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In the Court of R. L. Yorke I. C. S. Addl: Sessions Judge Meerut.

In the case of King-Emperor Vs. P. Spratt and others Examination of S. A. Dange accused under section 342 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, made before me R. L. Yorke Addl: Sessions Judge at Meerut on the 26th day of October 1931.

My name is Sripat Amrit Dange; my father's name is Amrit Raghunath Dange; I have no caste as I do not believe in Caste; 31 years of age; by occupation Journalist and Labour organiser, my home is at Bombay, Police-station City of Bombay, district Bombay, I reside at Bombay.

Q. You heard your statement in the Lower Court P 2613 read out to you on 16-3-31. Is that statement correct?

A. Yes.

Q. The following documents which are in evidence against you may be described as foreign correspondence:—P 1869C, 2328P2, 1968, 1009, 1606, 1607, 1845, 1633, 76, 1345 (34), 2408P, 1609 and A and 1807 (1), 1610, 2215, 1208 (1), 2412P, 2419P, 2409P, 2211, 2057P, 2413 P2, 807, 1803, and 1203. Have you anything to say about this evidence?

A. I am technically charged with conspiracy to deprive the King of his sovereignty of British India. But as has already been said I am being tried for subscribing to the principles of Communism, and thereby endangering not only Government "but the whole of the established order of society". (Mr. Kemp's speech in the High Court). Sir James Crerar in his speech on the Public Safety Bill in September 1928 wanted the suppression of Communist views to save the "established order of society". The Viceroy in a speech in Calcutta at the end of 1928 referring to us said, "While every allowance must be made for the genuine grievances which the labouring classes feel there can be no doubt that the unrest of the past years has been due in no small measure to the activities of certain persons, whose end is rather to promote anti-social purposes than to secure the betterment of the workmen's lot. The disquieting spread of the methods of Communism has for some time been causing my Government anxiety.....all classes alike are threatened by the spread of these doctrines and no Government can afford to ignore this insidious danger." (Exhibit P 1206). So on 20th March 1929 the Government removed 32 centres of its anxiety and locked them inside the Meerut Prison. For three years "this insidious danger" has been locked inside the prison by the big round-up and locked outside India by the Public Safety Ordinance and

Sea Customs Act. I would have been quite pleased to stay in if I had been shown that excellent "established society", "culture", "religion" etc. which we were threatening had now improved for the benefit of mankind and contributed to the happiness of the millions of workers, peasants and soldiers. The element of disruption being removed, stability and happiness should have grown.

But the sovereignty of the representative of His Majesty was challenged most unceremoniously, and His Excellency speaking at the Associated Chambers of Commerce said (15th December 1930) "An unkind friend reminded me that when I addressed your meeting two years ago I ventured on the statement that the general position gave good ground for sober optimism.... For a year or so after that meeting of 1928, it is true the position showed no great change for the worse, but the Wall Street collapse of October 1929 proved to be the beginning of an acute world depression." That unkind friend forgot to tell the Viceroy that the locking of Communists in Meerut Prison was not going to help his established capitalist society. Capitalist society was crumbling down under the weight of its own contradictions and it was not "the insidious danger" of Communism that had any hand in it. The foreign editor of the Journal De Geneva writes, "The world never had institutions which seemed to be more firmly established than the Parliament at Westminster, the British fleet and the pound sterling. The people were wont to consider these as the chief pillars of international life. The Parliament was the prototype of Democracy, the fleet was the guardian of the security of the sea and the pound sterling was the world currency par excellence. In less than three months the British nation has abandoned the traditional Party politics of its Parliamentary institutions, it has witnessed a formidable mutiny among the crew of its fleet and now it is assisting with a hardened heart the fall of the pound sterling. These are great trials hard even for a people with soul so well seasoned." These are great trials hard even for a Capitalism so well seasoned with 4,000 millions pounds of foreign investment. To boast before the world of an "Ideal Democracy" and yet to suspend it and pass a budget by means of an ordinance (Order in Council) is not a great trial, but a great revelation to those who are enamoured of Parliamentary Democracy. When Imperialism is fooling the Indian bourgeois patriots with discussions over the skeletons of Parliamentary structure and teaching them schoolboy stories of Robert Bruce it is a humiliation for it to appear next minute with an electioneering campaign that openly asks for a Dictatorship, to save the nation—that is Capitalism. Democracy Parliament, established order of society and His Majesty's private

purse in the bargain, are being assailed by the international bankers' cabal while adherents of the Communist International in the Empire do not number more than a few thousands. The overthrow of British Imperialism is not an act of Communist Conspiracy. It is already going on before our very eyes for the last ten years. And a man, who helped that Imperialism with crores of the Indian workers' and peasants' money, when he was the Finance Member of the Government of India, in order that "established order," Sovereignty, and the sovereign may not go down, has lost his faith in his own Capitalism and says, "I am not sure that we do not need a new political and economic technique to deal with the situation. I am not sure we should not be wise to take a leaf out of the books of both Italy and Russia in the matter of organised thinking and planning." (Times of India, 18th July, 1931.) Sir Basil Blackett, who says the above, has purposely confused Fascism with Bolshevism but the yearning of this Director of the Bank of England for "a new political and economic technique" is unmistakable. Capitalism is bankrupt and looks everywhere, even to Bolshevism, to lift it out of the grave it is sinking in. We Communists are accused of planning the ruin of all capitalists. But the most brainy fellow of British Capitalism Professor J. M. Keynes proposed that very thing, by which of course, he thinks he can re-organise Capitalism. "Individually we should all be 'ruined' but collectively we should be much as before. Perhaps indeed it is an attractive alternative, this committing of suicide by the capitalists. For under the pressure of hardship and of excitement we might find out some much better ways of managing our affairs." The great economist is quite sure that the "suicide of capitalists" is attractive. We agree with him in his literal sense. But with all his cleverness, he is only fumbling for a way. He is not sure and looks to "some much better ways", and he, of course, does not know who will show it. It is we Communists, it is Marxism—Leninism, the Communist International which has the better way, overthrow of Capitalism, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, then orderly economic planning of socialist life and thus freeing the world from anarchy and chaos. That is the "much better way"—the only way.

The British Empire, that Sovereignty against which we are said to be conspiring, is nearly half conquered and is no longer sovereign. It is a colony of American Imperialism. When we speak of making India and Britain a Soviet Republic you falsely accuse us of bringing in Russian rule, and supplanting the Empire. But when thieves fall out they let out their secrets to their victims, so is your secret out. Henderson goes out telling the world,

“We were told that the country would not have Russian Dictatorship, German Dictatorship or for that matter even the Dictatorship of the British Trade Union Council. But the so-called National Government is prepared to accept the Dictatorship of American bankers at the cost of the British working class.” Yet with the backing of the two mighty Imperialisms of U. S. A. and France British capitalism cannot stave off its ruin. What better authority can there be on this point than the brilliant Governor of the Bank of England, Mr. Montague Norman? In a letter to the Governor of the Bank of France, M. Moret, he writes: “Unless drastic measures are taken to save it, the capitalist system throughout the civilised world will be wrecked within a year. I should like this prediction filed for future reference” (quoted by Mr. Wilfred Wellock, M. P. in a recent issue of the *New Leader*). Mr. Norman himself made very drastic aeroplane dashes to the Financial Capitals of Europe and America to save the credit of the pound and of the Bank of England, which is the essence of British Capitalism. But he failed. The pity of it is that after 12 years of governorship of the financial operations of British Capitalism, Mr. Norman still hopes to save it. The Capitalist system throughout the civilised world is incapable of any “drastic measures” because those very measures that are proposed to save it, hasten its downfall. The only “drastic measure” to save, not Capitalism, but society, is that the Dictatorship of the bankers has to be replaced by the Dictatorship of the working class. But this is no “prediction to be filed for future reference,” but an urgent necessity to be worked out in reality, if society is to be saved from a return to barbarism and destruction of all its achievements.

If Capitalism is collapsing in Britain, it is not more stable in India. That “established order of society,” which the knights of a declining Imperialism have come forward to defend by our arrest has escaped their control. We were said to be the cause of industrial ruin and unrest. We were removed and two and a half years after, Sir George Rainy comes before the Legislative Assembly and tells them “the present economic depression in India is beyond the control of the Government” (September 10, 1931). The State of the bourgeoisie is impotent to save its own class. The champion of parasitic landlordism, Sir Fazle Hussain supporting the spokesman of Imperialism said, “It was equally true that no Local Government could put the matters right in a couple of years”, and as if to hearten his class he went on, “It was also not right to get into the mood that India was the only country that was badly affected.” He showed by way of illustration what sort of conditions existed with in the British Empire. Imperialism—Capitalism

were bankrupt not only within India but in the whole Empire. Their conspiracy of bankruptcy had a 'foreign part' and an 'Indian part.' Poor Fazle is optimistic and thinks his class can get up after two years. So they used to say about dead Czarism also! You may have a short flutter of life again, but you have to make way for Communism, for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It is rising from the ruins of your own economy. The Capitalist State is crumbling and even if all the Mahatmas collect all the taxes from the peasantry for you, the State is collapsing.

Like mean demagogues, our accusers misrepresent us before the people and tell them that we are 'out against' culture, 'against their family and happiness. And the nationalist patriots join them in that game. I can only throw in their face their own report and the admission of their own men. An official report quoted by the Times of India (17th October 1931) says, "In several features traffic in women resembles cattle-theft..... To indulge in it brings no disgrace in the eyes of the public." "At one place men were caught kidnapping by pushing along a handcart containing a concealed double compartment into which they put likely-looking girls whom they espied in the street." That is the value of women in your society. You have to set up a commission of the League of Nations to stop the international capitalist trading in girls. And yet the hireling intellectuals of Capitalism are not ashamed to say that it is Communism that abolishes the family. Mian Shah Nawaz said in the Assembly (31st March, 1931) that "he knew from his own knowledge that men were driven to selling their daughters in order to get money to pay their obligations in the shape of land revenue and the moneylenders' interest." Who is thus abolishing the family? We or Capitalism? All the patriotic bourgeois and Imperialists stand for the maintenance of this "established order." When they find they cannot do it, they wreak their vengeance on the heads of the revolutionary workers and peasants who fight under their vanguard, the Communist Party, and on the heads of those revolutionary intellectuals who refuse the Mahatmic compromise and surrender to Imperialism. But that is not going to help. Capitalism leads inevitably to Communism. It is a necessity if society is to be saved. It is not a criminal conspiracy but a scientific system of social reconstruction.

PART I.

WHAT I BELIEVE IN.

THE PHENOMENON OF SOCIAL GROWTH AND THE CLASS- STRUGGLE IN THE FOREIGN COUNTRIES FROM WHICH MARXISM IS DERIVED.

Q. The following documents relate to your connection with the Communist Party of India:—

P 1287 (11), 1140, 1141, 840, 1605, 1207 (1) (=409), 989 Kranti of 4-6-27 and 16-6-27, 1684, 1285, 1287 (2), (3), 2055C, 1295, 1300, 1310, 1296, 1208 (3), (4), and 1574. Have you anything to say about this evidence?

SECTION I The Birth of Classes and the Rise of Capitalism-Imperialism : Paras 1—32.

1. *Our object not the same as alleged by the Prosecution.*

A. In answer to a question from the Magistrate in the Lower Court, I had said that I was a Communist and I affirm the statement now. I will explain what I understand by Communism and what my aims and objects as a Communist are. I do not want to do this in order to mark myself off, by any special interpretation of "my own" from the already existing authoritative expositions of the aims and objects of Communism, found in the works of Lenin and others. Till the epoch of Proletarian Revolutions and a certain building up of Socialism is over, the necessity of materially enlarging the details of the further aims of Communism will not arise. For the present period the guidance of Leninism is quite sufficient. Therefore, I could have disposed of the whole question of my aims by pointing out to the most authoritative works of Marx and Lenin. Some of these are put in as Prosecution exhibits also—viz. "The Communist Manifesto of 1847" (P21), "Capital" (P 455), "The Civil War in France" (P 1179), (D 409), "Imperialism" (P528), "State and Revolution" (P 1092), "On the Road to Insurrection" (P 979), "Left Wing Communism" (P 975), Bukharin's "Historical Materialism" (P 864). So also the several theses adopted by the World Congresses of the Communist International. In order to convince the Court about the aims and objects of the Communists and to show that they are quite the same as they are represented by the Prosecution to be in their complaint, they (the prosecution) have exhibited more than a hundred books, and after the digest of

so many volumes they have formulated a complaint and delivered an Opening Address to the Court which shows they have either not understood our aims or have purposely misrepresented them. I am not prepared to believe that the Prosecution, represented by the best available brains of bourgeois culture are incapable of an intellectual understanding of the literature. I would rather say that their class duty dictates to them the latter course. Therefore my aims as a Communist are not the same as shown by the Prosecution nor is their interpretation of my activities correct.

