

Indian Opinion

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ONE PENNY

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— EDITORIAL

The Hammond Report

The recommendations contained in the Hammond Report for a better educational system in British Guiana is now more than two years old. Government seems to have placed it in the waste paper basket, but the people of British Guiana have not done so and we are of the opinion that if this Government is to exercise any degree of democracy then it has to take it out of the waste paper basket and do something about implementing it. If the dissatisfaction regarding the present educational system is to be remedied and the confidence of the people in the Government retained, then Government must take the initiative to put into operation such measures as would tend to elevate the general outlook of the people. There is no gainsaying the fact that the present educational system is outdated and should be improved without delay.

A committee was appointed to go into full details in regard to this Report but the Committee seems to have done nothing and has bungled the whole matter.

We pointed out to His Excellency the Governor that the Committee referred to above was nothing more than a mere instrument to delay the issue and to keep the mass of the

Influence to Voluntary Collective Bargaining

Cricket Match at Pln. Albion

R. M. ALLIS CUP FINAL

The final for R.M. Ali's Cup between Silver Whip C.C. and Young Trial C.C. (both of Albion) was inevitably postponed from 21st Feb. 1945 to 11th March 1945.

On the 11th March at 12.30 p.m. the two captains Mr. Solomon Chinapen of Silver Whip C.C. and Mr. Mahadeo of Young Trial C.C. went out to spin the toss. The toss was won by Mr. S. Chinapen who sent in the Young Trial team to bat on a perfect wicket.

Under the destructive bowling performances of Mr. Lilboy Dookhie and the promising left hander Rajnauth, also known as Sugar Boy, the Young Trial Team could only muster up a meagre score of 53 runs, (Azeez making a top score of 9) (Lilboy Dookhie secured 5 wickets for 19 and Sugar Boy 3 for 27).

In reply to the poor score the Silver Whip C.C. replied with 3 wickets for 54 runs (Sugar Boy 31 not out; Lilboy Dookhie 14) (L. Madray secured 2 wickets for 9 runs and G. Persaud 1 for 17, for the Trial Team.

The Cup was handed to the captain of the Silver Whip C.C., amid great applause, by Mr. Roopnauth.

The Donor of the cup is Mr. Richard M. Alli a Class II Certified Teacher of Albion C.M. School. He is a successful candidate for the Government Training College in Georgetown this year.

people illiterate for an indefinite period.

We now find that what we thought then nearly two years ago, seems to be well founded. We again ask Government to ask the committee to present its report.

An overall increase of no less than 82 per cent. in the average earnings of workers in national industry during the war years is a statistical fact attested by Britain's Ministry of Labour. It is a significant phenomenon, arising out of the practice of voluntary collective bargaining maintained by the Trade Unions and the employers' organisations, with the co-operation of the Government Departments concerned, during the war years.

In terms of wages it means that average weekly earnings of all workers, skilled and unskilled, men and women, young and old, have risen from an average of 53/3d. in the autumn of 1938 to 96/8d. in mid-1944.

DATA FROM 50,000 EMPLOYERS

The Ministry of Labour has conducted systematic inquiries from time to time to ascertain the facts concerning average wartime weekly earnings and working hours of wage earners in the country. Data has been collected in these investigations from considerably more than 50,000 employers. All the wage earners in the employment of these concerns, other than office staffs, managers, commercial travellers, clerks, typists and salaried persons generally, were covered by the inquiry, and the returns showed total earnings inclusive of bonuses, and before any deductions were made in respect of income tax or workers' contributions to statutory insurance schemes. No fewer than 6,000,000 wage earners came within the scope of examination and the statistics, therefore, are a fair indication of the upward direction of wages during the war.

The upward movement represents the combined effect of a number of factors—including increases in rates of wages, fuller employment with longer working hours and more extended working of night shifts, extensions of systems of payments by results and increased output by the workers affected, and also changes in the proportions of men, boys, women and girls employed in different industries and occupations.

(To be continued)

India

For three years India had been in a state of suspended political animation. Some 3,000 nationalists were in jail. (Including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru; Mohandas K. Gandhi was released ten months ago) their pleas for Indian independence silenced by the fiat of the British Raj that constitutional reform must wait till the war is won. Three years after Sir Stafford Cripps's mission, Hindus [the Congress Party] and Moslems [the Moslem League] were still unable to agree on his plan for postwar Dominion status. They were also unable to agree with one another. But last week India was stirring unessily.

