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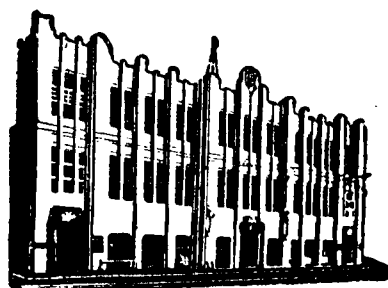
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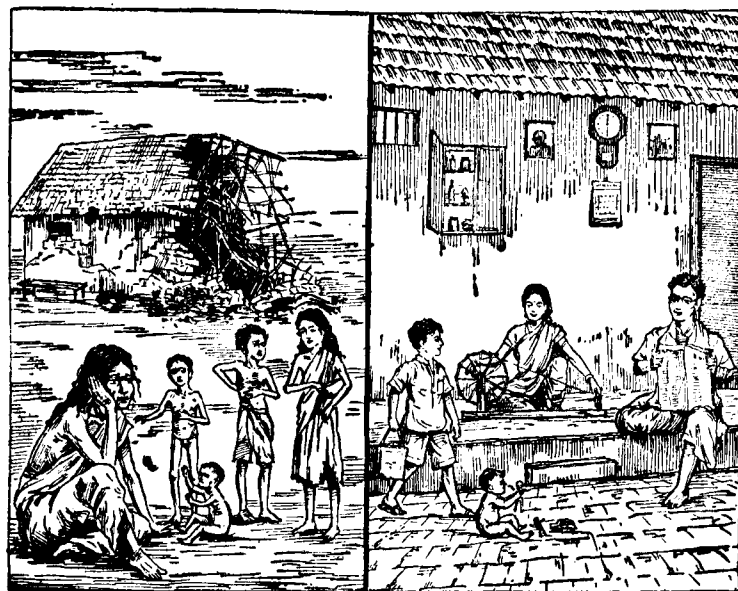
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SWATANTRA

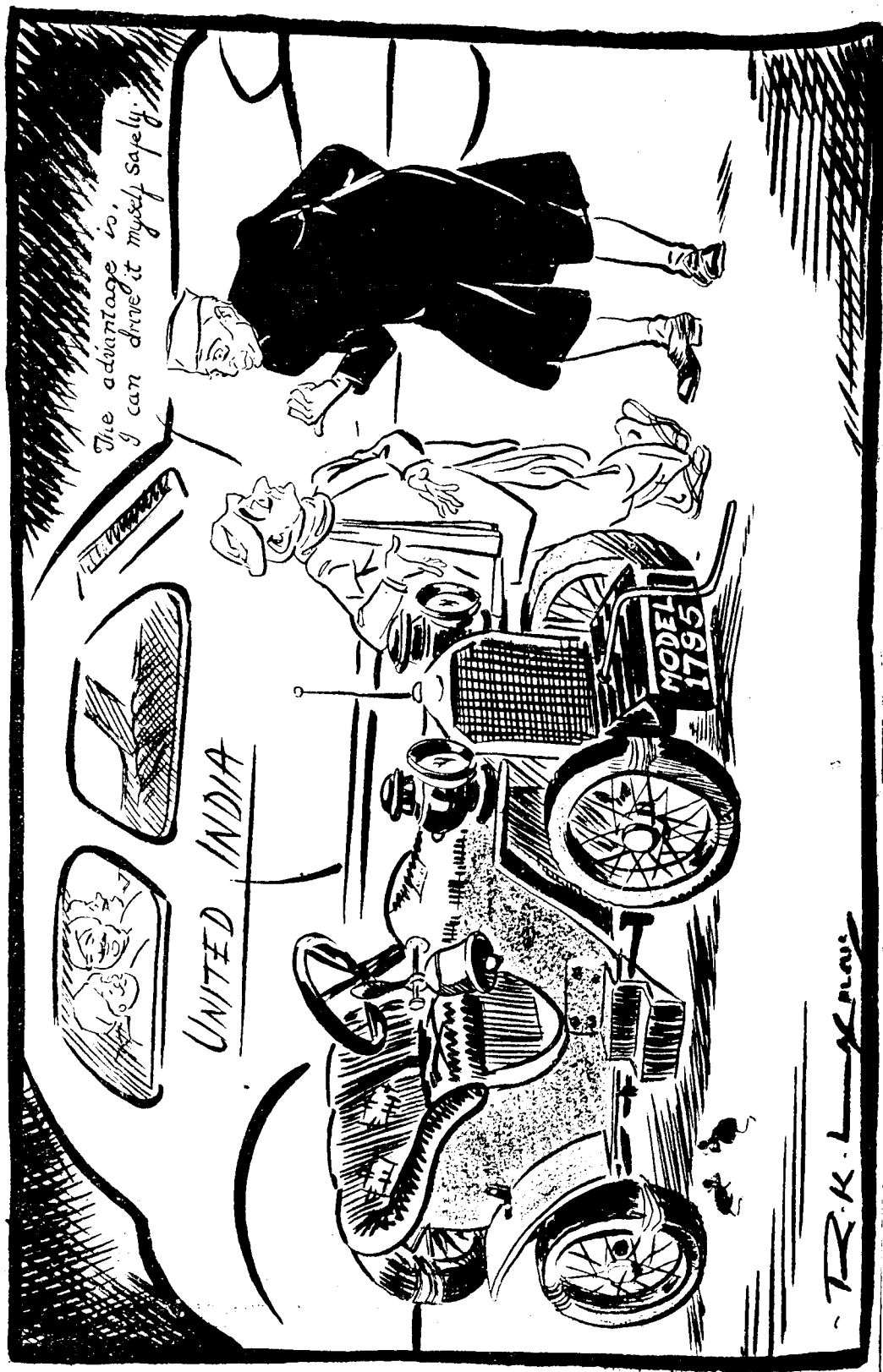
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SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1947.

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THE NEWFANGLED STATE!



SWATANTRA

VOL. II
No 7

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1947

ISSUED
WEEKLY

LOADED DICE

THE election of Mr. Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar as leader of the Congress Legislature Party in Madras and his subsequent elevation to the premiership of the province, are likely to have very far-reaching consequences. According to every canon of commonsense guiding the judgments of reasonable and responsible men, any comparison between the unseated Premier, Mr. Prakasam, and the winner might be regarded as an insult to the former. The two do not indeed belong to the same level. If Mr. Reddiar has any political achievements to his credit, they are not known to the general public, especially outside Tamil Nadu, who had been ignorant of his very existence until he burst upon them as Mr. Prakasam's rival. In the modern age when a working knowledge of English is the key to understanding of public affairs and is indispensable for the transaction of any administrative business with tolerable efficiency, he must be rated as scarcely an educated man. Nor has Nature endowed him, to make up for defective education, with any outstanding intellectual gifts. A less suitable choice for the premiership of a major province, it would be difficult to conceive. We do not think, in the whole world, any body of men boasting the title of "legislators" could be found capable of pitching upon so outrageous a choice as the one by which the 116 that cast their votes for Mr. Reddiar as

Premier distinguished themselves in Madras last week.

Mr. Prakasam is as towering a personality in the politics of South India as Mr. Reddiar has been obscure and inconsequential. His name is a household word in Andhra Desa. It is also a by-word for courage and sacrifice. The masses adore him. When news went abroad of the no-confidence move against him, there was uproar in every Andhra district, and practically every Congress committee met and passed resolutions condemning the move and avowing confidence in him. Many committees outside the Andhra area also signified their protests against the revolt of the anti-Prakasamites in the Legislature Party. If democracy implies respect for public opinion, it is Prakasam and not Omandur who is wanted by the people as their Premier, and the legislators' choice to the contrary is an undemocratic and anti-democratic one which would have been blown to pieces if the matter were referred for decision to the people of the province through an election.

In the event of legislators proving unfaithful to public opinion and challenging a popular leader commanding public confidence, the proper democratic device is for the leader challenged to seek the verdict of the people at the polls. The Congress President who visited the province to settle the ministerial crisis is reported even in his Kerala tour to have been confronted with

THE UNSEATED PREMIER



8

T. PRAKASAM.

THE WINNER



OMANDUR P. RAMASWAMI REDDIAR

9

crowds clamouring for Prakasam's retention as leader. He should have been blind if he failed to realise that the overwhelming desire of people everywhere, apart from the intriguing legislators, was unmistakably for the continuance of Prakasam's leadership. If the Working Committee had any real regard for democratic standards in the spirit of how democracy is understood all over the world, it would not have allowed the anti-Prakasamites to set up a regime of their own unmindful of the boiling rage of the masses, nor would it have forced on the people a sense of impotence as against their own elected representatives defying their will.

From all that has come to light, it is clear that the origin of what fructified later as "no-confidence" and eventually led to Prakasam's defeat, was the backing given by the Working Committee to certain disgruntled spirits in the Party who found themselves left out of the Prakasam Ministry and set themselves up to work for his downfall as the only way of pushing themselves forward. The part played by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and Sardar Vallabhai Patel from their high and mighty seats in the Central Government to promote the collapse of the Prakasam Ministry has been neither a noble nor an honourable one. Let the public reflect on the implications of a statement published by Dr. Rajan in *The Hindu* on March 1. "The point at issue then," said Dr. Rajan, "was how many more men could be taken from Rajaji's group to strengthen the Cabinet. That was the position last month." According to Dr. Rajan himself, "the question of passing a no-confidence motion against Mr. Prakasam or asking him to resign does not seem to have been thought of at that time." The legislators formed into groups and used their group formations as bargaining weapons for extracting ministerial posts, and when Mr.

Prakasam would not purchase his safety by yielding to their demands, they hurled on him their threats of no-confidence, and from his vantage position at the Centre, C.R., though the Party rules prohibit the existence of groups, actually continued as leader of a group in the Madras Legislature Party, and evidently with the full support of the Sardar, the "strong man" of the Congress, he guided the operations of his group to the undoing of the ex-Premier.

The dice were loaded in the Working Committee against Prakasam from the very outset in a manner that has not added to the dignity or credit of the Working Committee. There are always men whose conscience is governed by self-interest, and in the Congress Legislature Party, thanks to the notoriously evil manner of selecting candidates that prevailed at the last election, there is a very large element of persons of no particular worth disposed to sell their loyalties on the basis of calculation as to which is likely to be the winning side. The Working Committee left no chance for Mr. Prakasam to win by the prejudiced action they indulged in against him at every turn. Their selection of Sri Shanker Rao Deo to supervise the proceedings of a meeting of the Party presided over by Prakasam was preposterous. It was like sending a judge of the calibre of Kala Venkat Rao to supervise the political morale of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The Working Committee's resolution calling upon Prakasam to resign, even after he had fixed a date for the meeting of the Party for the election of a leader, was an unseemly exhibition of spite and irresponsibility on the part of the Working Committee, and it is keenly resented by all lovers of fair-play in the political game. It is worthy of note that the resolution was based on a list containing the signatures of those who avowed that they had lost confidence in Pra-

kasam—a list that was never shown to the ex-Premier until long afterwards. Two of the supposed signatories whose signatures are included in the list have since given public statements that they never signed it, giving an indication of fraud of which even a drop, like poison, is enough to vitiate any document. Also, in the very fact that the 134 majority that was advertised as supporting Omandur at the time of the no-confidence motion on February 28, dwindled to 116 in the secret ballot on March 21 when the election was held, there is eloquent proof of the play of pressure groups behind the whole no-confidence move.

We charge the Working Committee with having acted towards Prakasam in a way of which patriots and decent politicians have good reason to be ashamed. Against a veteran that has given a life's devotion to the Congress, and as Premier packed his

regime with faithful implementations of the Congress election pledge with a zest and dynamism found nowhere else in the country in equal degree, against one who is veritably the idol of the masses, it has permitted the emergence into superior authority of an inconspicuous man of straw politically whose only fascination for his backers would seem to lie in their hopes that they could make a puppet of him and rule the roost while he filled the title of Premier. Those who preferred Omandur with his record as against Prakasam with his record are guilty of a political atrocity of the first magnitude, and however nicely it might be gilded, it will not be tolerated except on the ashes of democracy. The people look upon the new Ministry not as rulers to be proud of, but as guilty men that have managed to bring an unworthy conspiracy to success. There is no rejoicing. Only a sense of mourning.

Sotto Voce

Gadarene Glissade



"FORTY generations look down on you, soldiers of France," said Napoleon on the eve of the Battle of the Nile. And the pyramids no doubt look down still on Napoleon and his men turned into dust long ago and laughter rumbles in their cavernous hollows at the thought of the pygmy's self-importance. The Rau Committee, when it pompously declares that "the eyes of the world are upon India now," has not even Napoleon's excuse for its magniloquence. It is an exhortation to Philip sober to walk in the jazzy footsteps of Philip drunk.

