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— EDITORIAL —

Our Governor

We extend a hearty welcome to Sir Gordon Lethem on his return to British Guiana on Monday last after an official visit to London in the interests of the people of this Crown Colony.

Sir Gordon Lethem arrived in the colony on 7th November, 1941, a little over three years ago. There can be no doubt that he has taken a great deal of interest in his work. He has travelled extensively; he has written extensively and he has spoken extensively. On his arrival on Monday afternoon, he spoke over Station ZFY and His Excellency promised to travel extensively again and not to write many papers.

We welcome His Excellency's timely statement not to write too much. May we suggest action instead of travelling too much.

Sir Gordon Lethem has been able to secure the good will of the large majority of the working people of this mis-governed colony. The people of British Guiana have always been generous, and particularly to high-ranking officials.

The time has now come for us to direct our attention to the material progress of the people of this colony. We are a practical people who have the will to live a full, free and practical life and while the majority of the

people have been trying to live this full, free and practical life our administrators have never given them that full and free opportunity to live their own lives.

We are told that His Excellency the Governor, the Secretary of State for the Colonies and others in authority have a lively interest in this Colony. What is the meaning of this?

At present, seven out of ten adults of Indian descent cannot read and write any language, and three out of ten children of school going age, are not in the primary schools.

Malnutrition is everywhere and the average earnings or wages of able-bodied adults are not sufficient to purchase food alone to sustain the bodily requirements of a worker. The majority of children in schools, as inspected by the School Medical Officer, are living on diets below the safety line. With these facts before us are our Administrators really concerned about the social and material welfare of our children and adults? If so, we call on all those responsible to take steps to adjust this very important matter without further delay.

This is not the time nor the place to point out the backwardness of the people of British Guiana, particularly the Indian people, after their introduction from India more than 100 years ago. We have been endeavouring to point out certain material facts in our Editorial columns under the head of "REPATRIATION OF INDIANS" and we ask His Excellency to be good enough to peruse them.

We wish His Excellency Sir Gordon Lethem continued good health in British Guiana.

Lord Moyne's Death

Lord Moyne, former Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Chairman of the Royal Commission that visited the West Indies and British Guiana in 1938-1939, was assassinated last Monday in Cairo, where he was the British Resident. The assassins have been arrested and sooner or later the true cause of Lord Moyne's assassination may come to light. According to cable, advices investigations are proceeding.

An Open Letter to Mr. Charles Taussig

CO-CHAIRMAN, ANGLO-AMERICAN
CARIBBEAN COMMISSION

Mr. Charles Taussig, Co-Chairman of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission in a recent declaration, termed the economy of the West Indies as lopsided and the conditions of life under which the people of the West Indies live as miserable and extremely poor.

It is indeed a correct observation on the part of Mr. Taussig and it is hoped that, placed as he is, on the Co-chairmanship of the Caribbean Commission he will do all that lies within his power to better the economy of these parts and to raise the standard of life and living of the people of the West Indies.

It must be, by now, clear to Mr. Taussig that the people of the West Indies are a subject people and as such have no right of self-determination and are thus denied the right of initiative and enterprise. These conditions have now been going on for over a hundred years and the people have grown so accustomed to have things done as their Rulers want that any departure from that custom comes as a shock rather than a natural state of evolution.

The people of the West Indies are fully aware of the broad policy that the Americans follow with respect to territories under their flag as can be seen in the matter of the Franchise as far as Puerto-Rico and the Virgin Islands are concerned. These territories of the U.S.A. have for years now been enjoying Universal Adult Suffrage, whereas in British Guiana a franchise is now being introduced whereby more than sixty-five percent of the adult population would be denied the right to exercise the vote. We ask solemnly if this is fair to a down trodden people and we ask you as Co-Chairman what are you going to do about it. From all we hear Puerto Rico will be electing its own Governor will that be ever possible in the British West Indies? We shall address ourselves to you again.

