again that our task will be almost impossible of achievement if we happen to be a consenting party to get the rich saddled with power. Then we lose strength, lose our capacity to struggle for a diametrically opposite cause; it becomes extremely difficult to get the people take an "about turn" and the enemies of people's freedom will be immensely strengthened. If they fail to understand, opposite barricades will be our respective places.

This scrambling for power happens on the background of a war closing victoriously for the anti-fascist forces. We must understand the currents and under-currents vigorously rushing with the most complicated current of events. We must appraise their proper value, must have proper foresight to see things yet to come; we must know in what way we are likely to be affected by them and must have the scientific vision that gives the capacity to make use of all factors for the achievement of our goal.

Revolution Churning up in Europe

So far only the expected is happening in Europe. Even the worst doubters no longer retain faith in the possibility of Hitler's victory. His defeat may happen very soon. But it does not mean that the regime cannot continue for a little more time. But in any case it will not be too long. What then? Will it mean advent of Socialism everywhere in Europe spontaneously? Nothing of the sort is going to happen. Where opposing forces are involved in a life and death struggle spontaneity is an impossibility. Will the shape of things to come be according to the wishes of the big politicians of the winning camp? No, if their wishes run counter to the requirement of production, however much they may try for it. But if it is possible to force the entire system of production back, thus making sufficient scope for the new system to function, they may succeed. But as none of these politicians has as yet planned for such retrogression it is not likely that the system of production will go back. To think of maintaining the capitalist system with a parliamentary form of democracy to manage its affairs, say, in Germany, is to ignore the history which had to bring a fascist regime into existence to maintain capitalism in its decaying period. What are the new factors that can be counted upon for the anachronous parliamentary democracy to function now? To our knowledge there is none. But then attempts there are bound to be, for otherwise we have to assume that the time has come when capitalism has gone anxious for self-liquidation. So, during the process of the war and particularly as the victory is coming nearer, the capitalist

bosses have been busy manoeuvring to prevent what they believe to be a catastrophic disaster. They will, by organising relief measures, taking the administration in their hands to be shifted to safe hands found from out of the sons of the soil, by inauguration of rehabilitation scheme to relieve the problem of widespread unemployment and by thousand other ways, try to turn the tide in their favour.

But the objective condition of revolution is there: Production cannot be maintained within the limitations of the structure. With the collapse of the Nazi machinery of war the system of government retained for the requirement of and maintained by the machinery of war, is bound to collapse. People now forced to collective attempt to exist, will have none of the requirements of war, no desire to see victory in this war, but will be faced with the problem of existence in a new form where others are not there to help them, and they will have to live as best as they can. The entire system of production very successfully and thoroughly switched on to the requirement of war, is bound to collapse. With the collapse of the war, people will now willingly try to exist collectively. This gives the real democracy of the people and it will be their organ of power to live. Any other arrangement thrust on the people, however helpful for a time, cannot be tolerated for any length of time, provided, the proper leadership is not wanting.

But it is feared that the subjective factor is absent, as there is no previously grown party worth the name. This point has been discussed in the earlier part of this report and need not be repeated here. Crisis will force people to take to a new kind of movement for their existence that will give them their own democratic instrument and this new type of movement will for its own requirement evolve its own leadership receiving its inspiration from the victorious Red Army, hard-tested hope of humanity, Sovietism and the German Liberation Committee now functioning as the co-ordinator and guide of the struggle against Hitlerism. With the objective condition ripening in favour of revolution, the necessary organ of power and the collective leadership will not be wanting. All attempts at thwarting the

revolution will be of no avail, if the leadership does not commit serious mistake. If the leadership fails, the situation may then turn to be helpful to the forces of counter-revolution and its leadership receding to the back-ground with its defeat in the anti-fascist struggle will again come to the fore-front with a programme of counter-revolution which is bound to be far more oppressive and retrograde than we can now imagine. Let us hope that any person or group on the side of revolution may not make any serious mistake and the German revolution may emerge out of this complicated situation victoriously with all its grandeur and glory.

Revolution succeeding in Germany, its mighty wave cannot be checked anywhere in the Continent. A vast area representing the most important strong-hold of capitalism thus going revolutionary, the rest of the world cannot but have its repercussions with all its might. Besides, capitalism in its period of decay will be there to help the revolution to have varying success in various countries. The much tested Sovietism and the wonderful victory of the Red Army will continue to supply the inspiration.