"We are now *almost* bound in honour to remove these disabilities at the earliest possible moment." The delightful pedantry of that *almost* is typical of our neo-Manus whose judgment is perpetually aflutter between alternating moods of lordly assurance and timid scrupulosity. They are orthodox but with the orthodoxy of topsy-turvydom. They solemnly parade, like some clown's carnival or Festival of Fools, singing hallelujahs to that Spirit of Youth which is the God of our unbelieving age. "In the younger generation the vast

majority favour the Code, and this is a circumstance from which we have derived the utmost encouragement." Do you know why? "It is the young," says the Committee with a flourish, "that will have to live and be governed by the Code."

* * *

Here is wisdom with a vengeance. Let us hope that administrators everywhere will, inspired by the same sweet humility, revise the laws governing prisons and mental asylums to make them acceptable to criminals and lunatics. The Kingdom of the Yahoos itself never thought of a brighter, a more revolutionary idea. The youth of tomorrow will of course have the right to reject with contumely what the generation admired of our codifiers has received with acclaim. But impermanency itself is the crowning virtue for men who have no roots in the past and no hope of flowering in the future.

* * *

The Rau Committee's solicitude for Hinduism is indescribably pathetic—like that of the wolf for the lamb. And its logic is unmistakably vulpine. India has pleaded for human rights and equal treatment for Indians in international conferences; *ergo*, she must "enact within her own borders a Hindu code." But why a Hindu code? Why not an Indian code which shall comprehend Muslim and Christian, Jew and Jain? Is it because the Committee feared that the Millat and the Vatican would declare a Holy War? The western world from which we are for ever cadging testimonials knows neither equality nor human rights; if the Committee doubts it, let it ask the Negro in America and the Trotskyite outside Russia.

* * *

"A single law for all Hindus in India" is the grand ambition that fires the imagination of the Committee. That reminds me that there are Hindus outside India whom the Committee has apparently decided to spare from its ministrations; possibly it thinks that the future of Hinduism in Africa is safe in the

hands of Jan Smuts. I am on the whole inclined to congratulate outer Hindustan on its providential escape from the Committee's reforming zeal. Smuts and Malan may wish to pen up our nationals in their own ghettos; but they are not anxious to Eurasianise them.

* * *

The craze for uniformity infects a generation which is painfully conscious of its being out of tune with itself and with the eternal order of things. Long before the totalitarian dictators made a shambles of the twentieth century, Valmiki gave us the prototype, in Ravana's Lanka, of the slavery which makes the despot possible. The Ekakshis and the Ekakarnas, who harried Sita with the compacted virulence of a pack of hyenas, were as different from one another and from the normal female of the species as they were united in their abasement before Ravana and their cringing readiness to do his bidding. The man who is, like these epic hags, an embodied appetite, is only too willing to be lured to his doom by false prophets.

* * *

Manu and Yajnyavalkya, when they expounded Arya Dharma, did not bother to think how their code might be received by the Hunas and the Mlechchas. Nor were they upheld by the exigent morality of "Eric; or Little by Little." If they had depended like the Rau Committee on their own powers of ratiocination to guide them aright, they might have easily perpetrated such fantastic *non sequiturs* as that monogamy and divorce go together; surely, if equality for women must be the paramount consideration, the logical thing will be to sanction polyandry *ad lib*. The cute young things for whose opinion the Rau Committee has such profound respect engagingly ask, "Has Hinduism never changed? Why should we in our generation alone lie benumbed under the dead hand of the past?" The fate of the Gadarene swine supplies the answer.

VIGHNESWARA.

SIDELIGHTS : :

If ever this free people—if this government itself is ever utterly demoralized, it will come from this incessant human wriggle and struggle for office, which is but a way to live without work.—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

OF the new team of Ministers, the Premier is the least able, the least qualified according to any basis by which the qualifications of individuals can be assessed. He is thoroughly unsuited for the headship of a modern State. When Pressmen put a question to him, it was Dr. Rajan that had to give the reply. The incident is an omen of what is sure to happen hereafter. Deputies will arise to cover the disabilities of the Premier and relieve him of tasks he is not fit to perform. There is no doubt as to the emergence of a cipher potential as the due fulfilment of Omandur's personality in the role of Premier before the month is out.

* * *

With the inevitable receding into progressive unimportance of the holder of the Premier's title, a fight is imminent for mastery of the puppet. Dr. Rajan has already scored a point or two over his prospective rivals of whom Bhaktavatsalam and Dr. Subbarayan are apt to be the most determined. Dr. Rajan is a man of ability. He has grit, courage, a firm will and a constructive mind. He is endowed with a fine sense of humour and on the floor of the House he will be forensically the most impressive of all the Ministers. What Dr. Rajan lacks is the milk of human kindness. His temper is saturnine and he is apt to be harsh and vindictive if criticised. He has the gift of making more enemies than friends. His undoubted talents may not carry him far, because of a certain unscrupulousness and lack of spiritual quality in his make-up.

* * *

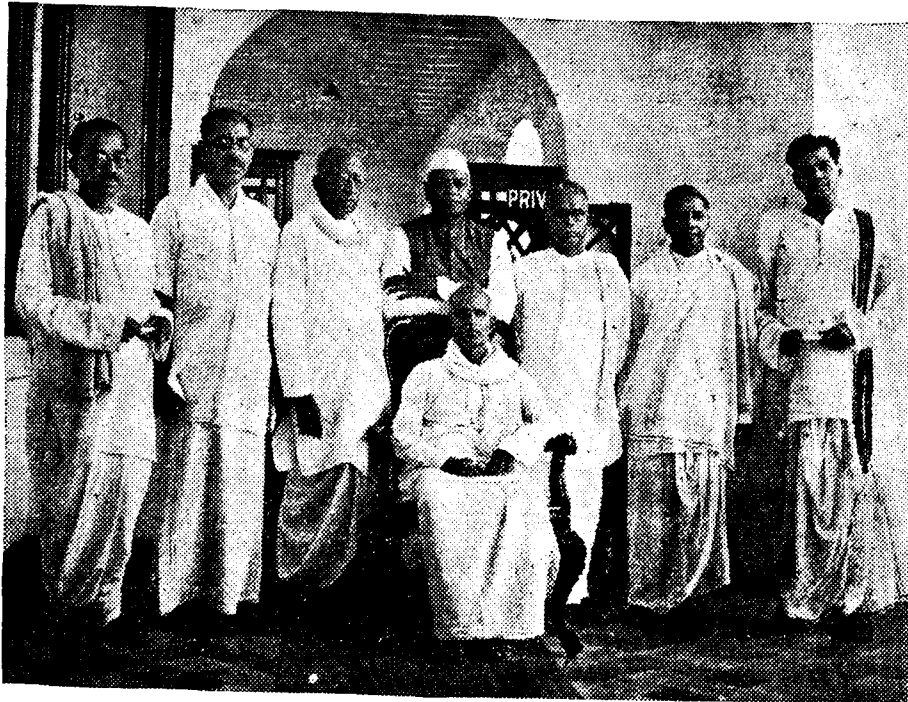
Mr. Bhaktavatsalam made a name for himself as an efficient Minister in the Prakasam Cabinet. For all routine responsibilities he is thoroughly adequate. His failing lies

in his being unable to utilise his attainments for building himself into a stature inspiring confidence in others. When ambition functions within a framework of discipline and loyalty, it gets well primed for riding on the crest of opportunities, as they arise, to higher and ever higher pinnacles of eminence and achievement. But when it is forced by impatience into treachery, it is foredoomed to trickery, but even successful trickery cannot be equated with leadership. In a Cabinet, every Minister who continues in office is assumed to support the Premier, but the timing of Bhaktavatsalam's resignation upto just a few hours before the moving of no-confidence against Prakasam, provides an exhibition of political sharp practice of which the stigma will cling to him for ever. On this score alone, he would have been excluded from any kind of responsible public work, if anything like decency of standards had value in the eyes of the Congress bosses.

* * *

Dr. Subbarayan is a social prodigy in a world of chronic disharmony, and is endowed with an invincible pleasantness that refuses to be defeated under any circumstances. His domestic experience must be rated as a valuable training ground for the preservation of poise in the midst of warring elements of irreconcilable ideologies. It is a family in which Brahmin, non-Brahmin, Congress, Communism, commerce and the services are all directly or indirectly represented, and no member of it could last a day without enormous powers of toleration for schools of thought opposite to his or her own. The bonhomie that characterises the Doctor is however lost on the present Assembly where his ill-timed elevation to the Leadership of the House is welcomed by few and is acting as an irritant on many. A year ago the Congress High Command refused to set the seal of their approval on Dr. Subbarayan even as a Congress candidate for the

NEW MADRAS MINISTERS



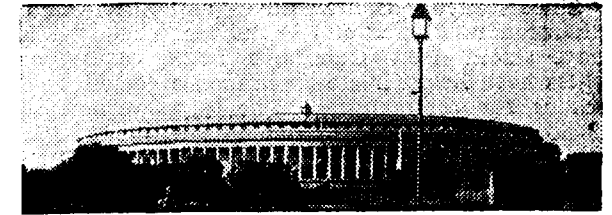
Left to Right: H. Sitarama Reddi, Madhava Menon, Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, Dr. Subbarayan, M. Bhaktavatsalam, K. Chandramouli, B. Gopala Reddi.
Seated: Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar (Premier)

Assembly. Today they have conferred their *imprimatur* on him over the heads of all whom they had only so recently preferred to him, for the highest post next to that of Premier in the Congress Legislature Party. What are the Doctor's services between then and now to justify the High Command's somersault? Discriminating critics hereabouts have no very high opinion nowadays of the Congress High Command whose part in pulling Prakasam down is universally resented as a stroke of shocking malevolence against the greatest and most revered servant of the Congress in South India, for shady reasons that cannot bear any close scrutiny.

Of the other Ministers, Gopala Reddi has already once figured in office. Not any merit on his part, but adventitious circumstances, brought him to prominence, and from his precarious attempts to ward

off relapse into native inconsequence, he has been saved by the grace of Omandur. This time ministership entails on him a period of exile from Andhra constituencies where public fury has risen to unprecedented levels against the anti-Prakasam legislators, and Gopala Reddi who swore confidence in Prakasam in the Rajahmundry meeting of the Andhra P.C.C. last year, may live to rue the day when he hitched his fortunes to the political wagon of the arch-intriguer Kala Venkat Rao. Chandramouli has been during and after the war a favourite target of Communist journals in their anti-blackmarketing campaigns, and he stood their attacks in absolute silence. Madhava Menon is perhaps today the most unpopular of Kerala legislators. H. Sitarama Reddi's choice as Minister is Kamaraj's gift to Goenka and his business coadjutors for signal services rendered through the Press and in other ways since the time of the anti-C.R. plots.—SAKA.

NEW DELHI DIARY



by V. V. PRASAD

IT is not often that an Information Member or Secretary is badly reported by the wire agencies. But the other day they gave an extremely unsatisfactory summary of Sardar Vallabhai Patel's Press Conference. The most important questions at the Press Conference were put by a Muslim League Correspondent in a purposely provocative way, and Patel replied to them as calmly as he could. The Press Conference related to the Eight Year Plan for Broadcasting.

Question: In view of the British Government's statement of February 20, is it not ridiculous to think in terms of an all-India plan for broadcasting?

Patel: This plan has nothing to do with the statement of February 20 or any other statement.

Question: The statement of February 20 indicates the possibility of there being two centres. Is it not better therefore to wait until June 1948 before implementing such plans?

Patel: The Government of India is at present proceeding on the basis of one Central Government. This is the assumption in all departments of the Government at the present day. There is no question of waiting even for a day. We must proceed on the assumption that there is one Centre. If there is a division we will have to deal with it when the time comes. Because death is certain at some future date, we cannot commit suicide immediately. (Laughter).

Question: Was the Press Note relating to the Eight Year Plan prepared before or after February 20?

Patel: It is immaterial whether it was prepared before or after, because

it has nothing to do with the statement.

Question: Are you proceeding on the assumption that there will be a strong Centre or a weak Centre? Is it not likely that your present plans may be upset after June 1948?

Answer: We are proceeding on the basis of a Centre. Strong or weak I cannot say.

The inevitability of death seems to be a favourite topic with many members of the Government. Rajaji compared nationalisation of industries to death (to the industrialists, it is to be presumed). He argued that the certainty of death at some future date did not deter us from pursuing our day-to-day activities. Similarly the industrialists should go on starting new industries until nationalisation comes in. This preoccupation with death perhaps indicates that our Congress leaders have so completely familiarised themselves with the idea of death that they have no fear for it.

Thoughts of death lead one to thoughts of prayer. Soon after the Interim Government took charge, I had suggested to Sardar Patel that Mahatma Gandhi's post-prayer talks might be recorded and broadcast. Gandhiji's voice can then go direct to the heart of the listener and is bound to be an inspiration to every Indian. I pointed out he would easily beat Walter Winchell or J. B. Priestley or Kay Smith as a broadcaster. Patel wrote to me to say that he agreed that such broadcasts would have a great educative value. He indicated he wished to be cautious "lest we offend the susceptibilities of those who are opposed to us."

