

Indian Opinion

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ONE PENNY

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EDITORIAL —

Drainage and Irrigation Schemes and planned Settlements

Provided the Secretary of State for the Colonies approves of the Schemes by Sir Gordon Lethem Governor and Sir Frank Stockdale, Comptroller of Development and Welfare, the Colony may expect grants totalling approximately Twelve Million dollars for the improvement of Drainage and Irrigation.

These schemes are printed as Legislative Council Paper No. 1A/1945 and are briefly described for record purposes.

Scheme No. 1 that is approved and is being carried out under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act 1940 is estimated to cost \$2,089,882.

Scheme No. 2 which was approved under the Development Trust Fund and estimated to cost \$415,952 is being carried out.

Scheme No. 3 which embraces main Drainage and Irrigation in the Corentyne and East Demerara, and estimated to cost \$5,678,250 has been recommended to the Secretary of State and the financing of same is under discussion.

Scheme No. 4, East Demerara Drainage, estimated to cost \$3,500,000 is still under consideration

The details of the Schemes mentioned above make interesting reading.

Rice Situation in Corentyne

Reports reaching us from the Corentyne speak of untold hardships that producers are passing on account of their rice not finding transportation to the city.

The majority of these growers are blaming the B. G. Rice Marketing Board for their complacent and don't give a hang attitude.

The reports are filled with contempt and indignation at the Board's activities.

There is no doubt that the people are going through unnecessary hardships, due to lack of foresight and proper management of the affairs of the Board.

The present situation will have a bad effect on the production of rice on the Corentyne and is creating a very bad impression on the minds of rice farmers on the Corentyne Coast.

It is hoped Government will instruct the Board to act in such a manner as to relieve the congested rice situation on the Corentyne

The recent arrests of several employees of the Board resulting in the alleged loss of thousands of dollars is another example of the Board's com-

petency to manage the affairs of the Rice Producers. Some people are wondering if the Rice Marketing Board is the twin sister of the Public Works Dept.

Rumour states that the principal officers are more concerned with sport of various kinds than work and may be the producers would take action.

Muslim Literary Assn.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Muslim Literary Association of British Guiana took place on Sunday 21st January, 1945. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were presented.

The following are the result of the Election:—

President	—	Mr A. R. Manraj
Senior Vice President	—	Mr M. Hassan Khan
Junior Vice President	—	Mr S. A. Sattaur
Secretary	—	Mr E. Ally
Asst Secretary	—	Mr O. Ganie
Treasurer	—	Mr M. Hanif

What we are particularly concerned with is the availability of land properly drained and irrigated, and secured from abnormal floods and drought not only for our people but for all farmers to plant rice and other crops, and for rearing live-stock. So far very little land is available for over 10,000 families who have been making repeated request for land in Demerara and Corentyne and while we appreciate that something has been accomplished during the last two years, we urge on Government to be a little more practical by beginning to settle some of ten thousand families on their own five, ten or fifteen acre plots.

Up to the present time farmers in general have had bitter experience as regards securing of land and while they may be hopeful as to the immediate future the Experts may fail in their schemes and plans resulting in frustration and bitter experiences again for the farmers in the future.

Solving India's Political Difficulties

LONDON, Jan. 20 (BOP)—

Recent discussions between Bhubhai Desai, leader of the Congress Assembly Party, and Zila Lucutali, Deputy Chief of the Muslim Party of India, created a great deal of interest here," says a Lahore correspondent.

It is stated that they have come to a provisional agreement with the approval of both Gandhi and Jinnah, and Desai is meeting the Viceroy today to discuss this agreement. This is understood to be the establishment of a new 'National Government' centre with 40 per cent of the seats nominated by Congress, and 40 percent, by the Muslim League while scheduled castes and Sikhs will be given 20 per cent. If the Viceroy agrees the immediate release of Congress leaders will be demanded.

Letters to the Editor

Thursday, January 11, 1945

The Editor,
Indian Opinion.

Sir,

In your issue of Jan. 6, 1945, you state in headlines "Local Government Waves Dollar-a-Ton Tax from Colony's Revenue," and in the course of your first paragraph, by "The Watch-dog;"

"It was indeed surprising to learn from the Local Government and the Sugar Producers' Association that the recent increase in price for Colonial Sugar in the United Kingdom and the waiving of a dollar-a-ton tax recently imposed as export duty on Sugar..."