(To be Continued)

Governor Lethem Returns To Colony

Indian Public Opinion Sceptical About Sir Gordon Achievements During His Term Of Office

Public getting tired of Unceasing talks and plans without Any practical results

The Governor Sir Gordon Lethem returned to British Guiana on the 13th instant. He was absent three and a half months from the colony.

Nevertheless the affairs of the colony marched on in the same way as it has done for the past century. It will be recalled that the Governor went to England to be consulted with respect to the franchise question, and the drainage and irrigation schemes of the coastal areas rumour has it, that Sir Gordon Lethem went to England with the definite purpose of making sure that the Secretary of State adopt the Majority Report of the B.G. Franchise Commission; if that was his purpose, he has certainly achieved it, but then when all is said and done Sir Gordon will leave British Guiana the same way he came and would be forgotten after a while. That, in a nutshell, is man's destiny when he has not been able to do anything which is in itself outstanding.

The public are now awaiting the putting into effect of the Drainage and Irrigation Schemes of the Corentyne and East Coast Demerara, of which so much was said during Sir Gordon's regime. The test of the question is in the practical results, British Guiana's public are tired of hearing and seeing plans which eventually blows off in hot air.

Another important matter is the question of land settlements; which was brought into prominence during Sir Gordon's regime but to date other than recommendations by the Com-

mittee and debates on the matter in the legislative Council nothing concrete has been done.

An open question to Sir Gordon Lethem boils down to the fact; what are the practical achievements of his administration? The people await an answer to this question.

Crisis Between Indian and South African Governments

Indians Being Taken Advantage of in Africa

General Smuts Refuses to Assist in the Matter

India Takes Reprisals—Recall of India's High Commissioner and Economic Sanction Among First Steps Taken

Indian Statesman Declare He Wished India was in A Position to Declare War on South Africa.

NEW DELHI, Nov. 9—Parakash Narayan Sapru Secretary of the Indian Progressive Party and member of the Indian Council of State declared today: "General Smuts and Dr Malan are no better than Hitler and Mussolini."

Moving a resolution recommending protection by agreement of Indians in other Empire countries, Sapru explained: "I have excluded South Africa, because South Africans are no better than the Japanese or Germans."

"There is no difference between the Germans persecuting the Jews and South Africans persecuting Indians."

"There is no question of any agreement or understanding with the South African. Until he becomes a reasonable creature—until he comes to learn that an Indian is just like another human being entitled to rights and privileges"

On Monday the Indian Legislative Assembly recommended the recall of the Indian High Commissioner to South Africa as a reprisal for property laws affecting Indians in the Union.

During the debate Dr. N. B. Khare, Commonwealth Relations member, said he wished India was in a position to declare war on South Africa.

*

CAPETOWN, Nov. 10—General Jan Smuts, South African Premier, has informed the leaders of the Natal Indians that he cannot receive a deputation to discuss the question of residential control there until the position clears.

The General said he had not had an opportunity of studying the debates and the ordinance on residential property control in the Natal.

The whole position, he added had been complicated by reprisals taken in India.

The ordinance has been read a third time by the Natal Provincial Council. It provides that when a European wishes to sell residential property in a mainly European area to a non-European, or vice versa, the Natal Board shall have immediate option to purchase the property.

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AGENTS

Letters to the Editor

Port Mourant
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13/11/44

The Editor,
"Indian Opinion"

Dear Sir,

The people in Sugar Estates do not get delivery of their letters; the letters go to the estate office and is left for a couple of weeks no one to distribute it for instance if John writes Sam, at say Port Mourant Sam would not know, so how can he call at the office for it, only by accident if someone know that there is a letter lying in the Estate's Office for Sam then Sam will go for it, but what happened; Sam had a vacancy but is filled, he did'nt go because he did'nt know; there are some other instances where letter was sent that some one is very ill the person would not know until he receives a telegram of the relative's death; when he gets at the place he starts to quarrel instead of showing sympathy, until he comes back home to find his letter was kept at the Estate's office undelivered; No one can blame the Sugar Estate for that, but the rotten system is the Post Office they don't deliver the letters to the people; I personally made complaints over and over to the Post Master General and I received no satisfaction; I have reported the matter every where it was necessary about my letter delivered after many days.

