

Indian Opinion

OFFICIAL WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE BRITISH GUIANA EAST INDIAN ASSOCIATION

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Village Chairmen's Conference

In our last week's issue we expressed the view that our Village fathers do not plan for the future with any degree of constructiveness nor do they deliberate in a constructive manner.

Today, we take this opportunity to endorse the views expressed by the Chairman, Mr. T.T. Thompson in his constructive address delivered at Bartica, particularly the following: —

"The personnel of the Local Government Board does not inspire confidence on the part of the rural population."

"Selection seems to be influenced by, among other things, convenience to attend meetings and a possible acquiescence to the Chairman's views."

The British Guiana East Indian Association has been complaining about the personnel of Boards and Committees for about ten years and although they carried the matter up to the Colonial Office little or nothing has been done to improve the situation. It is true an Indian has been appointed here and there but the importance of the Indian community warrants substantial representation on all Boards and Committees, and the members to be appointed should be men who are responsible to an Electorate and no one else.

We support the view that the Chairmen of Boards have a great deal of influence with the Government, or to be precise the Governor, but the time has come when Government have to be guided by the majority of the people and not Officials, most of whom are

"birds of passage" or "yes" men. Reverting to the Village Chairmen's Conference, we earnestly hope that the majority of the members of the Conference will support the Chairman's views in regard to the personnel of the Local Government Board, and request Government to have the Chairman removed with as little delay as possible.

We also support the views expressed by Mr. T. T. Thompson regarding the Central Board of Health and the Central Drainage and Irrigation Board. In our considered opinion the majority of the members of the Board of Agriculture, the Central Drainage and Irrigation Board, and the Central Board of Health who have been serving for more than four years should be removed, including the Chairmen, then and only then, we may hope to see improvement in Village Communities and rural areas.

We urge on our community to take a keener interest in Village affairs and assure all concerned, if assurance is necessary, that no one realises more than us that the majority of the residents in rural areas should cooperate in all matters. We have heard very disturbing rumours as to the attitude of certain influential groups to split the working-man's solidarity. We wish to warn them that if any attempt is made to divide the Indian and African community no one but they themselves will suffer. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Plantation Justice For Helpless Workers

NO ASSURANCE OF REGULAR EMPLOYMENT BUT.....

It has been brought to the notice of the *Indian Opinion* that certain factory workers of Fin. Albion were sent to take up work in the fields because their jobs were taken up by individuals who did not live in the estate. Those "outsiders" are no longer available, and so the management has again asked the curers to work in the factory. They are willing to do so if given an assurance of regular factory employment. This the management will not give. But, according to the report, no work will be given the workers in the fields, if they do not accept factory employment.

Mr Alfred Sawh Pursuing Legal Studies

ARTICLED TO MR L.M.F. CABRAL

Mr. Alfred R. Sawh, eldest son of Mr. Ramsawh, business man of Triumph, East Coast, Demerara, intends to pursue studies in law. He has been articled to Mr. L.M.F. Cabral, Barrister-at-law.

After receiving his early education at St. Peter's R.C. School, Triumph, Mr. Sawh attended the Central High School, Georgetown, where he Matriolated. For a short period he was attached to the staff of the Central High School, after which he entered the Chambers of Mr. Cabral.

Organising Trade Unions in British India

It is recently reported that the British Government is doing every thing possible to foster Trade Unionism in Britain. Already Organisation has started on a large scale.

Even members of the Indian Congress are said to be collaborating for this improvement.

Hindi And Urdu Examination May Be Held In September

NAMES TO BE SUBMITTED NOT LATER THAN SEPT. 11 FEE IN ADVANCE

Should a sufficient number of candidates apply, an examination in Hindi and Urdu for Officers of the Public Service, Interpreters, and candidates for appointment as Interpreters, will be held at the Men's Hostel of the Teachers Training Centre, 237 Camp Street, Georgetown, commencing on Friday, September 22, 1944, at 8 a.m.

Persons who are desirous of presenting themselves for examination should submit their names to the Secretary not later than Monday, September 11, stating the standard and language in which they desire to be examined.