May I point out to you that on December 20, 1944, in Legislative Council, the Hon. Attorney General moved and the Hon. F. Diss seconded the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, 1944. Among the Laws to be continued was the Sugar Duty Ordinance, in respect of which the Governor had explained very clearly that in view of the increased price for sugar granted by the Ministry of Food, Government would not proceed with the proposal to waive the existing duty. The motion was passed.

A fairly full report of this discussion appears in the Daily Argosy of December 21, 1944. I should be glad if you will publish this letter or its substance in your next issue.

Yours truly,
H. R. HAREWOOD
Publicity Officer.

The Editor:
Indian Opinion

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter with the object of placing on record in a public organ my impression of an important matter which concerns the welfare of the inhabitants of British Guiana. I have come to this viewpoint after reviewing a few of the most recent incidents. The matter concerns the delays and indecisions of the Local and Imperial Governments.

A classical example is the Corentyne Drainage and Irrigation Scheme. When the Caribbean area was very hard pressed for food in 1942 and rice was urgently required in the British West Indies, the Corentyne Drainage and Irrigation Scheme received attention and a plan was drawn up to place the whole area under a proper system. Since then the whole situation has been changed somewhat and there is a gradual shifting away from the problem.

In August 1944, the Governor left for England where he expected (as we were told) to have definitely settled the matter with the Secretary of State for the Colonies; but much to our

surprise when he returned nearly three months later the matter stood exactly where it was in 1942.

We the public were informed that Sir Frank Stockdale will arrive to FINALLY FINALIZE the decision. Much to the disappointment of citizens like myself what do we find, the matter is again referred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I am sure work will not be started until a decision is reached and I would not be surprised if the matter will have to be referred to the co-chairman of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission for his approval and lastly the people of British Guiana would be told—the Secretary of State has given consent to the plan and the money is available but ALAS there is no machinery with which to start work and you must await the conclusion of the war. Have patience—endure your chafe. This is British Guiana,—a Crown Colony.

Yours

"A WORKER FOR PROGRESS"

Prominent Business Man On Holiday

Mr Azeem Khan prominent businessman and sponsor of the Hindustani Master Singers Programme over Station ZFY, Attorney of Messrs Meer Khan, Stabroek Market, Senior Vice-President and Patron of the Islamic Association of British Guiana and member of the executive committee of British Guiana East Indian Association recently left the colony on vacation to Trinidad and St Vincent. Mr Khan will be away for about six weeks from the colony. We wish Mr Khan bon voyage and a good trip.

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"The Fate Of The World"

Continued from last issue

CHANGING ASPECT

In Europe, there were several men of stature whose aspect changed in the shifting light of events. One of these was somber, iron-willed Charles de Gaulle. For four years he had been the symbol and touchstone of French resistance to the Nazi conqueror, but he had lived in the half-light of exile. In 1944 he returned in triumph to his free but prostrate country. In the liberated countries, he was the only exile who went back to a people solidly ranked behind him, and the only man who seemed able to control the revolutionary ferment which liberation had set astir.

Winston Churchill, Man of 1940, had also been a symbol. In Britain's darkest and finest hour, his flaming words and dauntless courage had heartened his country to stand alone against Hitler at the crest of his Blitzkrieg power. As one of the organizers of victory, Churchill had been magnificent. Now, in the last weeks of 1944, he was facing—with his usual truculence—the heaviest criticism of his World War II career; his critics charged him with responsibility for the civil war in Greece and for selling out Poland to Russia.

THE RUNNER-UP

Joseph Stalin, Man of 1943, who in that year had started to roll the Hitlerites back from the Caucasus oilfields, was also beginning to look a little different to many Americans in the dawn light of victory—or perhaps more like his pre-1941 self.

After dealing Hitler one of his two heaviest defeats of the year, Stalin's central armies had stopped on the Vistula, while those on the flanks pursued secondary aims. Then followed the illtimed martyrdom of General Bor and his heroic partisans in Warsaw; the Moscow-sponsored Government at Lublin; the methodical destruction of the London Polish Government. At Dumbarton Oaks, Russia's diplomats insisted that, in the framework of postwar security, no great power (e.g., Russia) should be disciplined without its consent.