2. *Fundamental proposition of the Communist Manifesto.*

The theory and practice of Communism which is also known as Marxism and Leninism was first scientifically formulated by Marx (1818-1883) and Engels (1820-1895). Both Marx and Engels were Germans, both of them in their early life took part in the revolutionary upheavals in Germany, both were champions of the working* class and peasantry and were therefore expelled from Germany. After expulsion, Marx and Engels lived in England, the classical home of Capitalism. While there Marx studied the development of Capitalism, how the working class creates the wealth of society and how it is appropriated by the Capitalist class and how at a certain stage of development it becomes necessary to overthrow Capitalism and establish Socialism. He observed how Capitalism developed in England and the Continent, the displacement of handicraft production of English artisans by English capitalists, owning the newly invented machinery, the capture of political power from the hands of the old feudal lords and merchants by the new bourgeoisie. He saw how in this struggle the working class and peasantry was used by the rising bourgeoisie to fight its class battles and was after the struggle exploited by the bourgeoisie, and he formulated the fundamental proposition in the Communist Manifesto—"that in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange and the social organisation necessarily following from it formed the basis upon which is build up and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch, and consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a development in which a stage now been reached, where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time and once for all

emancipating society at large, from all exploitation, oppression, class distinction and class struggle." (P 21). The proposition states that the classes arose from the dissolution of the primitive classless society, when private property arose. One class was of those who owned the means of production, land etc. and another of those who worked and gave the surplus to the owners. The exploiting class dominated and governed society in its own interest. The conflict of economic interests has led to a continuous class war (sometimes violent, sometimes peaceful) and now in the present epoch of Capitalism a stage has come where society cannot move forward without once for all overthrowing Capitalism and establishing a classless society, that is Socialist society. This is historically inevitable. After the episode of the Paris Commune, Marx emphasised the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a transitional stage. Thus in fact all the fundamental principles of Communism were formulated by Marx and Engels in the period 1842-1895 including the now universally famous slogan "Workers of the World unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win," which appeared for the first time in the Communist Manifesto issued by the Communist League from London in 1847 and which was also printed as a guiding principle of the first Marxist paper "The Communist" issued in September 1847 by Engels.

3. Communism is neither German, Russian nor English.

There is a lot of talk going round about "Moscow Road" and "Moscow Ideas". It is said that Communism is a Russian growth unsuitable to any other soil and especially the Indian. I may point out that neither Marx nor Engels were Russian. By birth they were German, by long residence they were English and their study and writings were done in England. Communism would be German according to the birth of its founders, and English according to the place of its formulation and publication, French according to its first experiment and Russian according to its second and successful experiment. But such a labelling is absurd and unscientific. Marxism has no nationality because it is a science of social construction. The fundamental proposition of Marxism applies to every social group wherever it exists. The differences in its application arise, not from differences of nationality, religion or caste, but from differences in the economic development of the particular social group in a particular historical epoch. In the present epoch of Imperialism the application of Marxism to Russia, India, and China will be predominantly similar, not because Lenin was a Russian and the Communists in India and China

follow Leninism and observe "Lenin Days," but because these three semi-continents are similar in economic development, that is they are predominantly agrarian and feudal. While the application of Marxism to countries like England, Germany and America will be somewhat different because of the high industrialisation there. But it must be remembered that these differences will not be very emphatic. In its main outlines, the line of advance will be highly similar. Thus when I follow Marxism, Leninism or Communism, I am not following a method of this country or that but the method of reconstruction of society which is proved historically to be necessary and correct.

4. *Our aim—to replace world Capitalist Economy by a world system of Communism.*

My aim as a Communist is to replace world capitalist economy by a world system of Communism. Now the necessity for this arises out of the historical development of modern society which threatens to degrade and even destroy the human race if capitalist economy were not overthrown. This necessity has nothing to do with the question whether individual capitalists are charitable and very religious men or a most hateful pack of scoundrels. Even if they were most "ideal men" living on two pennies a day, eating from iron utensils, in their private life, the capitalist economy would have to be overthrown and replaced by a socialist economy because the former is no longer compatible with the growth of society. So when Communists speak of their aim they do not speak of it, as if it is ordained by some holy book descended from heaven or because it is preached by an extraordinary genius like that of Marx or Lenin, such as are cast forth by Nature once in centuries. Their aim is a historical inevitability, the inexorable demand born out of social growth of centuries. "The theoretical conclusions of Communists are in no way based on the ideas or principles that have been invented by this or that would be universal reformer. They merely express in general terms actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes," wrote Marx himself in the famous Manifesto of 1847.

5. *Existing system not eternal.*

The existing capitalist economy governing the whole world did not exist from time immemorial. It is a wellknown historical fact that Capitalism arose after the mechanical inventions, the great changes in the technique of production, exchange and transport and the social revolution following from them. It is a commonplace lesson of every school textbook of history that the modern

capitalist economy and the industrial powers in the world were born from the industrial and technical revolutions of the 18th and 19th century. We all know that formerly there were barons, landlords and kings on one side and small towns and castles, artisans and handicraftsmen, handloom weavers and the small merchants on the other; that all these have vanished. In their place have sprung up big industrial companies, huge cartels, finance-kings and banks on the one hand, and a huge army of workers and petty bourgeois employees on the other. An unlimited accumulation of wealth at one end of the pole and accumulation of misery at the other. This development has been going on under our very eyes, giving birth to new forms of class struggle. The changed conditions, the new bourgeois economy, was the outcome of the new technology of society the new instruments of production and exchange, that are being daily perfected more and more.

6. *Its characteristics—Monopoly of the means of production.*

The characteristic features of this capitalist economy which dominates the world today are these:— The monopoly ownership of the most vital means of production of social necessities by the capitalist class and big landlords, the existance of a propertiless wage-earning class which being deprived of the means of production is compelled to sell its labour power to the capitalist class; the production of commodities for profit, and linked up with all this the planless and anarchic method of production as a whole.

The characteristics of capitalist economy are to be found in their highly developed form in those Imperialist countries where Capitalism has been developing in the 19th century. The monopolisation of the means of production by the capitalist class and a whole propertiless population at their mercy are a condition at their highest point of development in America, England, France, Germany, and Japan. Though these countries by themselves are not a very substantial part of the world either in territory or in population, yet their economy, the Imperialist economy dominates the whole world in all its branches of life.

The monopolisation of the means of production by the capitalist class has not been brought about by what is called the accumulation of the honest returns of enterprise, the abstinence of the capitalist class in not spending away all its profits but charitably and most humanely reinvesting them in industry so that the poor may get work and be fed and humanity attain happiness. Such an idea of capitalist process is reserved for the priest to

preach from the pulpit to the gullible, and the school master to the pupils so that they may not revolt against bourgeois property.

7. *Monopoly brought about by force.*

The monopolisation of the means of production by the capitalist class has been brought about by violent robbery and forcible expropriation of the artisans of the middle ages, the violent expropriation of the peasantry and the feudal landlords by the new bourgeoisie, and by wholesale robbery of such feudal nations like India and China by the Capitalism of Europe and America. The primary accumulation of feudal property and afterwards of bourgeois property is a tale of nothing but bloody violence on English farmers by English landlords, of opium wars of the spoliation of Begums and Nawabs, of rate wars and wars for concessions of exploitation and finally Imperialist world wars. Accumulation of Capital in the hands of the bourgeoisie is accompanied by the ruthless exploitation of child and woman labour, by the horrible atrocities on a rebellious working class, trying to get a few more rupees and a few less hours of work. "Capital is born into the world oozing with blood from head to foot," so said Marx.

8. *Capitalism civilises—why then rebel?*

But an objection may be raised that these are stories that belong to the dead past, why unearth them now? Today at least Capitalism is trying its best to give better conditions of work to the workers, who would be nowhere if capitalists were not to run their factories. Are not the capitalists taking you by their side on the highest ruling authority of the Empire—the British Cabinet? They are instituting great welfare schemes for the workers. They are prohibiting child labour in factories and woman labour in mines. In the best capitalist countries they are spending millions to feed the unemployed. Then why complain against Capitalism?

If capitalists have the monopoly of the means of production, of the great wealth-producing factors, why grumble against that? Has not Capitalism developed the whole world from marshy jungles into wealth-producing populated countries with culture, civilisation and all the best things that could be obtained under the sun? There are some defects in the capitalist system, no doubt about it. It has its bad features, as every thing else in the world has. But then the Communists alone have not the monopoly of the best means for removing these evils. There are others also who are as much anxious about society, workers, and all. They too are trying to

remove social evils. Let us "all" unite for the good of humanity. Such are the arguments of many petty bourgeois reformists.

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9. We appreciate progress under Capitalism.

We cannot afford in the first place to bury the hatchet and forget history. History is a great account-book and balance-sheet of every epoch of the class-struggle of the great concern called society. When a great concern is failing, affecting the lives of 2,000 million people, it is impossible to take over charge of it and reconstruct it without its previous account-book. Up till now in all the historical epochs, all the misery has been credited to our side, while all the good things of life have been pocketed once by feudalism and next by the bourgeoisie. But even supposing for a moment we consent to forget history, consent to let bygones be bygones, even supposing that the whole bourgeoisie has been overtaken by a complete "change of heart," we cannot pull on with Capitalism. Even if every bourgeois were to turn out tomorrow in the coarsest Sabarmati cottons, begin to live on goat's milk and cucumbers and call his workers and tenants "my dear brother," while keeping intact the present property relations, still Capitalism must be overthrown.

There is no school of thought in the world which appreciates and assesses the world of Capitalism at its true and highest value as much as Marxism does. "The bourgeoisie during its rule of scarce one hundred years has created more massive and colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjugation of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?" (Manifesto—Marx). This was written in 1847 by the founders of Communism. Since then subjugation of nature's forces to man has gone still further. Railways are superseded by air-ways, canalisation of rivers is fading into canalisation of oceans if they dare to obstruct man's traffic. From electric telegraphs we have moved into television, and the old feudal soldier of the Bikaner desert is not now surprised to see his son jump from the jerking dromedary into the giant dirigible. The bourgeoisie has done all this, and that is why it is time now for it to be overthrown, just as

if overthrew its predecessor, because it is no longer compatible with further progress.

10. *What makes it now incompatible with progress—nature and society—the process of production.*

What is it that has made the system suddenly incompatible with further social development, when for so long it worked so hard and so nice and created a new world? The element that has made it so, we call "the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations." What does it mean?

Human society ever since it began has had to abstract material energy from Nature; without these loans it could not exist. Society best adapts itself to Nature by abstracting (and appropriating) more energy from Nature; only by increasing this quantity of energy does society succeed in growing. "Every child knows that any nation would perish of hunger, if it should stop work, I shall not say for a year, but only for a few weeks." (Marx's letter). Men cultivate the ground, raise wheat, rye, maize; they breed and graze animals. They satisfy their demands for food, clothing and shelter.

In order that society may continue to live, this process of production must be constantly renewed. If we assume that at any moment a certain amount of wheat, shoes and shirts have been produced and all these are eaten up and used up, in the same period, it is clear that production must at once repeat its cycle; they have to be *reproduced*. The raw material like cotton and also the instrument which made it into cloth, all deteriorate and have to be reproduced. In this process of production and reproduction, the *balance* between what you have been able to produce and what you have spent or it has been necessary for you to spend is the decisive element in the growth of society.

For example, a certain society, like that of the aboriginal Bhils or certain groups closed in the interior of Africa, which must devote all its working time to covering its most rudimentary needs, will consume all its produce as rapidly as new products are produced. If half the year it gathers mulberries and half the year it spins on a takli it will have spent its old mulberries, by the time it has spun some cotton for itself, and by the time it gathers new, it has worn out its takli product and must spin again and so on. This society will remain at the same low level of existence.