A blaze of speculation and hope had sprung up around two secondary political figures -- the Congress party's Bhulabhai Desai, 67, and the Moslem League's Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan 49, who repeatedly had set out to break the interminable deadlock. Both were members of the Central Legislative Assembly in new Delhi; both felt that they could negotiate with the British authorities more freely than their policy-bound leaders, Mohandas Gandhi and Mohamed Ali Jinnah.

First, soft spoken Lawyer-Desai had a talk with the Viceroy, Lord Wavell. Then he consulted Gandhi and his old friend - Liaquat Ali Khan. Finally he came back to the Viceroy with a coalition proposal: until the war ends; Congress, the Moslem League and other minority groups should form an all-party interim government without holding elections. In the Central Assembly and the five provinces where elected Indian majorities refuse to share in the government, Hindus and Moslems would each receive 40% representation, minorities the rest. Since this would mean a resumption of India political responsibilities without involving wartime constitutional changes, Lord Wavell has sent the scheme on to Whitehall.

In retirement at Wardha, Gandhi, said nothing concerning the plankmakers. But he wagged an admonitory finger at Britain: "Victory won at the expense of India will mean...there will have arisen a new monster that will seek to eat all it sees...It has given me no pleasure to make this statement."

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Letters to the Editor

The Editor,
The "Indian Opinion"
Sir.

Please allow me space in your column of the "Indian Opinion" to express my views as follows:—

Good Fortuin
West Bank Demerara
3rd April 1945.

Dear Comrades,

As I plead, I think it is my duty to say too that we ought to realise by now that the domestic affairs of Indian people should be settled at home, or by some efficient men appointed by us from among ourselves.

We know to what extent the domestic affairs of our Indians are taken abroad by ourselves, and spread among those who are not concerned in our disputes.

This is one of our troubles which we can avoid. I have had many opportunities of having husband and wife disputes settled at the estate office, and at other public places. This procedure brings a shame and a disgrace not only to the parties concerned, but also to the whole Indian Community.

In consequence I may suggest that there be elected annually, from among ourselves on every sugar estate in the colony three (3) efficient and capable men for settling domestic disputes arising between husband and wife or neighbours.

The individuals elected must be impartial, and whose judgments must be without prejudice or malice of any kind, as they will have certain responsibilities attaching to their important office; and will be recognised as

a Justice of the Peace, to some extent among their own people.

Our first obligation is due to our home. We must first learn to avoid the creation of disputes and how to settle them should they arise. To avoid disputes, we must bridle ourselves, our wives and our children. This is an education in itself. To bridle ourselves means that we must first respect ourselves before demanding respect from others.

It would be very unreasonable for one to demand respect from another when he or she does not respect himself or herself. How can a drunkard preach about stop drinking when he shows no example? Charity begins at home.

Parents should educate their children and prevent them from making use of filthy language. Children should also be taken often to Kathas, Surooj Pura, Koran Shareefs, Meelaud Shareef and other religious functions rather than to go about their own way.

If such examples were to be set, they would be in the best interests of all concerned, and especially the Indian community on sugar estates.

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No More Big Profits From Colonies Colonel Stanley Tells Parliament

Britain 'Can't Run Empire On the Cheap' Warns Labour M.P.

(BY GEORGE PADMORE)

Warning optimists that "there is no idea of imposing on the Colonies a new heavier prefabricated in Whitehall," Colonel Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, told Members of Parliament that there must be no "get-rich-quick" investment in Africa, the West Indies and Malaya when the Japs are expelled and post-war plans are being considered.

Colonel Stanley makes these observations when he was moving the second reading of the Colonial Development and Welfare Bill, which provides £120,000,000 for Development and Welfare of the native races throughout the Empire during the next ten years. The vote represents a substantial increase over the previous amount allocated in 1940, which stood at £40,000,000, approximately two pence [four cents] per head for the 60,000,000, coloured colonials. The present Bill brings the amount up to four shillings per annum.