A candidate who is not a Government Officer is required to pay a fee in advance.

The B.G. East Indian Association Cables London and India with respect to Universal Adult Suffrage

Text Of Cables Below

July 30, 1944

Hon. N. D. Khars M.D. Nt Government of India Minister for Indians Overseas Delhi

Indians BRITISH GUIANA request your immediate intervention support our resolution now before Secretary of State for Colonies for introduction Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith Population British Guiana 360000 Indians 45 percent Africans 40 percent Europeans and mixed Races 15 percent New Constitution now being framed Downing Street on recommendations prejudiced Local Franchise Commission Majority Report Widespread dissatisfaction. Masses determined for equality of status in every respect regarding Franchise Minority reports recommend Universal Adult Suffrage as granted Ceylon and Jamaica stop Governor will be in London next week for consultation Please enlist support of Kunzru Jinnah and Congress situation critical for masses.

Indian Association

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July 30, 1944

Nt Mayor of Calcutta Calcutta

Indians British Guiana request your immediate intervention support our Resolution now before Secretary of State for Colonies for introduction Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith Population British Guiana 360000 Indians 45 percent Africans 40 percent Europeans and Mixed Races 15 percent New Constitution now

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*

July 30, 1944.

Nt India League 165 Strand London

British Guiana Franchise Commission Majority Report is considered biased and against Indians and masses in general especially illiterates Widespread dissatisfaction over Report Masses determined for equality of status in every respect regarding Franchise Please intervene immediately support demand for introduction Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith stop Have cabled Sir Jagdish Prasad Mayor of Calcutta and others also Creech Jones and Secretary of State for Colonies.

Indian Association

*

July 30, 1944

Nt Creech Jones House of Commons London

British Guiana Franchise Commission Majority Report is considered biased and against Indians and masses in general especially illiterates Widespread dissatisfaction over Report Masses determined for equality of status in every respect regarding Franchise stop Please intervene immediately support demand for introduction Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith Resolution by seven Organizations cabled Secretary of State for Colonies last week please enlist support Fabian Colonial Bureau and give them copy this cable.

Indian Association

Joseph G. Hanoman

GENERAL PROVISION
MERCHANTS

14 Pitt Street New Amsterdam

THE HOUSE OF
QUALITY AND SERVICE

Letter To The Editor

The Editor,
"Indian Opinion,"
Water Street,
Georgetown.

REPRESENTATION BY HONS.
J. A. LUCKHOO AND H. N.
CRITCHLOW

Sir,

I am writing to congratulate 'Indian' and 'Labourite' for their two letters in your issue of 12th August.

I am not surprised at Mr. Critchlow's behaviour. Those of us in the country districts who knew the man in his work for labour are not surprised. He is now in a position to help the working man and he has shown us the kind of help we must expect, I say again that I am not surprised, and we in the Essequibo Islands have no use for Mr. Critchlow.

Now about the Hon. J. A. Luckhoo, K.C. I remember when he was our representative for S. E. Essequibo for ten years. He proved so ungrateful that he was unable to face the Electorate in 1925. He then went to New Amsterdam in 1925 where the Hon. E. G. Woolford defeated him and he had to get out of the then Combined Court. In 1930 he contested the seat for Eastern Demerara against Mr. A. E. Seeram and he was defeated again. Now he is a Nominated Member, is it fair for the people to expect honest and true representation from a man who was rejected by the people on two separate occasions.

Mr. J. A. Luckhoo showed his hand when he advised Government against the East Indians who are entitled to return passages. He is persistently against the Indian masses and while he must be given credit for his ability as a Criminal Lawyer the best man to defend any one for the capital and other grievous crimes—he is the worst politician the Indians can get.

I will not forget his speech about Universal Adult Suffrage nor will I forget what he is doing about the school we are paying to carry on in this Island. As Chairman of the Education Advisory Committee, we are looking on with keen interest as to what he would do for Education generally, particularly in the remote parts of the Colony, where there are no opportunities for secondary education.