Confusions in the Far East

After the fall of Hitler the defeat of Japan cannot be much delayed unless there are any serious differences cropping up among the allied powers, though other eventualities cannot be ruled out altogether in such a complex situation. But the chances are, that the thing will not be allowed to deteriorate to this extent. China may continue to be a drag because of her own complications mostly due to the backwardness of her industries. American imperialism that has been able to create conditions favourable to its existence at the cost of capitalism all over the world, may have a spring-board in China to deal with the revolutionary situation maturing in Japan, possibly also against the citadel of revolution. As against that eventuality, we have in all the Victorious Forces a feeling, that it is the revolution and its fruit, the Red Army that has very successfully played the role of the saviour not only of the allied army fighting

for the same cause, but of the entire humanity. Will America be able to successfully utilise her army against their saviours? Possibly not. Then China in spite of her complications may not be as helpless. Elemental forces are likely to behave similarly under the same trying conditions. Much of her developments are either held back, or covered by ill-concieved propaganda, and we cannot and should not be very definite regarding the course of her developments in details. But, what is apprehended is, that after the war China for some time may not be allowed to remain solid. A division may even be the requirement of the progress of revolution, if counter-revolution can gain sufficient ground over a considerable portion of that unhappy land.

To come to the problem of revolution in Japan: it too must be primarily built up by the people themselves. Determined opposition to the regime now in vogue, exists; the danger to the very existence of the people will be there, due to the very costly war being conducted for so long a period: the defeat will bring disaster, the entire productive system will be on the verge of collapse. But owing to a different type of productive system in Japan, the collapse may not be as spectacular. The people under the danger of extinction will behave more or less in the same manner, and form their own democratic instrument to save themselves from the danger. The most important requirement for the success of the revolution, its leadership, has more or less the same chance as revolutions on other lands are likely to have. But being in close proximity to America and Soviet Russia, Japan's revolution will have to face tremendous diplomatic manoeuvres, conflict and opposition from within and without, as also certain advantages obtained from outside.

England at the Cross-Roads

England, after the war is over, will be a platform where forces of progress and reaction will fight for supremacy. She through her present leaders in a period of great crisis had to sue for friendship of Soviet Russia and had a commitment to be friendly with the latter. But her leaders,

as the victory is coming nearer, cannot look to this commitment with equanimity. They are, on the other hand thinking of, as against this embarrassing commitment of friendship with Soviet Russia, the hand of American Imperialism with promise to save. It is concretely expressed through the recent statement of Sir Stafford Cripps who has given out his hope that Great Britain after the war will be able to produce 50 p.c. more of exportable goods, and presumably, hopes to have a market. This is of course, in comparison with the pre-war figures. The capital of Great Britain exhausted beyond redemption, she, if left to her own resources, cannot venture to think in the same way as Sir Stafford has been doing unless there has been some understanding with America through the series of conferences and negotiations being now conducted with speed almost surpassing that of the war. But her people though conservative to nauseating extent, cannot to-day be a party to stabbing their saviour Soviet Russia and the child of victory in this war, revolution in the continent. Besides, the people of Great Britain may not have the advantage of the defeat of their own masters; but they will have their own victory and the strength built up through its process. They will have their own sufferings consequent on the termination of the war. Then the mighty upsurge of the forces of revolution in the continent will have its effect, and the post-war Britain even with her traditional conservatism may not exclude the content of revolution for a long time to come. Their Masters sitting on a volcano may not be too much obliging to the American Imperialism and may have to accommodate the new spirit to a considerable extent. Then will come the time to review the situation from quite different an angle of vision. Instead of seeking the friendship of American Imperialism, its exploitation of Great Britain through loans advanced for the prosecution of this war will be considered too much a burden to bear. A struggle will ensue resulting in a realignment of forces in favour of progress. Under these circumstances, the rulers of Great Britain will be engrossed with their home and European problems and cannot be expected to deal effectively with the affairs of the

Empire. Most of the colonies will, after the experience of this war, find little attachment for Great Britain and some may go closer to U. S. A.

Converging Re-action

There is no knowing when America's salvation will come, for, opportunity of American Imperialism thriving at the cost of all capitalist countries must go before a royal road is opened up there for the revolution to make any headway. Of course, conflicts coming as corollary to this war may compel an unexpected turn in which case revolution in America will complete the process of revolution in this epoch.

India to Emerge Victorious

Now to turn to our own unhappy land. We have already discussed how the situation has been maturing in favour of revolution. When the ferment of revolution will have its sway throughout the world, when there will be no fascist powers to replace the present rulers, when the existing system of production will get thoroughly dislocated owing to the termination of the war, when the existing system of government will fail to cope with the situation then developing, when rulers in Great Britain cannot come to the rescue, when internal forces of disruption may further aggravate the sufferings of the people, be it under the present rulers or be it under the rule of the Native rich—the people will have to make a determined attempt to save themselves as best as they may. If their attempt succeeds it will be through their Democratic Panchayets and under the leadership of that combination which has been evolving from out of the movement of the people to save themselves. Revolution means the successful termination of the people's struggle to exist. Woe unto them who will stand in the way; we call upon all to contribute towards the consummation of people's victory in their struggle against starvation and death, disease and hunger, ignorance and privations—in a word, their struggle for human existence.

INQUILAB ZINDABAD.