Since then Suhrawardy and Shamsuddin Ahmed and Fazlul Huq have stated that Gandhiji's activities have helped restore confidence among the communities. The time is now opportune for taking up the task of recording Gandhiji's talk every day and put it on the air every day at a fixed time. For this purpose he may be treated as a news commentator!

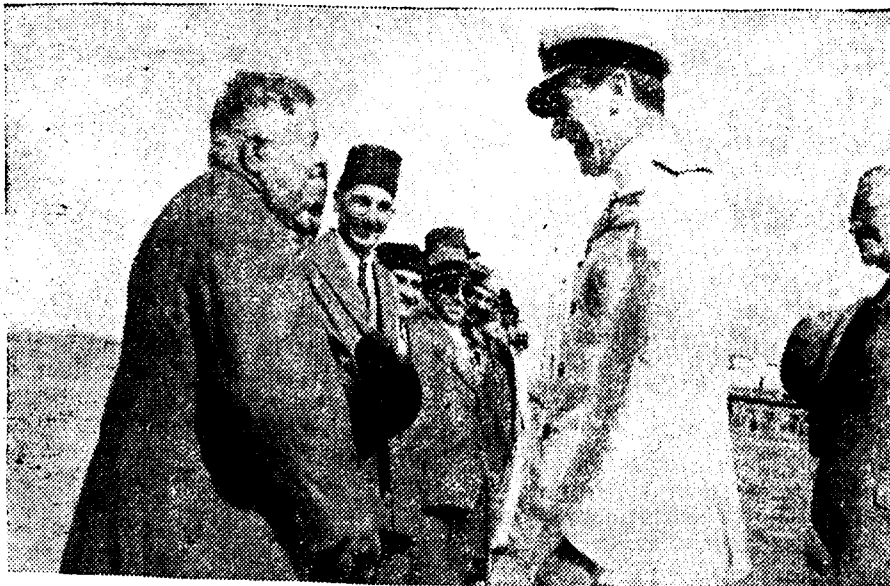
To return to the Press Conference the familiar figure of Bokhari was not there. All-India Radio, it used to be said, was really Bokhari Brothers Corporation. Bokhari was a poet and had the manner of a *prima donna*. He created the impression of trying to answer Cassius' description of Caesar, for he doth bestride the narrow world like a Colossus.

The story is told that Bokhari wished to know whether he would be retained by the Government of

India or not. So he went up to the Minister for Information and Broadcasting and told him of a communication from the Punjab Government that he should join them back. Patel is reported to have replied: "There will be no difficulty for you. We will relieve you as soon as you want."

Bokhari's place has now been occupied by S. P. Chaudhri. He told us after this Press Conference that he was born in Assam, brought up in the Punjab and served in the I.C.S. in Bihar. One Press Correspondent exclaimed: "Behold the perfect Indian!" For he was reminded of the description of Churchill as the perfect man, since his father was British and mother American.

Chaudhri appears in many ways to be the opposite of Bokhari. He should be able to get on well with the Interim Government.



Lord Louis Mountbatten, greeting the Sind Premier Mr. Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah at the Karachi Airport soon after arrival. Other members of the Sind Cabinet are in the background.

SOVIET SCIENTIST GIVES HIS IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA

by Prof. SULTAN UMAROV

Professor Sultan Umarov, whose impressions of a visit to India are given below was a member of a Soviet scientists' delegation headed by Vyacheslav Volgin, Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, which attended the recent session of the Indian Science Congress in Delhi. Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR and Rector of the Central Asian University in Tashkent, he also heads the Department of Theoretical Physics at this University and the Theoretical Department of the Physico-Technical Institute of the Uzbek Academy.

THE 18 days we spent in India were a memorable manifestation of the bonds of friendship linking the scientists of India and the USSR. We became aware of the friendly sentiments entertained by our Indian colleagues toward us as soon as we landed at Delhi, where the most eminent representatives of India's science world gave us a hearty welcome. As the honored guests we were inundated under garlands of roses and other flowers as we drove through the streets of the city.

We met the members of the Indian Science Congress the same day at a public lecture attended by some 2,000 people. The audience accorded the Soviet delegation a rousing ovation.

The meeting was typical of the public lectures sponsored by the Science Congress Association, which drew huge audiences running into thousands. Held in addition to the general and section meetings of the Association's members, these public gatherings are striking evidence of popular interest in science. This popular desire to acquire knowledge is something I repeatedly had occasion to witness during our travels in the country.

I was deeply disappointed to find that even leading Indian intellectuals knew very little about the Soviet Union, though, I must admit, their desire to learn more about it was great enough. Particularly noticeable was this during the lectures that Academician Pavlovsky, who is head of the Tajik Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and myself delivered on progress in science and education in the Tajik and Uzbek Republics. What we had to say apparently was a revelation to our hearers.

Especially memorable was my visit to the Usmania University in Hyderabad, which is one of the leading Muslim scientific centres. At a reception given by the Faculty the night before my lecture there, I noticed in private conversations (I needed no interpreter for we spoke Parsee) how surprised people were at my knowledge of the Koran. They were still more amazed to hear that there was complete religious freedom throughout the Soviet Union, that Muslims in the Central Asian Republics and elsewhere in the USSR are free to follow Islam and have their own muftis. What the Indian scientists had been told before about these things was far from the truth.

I shall never forget the applause it evoked when in my lecture I cited these figures on the development of public education in Uzbek SSR: that out of a population of six million, one million children study at elementary and secondary schools, that Uzbekistan has 4,500 elementary and secondary schools, 34 institutions of higher learning and 18 scientific research institutes, headed by the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, and that during the years of Soviet power 37,000 teachers of the local nationalities had been trained and were working at the Republic's schools. My hearers staged a protracted ovation in honor of the Soviet

Union in appreciation of its cultural achievements.

We are aware of the warm feeling toward our country and ourselves as its representatives everywhere. Invitations to luncheon and dinner were showered on us by Indian scientists and public figures. People soon came to recognize us on the streets and more than once we found ourselves besieged by crowds of autograph hunters.

The leadership of the Indian Science Congress Association took exceptionally good care of us and splendidly arranged our itinerary. We had an opportunity to see Indian universities and research institutions in a number of centers, besides viewing India's marvellous memorials of the middle ages and ancient times. As an Uzbek scientist, I was particularly impressed by the magnificent edifices raised during the epoch of the Great Moguls, a dynasty founded by the Uzbek Khan, Babur, from Ferghana, which afforded ample evidence of the great talent and feeling for beauty the people of India possess.

Exceedingly interesting for me was the old observatory in Delhi. Mathematics and astronomy have long been highly developed in India, and the Delhi observatory has enjoyed well-earned fame. It bears a great resemblance to the famous observatory built in Samarkand two centuries earlier by Ulugbek, judging by what we know of the latter, for it unfortunately has not been preserved to the present. I took a great many photographs of the Delhi "relative" of Ulugbek's observatory which are a valuable acquisition for Uzbek scientists.

I am always a small man, an insignificant man trying to serve the country in my own way. I have not had the backing of any superior authority throughout my life. I have come into conflict with superior authority or leaders of some kind or other. But I have survived in my own way during all times of conflict. I did not really know that I was a formidable rival to the other leaders in the field. But I had the one general reputation that I enjoy the confidence of the masses.—*Sri Prakasam*, in his recent statement in the Legislative Assembly.

Not even Prakasam's bitterest opponents have ever challenged his integrity, or his reputation for truthfulness.—*Time*, the American Weekly.

The cave temples near Aurangabad impressed us very much by the beauty and uniqueness of their paintings and sculptures. Neither shall we easily forget Benares, the banks of the Ganges, the Hindu holy river, and the numerous religious rites we witnessed there.

I shall not take it upon myself to judge of India on the basis of a visit as brief as ours. Nevertheless there are impressions that are so obvious that you cannot err in sizing them up. For one thing, India struck me as a country of extremes where you find past centuries existing side by side with the present. And I must say that 20th century India with her up-to-date street planning and modern universities and magnificent medieval monuments offers a strange contrast to farm fields that still are cultivated by hoe, the peasant hovels that barely look like human habitations, and the incredible numbers of beggars that one sees in towns and villages and on the roads.

These, I repeat, are the impressions of a visitor who spent only a brief period in the country. I also know that the people of India have produced many eminent scientists, that the young generation of the country is eagerly reaching out for knowledge and that India's science world, taken as a whole, regards the Soviet Union with lively heartfelt interest. My desire is that our visit should be the first link in the close ties of mutual understanding and friendship which I hope will develop between the scientific circles of our two great countries—(Exclusive to *Swatantra* from *Moscow News*.)

FRENCH DOCTOR TELLS LONGEVITY SECRET

(From Our Correspondent)

New York: Dr. Julien Besancon, noted French physician and specialist in research on long life, finds that the normal span of a man's life is seven times his years of growth, that is, 140 years. Dr. Besancon's conclusions are contained in his book entitled "The Days of Man," just received here. He says: "The real secret of long life is to live, that is keep alive, in every sense of the word. The lazy man will not live to be old. Dr. Besancon, who is himself nearly 90 years old, found in his research that Turkey has more centenarians than any country in the world. According to official Turkish statistics more than 7,000 Turks, men and women, are 100 years of age and over.

Dr. Besancon also tells of a village in the Ukraine where out of 2,000 men 100 have passed the century mark, and he relates that in South America, in Bolivia, there are numerous centenarians, especially in Lapaz. Attila, king of the Huns, who came from Asia, attained the longest life of any man in recent centuries, and Dr. Besancon writes he found that Attila married again at the age of 180 and died on his wedding night. Numerous were the centenarians among soldiers who had served in the grand army of Napoleon I. The oldest of these, Nicholas Savin, died in 1894 at the age of 126. In 1912 when Czar Nicholas II held a review of Russian troops on the centenary anniversary of the battle of Borodino, seven Russians were presented to the Czar who were aged 122, 120, 118, 115, 112, 110 and 109 respectively. Other conditions and circumstances being favourable, the keeping up of keen interest in life prolongs life, while

loss of interest in life shortens the years, says Dr. Besancon.

The rules of hygiene are in themselves not sufficient to lengthen the years and athletics and sport shorten life, categorically declares Dr. Besancon. Athletes and ardent sportsmen do not live to be old, he says, the majority of them develop an enlarged heart. A large bicep usually indicates an over developed heart and a large heart has little chance to grow old, he says, and warns against violent exercise by elderly men.

Moderation in all things is essential but it is not necessary, he holds, to refrain from the cup that cheers. Brain workers and businessmen shorten their years, in the opinion of the French physician, by retiring at a certain age and thereby losing interest in life. One does not necessarily have to be intelligent to grow old but one must fully utilize the spirit and the talents that God and Nature has given you, he holds.

The late George Clemenceau who was a friend of Besancon, died at 88 because he had the unfortunate habit of engaging daily in athletic exercises, says the doctor.

Besancon strongly disputes that old age is in itself a burden or that the elderly can have no interest in life. He cites Michelangelo, Goethe, Corot and others who did some of their finest masterpieces when in the eighties. Boredom, he asserts, is one of the greatest of life shorteners. The use of hormones, developed and applied by the medical profession in recent years, is in Dr. Besancon's opinion one of the most important agents in prolonging the years in that they keep alive interest in life.

Gerrymander is an interesting word. It is of American mintage, and means 'to rearrange the voting districts in the interests of a particular party or candidate: to manipulate facts, arguments, etc. so as to reach undue conclusions.' It was formed from the name of Governor Elbridge Gerry (1744-1814) and Salamander, from the likeness to that animal of the 'gerrymandered' map of Massachusetts in 1811.—("K").



Revelation

by MANJERI S. ISVARAN.

ALL through that day Savitri was in very high spirits. Usually such a shy, reserved sort, she looked as vivacious as a school-girl; little songs like bird-snatches bubbled to her throat and found their way out in soft, melodious croonings. Her mother-in-law had gone to her daughter's to stay for a fortnight, and she had all the house and all her husband for herself.

Brihadisvaran and Savitri had been married two years. Their marriage, as is common today, was not solemnised on the advertisement page of any of the local dailies, with a composite photograph of the bride and bridegroom arrayed in all their marital glory; it was solemnised in the ancient orthodox way and consummated suchwise, with the piper piping merry tunes and the priest chanting the *mantras* with added gusto, and the nuptial gifts to man and wife on magnificent display to the admiring gaze of friends and relatives. And so married and consummated, each rejuvenated the other with their pure physical sympathy, derived from one another their handsomeness and sense of strength; and Savitri bloomed like a sunflower in the sun in the splendid presence of her husband, opening thresholds in stranger worlds than the phenomenal. She smiled mischievously, intriguingly at him, made fun of him and his mannerisms, and seemed deliberately to wrap herself up in some secret spell.

Brihadisvaran was mystified and asked his wife:—

"Why are you so hilarious today?"

"Always I am, there's nothing special."

"That's a lie. Let it out."

In answer she smiled more mischievously, patting him gently on the cheek, and murmured in his ear:—

"With the night my secret will be yours. Wives never tell what's inmost in them, there's a curious protective armour about them, god's gift to women,

but your candour, your unfailing love for me has broken a chink in that armour."