11. *Technology, the material measure of progress.*

But if by reason of machinery and tools, the same quantity of necessary produce is obtained in half the time, that society will get time to devote the saving in time to "culture" or obtaining other useful products. Society will grow. So the growth of society depends on the *productivity of social labour*. It means the relations between the quantity of product obtained and the quantity of labour expended. Obviously the productivity of labour is a precise measure of the 'balance' between society and nature. The expenditure of labour consists of two components: the labour that is crystallised and transferred into instruments of production, and the "living labour", i.e. direct expenditure of working energy. The material factors of the productivity of labour as a quantity are the quantity of products obtained; second, the quantity of instruments of production; third, the quantity of the productive forces, i.e. living workers. All these taken together become "the material productive forces of society." If in the case of a certain society we know what kinds of instruments it controls and how many, what kinds of workers and how many, we shall also know the productivity of social labour and what will be the degree to which that society has conquered nature. For example if we know that a Sabarmati-Ashram-Society on an All India scale requires a hundred million taklis with hundred million spinners to provide the necessary yarn for cloth working at 12 hours a day and side by side with it Soviet India requires ten million spindles with 20,000 spinners working at 7 hours a day only, it can give us a precise material measure for the stage attained by them in the conquest of nature and social evolution.

In trying to change nature with the help of instruments of production (which also determine the distribution and consumption) man changes himself also. If the handloom is evolved into a power loom the handicraftsman will vanish and the skilled powerloom weaver will come into existence. Motors will produce motor-drivers. Thus instruments and persons are not merely aggregates but they stand in deep interconnection, in a system, all persons and things standing in a definite relation to each other. This technology of society is the material indicator of the relation between society and nature. It is the fundamental characteristic which differentiates one social group from another.

For example, the Mughal Emperor Aurengzeb, in the days when printing was not known, used to copy the Kuran in handwriting and sell it, which was the prevalent mode of producing books. It took days to make one copy and cost one guinea.

Today, the same copy is produced on the lithograph by a thousand per hour costing a few annas. Technology has advanced and indicates our higher stage of evolution.

12. Instruments determine ideas and classes—their lay-out—they produce a working class after their own image.

The instruments of labour not only determine the type of labour, they also produce a system of ideas. Human beings are not like tools. They think. But this thinking is also governed by technology and the consequent social structure following from it. The elements in society would therefore be (1) things (2) persons (3) ideas. These elements stand in a definite relation to each other. Everyone knows that the instruments of production do not stand merely in certain places but in a certain order. At any given moment if we study society functioning we can find this easily. For example, the textile mills in Bombay and their looms and spindles are arranged in a definite order, in a definite proportion, so many carding machines for so many spindles, so many spindles for so many looms. Then again all mills have a definite relation of the coal or electricity they consume, the cotton they require, the iron and steel factories they want for meeting their needs of machinery. The relation inside a single factory is fixed. But the relation between one branch of technology, say like textiles, and another, say production of cotton, in the unorganised Capitalist society, depends on blind forces, while in an organised socialist system it depends on conscious direction of forces. But still a relation does exist in all society. This relation between different branches of social production and their proportions also determine the structure of human relations of that society. For example, we take textiles. In the feudal days when manufacture of cloth was done by spinning on charkha and weaving on wooden handlooms, the nature of technology determined the order of human relations. Cotton was produced in small patches on village lands, ginned and carded in the cottages and distributed to spinners. The spinners' product was either woven in the same family or given to the village weavers. What was the structure arising from this? There would not be a Central Cotton Committee as we have today in India presided over by a cotton magnate. There could not be a Cotton Exchange because no cotton came to the market operating on an international scale. There could not be mill-owners owing millions of spindles, as millions of spindles could not be fixed in a steel-frame running a thousand spindles at a time and making the instrument so costly and so efficient that necessarily the village spinner could not buy it nor could compete

with it. There were of necessity small cotton patches, cottage spinners and weavers unconnected by any market on a large scale and not subject to a factory system. Similarly in the case of building. The Moghuls could build the beautiful Taj Mahal. Capitalist technique today can produce a like one or even a better one. But the Taj Mahal remains a wonder. To whom? To the villager because it is so magnificent. But for the modern men, the men of cities like London and New York it is also a wonder. Their wonder consists in the question, how could the technique of those days produce such a structure? A large part of the wonder consists not in what thing is produced but *how* it is produced. The Moghul Emperor took five years and 20,000 men to produce it. The technology of the time required hundreds of separate artisans, employed thousands of slaves to chisel out the masonry and raise it in months and months. But modern technology would cut the stone with huge electric iron saws, raise it with cranes, get the whole thing planned by delicate instruments and finish the job with a few hundred skilled workers in a few months. The two technologies produce two different labour relations, types of labourers and the order in which they stand to each other. Slaves are incompatible with delicate machinery. The technique determines the organisation of labour, in the productive process. The poor technology of ancient times produced things on small scale resulting in a poor exchange process. The economy remained mostly economy in kind. Modern technology makes it possible for a capitalist manufacturer to produce, say, shoes by thousands. As he cannot wear them all, he throws them on the market. He produces "commodities" which is a consequence of change in technology.

In the nationalist literature of India today we find often a reference to the fact that India produced fine muslins in ancient days. The thumb cutting of Dacca weavers is a famous example which millions of orators today use to illustrate the ruthless suppression of Indian industry by Lancashire. They say that if violence had not been used against these weavers they would have competed against the finest of Lancashire cloths. There is no doubt about the fact that Dacca weavers produced fine goods and that they were forcibly suppressed. But that does not alter the fact that the social technology of India of those times was poorer than that of Lancashire or India today. As is said above the question is not 'what' things were produced but 'how' they were produced, which shows the stage of social evolution. Dacca muslin of 110 counts requires a weaver to cultivate a peculiar kind of nails and dexterity of fingers over long years. The social time necessary to produce ten

yards of that muslin was several hundred times more than what the modern spindles and looms will require. A saving in social expenditure of energy on the same product caused by the two different techniques constitutes our advance. Even the violent suppression and conquest of India was due to the higher technology of Britain, and we would be unfair to the British bourgeoisie if we were not to mention the fact that it suppressed the British weavers also as ruthlessly as it suppressed the Indian.

13. *Instruments distribute men.*

If we observe the relations of men in the productive process we find that the groupings of men are not accomplished in such a manner as to cause the various groups to lie in horizontal line but rather in a vertical line. For example in the conditions of serfdom of the ancient Hindu caste system we find at the top the owners of the estates, sharing their power with the theological autocracy which at the beginning had an economic content. Then we find ministers, petty merchants and at the bottom the peasants; all of them again standing over the heads of the aboriginals, jungle-cleaners and marshy place cleaners, the vanguard of the colonising groups of Kashtrias. In capitalist production relations, men are not only distributed as machinists, railwaymen, textile workers etc., all of whom in spite of great difference between their tasks are working along the same line occupying the same relative station in production. But above them we find overseers, master mechanics, "salaried employees," then the agents, managers, owners and capitalists. So we find differently constituted relations between persons at work. All of them participate in the labour process. In classifying we may do so by trade or calling and also according to *classes*. On the basis of occupations we shall have smiths, carpenters, weavers etc. Then in the higher class we shall have supervisors, engineers, jobbers, etc. It is quite obvious that the smith, the fitter or the weaver are in a class different from that of the engineer, the supervisor or the jobber. And distinct from them all is the capitalist who has control of all. In spite of the difference in work of the numbers of the first category, they all stand in the same relation in the labour process. But their relation to the capitalist is quite different. The greatest differences here are in the productive function, in the significance of each in the productive process.

The capitalist in his factory distributes and arranges his workers just as he might his tools and machines; but in the capitalist system, the workers can not distribute the capitalist. This is a

relation of "master and servant, with Capital in command". The basis of division of men into different social classes lies in their different functions in the productive process.

14. Distribution of Capital determines distribution of products.

The process of distribution is governed by the process of production. The former is not independent of the latter. As I have already said, in modern technology, each establishment produces a special product and its distribution takes the form of exchange. The manner of production determines the manner of distribution of its products. But in the process of production itself are involved two "distributions", firstly the distribution of persons in the process, and secondly the distribution of tools amongst these persons. The varying distribution of persons as we have seen is again connected with the distribution of the means of labour. The capitalist and the landlord control the means of labour, factory, land etc; while the worker has no instruments of labour apart from his labour power. The slaves and peasant serfs—like Dublas in Gujarat—do not own even their bodies. It is therefore obvious that the varying function of classes in production is based on the distribution of instruments of production among them. Engels says, "Economy deals not with things but with relations between persons and in the last analysis between classes; but these relations are always bound up with things and appear as things". For example, the current class relations in capitalist society, namely the relations between capitalists and workers are bound with a thing, the instruments of production owned, controlled and used to obtain profits for the former. These instruments like the mills in Bombay are not merely for producing cloth. They also have a special, social significance. They are instruments of exploiting wage labourers. The capitalist obtains profits because he owns the means of production which ultimately means capital. Thus the distribution of the means of production determines the distribution of the products. The owner of the means of producing cloth has all of it while to the share of the worker falls little of it. It is these class relations which determine in the first place the outline of society, its economic structure.

In a complicated society like the modern the relations of production and consequently of distribution are very complicated and interwoven. But the fundamental scheme of all is the relation between the great groups known as social classes. The system of society will depend on the classes included in society, their mutual position, their functions in the productive forces, the distribution

of the instruments of labour. We have a capitalist society if the capitalist is on top; a slave system if the slave owner is on top and in control of every thing; and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat if the workers are on top.

15. *Change in technology changes social structure.*

The form of social classes depends on production relations, which in turn depend on the technology of society. So if technology changes, the social classes also must change. Fifty years ago in India large scale production was unknown. The means of production had not advanced beyond simple tools which depended on the skilful use of the workers who wielded them. As the instrument of production was subject to the skill of the worker, production was scattered, and technique could not give birth to large scale production concentrated in a factory and consequently to the class of proletarians of modern capitalist society. With the change in technique the artisan class is being destroyed and a proletariat is in the process of formation. The merchant guild master is vanishing and is being replaced by the modern banks and capitalists. Class relations change with the changes in the productive forces. "These social relations between the producers and the conditions under which they exchange their activities and share in the total act of production, will naturally vary according to the character of production. With the discovery of a new instrument of warfare, the firearms, the whole internal organisation of the army was necessarily altered, the relations within which individuals composed an army and can work as an army were transformed, and the relation of different armies to one another was likewise changed. We thus see that social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production; are altered, transformed with the change and development of the material means of production, of the forces of production". (Karl Marx "Wage Labour and Capital"). This in other words is the proposition which I have already quoted. The totality of production relations is the economic structure of society or its mode of production.

16. *The Superstructure—State, religion, art etc.*

The question then arises—are the other phases of social life a product of these production relations or are they an independent growth? These other phases are of a varied character, some of them appearing to be so far removed from a direct relation with the economic structure of society that they take up an appearance of an independent growth. But Marxism states that all the social,

political and cultural aspects including religion, art, manners, customs, philosophy etc., are conditioned by the economic structure of society.

In the modern Imperialist epoch it requires very little argument to prove that the State conforms to the economic structure. In capitalist society, the capitalists control the means of production, naturally they control the State also. The fusion of the activities of the great banks and trusts with the actions of the State is so naked since the world war, the governors of big metropolitan banks controlling currencies and economic operations of several States at a time, illustrates the fusion to such an extent that none now can sensibly challenge the proposition that the State is controlled by that class which is dominant in economy—today the bourgeoisie.

Religion is one of the phases of social life that is supposed to be independent of the economic structure. But in this case, the example of the ancient Hindu States will prove our proposition. In the ancient Hindu States and in fact in all medieval States, religion and its theological hierarchy was completely identified with the State, which was controlled by the dominant class in economy, the landowners, slave owners and barons. Naturally all the actions of the dominant class which were also the actions of the State found sanction in the religion of the time. An excellent example of this is the Law of Manu. In a clear cut manner and quite ruthlessly he prescribes the law, religion, customs and morality once as applicable to the dominant class or caste (which at that time were interchangeable categories and not rigid and devoid of their economic content as today) and then as applicable to the suppressed class of peasants, serfs or slaves. He frankly says that unless it was so the suppressed class would become dominant and try to alter the relative position of the classes in social life (including the economic) causing a great "disaster." These social standards of the dominant class were to be forced on the subject class by force and violence and the king who would fail to do it would be dethroned by the dominant class. The State, law, morality, religion, all conform to the needs of the dominant class in the economic structure of society. They abide so long as they are necessary to maintain a certain equilibrium between the contradictory class interests in the structure. It is on the basis of the economic condition that they are evolved and with it they change and disappear. This is formulated by Karl Marx in another place thus:—"In the social production of their lives, men enter into specific necessary relations, independent of their wills, production relations, which correspond to a certain specific stage in the evolution of their material productive forces.