Then I have noticed this very P.M.G. is asking for increase in the letter rates, all because he is well paid and don't seem to care about those who are underpaid and underfed; what does the Government want with increasing the letter rates when their excess of revenue over expenditure is well secured. What are we to think of this Government. We see a Labour Leader

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even supported it. Government never even tried to assist the poor man at anytime;

The poor people started the Rice Cultivation with many failures and now because it becomes a successful industry they have stopped in.

The poor people came into this colony under a contract, after their terms were finished overnment has been sliding back from their obligation.

The poor people are suffering from want, after all these unchristian and undemocratic actions; This place is called **BRITISH GUIANA A CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT**

If the Legislative members had seen that the increase would have affected the poor people they might have understood, but they are not interested in the poor man, yet whe representatives are sent abroad; it goes as the community when the community are not being represented in this Colony;

R. SINGH

Public Reaction To West Indian Conference

BACKWARD CONDITIONS NOT UNKNOWN.

BY Observer

In the issue of Indian Opinion of the 13th of May 1944 shortly after the conclusion of the Anglo-American Caribbean Conference held in Barbados the following was published.

"Public reaction to the publicity given to the decisions reached at the recent West Indian Conference held in Barbados is not altogether favourable.

All classes of the community are awaiting practical results. It is now felt that the "needs" of the colony require no constant Repeition. The Anglo-American Caribbean Commission is fully informed about the backward conditions of the West Indies and British Guiana. The second meeting of the Conference will have practically no value if no practical benefits result from the first.

Today more than six months after the Conference was held absolutely nothing has been done from a practical standpoint as far as British Guiana is concerned to implement any of the decisions reached.

It is only fair to ask what is the use of these conferences when nothing comes out of them. The masses have no use whatsoever for academic achievements, the sooner the local and Imperial Governments understand it the better it would be for the future of the British Empire.

The Bauxite Industry

SLOWING DOWN OF OPERATION RUMOURED

By I. O. Special Correspondent.

Disconcerting rumours have been circulating in the city, to the effect that a large number (about two thousand) persons employed at the Bauxite company, at McKenzie, have been dismissed from their jobs and that operation has considerably slowed down. On investigation this rumour has been partially confirmed by persons dismissed from their jobs but official circles have not issued a statement one way or another.

If this is true then the colony is undoubtedly out for a very bad time and it will need the pooling of all its resources to stave off depression.

The Colony's financial position has been quite satisfactory recently due mainly to increased revenues and one of the important sources was the export of Bauxite.

The Colonial Treasurer Mr McDavid has been patted on the back time and again for the colony's present financial position, which is generally felt was due to increased revenues.

The test of his ingenuity is near at hand, we shall see how he stands under it.

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Russia in the International Picture

The Challenge

All Russia celebrated the anniversary of history's greatest social revolution this week. It was the most important of the 27 anniversaries that have been solemnized thus far. For the first time since Lenin opened the first session of the Supreme Soviet (and a new chapter in human history) with the casual words: "We shall now proceed with the organization of the socialist state," Russia had ceased to be a defensive power. It had passed over to the offensive. In retrospect it was clear that the revolution was the most important fact of World War I. Russia's emergence as the No. 1 power in Europe and Asia might well be the most important fact of World War II.

In the old Russian fairy tale, Vasilisa the All Wise walks up to the little hut that stands on hen's legs and says: "Little hut, little hut, turn with your face to me and your back to the sea." And the voice of Baba Yaga, the witch, answers from within the hut: "Fee fo fum, I smell Russian blood. For today the Russian spirit is marching through the world, and it throws itself on your breast and it slaps you in the face..."