Any sovereign nation may choose to drug itself with suspicion, cynicism, isolation, and history does not deny a great man his place because his aims and methods are objectionable. 'History,' someone has said 'is a record of events which ought not to have happened.' But Joseph Stalin was not the Man of 1944.

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**Mr. Mohamed Ghanie
Appointed On Drainage
And Irrigation Board**

Mr Mohammed Ghanie Chairman of Unity-Lancaster Local Authority, has been appointed to serve as a member of the Drainage and Irrigation Board as from January 1 1945

A prominent rice miller and grower, M. Ghanie has served as a member of the Poor Law Board of the Mahaica District for more than 16 years; is a member of the Ann's Grove-Lancaster Drainage Board; the Central Rice Committee; the Sub-Rice Committee for the East Coast, Demerara, and West Coast Berbice District; and the Sub Committee of the Millers, Landlord and Marketing Committee, and Vice-President of the East Demerara Rice Millers Association.

Mr. Ghanie takes more than passing interest in village life. He was instrumental in extending the township of Unity Lancaster, and has been President of the Village Cricket Club for more than 16 years. He is also Chairman of the Hindi Night School and President of the Unity-Lancaster Branch of the East Indian Association.

**Indian Passes L.L.B.
Finals**

Mr. Bertrand Oswald Adams B.A. (London) has passed the L.L.B. Finals (London), to become the second student to pass this examination locally and also the second to gain to University degrees on studies here at home.

Mr. Adams, who wrote the papers for the L.L.B. Finals in July last year, has had a brilliant academic career. As a boy he topped the lists for the Government Junior and Mitchell Scholarships with a record number of marks, had the distinction of being the youngest British Guianese to obtain the London Higher School Certificate, and was twice recommended for the Guiana Scholarship. He passed the B.A. (London) in June, 1942, in languages coming in the Second Class.

Mr. Adams is the youngest son of Mr. E.A. Adams, Government nominee on the Georgetown Town Council, and Mrs. Adams, is a brother of Mr. E.W. Adams, Barrister-at-Law, and nephew of the Hon. J.A. Luckhoo, K.C.

Joseph G Hanoman

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**Stablising Post-War Wages
And Conditions**

**Bill Introduced By Britain's Labour Minister To
Make Trade Union Standards Compulsory
For Five Years**

Wage Councils As Permanent Statutory Authority

FROM HERBERT TRACEY OF THE BRITISH TRADES UNION
CONGRESS

London, December 13 1944
Under impulses imparted by the Minister of Labour, himself an experienced trade unionist, British Trade Union policy and basic principles are being rapidly adjusted to the needs of the post-war situation. The latest and most significant development is the introduction in Parliament of a Wages Councils Bill.

This measure which involves a change in the traditional attitude of Britain's Trade Unions towards State regulation of wages, has been the subject of full and careful consideration by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress in consultation with both the Minister of Labour (Ernest Bevin) and representatives of the British Employers' Confederation. The traditional attitude of Britain's Trade Unions towards statutory regulation of wages has been hostile; a cardinal principle of Britain's Trade Union policy hitherto has been to entrust the determination of wages and conditions of employments to the voluntary machinery of collective bargaining. Even the Trade Board legislation, dating back to 1909, under which minimum wage rates were prescribed and enforced in what were called the 'sweated' trades, never commanded the wholehearted assent of the Trade Unions. But the Bill now before Parliament goes farther than the Trade Board Acts, though it might be regarded as a logical development of the Trade Board system.

**RADICAL ALTERATION IN
METHODS**

The Bill makes radical alterations in the methods by which wages will be determined in post-war industry. One of the main provisions continues for five years after the war the provision of the Order of 1940 governing wartime conditions of employment and setting up a national Arbitration Tribunal. By the extension of the life of this Order employers will remain under the obligation to observe in their establishments terms and conditions of employment not less favourable than "the recognised terms and conditions" in the trade or industry in the district; that is to say, wage standards and

conditions of employment stipulated in Trade Union agreements were made obligatory under the Order, and will continue to be the standard for five years after the war. By this provision the Government is meeting the problem of stabilising wages in the immediate post-war years—after World War I a temporary Act of Parliament was passed to effect this purpose.