The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis over which there arises a legal and political super-structure and to which there correspond specific social forms of consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and mental life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary their social being that determines their consciousness." ("Critique of Political Economy", quoted by Bukharin in "Historical Materialism").

17. *Ideology.*

This super-structure consists of various human organisations, vague non-coordinated thoughts and feelings and an "ideology". Generally we find several vague thoughts, ordinary feelings common to a whole society, which may be called social psychology. The social psychology involves two principal elements. First there are general psychological traits found in all classes of a given society, because the situation of those classes may have certain common elements in spite of class differences. For example in the feudal times a common trait is submission to authority, routine, and traditional practices; the peasant serf is ruled by the lord, yet, he also has got the same trait and in his turn expects submission from his family. Both enjoy unlimited authority, one on his estate and the other in his family. That trait begins to disappear in the city life of a worker, which breaks the family and consequently the authority of the "head of the family". Hence the psychology of the old men of the countryside conflicts with that of the younger sons from the city, and in despair they wail "it is the power of Kaliyuga!"

The second element is class psychology which is produced by the aggregate conditions in which the class is stationed, in the economic and socio-political environment. Class psychology assumes very intricate forms and does not many a time lend itself to a direct interpretation through its economic content. It can always be explained by the concrete environment of the specific class. Besides this there are vocational types of psychology also; viz that of the lawyers and the jurists. All law and jurisprudence have a solid economic content, yet to a jurist the law appears to be every thing and many a time, a whole lot of them, due to their vocational psychology which shuts them up within the wheels of law and its own logic, develop theories or view points which may conflict seriously with the existing property relations. In such cases the correcting agency of the State steps in and the

"rulings" that conflict in such a glaring manner are set aside by legislation.

A systematised class psychology becomes ideology. For example, in the early stages, the workers' discontent against the capitalist order is a vague general dissatisfaction. It is not ideology. Later however the vague tendency to have some other system becomes definitely formulated. A set of demands, programme or platform arises, a definite "ideal" begins to appear. Hence we get an ideology. We often hear of ideological deviations and corrections. Because, as Engels says, "Ideology is simply occupying oneself with thoughts as with independent entities developing independently subject only to their own laws." Naturally a correction of them is to expose their conflict with their fundamental basis—the economic content of their class.

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18. *Economy and other factors of social life—their relative importance—the view of the Indian bourgeoisie.*

The insistence that is laid so long upon economy, does not mean that it is the only true element while all others are vague mists. The theory of historical materialism does not deny the importance of the superstructure but explains it. It does not consider the various factors of the structure from the point of their unequal value, whether literature is more important than science, or science more than politics. Such a gradation of the relative importance is dangerous. The trigger is as important as the barrel in a rifle. But certainly economy is more important than dancing. But we reject considering the scales of importance of these 'factors'. They are not independent factors as such at all, but the whole is a synthesis, all the elements being necessary to maintain the equilibrium and continuity of society; at the same time all these elements are conditioned by the material productive forces of society.

It has become necessary here to show that the fundamental basis of all society is its economic structure, because in India today, in the political and cultural movements, the champions of those movements consider that their particular movement is conditioned by the causation of its own ideological system and it is unconnected with any other basis. As already pointed out this is always the case when people try to deal only with the super-structure and do not know the real

basis. For example, the liberal bourgeoisie in India says, "It would accept everything that is best in British culture." The petty bourgeoisie revolts and says that India has her own culture and we shall have nothing from the British culture. Such statements come from two purely isolated fights between two ideological schools. But as we have seen above these attitudes follow necessarily from the production relations of the class to which the contending sections belong in the production forces of Indian society. The liberal bourgeoisie being completely interlocked, in Industry, Banking, Government posts etc., with the British bourgeoisie, it has made its own the British culture, which in its turn is the culture of the industrial bourgeoisie. But the case with the Indian petty bourgeoisie is different. It is not yet organically fused with the liberal bourgeoisie. It still depends on petty trading of village products, on petty farming rents which are threatened by the British expropriators. A large section is still governed in its life more by the customs and laws of Manu than the ideology of Mill and Bentham. A section of it, drawn from the families of the feudal landholders, expects to see the return of the "old glorious times." Therefore, it thinks India has a special culture, which means a specific type of feudal culture, which is not yet completely destroyed because its basis the feudal productive forces are yet dominant to a large extent.

Not knowing historical materialism of Marx, the scholars of the Indian bourgeoisie run hither and thither to explain these "special cultures" and "special messages" of India. The various "popular parties," not based on the scientific historical materialism of Marx, are easily deluded into thinking that the ills of India can be cured by simple readjustment in the superstructure of the State, law etc. Even a great scientist like Sir. C. V. Raman proposed that if Government were to give him ten lakhs of rupees to establish experimental laboratories for research and training in industrial chemistry, the ills of India's Industry would be cured. This was a glaring example of Engels' definition of ideology as being simply "the occupying oneself with thoughts as with independent entities developing independently subject only to their own laws." The expert forgot that industrial chemistry does not arise unless there is first a modicum of Industry as a basis for it, unless there is a certain accumulation of capital in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the State power is in harmony with the development of the productive forces of the country.

The thorough grasp of historical materialism is therefore absolutely necessary to show that the present clashes in politics,

in culture, in education etc. are disturbances in the superstructure of society caused by the disturbance of the equilibrium in the productive forces and production relations of the classes of our society, some on world scale and some limited to the Indian field. When this is accepted, it naturally follows that the political and cultural warfare is not all in all, and no "compromise" or "understanding" in the field of the superstructure, viz a conversion of reserved subjects into transferred, a free distribution of the copies of Gita instead of the Bible, appointment of Indian Governors and Legislators instead of the British, will restore the equilibrium unless there is a readjustment or revolution in the production relations, the property relations of the social classes. Therefore it is that the statute of the International Workmen's Association, which comprised the vanguard of the Proletariat, says that "The economic emancipation of the working class is therefore the great aim to which every political movement must be subordinated." At the same time it is necessary to give a warning here that this is not to be understood in the sense that the movement in the field of Economy alone is important. That leads to the deviation of "Economism" and ultimately "welfare-work-reformism", which neglects the political task of the working class. The economic emancipation is the fundamental aim. But politics as a means to achieve it is the most important and the first and supreme weapon in the achievement of that aim.

19. Marxism is concerned with changing the basis of economy, not merely the superstructure.

We know from History that revolutions have occurred as recently as 14 years ago, and that revolutionary upheavals have been going on almost in every country of the world since the close of the Imperialist world war. What has been the outcome of the victorious revolutions? Firstly a different political power. Secondly a different place of classes in the process of production, different distribution of the instruments of production. Why? We know that all the means of human life are procured with the aid of these instruments. Through the long process of history, into the details of which we cannot go here, the distribution of these products takes place according to the distribution of the means production among the social classes. As the ownership of the means of production is in the hands of the capitalist class or the feudal class, the largest share of the products is appropriated by this class. So long as this accumulation of social necessities into the hands of a class does not become a complete hindrance on further production the discontent of the actual producing class, the workers and peasants,

does not take the form of a violent conflict. But so soon as a further development becomes impossible the conflict breaks out in a violent class war. As the dominating class fortifies its economic powers through the State in the final analysis, the highest form of action of class war is a political revolution, the capture of the State power. "Politics is the concentrated expression of economy", but not every conflict between the productive forces and production relations results in a revolution of this type. Bourgeois writers of History depict every change of a king or constitution as a revolution. Every street rising leading to a displacement of one party by another is called by it a revolution. But that is not the kind of revolution which is aimed at by Communists. A dethronement of the present monarchy by the present Labour Party or the Liberals may not mean a revolution at all so long as the present property relations between, say, the miners and the mine owners, remain the same. The mere disappearance of King Alfonso from the throne of Spain is not what we might call a revolution. Because it does not alter the relative position of the social classes in production and the consequent appropriation of the products. The working class continues to produce surplus values for the dominant bourgeoisie. Thus a change in the personnel of the bureaucratic system of the State or the change from monarchy to Republic or from one bourgeoisie to another, since it does not affect the fundamental character of the production relations, is not a revolution. Such changes have their importance in so far as they are attempts to lessen the intensity of the contradictions and bring about a readjustment of the equilibrium within the same socio-economic structure. For example the Chartist Movement in England threatened a revolution against the bourgeois order, but did not develop into one because the forces of production had not exhausted all their possibilities of growth. The discovery of mines and new regions and a consequent migration of the discontented labour force reduced the pressure of the contradiction; the productive forces developed still further. It was an adjustment within the same socio-economic structure. "The cause of revolutions is the conflict between the productive forces and production relations as solidified in the political organisation of the ruling class. These production relations are so emphatic a break on the evolution of the productive forces that they simply must be broken up if society is to continue to develop. If they cannot be burst asunder they will prevent and stifle the unfolding of the productive forces and the entire society will become stagnant or retrogressive, that is it will enter upon a period of decay."

The signs of the revolutionary upheaval began to appear first in the ideological change of the oppressed class, which is ripening

for a revolution. The ripening of the bourgeois French Revolution first found expression in the philosophers of the revolution, in the new ideas about State, Democracy, Reason etc. The next step was the political seizure of the State apparatus and thirdly rearrangement of economy. The feudal barons were destroyed and the bourgeoisie controlled the State, developing the productive forces on capitalist lines whose growth was hindered by the feudal order, by its tithes and taxes tying down the serfs to the land and thus depriving the growing industrial workshops of a free supply of labour.

20. *Dialectics.*

This in short is the Marxist method of reading history. This is what is called the materialistic interpretation of history or historical materialism. It should be noted that this is not identical with materialism as popularly understood or misunderstood. This method views society in dialectical motion and not as a static permanent thing. Such a view-point is opposed by the bourgeoisie in the present period though the method of dialectics was evolved in its essence by a bourgeois philosopher, Hegel. It is opposed because the bourgeoisie wants to tell the revolutionary proletariat that a capitalist system is a permanent and immutable state. Dialectics in essence is revolutionary, as it measures progress by the development of contradictions, resulting in a higher form of motion. It views, when applied to History, the feudal order as a higher form than the primitive one; the bourgeois economy or social order as a higher form than the feudal whose contradiction it is. But the bourgeoisie wants to stop here, while the Marxists proceed and state that the same dialectical motion of society shows that the socialist order is a higher form than the bourgeois and the highest because it will have no class contradictions at all. Historical Materialism is this law as applied to social growth and explains the past and enlightens and moulds the future.

21. *Causes of the conquest of India as given by the Maratha historians—they are not causes but the description of symptoms and after-effects.*

The history of the conquest of India by the British bourgeoisie is represented in many fantastic colours by the historians, whether of the Indian bourgeoisie or the British. Prominent writers like Mr. N. C. Kelkar and Mr. V. V. Khare attribute the failure of the Indians (and the Marathas especially, because it was with them that the last decisive fights were waged by the invaders) to put up a proper resistance mainly to the following causes:—

1. General absence of the feeling of nationalism.
2. Absence of a habit of cooperative working.
3. Absence of an institutional life, with its accompaniment of elective principles.
4. Absence of superior weapons of war.

Mr. Rajwade, the most brilliant research scholar of Indian and Hindu history and of sociology in one of his articles finds the the cause of British victory in the superior weapons of war of the British. British historians very rarely speak seriously of the whole thing and say that the British won because the Indians lost ! But both sets of reasons are shallow and unable to explain why the Indians had not those four attributes in the same period in which the British had them. Others would not like to admit the first three reasons but would content themselves by saying that it was a huge military bungle on the part of Indians.