Yours etc,
VOTER

Wakenam,
15th August, 1944

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Facts About India

Women have the franchise in all British India, and there are women members in all the Provincial Legislatures. Mrs V. L. Pandit, a sister of Jawaharlal Nehru, has been a Cabinet Minister. Another woman, Begum Shab Nawaz, is a member of the National Defence Council.

*

One out of every five persons in the world is an Indian. India's total population of 388,800,000 inhabits an area of 1,576,000 square miles.

*

68 per cent. of the population are Hindus, 24 per cent. Moslems. The total number of Hindus in 1941 was 255½ millions; 49 millions of them belonged to the scheduled castes (or Untouchables). There were 94½ million Moslems, 63 million Indian Christians, and 5.7 million Sikhs. The remainder of the population belong to a wide variety of races and creeds.

*

The three most populous cities in British India are Calcutta 2,109,000, Bombay 1,488,000, and Madras 777,000; while in the Indian States Hyderabad leads with 729,000. The population of Delhi, the capital of India, is 533,000.

*

As the result of the handling of Indian finances by the British Administration, India stands on the threshold of political independence in a financial position which is almost, if not quite, unique. In the post-war period few countries will occupy a stronger financial position.

*

New industries are being developed in India. Machine tools, formerly imported, are now being made by over 50 firms. A heavy chemical industry is being developed, and India now makes 60 per cent. of her medical supplies. An aircraft assembly plant has been established, and the ship-building industry is being expanded.

*

The largest single steel plant in the British Commonwealth, including the United Kingdom, is the Tata Iron and Steel Works, a wholly Indian enterprise financed by Indian capital. India, for many years an importer of steel, is now an exporter.

T. Annamantadoo.

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Seven Organisations Hold Joint Meeting in Country

Eight Resolutions Passed Unanimously Claiming Universal Adult Suffrage Forthwith

Meetings were held at Cotton Tree and Rosignol on the W. C. Berbice; at Kitty on the E. C. Demerara; at Albouystown in Georgetown; at Poudroyen on W. B. Demerara; at Vreed-en-boop, Pina, Leonora and Windsor Forest, on the W. C. Demerara.

The attendance was in the majority of cases large and both Africans and Indians were present. Feelings were high on the matter and the resolutions were passed unanimously.

The meetings were held under the joint auspices of—

The British Guiana East Indian Association.

British Guiana Saatan Dharma Maha Sabha.

The Islamic Association of British Guiana.

Sadr-Anjuman E-Islam.

The Man Power Citizens' Association.

The Guiana United Trade Union.

The Cosmopolitan Workers' Union.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS there exists widespread dissatisfaction among the masses with respect to the Majority Report of the British Guiana Franchise Commission, 1941, which does not recommend the adoption of Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith;

AND WHEREAS the Majority Report is considered biased and prejudiced and does not express the view of the majority of the witnesses who appeared before the Commission and submitted their views to it,

AND WHEREAS the greater portion of the signatories of the Majority Report were continuously absent from the sittings of the said Franchise Commission;

AND WHEREAS the Majority Report appears to be based on racial consideration and the preservation of the interests of those in authority and control of the Government at the present time;

BE IT RESOLVED that this representative meeting places before His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, its considered opinion that all of His Majesty's Subjects who have attained the age of 21 years should be allowed to exercise the vote without further delay;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary for transmission to the Secretary of States for the Colonies by the first out going Air-Mail.

The Youth Council Of British Guiana

INDIANS DELIBERATELY KEPT OUT

The Editor "Indian Opinion"

Dear Sir,

Kindly allow me space in your valuable columns to state that I cannot understand how Government could appoint a Youth Council and leave out the East Indian Section of the Community all together. I would like to ask this plain question of Government is this the promised and much spoken of square deal being given Indians in British Guiana. It is a very baffling question in my mind and I would like an answer from the Government on the matter. While on this topic I take this opportunity of congratulating you on the efforts you are making in this direction.