But the Bill also brings into existence permanent machinery for the statutory regulation of wages. It does this by re-enacting the Trade Board legislation with amendments which will extend the powers of the Trade Boards (henceforth to be known as 'Wages Councils') and by endowing the Minister of Labour with additional powers to set up Wages Councils in any industry or trade where it is necessary to lay the foundations of better standards of remuneration for the workers.

In the view of the Minister the Trade Boards have fulfilled their original purpose. Mr Bevin dislikes the association of the Trade Board Machinery with the so-called "sweated trades" a definition which no longer applies to any considerable section of British Industry. The Trade Boards are therefore to be developed and invested with additional powers to bring them into line with the statutory Wage Boards that have been created under later legislation in some industries—for instance, the Agricultural wages Board, the statutory Wages Board for the Road Haulage industry, and the Catering Wages Commission.

To be Continued

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Mr. Gandhi's Letter And Viceroy's Reply

A Press Note issued from the Viceroy's House, New Delhi, on July 1, stated:

As the substance of Mr. Gandhi's letter of June 17 to H. E. the Viceroy and of the Viceroy's reply of June 22 has already appeared in the Press, the full text of the two letters is now released for publication:

Nature Cure Clinic,

6, Toddiwala Road, Poona.

June 17, 1944.

Dear Friend—But for the fact that this letter is along the lines of your preoccupation I should not have troubled you with any letter from me.

2. Though there is little cause for it, the whole country and even many from outside expect me to make some decisive contribution to the general good. I am sorry to say my convalescence threatens to be fairly long. Even if I was quite well, I could do little or nothing unless I knew the mind of the Working Committee of the Congress. I pleaded as a prisoner for permission to see them. I plead now as a free man for such permission. If you will see me before deciding, I shall gladly go wherever you want me to, as soon as I am allowed by my medical advisers to undertake long distance travelling.

3. I have circulated among friends, for private use, copies of the correspondence the passed between the authorities and me during detention. I do feel however, that in fairness to me Government should permit its publication in the Press.

My address will be as above till 30th instant.

I am

Yours sincerely

(Sd) M. K. GANDHI.

His Excellency the Viceroy,
Viceroy's Camp.

VICEROY'S REPLY

The Viceroy's House,

New Delhi;

June 22, 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,—I have received your letter of June 17. In consideration of the radical difference in our points of view which appeared in our recent correspondence, I feel that a meeting between us at present could have no value and could only raise hopes which would be disappointed.

I am afraid that similar considerations apply to your request to see the Working Committee. You have recently made public your adherence to the "Quit India" resolution which, I am afraid I do not regret as to a reasonable or practical policy for the immediate future.

If after your convalescence and on further reflection you have a definite and constructive policy to propose for

Port Mourant Murder

PRELIMINARY INQUIRY NEXT TUESDAY

MR. K. S. STOBY TO PRESIDE

The preliminary inquiry in connection with the murder of Mr. George Wilkie at Pln. Port Mourant, Corentyne on November 24 last, will be commenced at the Albion Magistrate's Court on Tuesday next, January 30.

The inquiry will be presided over by Mr. K. S. Stoby, Magistrate.

Mr. A. J. Parkes will conduct the prosecution.

The accused are Boodram, also known as Baijoon, and Jaisu Persaud, both of whom were labourers at Pln. Port Mourant. They are charged with having on November 24, 1944, murdered Mr. George Wilkie, Deputy Manager of Pln. Port Mourant.

Mr. Lionel A. Luckhoo with Mr. J. A. Luckhoo (jur), will appear for the accused.

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the furtherance of India's welfare, I shall be glad to consider it.

Since you have circulated, without any reference to me, the correspondence which passed between us and it has in consequence appeared in the Press, I have given instructions for the publication of the whole of the political letters which were written during your detention.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd) WAVELL.

M.K. Gandhi, Esqr.,

Nature Cure Clinic,

6, Toddiwala Road,

Poona.

—INDIAN INFORMATION

Further Correspondence
To be Continued

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