We say that all these reasons are merely symptoms, a description of the superstructure of the social groups in India of that time, but do not explain anything. The conquest of India by Britain was a conquest of Indian feudalism by the forces of the British bourgeoisie, and it was an inevitable happening because everywhere the feudal order has always succumbed before the new superior order of bourgeois Industry. The four reasons shown above are not characteristic of India as such but generally of all feudal systems, because they are the outcome of feudal economy. The characteristics of feudal economy are that production is carried on in isolated scattered farms by a peasantry, which is personally bound to the feudal lords, who appropriate the whole surplus produce, according as they like. Production of other necessities is carried on on small scale in homes or small workshops with handicraft tools, and as the productivity of labour is not great, very little of market relations prevail. A hereditary bureaucracy, stagnant life, wealth and ease for the dominant class and complete subjection including personal subjection of the vast peasantry, isolated production, such are a few of the characteristics. Isolated handicraft production is quite the reverse of modern factory production, which is based on a cooperative principle, i. e. each process in production (and naturally the worker) depending on another process. There is an active exchange of goods on the market in bourgeois economy which is lacking in the feudal. There is absence of a contact in the latter. Hence the absence of any active feeling of "nationalism". Nationalism is a bye-product of the bourgeois structure of economy. Constitutional working is also a product of the new productive forces. The

new technology requires the pooling of capital of millions of persons, which necessarily introduces a constitutional working and is incompatible with absolute autocracy and the purely personal power of the feudal nobility.

Lastly we come to the weapons of war. The weapons used by the British were, in the later period, used by the Indian feudal nobility also when it came in contact with the French and British armies. There is evidence of a gun factory at Agra and of ordnance batteries in the Maratha armies, but where was the basis of production of the technique that would supply them continuously? It requires a certain amount of iron and steel industry, of the requisite fuel supply which can develop only in conditions where the means of production have advanced to a stage of swift turnover, with an economical expenditure of energy with the aid of advanced instruments. In the absence of steel and mining industries the Indian army could not be equipped with a continuous supply of weapons used by their opponents. A technology that imports steel for its swords from Turkey could not be expected to produce a continuous supply of a phalanx of batteries.

22. *Why Indian peasantry first fought against Moghal feudalism and then became cold—class oppression restored by their Maratha feudal leaders.*

Moreover the Indian peasantry was not interested in fighting for its feudal nobility and nowhere has the peasantry done so. There is a class contradiction between the feudal class and the peasantry. As producers on the soil they create wealth which is appropriated by the feudal lords because they own the means of production—the land—and have fortified their power through the State and the clergy. The class war of the peasantry in Europe was fought in many a peasant war, one of which has been brilliantly studied and depicted by Engels in his "Peasant War in Germany" (Exh. P. 1183—D 407). In the ancient history of every country there are records of attempts of the oppressed class to end the unequal division of wealth. In India one of the biggest upheavals of this kind was, in my opinion, the Buddhist Revolution. But in the latest period of feudal India, the flaring up of an unmixed class war was to a certain extent prevented by the invasions of Muslim feudalism. The Hindu feudal lords succeeded in working up the religious feelings of the peasantry, which was led to believe that a fight with those invaders would improve their condition. The class struggle was canalised into a religious struggle, which in fact was a struggle between two feudal

groups, each of which exploited its own peasantry for its own class interests. But after each such struggle, the peasantry found that its condition remained just the same. The great revolt of the peasantry, which had intensified during the twelve years' famine of the fourteenth century, and which at last took the form of a religious movement of reformation under the leadership of the "saints", who had been harassed by the theological hierarchy or were ruined petty merchants of the city (like Tukaram), was also canalised into an impotent wailing against stone walls or a fight against the Mohammandan barons. Still it retained its peasant character till the organised risings and successes of Shivaji. The forces of this popular hero of the present nationalists and Hindus of the Deccan were mostly led by the rank-and-file peasants, which left its traces on the administration also. One of the most significant characteristics of this was the attempt made to discontinue hereditary services and grants of land. But after the successes, when the old feudal element entered his forces, the movement deteriorated. In the Third Reign, when the leaders of the rank and file peasants who had fought were themselves created feudal lords and hereditary grants of land etc. were introduced, the peasantry became again apathetic. The same old stagnant life, galvanised into activity only where famine lashed it into invasions, the same old surrender of wealth to the parasitic class was restored. The ideological discontent could not mature in any class demand, aiming at a change in the distribution of the means of production, because no new forms of economy had been generated within the womb of the old. The ideology and political superstructure had to conform to the productive forces, the technology of their time. There was no new invention; no advance in technology; therefore the repetition of the old production relation, or reproduction of the old contradictions and stagnation could be the only result, though accompanied by a little shifting of some groups but always within the same socio-economic structure.

23. The work of the British bourgeoisie—overthrow of feudalism.

It was quite a different case with the British at this time. When the Moghul feudal nobility was invading India, the German peasantry had fought out an unsuccessful class war with its nobility, which was helped in the ruthless suppression of the peasantry by the traitor Martin Luther, who in history is painted as a saint of a reformed religion but in reality was the leader and exponent of the ideology of the new mercantile bourgeoisie. When Jehangir was trying to speed up feudal justice by a chain of golden bells (a fine symbol for Justice indeed!), the British bourgeoisie had fought out

one revolution and beheaded its feudal king, thus removing the feudal fetters on its economic development in the towns. By a series of historical and natural circumstances, Europe had moved out a bit and had possessed the mobile gold and silver resources of America, which were profitably turned into mercantile Capital, expanding production, and creating new instruments of production etc. When the two warring feudal groups in India were entering a peace pact and partnership guaranteeing their respective rights and share of exploitation of the peasantry, the British mercantile bourgeoisie, though weak, was forging ahead and assuming the new capitalist form of a Company. Feudal India was being opposed, not by a feudal king, but by the East India Company. That alone sums up the relative position of both in the development of the productive forces. The new productive forces ripened within the womb of feudal economy, but the production relations, the property relations, which were in favour of and under the control of feudal nobility, would not allow them to grow unless they yielded the surplus product to them just as they appropriated the surplus values produced by the serfs. For example one bale of cotton to pass from the field of one noble where it was produced to the workshop in the town, if the states of twenty nobles intervened, had to pay twenty tolls which naturally hindered the growth of production and led to conflicts. Those fetters were removed by the overthrow of feudal power by the bourgeoisie, with the help of the peasantry which also was the enemy of feudalism. When we were here forming confederacies of barons, Britain had carried out the two bourgeois revolutions of 1648 and 1689 which curtailed the power of the landowning bourgeoisie and France had carried out a thorough destruction of all relics of the old order in the prolonged and ruthless revolutionary struggle of 1789-93.

24. *The bourgeois revolution of 1793—the role of the peasantry.*

School textbooks of the bourgeoisie in all countries suppress the revolutionary role of the peasantry in these revolutions and their subsequent betrayal by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois revolutions of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were the joint attacks of the peasantry and the town petty bourgeoisie against the feudal order, under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. The peasantry had tried single-handed to rise against feudalism but had been mowed down by the nobility whose rights and unlimited privileges over the peasant serf, including his wife and daughters, were threatened. The peasantry was incapable alone to lead the struggle because it was under the influence of the clergy which

was an ally of the nobility; it was isolated and scattered and therefore could not make concerted attacks like the nobility; its demands were not consciously revolutionary. They only asked for less exploitation and not abolition of exploitation. There was no considerable town proletariat to give them a lead. With the rise of the bourgeoisie the position changed. The feudal fetters on bourgeois production had to be broken, but alone the bourgeoisie was not capable of accomplishing this. It allied itself with the peasantry. The greatest and most thorough bourgeois revolution was that of 1793. All the literature on which we are fed by the bourgeoisie about this period paints it as the struggle for the splendid ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, propounded by the French philosophers. But these are merely the ideological expressions of the real conflict of the bourgeois productive forces against the feudal production relations, which kept the bourgeois forces under "fetters, inequality and class untouchability." Bourgeois historians also suppress the role of the peasantry, which has been brought to light by the Marxist writers in its true significance. I shall give only a short picture of the part played by the peasantry.

The revolutionary action of the peasantry commenced in the beginning of 1789 when France was only just making preparations for the Election of the States General. Already at that time the peasants had refused to carry out various services imposed upon them by the landlords. The movement grew still larger in the summer of 1789. The vanguard of the movement was the village Poir. The peasantry formed detachments with whatever weapons came to hand, marched to the castles of the nobles and demanded the surrender of all the deeds and documents upon which the feudal landlords based their claims to exploit the peasantry. If these documents were handed over they were immediately burnt. If the landlord refused the peasants attacked the castle and burnt it to the ground, sometimes massacring the owners. According to the historian Taine, during the four months preceding the capture of the Bastille, there were four hundred peasant outbreaks of this kind. While the bourgeoisie was opposed to feudal property, it was a fanatical worshipper of its own property; but feudal property is also a form of private property and had it become the fashion to treat feudal property with disrespect, the danger would have arisen of bourgeois property being treated with the same disrespect later on. For that reason the bourgeoisie were displeased at first with the revolutionary conduct of the peasantry (just as the Indian Congress is here displeased). The Deputies of the National Assembly began to complain: "property of every

kind is being subjected to most outrageous plunder. Everywhere castles are being burnt down, monasteries are being destroyed, estates are being plundered. The law is powerless, the authority of the courts no longer exists." Hence a section of the National Assembly proposed that these acts of violence be condemned and the peasants should be told that this kind of conduct was against the law and they must wait patiently for what the National Assembly would do for them (almost the appeals issued by the Congress in India asking the united Provinces peasantry to wait patiently for the Round Table Conference and abide by the Gandhi-Irwin Pact 1).

But the peasant movement developed so rapidly that it was hopeless to believe that it could be stemmed with promises. Moreover the bourgeoisie dared not repel the peasantry (unlike that in India) and the revolutionary conduct of the peasantry forced the landlords to make some concessions. On August 11, 1789, the National Assembly abolished feudal regulations. But it would not abolish feudal rights. For that they wanted compensation. This did not satisfy the peasantry. Then the Constituent Assembly again took up the question and tried some reforms, which kept in a large measure the rights of the aristocratic landowners. They fixed the compensation at $2\frac{1}{2}$ billion francs. The peasants of the Department of the Loire-Et-Garonne wrote to the Assembly "You proclaimed the abolition of the feudal regime, but in fact you have done the very opposite, for we shall always have to call those to whom we have hitherto rendered service, our seigneurs, for we shall never be able to pay the compensation you have fixed." The peasant revolt became more intense and the nobility also refused to make any concessions to the bourgeoisie. The result was that the Assembly confiscated property of the Emigre aristocrats, which was also a half-hearted measure. Only when power at last passed into the hand of the real revolutionary petty bourgeois Jacobin Party did the Convention repeal the half-hearted measures of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies. On July 17, 1793, the Convention abolished all feudal rights and services. A Decree on June 10th, restored all the common lands to the peasantry and permitted them to be distributed, which was in the interests of the small and middle peasants.

The characteristic feature of whole course of the Great French Revolution was that in its fight against the nobility and the survivals of feudalism, the bourgeoisie succeeded in rallying the masses of the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the rising proletariat. The bourgeoisie succeeded in taking the

lead, in securing the hegemony of the revolutionary movement and directing it in accordance with its own interests. Very unwillingly and only under pressure did the bourgeoisie make any concessions to the peasantry. It directed the revolution along the path that corresponded to its interests and turned all the gains of the revolution in its own favour. It was only the prolonged character of the revolution that permitted the peasantry to display its revolutionary energy, deliver heavy blows against its old enemy, the big aristocratic landowners, and convert France into a country of small proprietors.

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The mighty campaigns of Napoleon rested on the peasantry as the basis of the armies, and the new bourgeois economy and technique supplied the heavy artillery. Napoleon was the genius of the bourgeoisie working with the strength of the revolutionary peasantry, whose newly-won lands were in danger, if the expelled feudalism were to succeed in restoring its rule, (Reference P. 1186).

In Germany and Austria the situation was the worst. In these countries the revolution of 1848, owing to their relatively short duration, did not give the peasantry the opportunity to exert that pressure which was done by the French peasantry in 1789. Though some of the feudal relations were swept away, the landowners succeeded in retaining many of their privileges and large estates even till 1918. And when during the world war, the German bourgeoisie called on these interests to make sacrifices, they refused. The cleavage was one of the reasons of the failure of German-Austrian Imperialism, against the Allied Imperialism which was not suffering from such a drawback. Thus in all the three bourgeois revolutions the peasantry comprised the fighting armies and it is the peasant class which became ruined after the success of these revolutions, as an inevitable economic consequence of the victory. One hundred years after the victory of Cromwell the British Yeomen had completely disappeared, although it was due entirely to the intervention of the Yeomen and the plebeian elements of the towns that final victory was won and Charles I brought to the scaffold. The result of the revolutionary struggle of the peasantry allied with the bourgeoisie was the victory of the bourgeoisie—the establishment of the domination of Capital in place of the domination of feudalism.