It all looked so obscure to Brihadisvaran. "So it took you two years, clever dissembler," he said, "to know my candour and love for you."

She nodded in mock seriousness.

There are some flowers which open to their full sweetness and radiance only with the set of the sun—one such is the *antimalli*—just as there are tigers which burn bright in the forests of the night. Women are nocturnal beings, queens of the night; the chastest the most imperial their passion. In a background of black velvet a brilliant becomes a hundredfold more blinding, and rare women in their ardour and utter abandon, in the thrilling facets of their passion, recall the art of the jeweller. Savitri was not an artful jeweller, she was the rare flower that opened to its full sweetness and radiance with the set of the sun.

They were on the terrace. He was lying fully stretched, gazing at the moon. He was always allergic to this cool, silver planet, contrasting its effect over quiet rural retreats and on the hurlyburly of towns. She sat near him, with their baby boy in her lap. The little one was asleep. He looked at her face, smiled, and said:—

"Keep your secret for a moment more, my dear. Do you know that I have to thank this wonderful old moon for all my happiness?"

"Yes," she replied, looking at him winningly, and her winsomeness, was like a kiss in his eye; "the moon, a certain manufacturer of scents, your sister, and a young girl who had the whole happiness of her life at stake."

He looked at her enquiringly.

"My simple, foolish one," she said, "could a girl think of sleep on her nuptial night while her husband was worrying himself outside as to how to

approach her? Did you think you woke me up from sleep?"

"Then you weren't asleep, you rogue, when I came to take my pillows?"

That night of nights, of passion and perfume, came impinging on his mind with the dazzle of day.

"Of course not. When you went out I stood near the door for a while expecting you to return soon, but you kept on moving up and down, up and down as if you had to decide the destiny of India. After a time I went to the sofa and sat on, I don't know how long. And soon I began to weep, thinking you did not like me and did not want me, or perhaps you loved some girl of yours at college and were trying to think how to get rid of me. I even thought of coming out to the terrace and went as far as the door, but at the last moment my courage failed. I was feeling so rotten I did not know what was going to happen to me. Your sister, ah—she's a dear, dear, she took to me so kindly and warmly—she had warned me about your foolish notions and not to mind them, but it was hard to bear up. I knew you must come in

sometime, and then I was afraid lest when you came and found me awake, you might go out again to avoid speaking to me, and my last hope would be gone. So I turned down the wick of the lamp, went to bed, and lay there watching you. Your sister had given me your favourite scent and I had brought with me a small mirror which I had hidden



"... deeply absorbed in the thought of the contrariness of the female ..."

under my pillow. I applied the scent to my hair and face and waited. When the moonlight streamed into the room I watched you through the mirror. Once, you started coming towards the door and I lay as if in deep sleep. When you went back, I rose and blew out the lamp. I lay down again and began praying to my goddess to make you come in. I kept my head on the pillows in such a manner as to cover part of your pillows also. When you finally entered the room I feigned deep sleep and watched you all the while through half-closed lids. But when I saw you take out your shawl and place it on the sofa, I knew you were not coming to bed and I almost burst out crying. With my heart stifled in my throat, I bit back the tears that swelled for a break, but did not for a second take my eyes off you. And even when I had lost all hopes, I was arranging my lock of hair and my neckchain and keeping my face and body in the moonlight. I couldn't control the tumult of my heart, I was afraid you might hear it beat. When you returned for the pillows, I had to make the most supreme effort to stay relaxed and lie quietly like a lamb. I held my eyes tight shut but I could feel every bit of your movements. I heard you sit on the bed and I prayed ever so fervently to my goddess to make me appear beautiful in your eyes. It was my last chance. When you bent down over me, I knew my goddess had taken you in hand and that I had you. I felt really peaceful then, yet I knew it was too early to open my eyes. When you touched my lips I had to suppress the thrill that passed through me. I had to open my eyes at the right moment, as if awaking from deep sleep. And when I did open them and looked at you, I knew you were mine forever, forever!"

Brihadisvaran fetched a profound sigh, a sigh of wonder and pleasure. "So you were acting all the while, you humbug," he said, "and I thought you were an honest, homespun girl at my mercy!"

"At your mercy!" she laughed. "You were all the time at my mercy, poor dear. Even if you had gone to the sofa, do you think I couldn't have brought you back to bed?"

"How?"

"How! By getting up, lighting the lamp, and coming to you smiling my best smile. Do you think you could have resisted that?"

He slapped her softly on the cheek and said:—

"I don't think I could have."

She placed the baby on the bed, took his head on her lap running a tender glance on the child the while, and caressing all over his face said:—

"You see, these hands were impatient to rock a cradle."

She laughed softly, breaking into a low lullaby, bending over him, as though her face would melt and fuse into his.

But Brihadisvaran was deeply absorbed in the thought of the contrariness of the female and the tender confiding nature of the elemental feminine in adoration of the pure male in man.

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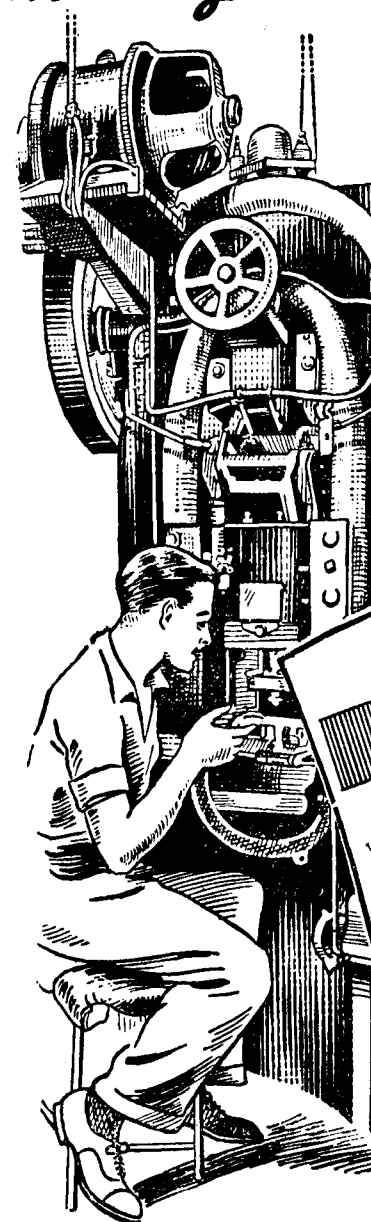
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Spotlight On The World

by Prof. M. VENKATARAMAIA, M.A.

THE meeting at New Delhi of the Inter-Asian Relations Conference consisting of about two hundred and fifty delegates representing countries with more than half the world's total population is an event of unique historic significance. It marks the end of one epoch in the history of the world and the beginning of another. For nearly five hundred years Europe has been the centre of the world's activity and she has controlled the destinies of mankind. Asia had become practically a dependency of the European peoples, working and toiling for their comfort and happiness. This European domination has now practically come to an end. The peoples of Asia have become politically conscious. Everywhere there is a new awakening and a determination to achieve complete freedom. There has always been an inner spiritual unity of a cultural character among all the Asian nations. Now they have become outwardly conscious of this and the Conference at Delhi is a symbol of it. It is but appropriate that the Conference should be meeting in India which has for ages been the centre of much that was best in Asian culture and the meeting place of the different streams of this culture. The contacts that will be formed at the Conference and the institutions that will be set up as a result of its deliberations will lay the permanent foundations for the development of all kinds of unity among the Asian peoples and enable them to play their legitimate role in the march of the world towards peace and progress.

THE FUTURE OF GERMANY

The Council of Foreign Ministers now sitting in Moscow has had two weeks discussions on the future of Germany. Most of the time has however been taken up with the expression of views on the extent to

which the four occupation powers put into effect the terms of the Potsdam Agreement of 1945. As regards the future, acute differences have arisen in regard to two essential points. One is political and the other economic. Britain, the United States and France stand for a decentralised Germany cut up into a number of autonomous States each exercising real sovereign powers. They regard this as essential if Germany is to be prevented from becoming aggressive once more. Russia however has proposed the creation at the earliest possible moment of a centralised Government for the country, modelled more or less on the lines of the Weimar Republic which existed in the interval between the close of the First World War and the rise of Hitler. She is afraid that the creation of autonomous States would strengthen the political hold of the Anglo-Saxon powers over the western half of Germany and enable them to dominate over the whole of central and southern Europe. She is also hopeful that a centralised Germany would be a Communistic Germany. This is the very thing which is unwelcome to Britain and the United States. In economic matters differences have arisen as regards the level of German industrialisation, the reparations to be paid from current income and the treatment of the whole country as a single economic unit. France is particular about getting a large amount of coal from Germany and reducing the amount of German steel output. Britain and the United States want, on the other hand, to keep up the level of German industrial production so that the burden now falling on them in the matter of supplying the bare needs of the German population in their zones might become less. Beyond and beneath all these details, what one can observe is a systematic programme to keep down

the German people for all time. We in India are familiar with the steps taken by the British to keep us down. What is happening in Germany today is the introduction into that country of all these steps. Disarming the people, reducing their standard of life, ruralising the country, and even reducing the population—all these are the effective measures that the occupying nations are determined to take.

FRENCH CABINET CRISIS

The political situation in France is heading towards a crisis. Acute differences have arisen between the Communists on the one side and all the other parties on the other as regards the policy to be adopted towards the Viet-Nam Republic. The Communists are for a negotiated peace. The others want to carry on the military campaign until the Viet-Nam military forces are thoroughly crushed. The differences took a serious turn when the five Communist members of the Cabinet threatened to vote against the military credits that the Cabinet wanted to get from the National Assembly for increasing the military forces in Indo-China. It appeared as if this would result in a Cabinet crisis and the fall of the present Ministry. But some kind of compromise was brought about at the last moment. The Communist Ministers supported the demand for military credits and have thus for the time being maintained Cabinet solidarity. But the strange thing is that in doing so they acted against the policy of their party. This party—which is the strongest single party in the Assembly—abstained from voting on the motion of confidence in the Cabinet which came up for consideration the other day. The truth is that the cleavage between the Communists and the anti-Communists in the country is becoming wider and more acute. A large section of the Socialist Party is anxious to merge itself in the Communist Party. There may be no civil war in the country between the Communists and their opponents as yet. But the political atmosphere is of a disturbing character and a serious

political crisis may happen at any time.

POLISH-SOVIET PACT

While the United States is trying to enter into pacts with Greece and Turkey and create a barrier against the spread of Communism and the expansion of Soviet influence, the relations between Poland, Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia have been brought closer in recent weeks. In the pact concluded between Poland and the Soviet the latter has permitted the former to export to other parts of Europe a large quantity of Polish coal. This concession is due to the output of Russian coal having increased last year. The Soviet is not now under the same necessity to purchase coal from Poland as she was before. It is expected that as a consequence of this Poland would be able to make good at least a quarter of Europe's coal deficit. Incidentally this gives additional dollar resources to her of which she is in great need in carrying out her rehabilitation and reconstruction programme. She has no hopes of getting a dollar loan from the World Bank as United States and Britain are suspicious of her. In addition to this the pact has resulted in Russia granting to Poland a loan of seven million pounds in gold to reorganise her army. The ties between the two countries have thus been drawn closer. Meanwhile a twenty years' alliance has been concluded between Poland and Czechoslovakia, an alliance of mutual assistance against not merely German aggression but also all other sources of aggression. The Soviet-Communist bloc in Central and Eastern Europe is being strengthened in these and several other ways.

GREECE AND TURKEY

The United States Congress is now engaged in public hearings on the question of aid to Greece and Turkey proposed by Mr. Truman. In this connection a number of secret documents have been published by the United States Government for proving that without American aid there is a danger of Greece and Turkey falling within the Soviet

sphere of influence endangering American interests in the Middle East. Three propositions are now being put forward in support of Mr. Truman's doctrine. The first is that Greece is hopelessly weak at present. The Communist military bands, it is said, are 15,000 strong and they are receiving active support from the neighbouring States. Unless Greek armies are reorganised and re-equipped, Greece will fall a prey to anarchy. Turkey is in a similar plight owing to external Soviet pressure. The second proposition is that the security of Greece and Turkey is essential to the security of the whole of the Middle East where Americans have large investments especially in oil. The third proposition is that the security of America consequently depends on security in the Middle East. In spite of these arguments it looks as if it would take some time before the Congress would approve of aid being granted to these two countries. Some straight questions have been sent by the Congress Foreign Relations Committees to President Truman in regard to his

whole attitude towards Communist forces not only in Greece and Turkey but also in other countries in Eastern Europe and China.

BACK BENCHERS AGAIN

In this connection the activities of the back benchers in the Labour Party in the British House of Commons who rebelled against the Cabinet some months ago are once more attracting attention. Last week they criticised the defence programme of the Cabinet and the official policy. They are of opinion that Britain is unnecessarily keeping large military forces in Germany, in the Middle East, in Malaya, Hongkong, etc., and all this at a time when she is suffering from acute man-power shortage. They are also in opposition to the National Conscription Bill now before the House of Commons. They believe that all this is due to the anti-Soviet policy of the Cabinet. It remains to be seen how this rebellion will be met by Prime Minister Attlee.