Last week there was not a country in Europe or Asia, scarcely a country in the world, where Russia's influence was not on the march. The influence was due not merely to Russia's new military might. The Russian Government, temporarily "respectable," was permanently revolutionary. Its appeal, reaching far beyond its war fronts and frontiers, was, in theory, one of the noblest in history of human hope—nothing less than the freeing of mankind from want, fear and suffering. But to safeguard its purpose, and focus its energies, it had organized one of the most resolute dictatorships the world had ever known, serviced by one of the most complex and efficient systems of secret police. In carrying its ideals abroad, it had developed a new tactic in power politics—the appeal to the foreign masses to organize, conspire and ultimately revolt against the dominant classes in their respective countries. The promise was that when the socialist organization of abundance was complete, the totalitarian state would dissolve of its own superfluities in a new kind of classless democracy. To most Americans and western Europeans this was the uncertain ideal, dictatorship, the inescapable fact.

Hitherto Russian influence had operated most effectively in the backward regions of Europe and Asia. But, as a result of World War II, Russian influence was marching into political power in Italy and France, would soon close in on Austria and a large part of Germany. There was one way in which the western nations, for whom even an economically secure life without political liberty was not

worth living, could meet this challenge—by freeing themselves from want, fear and suffering while remaining free. The history of the next 20 or 30 years would report their success or failure. If they succeeded, Russia's influence might be kept within Russia's present political frontiers. If they failed, Russia might some day celebrate other, global, anniversaries.

The Challenger

Hardly had Prime Minister Winston Churchill zoomed back from Moscow to announce that the question of Poland and the Balkans would vex Anglo-Russian relations no more, than those relations suffered a new wrench. This time it came in Iran—traditionally a prospective Russian LEBENSRAUM traditionally a very tender spot with Britons. For Iran lies like a massive wedge between British India and British-controlled Iraq. It is also the source of much of Britain's Near Eastern oil.

Oil was the immediate cause of the trouble. Iran's Premier Mohamed Said Maraghei was being briskly boiled in oil last week, and even the U. S. had been spattered with a few hot drops. The fire was lit by Sergei Kavtaradze, Soviet Vice-Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, who presented Said with a Russian proposal for oil concessions in northern Iran (Time, Oct 30). Said said no, but Kavtaradze would not take no for an answer. From Teheran, where he lingered, he denounced the head of Iran's Cabinet. From afar the Russian press echoed his charges that Said was a Russophobic reactionary. Vice-Commissioner Kavtaradze was also suspected of stirring up Iranians to denounce Said.

Tongue in cheek, Moscow correspondent Paul Winterton cabled London's *News Chronicle*: "With that spontaneity which is such a happy feature of the Persians at their best 20,000 people demonstrated in the streets of Teheran, called for the resignation of the Said Government." There were other demonstration in the northern section of Iran, occupied by the Red Army since 1941.

Said Must Go Except in Tabriz, Iranian troops patrolled the streets with armored cars or motorcycles mounting machine guns. In Tabriz, the Red Army simply locked the Iranian garrison in its barracks. Later, a Tass report said Iranian troops in Tabriz had fired on a "peaceful anti-Government demonstration," killed a demonstrator. The Red Army also cut off Iranian grain from the rest of Iran. Cried Kavtaradze and Moscow: Said must go.

Britain and the U.S. backed Premier Said, who had refused them further concessions at the same time that he refused the Russians. From London the BBC beamed the British view to Iranians: "The Iranian Government decided to make no oil concessions until after the war." Sir Reader William Bullard, British Minister in close touch with the Iranian Government and he has no objection to their decision." The U.S. was reported to have told the Iranian Government: Iran's decision does not cause the U.S. Government regret or alarm because Iran is an independent country.

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