An excellent study of the ideological expression of the bourgeois revolutions, the projecting of bourgeois production needs into the domain of the religious and philosophical field, can be found

in Engels' "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," and "Feurbach" which are available in English translations.

After the overthrow of the feudal regime, the peasantry took to peaceful farming. The appropriation of the whole of its surplus by the nobility being removed for a time, it was allowed to improve its position. The bourgeoisie took to capitalist manufacture on an expanding scale with the basis of the new peasant proprietors as their home market. During the 19th century, the brunt of exploitation fell on the working class and whenever it tried to rise against the bourgeoisie it was either not supported by the peasantry or actively opposed by it, because it was through the bourgeoisie that the peasantry had received its lands and emancipation from feudal oppression.

25. *Productive forces developed and changed society but did not abolish classes—crises begin.*

The development of productive forces under the new production relations was helped by the inventions of the 18th and 19th centuries. These inventions increased the productivity of labour, that is it also increased the surplus values yielded by them. For example, if with the old means of production, a worker in a guildshop or cottage produced a hundred units of a useful product and received 80 units back as the necessary minimum for the replacement of his exerted labour power, the worker with the new means of production produced one thousand units in the same time and received 80 or 100 units back—thus leaving 900 units surplus to the owner of the means of production, whereas before he could leave only 20. The rate of surplus value, that is the rate of exploitation, increased, leading to a rapid accumulation of wealth in the hands of the bourgeoisie, which centralised and concentrated it leading to even more expansion of production of commodities. When the production of commodities expanded beyond the capacity of home markets, the export of manufactured goods began and with it was felt the necessity of foreign markets and colonies. It is to these mighty efficient expanding claws of the productive forces of bourgeois economy, bourgeois interests, that Indian feudalism and peasantry fell a victim. It became a "colony," a market. The iron forges of the British bourgeoisie had seized the golden bells of Indian feudalism and converted them into a mobile gold currency for its commodity circulation. Marx in his Manifesto summarises the results thus:—

"We see then: the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in

feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organisation of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word the feudal relations of property, became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they were so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder. In their place stepped free competition accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted to it and by the economic and political sway of the bourgeois class. (Exh. P. 21)

The change, however, had not abolished classes nor emancipated the whole society. One species of class society was replaced by another. The bourgeoisie which had been revolutionary against feudalism ceased to be so and considered its rule as final and permanent. It formulated its position in the slogan, "Whatever is, has reason to be", but refused to see the further implication that "Whatever is exists so long as it is necessary". The bourgeois property relations and order have reason to be so long as it is necessary to develop the productive forces of society. But so soon as it will become a hindrance like its predecessor it will have to vanish. Capitalist social order is no more free from the law of dialectical development than was the feudal order. Only the manifestation of its contradiction would be different according to the different productive forces. The bourgeois intelligentsia tried to hide this. Though dialectics in the modern form was formulated by the bourgeois philosopher, Hegel and applied by the bourgeoisie in its other scientific achievements, yet its concrete application to social development, the bourgeoisie opposed vehemently, because it meant admission of its eventual overthrow by its contradiction—the Proletariat.

This was thoroughly exposed by Marx. Even before the bourgeoisie had scarcely established itself in a few countries, its contradictions began to appear; the conflict of its productive forces and production relations began to appear in their most glaring form, the periodical epidemic of overproduction. Says Marx, "A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production,

against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society. In these crises the great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that in all earlier epochs would have seemed an absurdity, the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself to be back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property. On the contrary they have become too powerful for these conditions by which they are fettered and so soon as they evercome these fetters they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endangering the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by the enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other by the conquest of new markets. And by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises and by diminishing the means whereby crises are lessened."

26. *Development of British Capitalism—expansion of colonies—Capitalism becomes Imperialism.*

Crises of over-production, the disparity between production and consumption began as early as 1830 and 1840 and were responsible not in a small measure for the Corn law agitation in England, the Chartist Movement and the revolutionary upheavals of 1848. As soon as there was a crisis, the lowgrade concerns collapsed the stronger ones beat them, production was centralised, costs reduced by a number of ways and a further impetus to trade was given. When such centralisation resulted in unemployment, it was very soon absorbed by the expanding production or the pressure was drained off by emigration. In the development of capitalist production England was ahead as it had accomplished its bourgeois revolution far earlier, almost a century, than the continental countries. This was in some measure due to the weakness of its

feudal nobility which was exhausted by a long war of the White and Red Roses. That is why the British bourgeoisie has the largest reserves, has been the first Imperialist power, has been the stock exchange and money market of the whole world and the largest colonial power. The development of the production of the means of production (production of heavy machinery etc.) is a sure index of the growth of industrial Capitalism. That England was forging ahead was seen in her iron output which was:—

16 Mil. Tons in the period	1831-41
18 Mil. " " " "	1841-50
32.5 " " " "	1851-60

Whereas in her neighbouring countries it was the export of British Steel and Capital that built their first railways. Britain had 49 million tons of coal production in 1850 which jumped up to 82 millions in 1860. Her export of goods of 70 million pounds in 1850 was 164 in 1860, i. e. it had more than doubled. The pressure of population, of ruined artisans and of unemployment was drained into emigration. The discovery of mines in California took away 250,000 men. From 1830 to 1850 there was a steady stream of emigration of about two million persons. The other countries also followed but very late. They had to deal with their feudal fetters.

Crises of overproduction occurred every ten or twelve years or sometimes less. In the 19th century as shown above by Marx these were overcome by conquest of new markets and a more thorough exploitation of old. This is reflected in the colonial expansion of the big industrial powers of the world. Lenin quoting an American writer sets it out thus:—

COLONIAL POSSESSIONS.

Britain.		France.		Germany.	
(Millions)		(Millions)		(Millions)	
Sq. Miles.	Population.	Sq. Miles.	Population.	Sq. Miles.	Population.
1815-30 ...	126.4	0.02	0.5	...	...
1860	2.5 145.1	0.2	5.4	...	...
1880	7.7 267.9	0.7	7.5	...	...
1889	9.3 309.0	3.7	55.4	1.0	14.7

For Britain the period of vast colonial conquests is between 1860 and 1880 and also the last 20 years. For France and Germany, the growth was mainly or entirely in the last 20 years of the 19th century. This was not an isolated development, due to the caprice of adventurers and heroes, as the bourgeois historians would like us to believe, (though we acknowledge the fact that individual qualities did play a part in it). The expansion was thoroughly correlated with the new development of the productive forces. Each crisis of overproduction was leading to what Marx called concentration and centralisation of Capital, leading ultimately to the monopoly form of Capitalism, represented by international cartels in the economic field and a fierce race for colonies by the respective States of the competing bourgeoisie, in the political field. The crisis of 1847 and 1860 which had their repercussions on Franco-Italian politics and also the Russian feudal nobility, which had to consent in some measure to the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. After this Lenin marks off the periods in the development of the old Capitalism based on the entrepreneur into that of the monopoly stage based on the almost hidden, impersonal and uncanny power of "Finance-Capital", thus:—

(1) 1860-70, the highest and final stage of the development of free competition, the beginnings of monopoly may just be discerned.

(2) After the crisis of 1873, a period of wide development of cartels, still unusual and transitory: they constitute a transient phenomenon.

(3) The boom period at the end of the 19th century and the crisis of 1900-3. Cartels become one of the basic features of economic activity. Capitalism has become Imperialism.

27. *Meaning of Imperialism—its five qualities.*

The aim of Communists is the overthrow of Imperialism and Capitalism, and the immediate aim of the Communists in India is the overthrow of British Imperialism. (Exh. P. 2339). It appears that many people misunderstand what we mean by Imperialism. Some think it means the rule of the Emperor and therefore think that only monarchies are Imperialisms. What we really mean is a certain type of capitalist economy with its political accompaniment. The description of this type is authoritatively given by Lenin thus: "Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation

of essential qualities of Capitalism in general. But Capitalism became capitalist Imperialism at a definite and a very high stage of its development, when certain of its essential qualities began to be transformed into their opposites, when the features of a period of transition from Capitalism to a higher social and economic structure began to take shape and be revealed all along the line, the feature that is economically essential in this process is the substitution of capitalist monopoly for capitalist free competition. Free competition is the fundamental quality of Capitalism and of commodity production generally. Monopoly is exactly the opposite of free competition but we have seen this latter beginning to be transformed into monopoly beneath our very eyes, creating big industry and eliminating small, replacing big industry by still bigger industry, finally leading to such a concentration of production and capital that monopoly has been and is the result; cartels and combines and trusts are fusing with them the power of a dozen or so banks manipulating thousands of millions. At the same time monopoly that has arisen from free competition does not drive the latter out of existence, but co-exists over it and with it, thus giving rise to a number of very acute and very great contradictions, antagonisms and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from Capitalism to a more highly developed order".

The above economic features are wellknown to the Indian bourgeoisie in the tremendous power wielded for example by the Swedish Match Trust, the Oil Syndicates etc. The five essential features of Monopoly Capitalism or Imperialism are:—

(1) The concentration of production and capital, developed so highly that it creates monopoly, which plays a decisive role in economic life.

(2) The fusion of banking capital with industrial capital and the creation on the basis of this finance capital, a financial oligarchy.

(3) Export of Capital which has become extremely important as distinguished from the export of commodities.

(4) The formation of international capitalist monopolies which share out the world amongst themselves.

(5) The territorial partition of the whole earth completed by the greatest capitalist Powers.

It is this economic and political structure we want to overthrow and replace by still higher form, the socialist structure, whose forces have ripened already within the womb of monopoly capital.

The Imperialist stage of Capitalism is a stage of decay, because the contradiction of productive forces and property relations, have now no room left to mitigate their intensity. The disparity between consumption and production and the crisis of overproduction formerly led to colonial expansion, export of goods, either consumption goods or capital goods. Expansion led to a still further increase in production and development of technique. But this process had come to its last point by 1914, because by that time the whole world had been completely partitioned. In the absence of new regions the only way was to redistribute the old regions over again; forcibly destroy the means of production and begin the cycle again. This in other words meant forcible seizure of the territories of one Imperialism by another and the destruction of productive forces of one bourgeoisie by another in short a world war. We got one in 1914, when the world stood partitioned amongst the six Imperialist Powers, who fought the war, or rather made their working class and peasantry fight it for them.

For the pre-war period details of the formation of international cartels in the most important industries like Iron, Steel, Electricity, Oil etc. and the banks behind them; the consequent export of Capital, the partition of the world amongst the various Imperialist Powers and the impending world war as the only solution that Imperialism would attempt, can be found in the most learned work of Lenin entitled "Imperialism—the last stage of monopoly Capitalism."

28. *Imperialist wars—a necessity, not a policy—results of last War—decline of Britain.*

Imperialist wars are thus not dependent on the murder of a prince or the will of a military genius. Neither they can be scrapped simply because some well-intentioned polished saints want peace and love in the world. They could not be scrapped by the scrapping of a few old ships and the reduction of a few battalions. War is not a policy with Imperialism but a necessity, which arises from the increasing productive forces and the inability of Imperialism to dispose of them because they are to be disposed of on the condition that they yield profits—which however are not obtainable within the markets of the same Imperialism. One Imperialism has naturally to invade the markets of the other, destroy the productive forces of the competing Imperialism and thus try to insure the return of its own profits. That is Imperialist war. Armaments are merely weapons, not foundations of Imperialism. Militarism and wars are the superstructural attributes raised on

the fundamental contradiction between the worldwide productive forces developed by society and the appropriation of their products by the Imperialist bourgeoisie to the exclusion of three-fourths of society. Unless this is abolished, Disarmament Conferences are merely smoke-screens for the preparation of more armaments.