U.S.S.R.'S CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by N. SRINIVASAN

(Andhra University)

THE U.S.S.R. covers a sixth of the earth's land surface (8,500,000 sq. miles) and has a population of 193 millions. Though vast, it possesses a certain geographic and economic unity. The population is varied; there are more than a hundred and eighty nationalities at all stages of development and a hundred and fifty languages and dialects are spoken. The Russians predominate (100 millions) and give the Union a measure of ethnic unity.

Till 1905 Russia was a pure autocracy. A Tsar who governed "according to his will and sweet pleasure", a Senate, a Soviet (Council) of Ministers and a bureaucracy constituted the machinery of government. In the eighties of the last century there grew up a liberal movement. In the conditions of censorship and persecution it was driven underground and took terroristic forms. The Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) revealed the weakness of the autocracy and led to the revolution of 1905. The Tsar issued two ukases creating a Parliament of two Houses, the State Soviet and the State Duma and reforming the Council of the Empire. This appeared like the beginnings of constitutional reform. But the first two Dumas proved radical and the Tsar dissolved them. The electoral system was reformed in a functional direction so that the Duma could become the pliable instrument of misrule. Constitutional government could not develop under these conditions.

The sufferings caused by the war of 1914-18 and the incompetence of the government brought on the revolution of February, 1917. A Provisional Government consisting of Liberals and moderate Socialists was set up. It could not make the Duma the starting point of a new constitutional regime. It announced the convening of a Constituent Assembly for making a constitution. But before the Assembly met the Government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks by a second Revolution in November 1917. From the time of the February Revolution the real power lay with the Soviets of peasant, worker and soldier deputies which had spontaneously been organised all over the country. Soviets are Councils. These had been first organised in the Revolution

of 1905. But had ceased to exist after the Duma was elected. They sprang up again in 1917 to take control of the Revolution. The Soviets functioned as a sort of parallel government. In the Soviets the Bolsheviks were strong and with their slogans of "peace, bread and land" and "all power to the Soviets" the Bolsheviks were able to effect the second revolution, seize power from the Provisional Government and proceeded immediately to implement their socialist programme.

The Bolshevik seizure of power marked a complete break with the past. One of the first acts of the Government was a declaration of the rights of the peoples of Russia and another of the rights of the toiling and exploited people. The first of these lays down the Soviet policy towards nationalities:

1. "the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia;
2. the right of the people of Russia to free self-determination to the point of separation and the formation of an independent State;
3. the abolition of all forms of national and national-religious privileges and disability;
4. the development of the national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia."

The second proclaims Russia a Workers' State and vests all power in the Soviets. It proclaims the fundamental aim "of the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, the ruthless suppression of exploiters, the establishment of a Socialist organisation of society and of the victory of Socialism." Other provisions decree the nationalisation of land, forests, mineral wealth, industries, banks, etc., and denounce secret treaties and colonial imperialism. In the thirty years of Bolshevik power since 1917 constitutional developments have reflected the progress in the realisation of these objectives.

The Constituent Assembly announced by the first Provisional Government was duly elected and met in January, 1918. It was hostile to the Bolsheviks and refused to approve the declarations of rights of the Peoples of Russia and of the toiling people. It was thereupon



dissolved by the Government. The Third Congress of Soviets which was meeting at the same time assumed the constituent power and made the first of the constitutions of the new Russia, the constitution of the RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic). The constitution was the result of the experience of the Revolution Government and of the discussions in the first two Congresses of Soviets. A large number of schemes were considered by the Congress. The drafting of the constitution was the work of a committee of fifteen members which included some of the most distinguished Bolsheviks including Stalin. The draft constitution was considered and approved by the Fifth Congress of Soviets and became effective in July, 1918.

As an authority remarks: "The Soviet constitution based on a revolutionary philosophy has no parallel in the constitutional history of either Russia or other countries." It incorporates the previous declarations of rights and sketches the machinery of government for what it describes as "the present transition," a dictatorship of the proletariat. The declaration of rights includes besides the usual rights of freedom of conscience, press, assembly, association, a right to education and to work. Works and military service are declared a right and duty of the citizen: "The RSFSR recognises work to be the duty of all citizens of the Republic and proclaims the watchword: 'He who does not work shall not eat'. The declaration is a far cry from the liberal pronouncements of the eighteenth century.

The supreme power is placed in the hands of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets meeting twice a year and its Executive Committee (TSIK) in the intervals. The Congress of Soviets is composed of representatives of the working classes elected indirectly through the district, regional and provincial Soviets. The urban worker is heavily over-represented as compared with the rural population. The right to vote is confined to those who live by their work and is denied to others. The Central Executive Committee is declared to be the "supreme legislative, executive and controlling organ." It chooses the Council of Peoples' Commissars (SOVNARKOM) who conduct the daily business of Government and are responsible to it.

The constitution is federal consisting of autonomous republics, regions and national districts within the RSFSR. The powers of the Federation include "all questions of national importance."

The All-Russian Congress decides the issues that are national. The constitution also organises the constitution of the autonomous republics, regions, district and primary Soviets.

The next step in Soviet constitutional development was the formation in 1924 of the U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). The RSFSR covered only a part of the old Empire. In the period after the outbreak of the Revolution a number of provinces had split from the parent States and were functioning as independent Soviet republics. These began to gravitate towards the Soviet Union after 1920 and by a series of treaties became allied to it. The RSFSR served as the nucleus round which these new units were gathered in the years 1920-22 to form the U.S.S.R.: White Russia in 1920; Ukraine, 1920, Transcaucasia, etc., before 1922. The reasons which forced these provinces to seek union with the RSFSR were partly economic, partly the need for security and the unity of the Communist Party which ruled in all of them, after the defeat of the counter revolutionary forces. The Tenth Congress of Soviets adopted a resolution in favour of federation and a special committee of 25 members consisting of 14 representatives from the RSFSR, 5 from the Ukraine, 3 from Transcaucasia and 3 from White Russia was set up to draft a constitution. The constitution framed was an adaptation of the earlier constitution to the new circumstances and became the fundamental law after its adoption by the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. in 1924.

This constitution was more federal than that of the RSFSR. Its division of powers is more precise, though the powers of the Federation are still wide. The powers of the Federation are enumerated and follow in the main the American constitution. The Federal Authority has however a comprehensive power of planning the national economy and a power to annul the decrees of the constituent States if they contravene the constitution. The Union Republics are said to retain their sovereignty over matters not assigned to the Centre. The framers seem to have acted on the principle of Bryce that "the best way in the long run of strengthening centripetal forces has been to give so much recognition and play to centrifugal forces as may disarm them and may allow the causes which made for unity to operate quietly without exciting antagonism."

The Legislature of the Union is made bicameral with a Union Soviet and a Soviet of Nationalities. The smaller

nationalities receive a slightly weighted representation in the latter. The powers of the two Houses are co-ordinate. An intermediate authority called the Presidium of 27 members is created between the Executive Committee and the Council of Peoples' Commissars to perform the function of the Executive Committee when the latter is not in session. In a sense it is the most important part of the new machinery of government.

The constitution of Russia of 1937 registers the further constitution development of the U.S.S.R. In the words of Sidney Webb it "embodies an effective Socialism" and is merely the record of an existing state of affairs. The method by which the new constitution was made, its adoption of many of the normal features of western democracy and the declaration of rights it contains are all remarkable. The constitution was spontaneously put forward by the Government without agitation or demand for it, and referred to a whole hierarchy of committees and experts. The draft as it emerged from them was distributed literally by the million in all the languages of the Union and over all its territory. The text was also broadcast on the Radio. For over two months it was discussed by citizens at innumerable public meetings and thousands of criticisms and suggestions were forwarded to the Government. These were considered by other committees and by a committee appointed to improve the draft. An All-Union Congress of Soviets was specially elected to consider and adopt the constitution finally. Such mass participation had never before taken place in the making of constitutions anywhere.

The constitution is federal on "the basis of the voluntary association of the Soviet Socialist Republics." The powers of the Federation are enumerated and the distribution follows the earlier constitution. The sovereignty of the Union Republics in their own spheres and their right to secede are recognised. They have been given the power of controlling their foreign affairs and defence by constitutional amendments adopted in 1942 within the broad lines of policy laid down by the Union. In these the U.S.S.R. is unique.

A single Union citizenship is established with urban and rural equality. The supreme power is vested in a Parliament of two chambers, the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, enjoying equal powers. The former is elected by all Soviet citizens directly and by secret ballot on the basis of one deputy for every 300,000 of

the population. The latter is to be elected by the constituent republics, autonomous republics, regions, and national districts returning 25, 11, 5, deputies and one deputy respectively. The term of the Legislature is four years. Besides its officers, the Legislature elects the Presidium and the Soviet of Peoples' Commissars. These bodies are responsible to the Supreme Soviet. A Supreme Court is to administer justice in association with peoples' associate judges and the judges are declared to be independent. The usual features of western democracy are all here.

A chapter of the constitution deals with the basic rights and duties of the subject. The rights include "the right to work with payment for it in accordance with quantity and quality"; the right to rest, the reduction of the hours of work, annual vacations with pay, the right to material security in old age, sickness, loss of capacity to work and the right to education; the right to freedom of conscience, press, speech, Assembly meetings, processions and demonstrations; the right to association, to the inviolability of person, home and correspondence. It is declared to be the duty of the citizen to observe the constitution, safeguard Socialist public property and to render military service for the defence of the Fatherland. The Declaration with its new set of rights and duties takes its place with the historic American and French Declarations and may well be the model for the maker of constitutions in the future. If these rights are not merely paper declarations but are the actualities of to-day as the Webbs claim, they give us a measure of the Soviet achievement.

The hierarchy of Soviets constitutes merely one aspect of the Soviet constitutional system. The State in the U.S.S.R. is necessarily concerned with a greater field of men's activities than other States. The organisation therefore takes a great many forms besides the Soviets in which the inhabitants are organised as citizens and attend to the problems that arise from neighbourhood. The organisation of Soviet citizens as producers in trade unions, industrial co-operatives, and collective farms; as consumers in consumers' co-operatives; and their organisation for the tasks of leadership in the Communist Party and of youths in the Komsomol include practically all citizens and secures their active participation in government. These organisations bring near realisation the famous statement of Lenin that the housewife must learn to run the State.

These organisations are built on the same pyramidal pattern as the Soviets, with a broad base of primary local units rising through a hierarchy of district, regional, provincial and Union representative bodies to the All-Union Central Organisation. The Central body directs the organisation. But its authority and inspiration are derived from the units below. This feature of the Soviet constitutional system is known as Democratic Centralism.

The Soviet solution of the problem of nationalities is by all accounts a most remarkable achievement. This has been done by a constitution which is professedly *un-national*, which divorces the conception of the State from that of the nation, and which provides the fullest opportunities for the cultural freedom of the smaller nationalities through a system of graded national district, regional, provincial, and Union republican constitutions. In the affairs that most affect sentiment such as

language, schools, religion and customs the smallest group is free to run its affairs through its own society. In the affairs that concern the Union as a whole they are partners in government. There is no State religion and no Church enjoys any special privileges. Education is purely secular. No discrimination is permitted on the basis of race, religion, language or sex. The economic life of backward nationalities has been improved by a policy of intensive development. There has been a 'levelling up' of their status, cultural, political and economic. In the task of Socialist construction the members of the backward nationalities have their due share. It is this basis of perfect equality of all citizens together with the institutional framework of Soviets provided for national self-expression that has made the U.S.S.R. the happy home of a hundred and more different peoples and not the theoretical right of secession embodied in the constitution.



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PARAMOUNTCY AND SOVEREIGNTY

by P. N. CHARY

A heterogeneous collection of Indian States, "checkerboarding all India as they do," have hitherto served as friendly foetresses of imperial British power, rendering impossible any general military rebellion. Tall talk of sovereignty notwithstanding, they have been no more than feudatory states, with undisputed rights on the part of the Paramount Power to interfere even in the details of daily administration. Tracing his lineage to the ancient Chera Kings did not save the Ruler of Cochin from insult from the British Resident, who in an epistle announcing his arrival wrote, "The Resident will be glad to learn that on his arrival near Cochin, the Raja will find it convenient to wait upon him." Nor did His Exalted Highness, the Nizam, fare any better at the hands of Lord Reading, who wrote, "Where imperial interests are concerned or the general welfare of the people of the State is seriously or generously affected by the action of its Government, it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate necessity for taking remedial action, if necessary, must lie."

Paramountcy is a hard term to define. With every accession of strength on the part of the Central Government, the scope for intrusion in the affairs of the States widened. Even the Indian States Committee, presided over by Butler, had to content itself with sententious statements like, "Paramountcy must remain Paramount" and "usage lights up the dark corners of treaties." Constituting the complex of Crown rights, sometimes it was used for the assertion of powers of suzerainty, and at other times in the name of the welfare of the people of the States. In his speech to the Princes Lord Mayo said, "If we respect your rights and privileges you should also respect the rights and regard the privileges of those who are placed beneath your care. If we support

you in your power, we expect in return good government."