Yours YOUTH

Press Statements Without Authority

MUSLIM PUBLIC MAY REST ASSURED

The Government of India have seen statements in the Press to the effect that it has been decided to permit a Haj (pilgrimage) this year from India. These statements are entirely without authority. While it is the desire of Government that a Haj should be arranged, if at all possible, the final decision must depend upon factors beyond Government's control.

No decision has yet been taken. The Muslim public may rest assured that as soon as a decision is reached it will be given wide publicity.

LALL BAHADUR SINGH

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Important Announcement

The British Guiana East Indian Association announces September the 24th as the date of its Annual Conference. Further announcements later.

"Why do we not wish them to be independent?"

APPLY THE RULE OF CHRIST AND LOVE THE INDIAN

EXISTING DISCONTENT AMONG THESE PEOPLES

(Written in 1923 by the Reverend C. P. Andrews—An Englishman)

We, Englishmen, have gradually got into the way of thinking, that every country can be made at one and the same time, more profitable to ourselves, and more happy in its own internal life, by coming under our protection. I happen to have been during my travels to all kinds of places, and nothing has impressed me so much as the discontent which is now existing among these indigenous peoples, who are being moulded into new shapes and forms by this protection of the British Government. The legend is kept up in England [for home-consumption] that every one is happy and contented under such protection. But this is not the truth. Whether it is a younger generation in Burma, or in South Africa, in Uganda or in Fiji I have had heart to heart talks with the young leaders in all these countries, and I can only say that the discontent is profound. If I had gone to Egypt or Mesopotamia or Palestine, or Ireland, it would have been the same story. My dear man, let us who are Christians, put to ourselves a plain and simple question. Would we like to be continually ruled by foreigners for our own so-called benefit? Don't you think it would make us perfectly miserable? Then, if that is the case, why do we not apply the rule of Christ, and love the Indian, the Burmese, the Egyptian, the Irish as our own self?

Why do we not do to others, that which we should wish them to do to us? If we would not like to be ruled by foreigners, why do we insist on keeping up a foreign rule? If we ourselves wish to be independent, why do we not wish them to be independent? As a Christian, it seems to me, there is no other way to meet that interrogation, except to desire earnestly and to strive all we can for the independence of every foreign part of what is called the British Empire. Don't you think that this follows from Christ's teaching?

Rambaros Misir

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19 Water Street

Georgetown

Facts About India

India, even before the war, ranked as one of the eight leading industrial countries of the world, while further developments now proceeding will raise her status still higher.



India, pivotal defence centre of the East, is the keystone of the great arch of lands around the Indian Ocean. Through India lie vital supply routes to Russia and China.



Indian troops numbered only 170,000 on the outbreak of war. India's army has now grown to over 2,000,000—all volunteers, and increasingly officered by Indians. It comprises all armed services, including parachute troops. Since May, 1942, the monthly average of recruits has been about 70,000. In the last war the highest figure reached was 40,000, and that only in one month.



Indian and British troops have fought side by side on almost every front. Seven members of the Indian Army—six Indian and one British—have been awarded the Victoria Cross.



The Royal Indian Navy consisted of only 10 or 12 small ships at the outbreak of the war, chiefly used for patrolling India's long coast line. Now corvettes, minesweepers & sloops have been added and the sea-going personnel has increased by over 1500 per cent. The Navy served with "conspicuous efficiency" during the East African campaign, fought in the Battle of the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean, and in the Java Sea, helped to evacuate 40,000 Indians from Burma, and has kept the Red Sea routes open.



There are 40,000 Indian seamen serving in the merchant ships of the Allies. In the face of bombing, shelling and hardships they have shown unflinching courage, patience and cheerfulness.



There are ten squadrons of the Indian Air Force, the personnel of which, except for a few technical instructors, is entirely Indian, in addition to the Royal Air force units in India. Indian Air Force pilots have served with distinction, particularly in Burma, and Indian pilots are serving with the Royal Air Force in Britain.



India is producing 90 per cent of her own equipment, as well as supplying other members of the United Nations, especially those associated with the Eastern Group Supply Council which, from March, 1941, in New Delhi, has allocated supplies and resources throughout the countries in the Eastern Hemisphere.

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