The Imperialist bourgeoisie of the belligerent Powers assembled the resources of the whole world in their war of graft and plunder, a war designed to destroy the productive powers that create useful values for society and not a war to increase the sum total of useful values for the benefit of society from nature. The war was unprecedented in its dimensions, in its destruction, because the growth of human powers was unprecedented. There never was a world society before like this, interlinked in all its parts by the swiftest means of transport and maintaining complete contact through the vast apparatus of capitalist markets. Not one country, not the smallest corner of the globe was left untouched directly or indirectly by the operations of the Imperialist War. During the four years, 1914-18, the mobilised population was 70 millions, out of which 9 millions were killed, 19 millions were wounded and 4 millions permanently disabled. The most gigantic apparatuses of destruction were being produced daily. Five million workers in Great Britain, U. S. A. and France alone were engaged in the manufacture of war material. The British and French bourgeoisie were sinking millions of their accumulated wealth, robbed from the peasantry and workers, solely to blow up men, women and children, to dig the mineral wealth of the globe, not for the service of human beings, but to manufacture guns and ammunitions, to blow up their skulls. The two countries alone put up on the field 48,000 guns, 112,000 machine guns, 106,000 planes and 6018 tanks. In the report made to the Third World Congress of the Communist International, July 1921, it was shown that at the time of the war, the national wealth of the warring nations was 2,400 milliard gold marks; of which 1200 milliard was destroyed during the war. In addition the yearly decrease in production was 100 milliards. So that after the war the wealth remaining was 800 milliard gold marks. The bourgeoisie was trying to overcome its crisis by "the enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces" Marx had said in 1847 (References Exh. P 2491).

Did the Imperialist slaughter and the destruction of productive forces cure Imperialism of crisis and contradictions? Did the war result in a better world, living in peace and contentment, "self determining" its life with the vast amount of good things, that

it had powers to produce from nature? No. As a result of the war a repartition of the globe took place amongst the victorious Imperialisms. But that did not cure Capitalism of crises and conflicts. The wiping out of Central European competition did not improve the position of Allied Capital. On the contrary the oldest Capitalism of the world, that of Great Britain, was outstripped by American Imperialism; in fact the whole of the bond-holding States of Europe, the moneylenders and financiers of the world, fell in bondage to American Finance. At the end of the war American finance was a creditor to the Allies for 11,872 million dollars to be paid by annual instalments over 62 years. Sir Charles Hobhouse in an article in the July number of the "Contemporary Review" gives figures which show the immensity of European indebtedness to the United States and the vast amount which Germany has to pay to the victorious Powers. He writes:—

"The capital indebtedness of Europe to America being in round figures, £2,250,000,000, it will require a total eventual sum of £ 4,300,000,000, to discharge this obligation. Germany's share of these sums at 66 per cent amounts to £ 1,500,000,000 and £3,000,000,000 respectively, only to be obtained at the expense of the foreign trade of her own creditors. These latter in addition owe £ 1,000,000,000, to Great Britain and a trifle of £ 40,000,000 to France. How long can international common sense tolerate the continuance of such illusory assets and debts?"

The crisis became chronic and more accentuated, during which the decline of British Imperialism, the oldest in the world, was brought out in the most vivid colours in the course of the post war twelve years.

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The second result of the war was the establishment of the Soviet Union, the First Workers' Republic, which had overthrown its Imperialism and, using all the productive forces developed under capitalism, had solved its contradictions by abolishing capitalism and forcing them to produce things not for profits but for equitable distribution and use of the workers and peasants.

The third result of the war was the increasing strength of the revolutionary movement of the workers and their progress towards an organised attempt to overthrow capitalism in their own countries.

The fourth result of the war was the rise of the revolutionary movement in the colonies and conquered countries of Imperialism—a movement of national emancipation from parasitic Imperialism and also of capitalism, in their own countries.

The advance of the new capitalist powers outside Europe is illustrated in their production of goods. United States production of industrial goods increased between 1914 and 1924 from 24 to 43 billion dollars or 78 per cent; Australian production between 1913 and 1923 from 161 to 348 million pounds or 106 per cent, Canadian in the same period from 1393 to 2781 million dollars or 93 per cent, South African, between 1915 and 1920 from 40 to 98 million pounds, Japanese between 1913 and 1919 from 747 to 2630 million yen. All these increases are considerably in excess of any allowance to be made for reduction to gold values in the case of some countries and of the general increase in world prices (about 50 per cent). In the same period British industrial production in 1913 values is estimated to have fallen 12 per cent to 20 per cent (Lord Weir's estimate) and her export of goods according to the Balfour Committee of 1926 has fallen by 27 per cent. This led to European politics being dominated by Anglo-American rivalry and new groupings of Imperialist powers.

29. *Rationalisation—increase in production—latest crisis.*

Immediately after the war Europe and consequently other parts of the world suffered from a crisis of under-production, which was the first of its kind since the rise of capitalism, which has always given birth to crises of over production (vide report of the Third World Congress of the C. I.). The situation in Europe was growing revolutionary and the proletariat attempted the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism in many countries. But they were suppressed, and continental capitalism started to rebuild itself. The legacy of the war—the burden of reparations and debts hampered the rebuilding. German Imperialism was thoroughly fleeced of the most important colonies, of its iron and coal mines and plants, of its reserve of goods. This threatened a complete collapse of Germany, while it did not help the Allied Powers much, as their loot was to a great extent drained into America to pay for the war debts. Currencies of every continental country began to fall, famine and bankruptcy stared in the face. Ultimately American Imperialism, helped with its war accumulations, the central European powers were put on their feet again on the basis of the Dawes Plan. A partial restoration of production took place. The Dawes Plan

brought to Germany 1750 million dollars of credit, which Germany of course imported in the form of goods. To that extent Germany constituted a good market for U. S. A. and other exporting countries. But when it came to payment of the loans it was bound to take the form of export of goods leading again to a conflict of German goods with those of the victorious bourgeoisie. They were thus confronted with a contradiction again. They must either give up the debts and reparation claims and even convert the Dawes Loan into a gift or consent to receive it in the only form in which it can be paid i. e. export of goods, which are bound to lead to competition with the lending countries. The extent of this competition can be gauged from the fact that Germany has to pay 2,500 million gold marks per year for reparation. The bond holders could not consent to cancel their war bonds and idle incomes nor could they afford to let their industry be engulfed by the incoming goods payment from Germany. But there was no way out—a blind alley of depression and crisis!

However, partial stabilisation was carried out by thorough rationalisation, wage-cuts, suppression of the revolutionary proletariat and application of new technique to industry. The result was that according to the "Financial Times" of 22-1-29 comparative index figure of production for the first eight months of 1928 in the leading countries, on the basis of 1913 as 100, showed that every leading country except Britain had surpassed the pre-war level of production. According to the memorandum of world production and trade issued in June 1930 by the economic section of the League of Nations, the world's production of food stuffs and raw materials increased between 1913 and 1929 by 25 per cent, of food stuffs by 16 per cent and raw materials by 40 per cent. As regards industrial production the figures given by the League show a further rise except in some cases as follows:—

	Index of Production. 1913—100		In 1929.
	First 8 months-1928 According to "Financial Times". (D. 22-1-29)	...	According to the Economic Section of The League of Nations.
U. S. A.	166	...	154
France	122	...	130
Germany	113	...	122
Western Europe	111	...	...
Britain	90	...	112
Sweden	...	...	127
Poland	...	...	138
Soviet Russia	...	...	140

Though in this table the United Kingdom is shown to have gone above the pre-war level it is noteworthy that its percentage of recovery is the last in the rank.

An ordinary man is puzzled to see this vast increase of food stuffs, raw materials and production of industrial goods taking place in the whole world on the one hand and to see unemployment, poverty, retrenchment, reduction of wages, strikes, risings and shootings going on in every country of the world on the other. A crisis of over-production has again overtaken the whole world. There is abundance of everything you want, but it cannot be sold. Prices have fallen, but things cannot be sold. There is plenty to sell and millions of men to buy, but things cannot be sold. The capitalists want to sell them, but they cannot be sold. World capitalist economy is in the grip of crisis. The whole world has produced more and more, even gold and silver, but are agreed in saying that there is no money to buy with. It is a deadlock. What are the characteristics of this crisis? Firstly the present is a crisis of over-production. Secondly the crisis is the first *world* economic crisis since the war. It is a world crisis not only in the sense that it embraces all industrial countries of the world, it is a world crisis also in the sense that the *industrial* crisis has coincided in point of time with an *agricultural* crisis, embracing the production of all forms of raw materials and food stuffs in the principal *agrarian* countries of the world. Thirdly though the crisis is general in character, it has developed unequally. The industrial crisis began first of all in Poland, Rumania and the Balkans. It developed there during the whole of 1928. Obvious signs of a commencing agricultural crisis could be seen in Canada, U. S. A. Argentine, Brazil and Australia by the end of 1928. All this time industry was climbing up in the U. S. A. By the middle of 1929 industrial production in the U. S. A. had achieved almost a record level. Only in the second half of 1929 began the turn of the tide, after which there developed a headlong crisis in industrial production which threw back the U. S. A. to the level of 1927. Then came Canada and Japan. Then followed bankruptcies in China and India and other colonial countries, where the crisis is aggravated by the fall in the price of silver and where a crisis of over-production is combined with the destruction of peasant economy reduced by feudal exploitation and overwhelming taxes to a state of complete exhaustion. The crisis struck the colonial countries and Western Europe with full force in 1930.

30. *Communist view of crisis—fetishism of commodities—contradiction of productive forces and production relations.*

We generally hear from all non-Marxist writers, that the phenomenon is due to the absence of purchasing power amongst the masses, i. e. the consumers of world production. But this does not explain where the purchasing power has gone. In fact except the parasitic classes, who form a very small minority of the world population, the majority, more than 90 per cent, are producers of these very goods which we see are "over-produced" and are not being sold. If the majority of world population is producing these goods, why has it not the power to consume them? The cause of it lies not in the answer that it has no purchasing power, which means simply begging the question; but in the production relations, the property relations of capitalist society. The property relations are capitalist relations. It means that all instruments of production, distribution and exchange are owned by the capitalist class. All the land and factories etc. are owned by them. The working class has to sell its labour power to the capitalist class in order to get a living; and the capitalist class buys its labour power to be used in running the means of production solely on the condition that the whole process yields it a profit. The working class produces surplus values i. e. more goods than are paid back to it as its wages. This principle also holds in agriculture. In short the result is that if the worker or peasant, with the aid of the means of production, produces say 100 units of goods, he is paid his wages in 30, 20 or even 10 units, which then is his purchasing or consuming power. Even if it is a peasant the same process works in his case, the surplus being taken from him through the means of rent, taxes, interest and the market where he sells his product. Thus every year, the balance of units, after their reckless waste, destruction, and consumption has been allowed for, goes on accumulating, in the form of money, capital, goods etc. in the hands of the bourgeoisie, until, after a period of 10 or 12 years or even less, the capitalist class finds itself in possession of so much surplus goods that it does not know what to do with them. There comes then the crisis of over-production. It is not that suddenly in one year too much production has been done. The crisis mainly comes as the accumulated effect of several years of disparity between the consumption allowed to the working class and peasantry by the capitalist class and the produce taken from them in return for that. Cannot the working class and peasantry consume the whole of it? "Consumption has fallen," "there is over-production," does not mean that the masses have been so much overfed that they all

have got constipation and therefore cannot consume more. The word "over-production" is a deceptive word. It hides the content of accumulation by a class, the withholding and accumulation of goods in the form of capital, wealth, money, gold and actual goods by a small class of parasites to the exclusion of the masses. The word very successfully transfers the evil arising from this fact of property relations to some imaginary quality in the commodities themselves, which have suddenly become so mysterious, so naughty, so "sluggish," so "depressed" that they would not move on the market, refuse to be consumed. But this is all nonsense which appears to be sense because capitalism through its organisation of the exchange market, through the money form in which all exchange is done, hides real content and creates what is called "the fetishism of commodities," which causes a definite *social relation between men* to assume in their eyes the fantastic form of a *relation between things*. There is no "over-production" as such in relation to the physiological needs or consuming power of the world's population. The world can consume not only what is produced, but even more, if all the productive forces of society were to be used to the full extent. Things are not exchanged, are not sold because this capitalist class wants its tribute, the surplus, the profit locked in them. In other words it is not "profitable to sell," "the prices are ruinous" to the bourgeoisie. In the meantime further production is curtailed, retrenchment and rationalisation are undertaken, wages and salaries are reduced. What does it mean? It means more people are deprived of their power to consume goods which intensifies the crisis. When capitalism was ascending i. e. there were people still left to approach and tell them to take the goods in exchange for theirs, these periodical crises were overcome. Formerly when there were retrenchments or cuts of wages and rationalisation, when the reduced cost had yielded more surplus to the bourgeoisie, the men so thrown out were absorbed in new factories and on new lands. In the Imperialist stage there are no new lands left; productive forces have developed so much, technique is so advanced, monopoly so widely organised on world scale that there is no "absolute" increase in employment in several countries. There is a chronic or permanent unemployment of millions, a chronic going down of consumption, a chronic crisis, which becomes accentuated at even shorter intervals than before on world scale and in fact never vanishes from the world as a whole at any single point of time.