The Princes have been most anxious to free themselves from the Political Department and assert their sovereignty in their own right. The Cabinet Mission encouraged them in the assertion of their rights: "It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government."

Whereas the Princes claim that Paramountcy reverts to them, the people of the States argue that responsible government established in the States will be the proper solution. True, in administrative efficiency and in ameliorative programmes, some few States can claim equality with British India; but in a large number of them, medieval feudal polity is still the rule. As Edgar Snow puts it, "All these States are run as autocracies. Many are fantastic despotisms, with a populace living in incredible social darkness, full of squalor, filth, ignorance and disease, in the centre of which are magnificent palaces where the Prince and his courtiers enjoy the most dazzling pomp and luxury to be seen outside Hollywood". No wonder that the Princes, alarmed at the resolution of Pandit Nehru in the Constituent Assembly, invoke the exploded Divine right theory of kingship. "Men," as Bagehot remarked, "are governed by the weakness of their imagination."

The Cabinet proposals do not contemplate the continuance of the States in a free India, as isolated units, "islands of independence

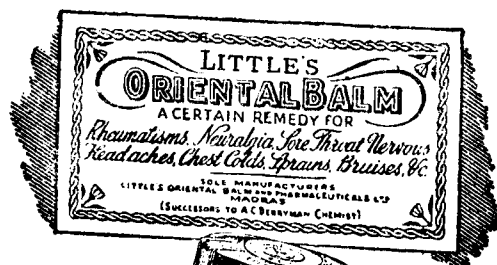
within the Indian Union." And economic considerations point to the need for the incorporation of the States into the Union. The general industrial and agricultural backwardness of the country is even more glaringly evident in the States. To provide the necessary incentive to get out of economic stagnation, one has to turn to the people of the States, rather than to the Princes. Apart from the democratic process which this implies, it becomes imperative that the States should enter into intimate relations with the Union. Without central planning, co-ordinating local and regional plans, without the Centre generously financing the States, and

without a uniform policy of public finance and labour legislation, all-round economic advance of the country is doomed.

The need of the hour is wise statesmanship. Not all Princes have failed to understand the time spirit. But most of them are more anxious at this critical juncture to preserve their ancient rights and dynastic privileges, rather than to advance the country on the road to political freedom and economic well-being. "Geographically India is one and indivisible, made up of the pink and the yellow. The problem of statesmanship is to hold the two together."

I believe in aristocracy—not of power, based on rank and influence, but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate, the plucky. Its members are to be found in all nations and classes and all through the ages, and there is a secret understanding between them when they meet. They represent the true human tradition, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos.—
E. M. Forster.

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TEACHERS' SALARIES: AN URGENT PROBLEM

by *S. SRINIVASAN*

(Member, Working Committee, S.I.T.U.)

THE long standing discontent among teachers has now been fanned into a bitter mood of revolt by the shabby way in which the Government has handled the pressing problem of their salaries. The decisions which the Government announced recently affect more than a lakh of teachers who are in a state of semi-starvation. While they have passed orders giving effect to the revised scales of salary for the N.G.O's., the hundred thousand teachers of this Province, whose hands are stretched out for the barest living wage, have been left to wait on the pleasure of local bodies and private managements. The Advisory Government had promised a fair deal to the teachers and the promises so definitely and solemnly made to their ears have now been broken to their hearts.

While teachers have not been assured even a living wage, it is a mockery for the Government to pretend to have 'done their best' to teachers and to ask them on that basis 'to do their part by increasing the quality and efficiency of their work.' To this callous denial the Government have added an insult by reducing teaching to a status inferior to that of quill-driving and bill-collection. The indifference of the educated public towards this matter is shocking to those who have the larger interests of the nation at heart. Those who talk of 'ample leisure, many holidays and light responsibility of teachers' simply do not understand the nature and technique of the great art and betray a dangerous ignorance. It is on this popular and false notion that the Government have based their decisions in regard to the salaries of teachers.

Resenting the treatment meted out to them, teachers are organising a province-wide strike. There can be no greater calamity than a strike

by teachers in their thousands. As one who has moved closely with teachers all over the province, let me warn the public and the Government that by their unsympathetic attitude to teachers they will be converting every school in the country into a hotbed of revolutionary and anti-social ideas preached to tender minds with evangelical fervour by discontented, disappointed and embittered teachers. Nothing can avert such a calamity save a fair deal to teachers which will assure to them not only tolerable living conditions, but also mentally recreative facilities. To ignore this is to ignore the very progress of the country which depends chiefly upon sound education for all. 'A hungry teacher is a bad teacher, and an embittered teacher is a social menace.' It will be a social disaster to subject the growing minds of the country's children to dangerous influences born of bitterness and discontent in teachers.

The education problem in this Province can never be solved unless and until the demands of teachers are fairly met. To plead that these demands are beyond the country's resources is to admit bankruptcy of statesmanship. These demands consist of a living wage which is never to be below Rs. 50, increased starting salary according to qualifications with annual increments, abolition of all distinction between teachers of the same grade serving under different agencies, fixing the salary of the existing incumbents with a service of 15 years and more at the revised maximum, adequate provision for old age after retirement and a good share of the administrative and executive jobs for experienced teachers. These are very reasonable and modest demands which teachers put forward not only in their own interests, but what is more, in the larger interest of

education by which alone the country can rise to greatness and prosperity. The present failure of the Government, unless immediately rectified, will stand as the greatest

obstacle in the way of educational advance, for the Government will find it extremely difficult to induce competent young men and women to take to teaching.

BRITAIN IN THE NET OF DOLLAR IMPERIALISM

by A British Left-Winger

THE Government have issued a White Paper giving a survey of Britain for 1947. As its title indicates, this Government White Paper examines the general trend of economic development in Britain for the current year. It paints a picture of grim austerity, with little or no increase in the food supplies, and a continuous shortage of clothing, household goods and furniture. It is a mixed survey, some of the plans cutting right across vested interests, while others continue the Tory policy, and knuckle under to both British and foreign capitalism. The programme for education, health, and insurance will go forward in spite of the activities of the big insurance companies. Twenty crore tons of coal will be mined, and three lakhs of houses will be built. These are figures that will be an inspiration to the people to take off their coats and get down to work.

But the report brings to light a state of affairs that few people appreciate—that Britain is insolvent. Today she is living on her capital and the American loan. Every day she becomes more firmly enmeshed in the net of dollar imperialism. This economic set-up is reflected in the political sphere by "Bevinism," a policy which virtually 'rubber-stamps' American foreign policy, and keeps hundreds of thousands of men in the armed forces, carrying but the traditional Tory policy in Greece, Egypt, etc. The 'luxury' of Bevinism costs Britain 214 crores of rupees in the upkeep of British forces in non-enemy countries abroad.

More and more of our imports come from the dollar area, and by far the majority of our exports go to the sterling area. In peace-time we made up the deficit by our dividends on foreign investments, which now hardly exist, and on merchant shipping, now severely depleted. But rather than offend American big business by rationing such luxuries as cigarettes and films, which together cost us over 100 crores of rupees of American currency, we continue light-heartedly to dive into the American loan to the extent of 400 crores per annum.

There is one thing we miss throughout this survey. Production figures, targets, and quotas are splashed around for each and every industry, but how is the Government going to ensure that these directives are in fact carried out by private enterprise? Partly, of course by the issuing of licenses and rationing. But this alone is insufficient, and to ensure that the policy which the Government has here outlined is carried through, it will require special powers to exert the necessary pressure on the industrialist.

The White Paper is a clear and concise statement, the real value of which will only be realised when it has been put into practice. Already the Government is taking big steps to circulate it among the widest sections of the people, as Mr. Attlee stresses in the Introduction.

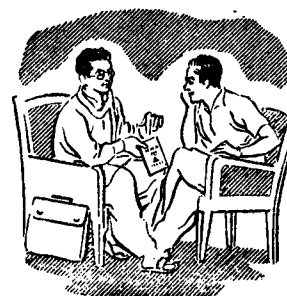
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POLITICS AND THE WEATHER

(From A Correspondent)

London: For five weeks Britain has been in the grip of a freeze-up, the like of which has not been seen for fifty years. Forty lakhs are now unemployed because the electricity is cut off during the day for five hours. Many villages on high ground have been isolated and are short of food. Even main roads are blocked with snow-drifts twelve feet or more deep. Railway lines are impassable, points are frozen up so that lakhs of tons of coal cannot be delivered from the pithead to the industrial centres. Continuous gales round the coast have prevented the sailing of scores of colliers (the name given to the small coastal ships carrying coal). Thus the truism that coal is the material basis of British civilisation has been brought home to the people more effectively than by any form of publicity.

Although the average weekly tonnage of coal mined is the same the whole year round, it has been possible in 'normal' conditions for industrial consumers to build up sufficient stocks in the summer to tide over the busy winter months, with some in reserve in case of bad weather. But now the fruits of the coal-owners' policy are being gathered, after years of neglect and mismanagement, when crores of profits which should have been spent on new machinery and modernisation were paid out in dividends—bitter years of wage-cuts and lock-outs, of the dole and starvation, which drove several lakhs of workers to seek employment elsewhere, but which never succeeded in breaking the miners' militant trade union, nor their revolutionary political traditions. A policy which reduced our coal production from over fifty lakhs of tons a week, to well under forty lakhs.

The Labour Government inherited this legacy when they came to power in 1945. Stocks of coal have been running lower as the production drive has developed. Last

winter was exceptionally mild, and we struggled through with no loss of production, and little discomfort. This winter the Minister of Fuel and Power, Mr. Shinwell, hoped for more mild weather, and took a gamble that failed. No doubt we could have got through an average winter with a week or so of hard frost, but no one was prepared for such weather as this. As might be expected, the Tories are using the present crisis as a glorious opportunity to try and win political prestige, and to undermine the Government. Shamelessly they disclaim any responsibility for the chaotic state of the coal mining industry. As the main exponents of 'free enterprise,' they brazenly blame the Government for not planning ahead.

Undoubtedly mistakes have been made. Last autumn hundreds of extra trains were put into service again. Only at Christmas, the Board of Trade announced with pride a big increase in the supply of electrical appliances for the home market.

The capitalists have been doing their bit to embarrass the Government. Even in December, several big industrialists threatened to close down their works at short notice unless they received more coal. Such notices were issued to the Press without prior consultation with the Ministry concerned. But the workers have loyally supported the Government. Mass meetings in the industrial centres have passed resolutions of support, while miners and railwaymen have been working extra shifts and week-ends to build up supplies of coal.

But the greatest mistake made by the Government was its lack of confidence in the masses. If Mr. Shinwell had fearlessly put the position before the people in the autumn, they would have responded to any appeal—even to a comprehensive rationing of fuel, if the real necessity had been explained.

If the Government has learnt a lesson from the fuel crisis, then it will not have been entirely valueless! They must encourage in every way the voluntary recruitment of men to the mines by giving better wages, rations, and other concessions. Cut down luxury imports,

e.g., tobacco, wines, etc., which Britain cannot afford. Reduce our inflated military forces because the men are needed for production at home. Only by these drastic actions will Britain recover from the serious loss suffered by the fuel shortage.

LIFE WITHOUT CRICKET

by N. S. RAMASWAMI

THE world of cricket was recently startled into a vision of the nether pit when it was announced that the Home Secretary in Britain was to meet officials of the M.C.C. to consider whether the prohibition on contests of sports in mid-week, now imposed on football, should not be extended to cricket. This horrid likelihood of life without cricket was happily dispelled with the intimation that Gen. Sir Ronald Adam, the President of the M.C.C., had persuaded Mr. Chuter Ede that there was no necessity for the extension of the prohibition. But the possibility of such an unhallowed and weary existence gives rise to many melancholy thoughts.

The cricketer in England salutes the return of May with the marmoreal exclamation of Shakespeare on his lips:—

"How like a winter hath my absence been

From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!

What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!

What old December's bareness everywhere!"

He has never overcome his astonishment at the thought of those, apparently respected and valuable citizens, to whom cricket does not, in a wretched phrase, "appeal". He cannot rid himself of the probably incorrect and even unworthy feeling that these individuals, like those bereft of appreciation of music, are fit only for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. That there should be a game which opens up visions of

*"Charm'd magic casements,
opening on the foam*

*Of perilous seas, in faery lands
forlorn",*

and that people should avert their faces from it can only be attributed to the perverseness and factiousness of man.

The reverence and awe with which cricket in England is regarded by followers of the game in other lands need no excuse. It is our New Jerusalem, our Promised Land. Mr. John Curtin, who was Premier of Australia during the war, spoke for his country when he declared that Australians will always take up arms when the sacred twenty-two yards at the Lord's come to be threatened. Shall not we who owe so much to the game, possibly only the few hours of happiness we have ever known in life in playing or watching it, be false to our creed when we are insensible as it becomes known that wretched kill-joys and theorists threaten it with annihilation and endeavour to do what even the most ferocious "flying bombs" of Hitler failed of doing?