LABOUR PARTY WELCOME INCREASE VOTE

While welcoming this new gesture on the part of the Colonial Secretary, who recently returned from Washington, where British colonial policy in the West Indies was discussed with high-ranking officials of the State Department the Labour Party spokesman in the House of Commons, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, warned Colonel Stanley that: "You can't run the empire on the cheap." He asked for an assurance that the local people in each colony and not only the bureaucracy, would be consulted by the various governments before schemes were put into operation.

This view was supported by Dr. Morgan, a native of Grenada who now represents Rochdale. Dr. Morgan said that he "hoped that the Colonial Secretary would see that the local people in the West Indies would be given control and an opportunity to develop schemes themselves. He also wanted to see more West Indians given high administrative positions and not merely used to do the dirty work of European officials.

PRIVATE CAPITAL TO BE WELCOMED

Replying to criticisms raised in the debate Colonel Stanley the Colonial Secretary would see that the

local people in the West assured bankers and financiers that it is not his desire to exclude them from post-war colonial exploitation

"He welcomed private capital. He believed that it was only if the Colonies would get sufficient assistance from private capital outside that a real measure of development would be possible." It was at this stage of his speech that he warned the prospective "get rich quick" speculators and "the man who is prepared to take risks but expects staggering profits." The private investor could not expect a privileged position, added Colonel Stanley. "He must come into the colonies as a partner and not a master. He must not expect to acquire a dominating position from which he could almost threaten the authority of the government itself."

AMERICANS TOLD COLONIES DON'T PAY

Answering Americans who accuse the British of monopolising colonial markets and raw materials Colonel Stanley explained that it is not so.

"You would think to hear some of these people talk that Colonial preference had banged, belted and barred the door of Empire markets". He went on to say: "It would surprise some to know that in the last year before the war Britain supplied only 24 per cent of Colonial exports." However, in the case of investments, the Colonial Secretary admitted that investors had got some good bargains and private capitalists had made some big profits out of colonial investments.

ROTHSCHILD WANTS "FREE ENTERPRISE" NO CONTROLS

Disagreeing with Dr. Morgan, who described Colonel Stanley as "the most disappointing Colonial Secretary this country has ever had," Mr. James de Rothschild, member of the famous banking family said that £120,000,000 was only a flea-bite and that it would not translate into reality the full development of Africa and the colonies. He suggested that the Welfare and Development Fund would only prepare the ground and open up the paths to be followed by commercial enterprise. He wanted to see big capital from all quarters—British and American poured into Africa if the plans outlined by Colonel Stanley are to be realized.

Mr. Ben Riley, another Labour M.P. endorsed the views expressed by Dr. Morgan and called upon the Colonial Office to create an adequate and effective machinery to implement its new policy. It was impossible to carry out the reforms envisaged by Colonel Stanley with the present out-of-date colonial machinery of government.

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NOTICE

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All East Indians in nearby areas who can possibly attend are asked to do so.

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Letter To The Editor

Pln. Albion,
Corantyna Berbice.
21st March, 1945.

The Editor,
"Indian Opinion"

Sir

Please oblige me space in your valuable columns to publish this letter:—

On this estate both field and factory workers are handicapped from getting more than two or three days work per week. There is not a regular or fixed price for cane-cutting. The workers are sometimes paid 16 shillings to cut an average bed of cane and another time they are paid from 7 to 8 shillings to cut a similar bed of cane. Is this fair to the poor workers? Is this not similar to black-marketing? Many times cane-cutters are sent home from aback because they are told that there is no work.

In the factory the mill is working without a governor which regulates the speed of the mill, as a result the mill works at such a rate that the whole week's supply of canes are ground up in 3 to 4 days, after which the factory stops and the factory-workers have to go without work for the balance of the week. Recently there were two breakages due to too much speed and I dare say that if a governor is not placed on the mill a fatal accident may likely to occur.

It appears as if the estate is prepared to produce just 12 thousand to 14 thousand tons of sugar per year, whereas the present cultivation can yield about 25 thousand tons of sugar per year. If Government requires a sufficient supply of sugar I think it is its duty to call on this estate to grind more regularly and see that the cane-cutters are given a proper and fixed rate of payment.

Thanking you for space.

Yours faithfully,
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Hours 4.30 p.m

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