This is neither high-falutin nor unnecessarily warm language to hold. The initiated will not think so, and they have a proper disdain for the views of those who have not felt the game "in the blood, and felt along the heart; and passed even into my purer mind with tranquil restoration."

An even more disquieting prospect faces cricketers in India. When the British shall have left this country next year, clamour is certain to be

raised for the extinction of their memorials. Jealous and foolish tongues are even now busy exclaiming against their language, the noblest tongue of man since Sanskrit and Greek fell into desuetude. Tennyson's reply to an airing by a wiseacre of the Baconian theory was to walk away from the room in displeasure, protesting against the plucking of the laurel from the brow of the dead Christ. This remedy will not be open to those who believe that English should stay in this country in its own right. It will be a difficult task to restrain extremists and visionaries from extending their insensate hatred of Britain to cricket. It was said of the Puritans that they hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator. It is conceivable that attempts may be made by our latter-day demagogues to restrain cricket in our land, not because it is a game, but because it has indelible British associations.

If so, the attempt should be resisted with all the power of reasoning at one's command. It has not been demonstrated that British associations are poisonous; but that conceivably is a matter of opinion. But cricket can be guaranteed not to degrade its professors, not to promote the cause of any foreign Government (especially since this Government's action in giving up the brightest jewel in its Empire is comparable only to the voluntary abdication of Charles V or Emperor Diocletian, at which all the world stared in awe), not to be anti-national, not to advance treason in this country, and finally not to be an obstacle in the development of the nation.

It is, therefore, to be hoped that cricket will continue to flourish in India, that the names and deeds of players in other countries will always be before our eyes, and that Lord's shall be as dear to us as Chepauk. Cakes and ale are no more incompatible with virtue, we believe with the excellent Maria, than cricket is with freedom.

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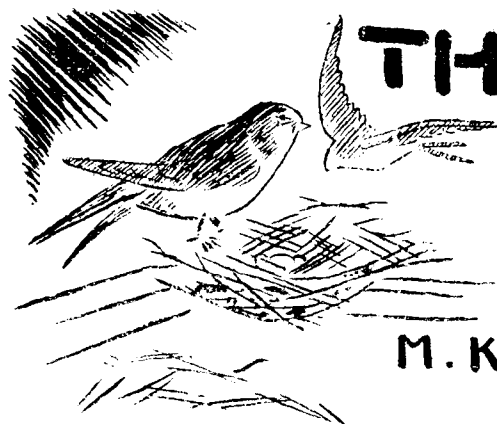
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THE NEST

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M. KRISHNAMOORTHY

In the morning he woke up to the shrill chattering of the swallows. It was a small bungalow and the bedroom and the drawing room and the dining room were all one. There were more people in the house than its builder had designed it to contain. And, now, in addition to human beings here were these birds, making themselves a nuisance with their endless nestbuilding and procreative activities. They even woke Dharman up earlier than he fancied. Every morning he solemnly resolved he would destroy their nest, and get rid of them once and for all, but every morning he found he had not the heart to put his intentions into action.

Their colossal cheek quite took his breath away. They paid no more attention to him than they would have if he had not been present in that room. They hopped unconcernedly on even to his bed and the boldest of them would even pick up the cotton that was coming out of his old and rotten pillow. They made an infernal din in the early mornings when one wished to round off hours of nocturnal sleep with an hour of sleepy wakefulness after sunrise. They flew about almost incessantly and most of the time they were adding touches to their nest. They brought in twigs and grass, hay, stray leaves, threads, pieces of the broomstick that dropped off from the servant's broom. Dharman had watched the nest grow from a mere few formless twigs into a cosy receptacle into which eggs had been laid, eggs that later gave birth to

rosy, lanky, awkward little birdies. From the rafter on which the nest was building would drop down twigs and wisps of grass, sometimes into the food which they were taking on the table below. And then Dharman's father would grow angry and shout to the servant to have those bloody nests removed. But, when the servant came in with a broomstick to accomplish his master's desire, he would say, rather, mutter angrily, "Let them be, the bloody nuisances!" And all the time the birds would have been flying about twittering happily, blissfully unconscious of the dire fate which they had escaped by the skin of their teeth, if they had any teeth at all!

One day a rather important visitor had called on Dharman's father and he had brought with him his small son, who carried an air gun. This Important Visitor was an Indian but worldly success had made him forget that. A salary of a couple of thousands does strange things to Indians. They wish to become as Europeanised as possible, sometimes even more European than the Europeans themselves. At home they dress like Europeans, they eat like Europeans, they sleep like Europeans, and forget Indian customs and manners entirely. Bad as this brood is there is another brood even worse; and that consists of the children of the former. These children, educated in convents and European schools, do not even speak their own language, but learn to lisp in English for their parents

would have it so. They call their parents "Mummy" and "Daddy" and friends of the family "Uncles" and "Aunts". They are blissfully unconscious of the fact that they are a nauseating sight to any self-respecting Indian. But this digression is neither here nor there as far as our narrative is concerned.

learn to shoot. When the boy saw the birds flying about the room he could not forbear having a shot at them. But no sooner did his gun go off than Dharman's father jumped up in a rage and asked the boy what the devil he thought he was doing. "Shooting the bird, of course", he replied, rather surprised.



"Shooting the bird, of course," he replied.

Now this important visitor's son had a gun, and you know you can't keep a gun for long without letting it off, as the nations of the world are discovering to their cost today. Having been in an European school the boy had been taught to shoot poor, innocent birds. That was what they did in England and every modern Indian youngster should

"Don't you dare to do that here," cried Dharman's father, "I won't have any bloody butcher in my house."

This was rather too much both for the boy and his father. The Important Visitor, that they soon departed in a huff. And all the while Dharman admired his father.

MAHA VIDVAN R. RAGHAVA IYENGAR

by J. PARTHASARATHI, M.A.

This had happened a couple of months back.

That morning, while they were having their meal, Dharman's father broached the subject of a dinner which he wished to give to a superior officer of his.

"You know Premnath, don't you?" he asked his wife.

Dharman's mother said: Yes, she knew him.

"He was responsible for making me an Assistant Secretary. I must do something to show him how thankful I am."

"You can," answered Dharman's mother. "Why not invite him to tea or something?"

"Tea!" snorted her husband, "Nothing less than a dinner will do."

"All right" she agreed, "When would you like to have him to dinner?"

"Tomorrow, if it's all the same to you. He's going off on tour the day-after."

"Very well."

And at that moment a twig from the nest above dropped into the father's plate.

He flared up in anger.

"Have these blasted birds thrown out," he shouted. "Have the nest destroyed. I don't want the dinner to be spoiled by the droppings from the nest."

"All right" said Dharman's mother, but neither she nor Dharman expected the father's instructions to be put into action. Such outbursts were not uncommon but had never led to any punitive expedition against the poor birds.

When they were at dinner that night the Father looked up. "Haven't those birds been driven out?" he cried in anger. There was no answer. Only, a wisp of grass fell down on the table from the nest.

"Look at it," father shouted, "Just imagine the same thing happening tomorrow night! I won't have any wretched birds spoiling the party. Ramu," he shouted for the servant, "Get the ladder and the broom-stick."

"Yes, Sir," replied Ramu.

"Do you really mean to destroy the poor things?" meekly expostulated Dharman's mother.

"Destroy? No, the birds will fly away," said Father.

"What about the eggs, father?" asked Dharman.

"And those small birdies which haven't learnt to fly?"

"You mind your business," snapped his father at him. "If they can't fly away, is it my fault?"

"But, father..." started Dharman.

A blow on the cheek brought his words to an end and tears into his eyes. He left the room. But he could imagine vividly what was happening there. The eggs would be crushed and he could no longer climb up the ladder and see the funny little birds lie helpless in the nest, squeaking for their parents who brought them their food in their beaks. He could no longer watch the gradual building of the nest and those touches of comfort added now and again with the sure touch of a master mason. He could no longer lie in his bed and watch the birds fly about the room, watch them teach their young ones how to fly. Poor Dharman's little heart was full of grief.

The Dinner was a success and, thanks to Premnath, Dharman's father got an even bigger job. And what do a few birds and the tender heart of a small boy matter when such mighty issues are at stake? The fittest survive.

IF we talk of a Renaissance of Tamil to-day, it is due in no small measure to the rediscovery and interpretation of the old Tamil classics by scholars of an elder generation. Among these pioneers, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer takes pride of place by virtue of his bringing out in print almost all important poetical works extant to-day. The late Bashakavisekhara Mahavidvan R. Raghava Iyengar, along with his cousin, Professor M. Raghava Iyengar (at present head of the Tamil Research Department, University of Travancore) carries the palm for critical scholarship and creative interpretation of literature. Looking back, at this distance of time, on the work of these two scholars, we find that it was the "first fruit" of the labours of Dr. Swaminatha Iyer: the classics edited so faithfully and fastidiously by Dr. Iyer were further critically analysed and interpreted, thus giving rise to a general wave of enquiry and research in the Tamil country. In knowledgeable circles, the elder Raghava Iyengar is known for his gift of literary discourse, and the younger, for his mastery of a happy, persuasive style of writing. R. Raghava Iyengar's lectures invariably attracted large elite audiences; he had the unique gift of literary exposition, of unravelling the secrets of the subtlest pieces of poetry, of making you listen enraptured to his picture of any given subject. The silvery tongued eloquence of the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri found its parallel in Tamil, as he himself admitted once, in Raghava Iyengar's rich musical voice rising like "a stream of distilled perfumes" in irresistible argument.

A lecturer in his early twenties who had just then joined the S.P.G. College, Trichinopoly, made a deep impression on every body. Who was this young man of dynamic charm who would not droll away

his Tamil classes in the usual routine way, but insisted on making them sparkling, spell-bound and inspiring? The reputation of R. Raghava Iyengar—for it was none other than he—soon spread beyond the college corridors. Dewan Venkata Ranga Iyer realized the value of this new find; he played a part in the scholar's life similar to that of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee in Sir C. V. Raman's career—introduced him to Rajah Bhaskara Sethupathi of Ramnad, then the foremost patron of art in South India. The Sethupathi was quick to recognise genius and made him permanently his *asthana vidvan*. Here, in the court of the Sethupathi, the centre and the arena of Tamil intellectual life before and after the First World War, R. Raghava Iyengar won his laurels and made lasting literary contacts. In discussions and debates on festive occasions, he invariably had the approbation of the best minds of the day like Arumuga Navaiaar, Kumaraswami Pulavar and most important of all, Swami Vivekananda himself.

The establishment of a Tamil Sangam—as scholars christened it, the Fourth Sangam—at Madurai, under the presidency of Pandithorai Thevar, was an epoch-making event of the opening years of this century. The *Sainupatni* made a present of his choice library to the academy, and lent the services of his court poet to the Sangam in its initial stages. In 1902, R. Raghava Iyengar became the first editor of the *Sen Tamil*, the journal which may be truly said to have broken the virgin clod of research on Tamil literature. For the next three years, the poet-critic was absorbed in the pleasant duties of editorship and literary instruction in the Sangam. The *Sen Tamil* became, under his guidance, a premier research journal to which all the foremost literary men of the day contributed; the Tamil College attached to the

I want no more children than the community can educate upto the level of the individually alert, politically responsible and culturally civilised human being.—C. E. M. Joad.

Sangam grew to new heights of prestige every day.

When the Sangam was placed more or less on a firm basis, R. Raghava Iyengar handed over his precious charge to his equally gifted cousin M. Raghava Iyengar, thus freeing himself for general literary ventures. In the long stretch of years that followed his dissociation from the Madura academy, his reputation spread throughout South India. He lectured in numerous places on Tamil culture and classics. His Madras University extension lectures on the Kamba Ramayanam, on Tamil arts and civilisation elicited praise from persons of the standing of Sri S. Satyamurti, Sir S. Varadachariar and Sir R. Venkata Ratnam. Year after year, he presided over the annual *Vidvat Sadas* (literary conference) at Man-nargudi and expounded the intricacies of Vaishnavite philosophic lore. His occasional research writings were universally welcomed as highly provocative even by those who could not see eye to eye with him. He was nominated to various committees and examining bodies of the universities in the Province; the Government Epigraphy Department chose to consult him freely, and frequently.

In the later years of Mahavidvan's life, three events are unforgettable. The discriminating authorities of the Samskrita Academy, Mylapore, conferred on him the title "Bashakavisekhara" before an august gathering presided over by Sri V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar. At the Sevalpatti Conference, Dr. Mahamahopadhyaya V. Swaminatha Iyer in an outburst of emotion called him "Mahavidvan" after his own guru, Mahavidvan Minakshisundaram Pillai.

Then came the presentation under Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's auspices, of a thousand rupees for Raghava Iyengar's monumental poem the *Pari Kathai*. The impressive function took place in a special conference of picked scholars, at Annamalai Nagar.

In his sixty-fifth year, old and yet young in his thirst for knowledge, R. Raghava Iyengar was appointed

as head of the Tamil Research department of the Annamalai University and in this capacity he served for a space of about five years. During these years, he wrote a history of Tamil literature, and an original commentary on the "*Kuruntokai*", an anthology of the choicest love lyrics in the language. The palm-leaf manuscripts that he had gathered with indefatigable industry—the garnering of a precious lifetime—were bought by the University and are at present housed in its premises.

With the passing away of R. Raghava Iyengar, we have lost a versatile genius, a poet and literary critic of the front rank, a speaker and debater of unsurpassed charm. Great is his achievement in various fields: original and translated poetry, suggestive commentatorship and historical research, not to speak of his exposition of religious poetry. He was a poet in the traditional line of Tamil poetry and his great work, the *Pari Kathai* (the story of a chieftain's supreme generosity) is written in the rich stiff brocade of *venba* metre. In it, he has recaptured in a measure the solemn and stately rhetoric of the Sangam works. This, for example, is how the chieftain *Pari* gives his all, in recompense for the words of praise that fall from the poet *Kapilar*.

"Even if I give away my realm with all its three hundred towns to this scholar of a myriad arts, even if I walk with him as his willing bondsman, how can all this be a fit reward for one ravishing word of his?—so ran the King's thoughts power (verse 117).

Suddenly he rose, and called: "O King of poets, be seated on my throne". And he rendered unto him his dazzling, lotus-shaped golden diadem and all ornaments, and his very sceptre, the emblem of his royal power (verse 117).

In that vast hall, the drums beat incessantly drowning even the sea's uproar, to the amazement of all assembled there, — sweet-tongued poets, wisdom's other selves as it were—this princely incarnation of charity loosened his ring and put it on the newcomer. (verse 118).

Less ambitious than the *Pari Kathai* are his *Puvi Elupathu* (seventy stanzas on the glory of the earth) and *Tiruvadi Malai* (stanzas of prayer and dedication to God). The *Sakuntalam* and *Bhagavad-Gita* are translations from the Sanskrit with many a felicitous expression delighting us at every page. There are also many stray verses translated by him from the *Maha Bharata* and *Valmiki Ramayana*, not to reckon numerous occasional verses composed by him on the spur of the moment.

R. Raghava Iyengar excels as a great creative commentator in the wake of old Tamil commentators like *Ilampuranar*, *Nachinarkiniyar* and *Parimelalagar*. In Tamil, the art of writing commentaries on poems of an earlier age with the fullest liberty of interpretation, has attained perfection. Mahavidvan's supreme command of this art of literary exposition gives us a sheer thrill of delight, as we read his own commentary on the *Pari Kathai*. The wealth of illustration, the crowded imagery and the happy sallies of thought on every page, will surely warrant the statement that an appreciation of this commentary may be regarded as a touchstone of one's taste in Tamil literature. It is a pity that the author's commentary on the *Kuruntokai*, probably more promising than that on his own *Kavya*, has not yet been released by the Annamalai University.

In his research work, Mahavidvan's originality, clarity of understanding and brilliance of intellect come to play. The *Vanjimanagar* is an erudite thesis regarding his conviction based on a sound study of the classics, that the geographical location of the ancient Chera capital "Vanji" was the modern Karur in the Trichinopoly district and not near Cranganore on the West Coast. *Nallisai Pulamai Melliyal* is an account of woman-poets gathered from references in the old poems. *Sethu Nadum Tamilum* (which, by the way, was written under pressure in less than a week's time) tells the story of the patronage of Tamil bards by the Sethupathi Kings.

R. Raghava Iyengar's personal qualities endeared him to one and all. To every fellow-worker in the field of letters who came to him, he had invariably kind words and thoughtful suggestions that revealed fresh worlds to them. He was generous to a fault in the loan of valuable literary manuscripts that he had with him. For the first edition of the *Agananuru* by Kambhar Vilasam Rajagopala Iyengar of Mylapore, he gave the ancient palm leaf of the work he had himself secured, helped in the editing of it in detail as a labour of love. Far into the night, R. Raghava Iyengar would tire himself out for the apt word in his translation of *Sakuntala*. His life was indeed one of complete dedication to literature. It behoves us to honour in a fitting manner the memory of this great soul, beyond doubt a part of our noblest heritage.

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LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

This section is offered to readers for free discussion on subjects of interest to them. Letters should be brief and typewritten.

"Disastrous Effects Will Ensnare"

Acharya J. B. Kripalani might as well not have taken the trouble to fly all the distance from Delhi to Madras, if he could not, availing his authority as Congress President, teach a befitting lesson to power-mongers in the Madras Congress Legislature Party. Did not the High Command receive innumerable telegrams from every nook and corner of the Province expressing full confidence in Sri Prakasam and no confidence in the conspirators against him? If the Congress President and the conspirators pay a deaf ear to public opinion expressed in such magnitude, with such force, vigour, and determination, can they be regarded as strict democrats or can the Congress claim to be a democratic organisation? Democracy has its essence in people and not of the M.L.As. It is high time that the Congress High Command realised that no other Ministry than that of Prakasam could have public support.

The elimination of Sri Prakasam would bring in disastrous effects over the Congress. Behind this no-confidence move, there are the hands of capitalists, Zamindars and black-marketing merchants who have been clandestinely backing and financing these conspirators because these vested interests fear that their wealth would be reduced if Sri Prakasam continues.

K. S. SUBRAMANYAM.

Rajahmundry.

Communalism The Creed Of Tamil Nadu P.C.C.

Communalism would seem to have a very large influence over the members of the Tamil Nad Congress Party. Some of them evidently hate their colleagues belonging to the Brahmin community.

One of the motives for the present Cabinet crisis is communalism. Not-

withstanding that Prakasam is a Brahmin, Andhra Congressmen are solidly behind him.

But unfortunately, the Tamil Nad Congress Party is composed of nonentities who have come into the party to wreck it, obstruct its progress, form and operate cliques, practise and preach communalism, rather than carry out reforms laid down by the Congress. They strictly adhere to the ignoble 'ideals' set by themselves, and follow like sheep their so-called leader, who is unfortunately leading them into wilderness and chaos.

To remedy these defects, a clean sweep should be made of the existing organisation and of the Congress Legislature Party through fresh elections.

Madras.

KAY VEE VEE.

Caste Versus Progress

Today we have hundreds of castes and society is broken up into innumerable water-tight compartments and is hopelessly disorganised and disunited. How can we realise our national aspirations and how can our country ever hope to take a place in the comity of the nations of the world, if we allow large numbers of our own people to remain sunk in ignorance, barbarism and degradation? Instead of unifying people into a coherent whole both for defensive and offensive actions, caste has created disunion, jealousy, and even hatred among Hindus who have been rendered completely helpless for co-operative action as well as in corporate life.

The first thing to do is to uplift the depressed castes. Political freedom without economic stability is a mockery. Economic stability without social advancement is Utopian. Social advancement without the elevation of the down-trodden castes is like a house built upon sand. These are inseparable and our one and only aim must be uplift of the

depressed castes. Without uplifting the low castes no national life can possibly be developed.

V. VENKATESWARALU, B.A.
Kalahasti.

SWATANTRA's Comments On Communists

It is a melancholy reflection on the degeneration of Indian political life to discover that Congress, which was one of the premier freedom-loving organisations in the world has, by its violent attack on the Communists and other democrats, joined the unsavory ranks of General Franco of Spain, Dictator Salazar of Portugal, and General Smuts of South Africa, who are likewise engaged in an anti-Communist drive. There is a very apposite English proverb which says 'birds of a feather flock together.'

It is all the more remarkable to find you in your leader of 1st February justifying such action in the name of law and order. It was a bitter reminder of similar apologists in the countries of Europe in the inter-war years, as the rights and liberties of the people were gradually whittled away in the name of 'law and order.' Although Communists, as the most consistent democrats, were the first to suffer, oppression, once started, feeds on itself, and before long trade unionists and radicals of all shades of opinion joined the Communists in prison and concentration camp. This is the lesson that history has taught, but which *Swatantra* ignores.

You make great play with the fact that Communist policy has changed with the radical change from war to peace. But surely the policy of every party is dependent on the conditions applying at any given time. This is exemplified by Congress itself, whose policy changed with the ending of the war from active opposition to acceptance of office.

By a policy of divide and rule, in less than a century Britain created a loyal landowning class in India with powers over the peasantry, which by comparison made the French aristocrats in 1789, and the Russian boyars in 1917 appear as public benefactors. This meek and submissive peasantry which has toiled for centuries without hope, has at last been given inspiration and leadership by the Kisan Sabha and the Communists. Any organisation which actively seeks to rouse the crores of India out of their age-old apathy, and to level up that terrible contrast of

wealth and poverty, deserves your support even though you may disagree with the methods adopted.

In the industrial sphere you are blaming the Communists for a spate of strikes which are symptomatic of a high cost of living, and a lagging wage level. Statistical proof is not available in Britain, but you may prove or disprove my contention only by publishing comparative statistics of wages and cost of living in 1939 and 1947.

But as you regretfully infer, it will be the blackmarketeers, the hoarders, and other vested interests who will rejoice at the Government's action. The great mass of the people and you yourself, sir, I hope, will live to rue it.

As a friend and admirer of yourself, and a contributor to *Swatantra*, I trust that you will allow me publicly to disassociate myself from your anti-Communist policy.

B. ALLAN WILLIAMS.

Basingstoke (England).

Our Portrait-Painters.

Mr. Vijayatunga challenged in *Swatantra* sometime ago the ability of portrait painters in India. But there are portrait-painters in India who have made a mark in their profession. I can suggest the names of Atul Bose, J. P. Ganguly of Calcutta and Pithaiwala and Lalkaka of Bombay. These devoted years of study to this most difficult art and have won fame in some of the Continental exhibitions. One might ask if they can be compared to Augustus John, the pre-eminent portrait-painter of the age. But in the matter of character-delineation our portrait-painters stand equal to the best painters of the Continent. Progressive countries have developed new vistas of artistic expression, and India, having contacts with foreign lands, has imbibed some of the modern influences in art. Great stimulus will be given to the furtherance of art if our eminent personages make it a point to have their portraits painted from life and refuse to have their portraits hung in public places if the work has a smack of photography in it.

N. SRINIVASA RAO.

A Barbarous Custom

Only a few days back, we had the obnoxious experience of being passive and impotent spectators while a young charming lady was cruelly obliged to submit her head to the sharp razor of a barber to ratify her widowhood. Is this not a blot on present day civilisation? Can the Government tolerate

this? There is urgent need for bold legislation to terminate this most inhuman custom.

A. LAKSHMAN RAO.
M. R. KRISHNAN.

Saidapet.

Dutch Imperialism

Dutch imperialists in Indonesia are emulating the tactics of their more successful British counterparts in India to delay the progress of that unhappy country towards self-government, by pitchforking into importance political parties with no popular sanction behind them. At a press conference at Batavia the other day, the Lt.-Governor of the Netherlands East Indies, Dr. Hubertus Van Mook, said ample space would be given to "all groups which so far found little opportunity to give expression to their opinions", and also referred to the existence of "millions of Indonesians" who had agreed openly to co-operate.

It is a fact admitted by everyone except the Dutch that the freedom movement in Indonesia, headed by Dr. Soekarno, has the backing of the entire country, and these so-called groups with little opportunity to express their opinion have their existence only in the imagination of the Dutch. It is in this more than in anything else that one can detect the subtle hand of their British inspirers. Do not the British in this country encourage, and in certain cases even remunerate anti-Congress "parties", and "federations" which have only leadership and no membership? If *divide et impera* has been successful in India from the British point of view, why can't it succeed in Indonesia?

But the Dutch in Indonesia have a very difficult job to tackle. It is one thing to assert that there are groups opposed to the Indonesian struggle for freedom and quite another actually to produce them when accounts are in the process of being settled. And so, like the drowning man clutching at the proverbial straw, they have to seek their 'yes-men' from among obscure groups of Arabs, Chinese and the notoriously anti-social Eurasians in an attempt to fool the world about the existence of disunity among Indonesians.

If this is the setting in which Dr. Van Mook's 15-point Plan is being negotiated, it is foredoomed to failure. The Indonesians have no illusions over the outcome of the talks and in the words of Dr. Sutan Sjahrir, they have already made their plans.

K. R. R.

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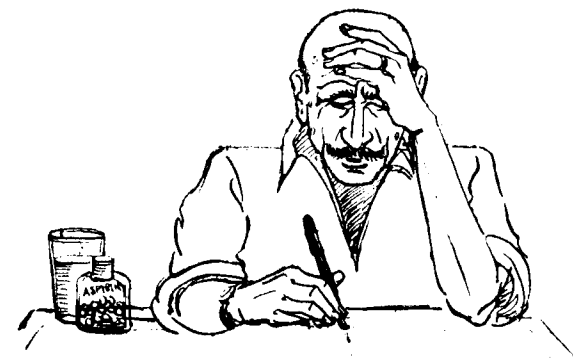
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EDITOR: KHASHA LURBA RAI

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