The intellectual agents of the bourgeoisie hide this simplest of all propositions, the contradiction between productive forces and production or property relations, which are the cause of the whole

capitalist muddle in all sorts of mystifying talk of the "eternal" law of supply and demand, of the "scarcity" of money, of disparity of gold distribution, and such other things. Now all these mystifying complications arise from the capitalist relations and defy solution and understanding so long as the fundamental proposition of the appropriation of surplus value created by the toilers is not grasped. This situation is described in practically identical terms by all the leading spokesmen of Capitalism. The British President of the Board of Trade declared in 1925, "every country has far greater industrial capacity than before but in a far poorer world." (Sir P. Cunliffe—Lister, House of Commons, 6/7/25). He was echoed by the German Chancellor, Luther, addressing the German Annual Trade and Industrial Congress in 1926. "It is a phenomenon of the war and the post war period that the total productive capacity of the world has risen far above the demand." (London Times 29/4/26'. In November 1926, the German Industrialist, Felix Deutch, estimated the world's industrial capacity at 40-50 per cent higher than before the war, but actual production was only just approaching the pre-war level at that time. If this phenomenon is not considered from the revolutionary class point of view of Marxism one would be lost in confusion to find 50 per cent higher capacity to produce the good things of life and yet "a far poorer world." In fact the world is not poorer, it is the working class and peasantry, the real producers and main consumers that are poorer.

31. *Monopoly of wealth, cause of crisis—monopoly in Britain, U.S.A. and France—share of wages in national incomes.*

The sole monopoly of the increasing wealth and capacity to buy and consume is held by the bourgeoisie, which can be definitely proved in the figures of the increasing accumulation of wealth by the capitalist class and the loss of wages and falling shares of the working class and peasantry in the national produce, in all the countries including those which are supposed to be prosperous. The British workers lost to the extent of 5000 million pounds by aggregate wage reduction between 1921-26. This fall is not covered by the fall in the cost of living. In the same period the profits of industrial companies as shown by the figures in the "Economist" rose year by year, the average dividend on ordinary shares being:—

1922	8·4%
1923	9·3%
1924	9·8%
1925	10·3%
1926	11·3%

Moreover the return on all capital bearings, on fixed interest like Government loans, debentures, royalties etc. increased by the return to gold standard, which increased the value of the pound. The Labour Research Department estimated that between 1900-1925 the real income of the working class in England has gone down by 20 per cent. An article in the "Daily Herald" of London by Mr. F. Brockway which was reproduced in the Indian Press in May 1931 discusses the latest official figures on this question. During the past ten years according to Mr. Graham, President of the Board of Trade, the annual income of the workers has fallen by 700 million pounds. Mr. Graham supplemented his statement about wage reductions by pointing out that during the same ten years the national income has not fallen. It has remained stable at 4000 million pounds a year. But Mr. J. M. Keynes says that the national income is actually increasing at the rate of 100 million pounds a year. The average dividend for 24000 typical limited liability companies was 9.8 per cent in 1930. Incomes from land increased from £300 millions to £415 millions since 1922. Since 1920 the interest paid on war loans has increased in real value from £300 millions to £750 millions per year. In one of the months at the beginning of 1931 the capital lying idle in one bank alone was £360 millions. The latest Inland Revenue Returns for the year ended March 1930 showed that there were 437 millionaires whose income for the year was 49 million pounds. At the same time out of the whole population of 48 millions there were only 2½ million persons chargeable for Income-Tax, i. e. having an annual income of £135/- which is the exemption limit. Mr. Brockway says, "If the incomes of the working class are falling and the national incomes are not falling, the incomes of some other section of the nation must be increasing." Yes, the bourgeoisie is increasing its wealth.

It may be said that this is the position in England because it had been involved in a ruinous war and has to compel her workers to share the burden with the bourgeoisie to meet competition and War Debts. But other figures show quite clearly that the process of impoverishment is a pre-war phenomenon also. However take a country like that of U. S. A. which has gained everything by the war. Capitalist propaganda has created an impression in the world that the U. S. A. is the ideal land of prosperity, high wages etc. amongst all the countries in the world. The U. S. A. has the biggest and most highly organised productive forces. With a population which is 7 per cent of the world and with a land area which is 6 per cent of the whole world, it produces 25 per cent of world's wheat, 52 per cent coal, 75 per cent grain, 40 per

cent steel and iron, 60 per cent cotton, 40 per cent silver, 20 per cent gold, 72 per cent oil and 85 per cent automobiles. It is completely free from any survivals of feudalism unlike the European countries and has been the home of cartels and trusts. Who commands all this wealth? The Federal Commission Report on Wealth and Income of the United States says that 13 per cent of the population owned 90 per cent of the total wealth in 1926. The aggregate income of all wage-earners including even some of the parasitic services, comprising 63 per cent of the population amounted to 39.5 per cent of the total national income according to Government Statistics of Income for 1924. Between 1890 and 1914 there was no improvement in real wages but actually a fall. If we take into account the rise in real wages between 1914 and 1925 and make allowance for the fall on the previous period, the rise in real wages, comes to 10-14 per cent between 1890 and 1925, while the wealth of the nation increased 263 per cent, exports increased 207 per cent, value of manufactured articles increased 388 per cent and bank clearings 420 per cent. After allowing for the change in money values, the "real wealth" of America increased between 1900-1924 by 96 per cent while real wages increased by 14 per cent. On the basis of the official figures of the International Labour Office 1926 it is found that in 1925 the average worker's wages was 20-30 per cent below the official subsistence minimum for a family of five. The average wage of industrial workers in 1919 was 1155 dollars while the minimum necessary "to maintain a family of five at a level of health and decency" was officially computed to be 2262 dollars. This difference of 51 per cent led to upheavals and consequently slight wage increases, but the difference still remained at 30 per cent and increased in the depression of 1930 when the unemployment figures rose to 8 or 9 millions and the biggest and most prosperous industrial combines announced wages cuts.

Another illusion with regard to America is that her peasantry is rich and is out to beat the whole world in production by scientific methods of agriculture. Here also it should be noted in the first place that monopoly syndicates rob the peasantry by their price policy. The price of agricultural goods in 1926 November was 130 on the basis of 1909-14 as 100 while the non-agricultural products stood at 161. The difference between the two reveals the increasing exploitation of the farmers by the single factor of monopoly price. The farming population which is 26 per cent of the working population receives 13.8 per cent of the national income. For example three million acres of land in the State of Texas were liable to be seized for arrears in interest and

debts and were to be sold by auction if payments were not made by 1924. A Government Inquiry in the State of Missouri showed that 28,500 or 9 per cent of its farm estates were vacant as they could not be profitably cultivated. In Canada also, a report says that in the Province of Saskatchewan, the most fertile of all the provinces, the indebtedness of the farmers amounted to 440 dollars per head about the year 1922.

The national wealth of France for 1909-13 was 225,000 million francs divided amongst 11,634,000 persons. But half of this was owned by 98,243 persons, each of whom possessed more than 250,000 francs.

A study of all other countries would reveal the same state of affairs: there is a growing concentration of national wealth in the hands of a small minority of the nation, the capitalist class, while a fraction of the national income is distributed over millions. These few illustrations show that workers' wages are attacked by British Capitalism, which is in a decline, as well as by American Capitalism which was said to be still ascending. It shows that the weaker Imperialism is made to surrender its loot to the stronger through payments of war loans, reparations, Dawes loans etc. And all Imperialisms strong and weak unitedly exploit the working class and peasantry, national and international. All the productive forces of the world are dominated by the bourgeoisie of the world. Naturally the whole distribution of products is dominated by it. It refuses to produce or distribute the produce except on the principle that it gets back more than what it gives. It has all the ownership of buying power, therefore others cannot buy; it has all the commodities, therefore others cannot consume unless by labour they yield to it more than what they get. The private property relations, the capitalist system, therefore is at the root of the whole trouble. It must be overthrown, if society is to survive and progress, just as the bourgeoisie had overthrown the feudal order and rescued society from stagnation.

32. *Distribution to be socialised—who will carry it out—
Marxism is the theory of this—six deductions and three results.*

Who will carry out this task? Marxism answers this question dialectically: The feudal order produced in its womb its own contradiction, the bourgeoisie, which overthrew the obsolete class. Marx says, "The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself. But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons

that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence, the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians. ”

The productive forces developed in bourgeois society are worked and wielded by the working class. Even that individual bourgeois manufacturer who in the initial stage of Capitalism was directly associated with the process and direction of production has vanished, except in small negligible units. He has been replaced by the impersonal power of the banks, by finance capital, which many a time is seldom aware where on the surface of the globe, the forces of production “ owned ” by it are in fact working. The ownership of things produced is completely divorced from any participation of the owners in the production of things. Production is already socialised on an international scale. The weapons are wielded by the proletariat. What remains to be done is only to socialise distribution, that is destroy the ownership of the means of production, to overthrow the capitalist order based on private property in the means of production, distribution and exchange. This can only be done by the class which actually works the whole apparatus that is the working class aided by the peasantry. Communism is the revolutionary theory of the working class which strives to rescue society from the destruction of its productive forces, which would be inevitable if they are allowed to be imprisoned within the stifling envelope of capitalist private property. It is the theory which reorganises society on a higher plane and removes the contradiction and misery from which it is suffering today. Every advanced revolutionary class must have a revolutionary class theory of its own.

D/-31. 10. 31.

The revolutionary theory of the bourgeoisie, when it was an advanced class as against feudalism, was provided by the bourgeois economists and philosophers of the British and French Revolution and before them it was religiously clothed in the Protestant Reformation. The revolutionary theory of the working class, which is now revolutionary as against the bourgeoisie, is provided in Marxism-Leninism.

I have sketched in brief the position prevailing in the Imperialist countries in general, because the full implications of the Indian situation and the position that Communists adopt cannot be understood without it. The conditions sketched so far will show that the national or bourgeois view point which pits one country

as a whole against another is misleading. Within each country there are "two nations," one pitted against another. That all the exploiting classes of all countries though competing against one another are united in exploiting the working class and peasantry. Therefore Communists do not look at an Englishman as an Englishman or a German as a German, but view him from the class point of view. We consider the worker Englishman our ally and comrade as against the bourgeois Englishman. Secondly it shows that in spite of the highest development possible under capitalism the real mass of the population is in no way better off, in spite of the tribute of the whole world pouring into the Imperialist countries the working class and peasantry are still poverty-stricken. That helps us in exploding the illusions prevalent in some of the revolutionary parties in India that a capitalist free India would be a paradise for the masses in whose name they always speak. Thirdly it shows that poverty is not a permanent or unchangeable factor, that wealth grows according to the growth of technology. But its monopoly by one class makes poverty for another compulsory in spite of the increase in wealth. That the solution of the problem of poverty is the solution of the problem of private ownership of the productive forces. Fourthly it shows that social development being a dialectical process, this problem is inevitably solved by the rising class, the Proletariat. Fifthly it shows that the problem is not an isolated one limited to one country, but one affecting world society, which for the first time has come into existence as an effectively interlinked unit in the epoch of Imperialism. Sixthly it shows that having accomplished its fullest possible development, the system is now in decline and awaits being overthrown and superseded by the higher socialist order, for which the productive forces are ready, and also the revolutionary class, which is to use the weapons on the basis of an advanced revolutionary theory. Besides these conditions and deductions there are three more factors which influence and are a guide to the Indian struggle against Imperialism and capitalism. One is the experiences of the proletariat of the Imperialist countries against their bourgeoisie, and the present condition of their class-struggle. The second is the general revolt of colonial countries against their Imperialist oppressors, of which the Indian struggle is a part. And the third is the Soviet Union, the emblem of the victory of the proletariat and the vindication of the correctness of Marxism-Leninism. The essentials of all these factors are all involved in this so-called "conspiracy" as stated in the Public Prosecutor's address. I shall briefly treat the first and the third now and then come to the colonial, specifically the Indian question.

SECTION 2 —The class struggle of the proletariat against capitalism in the period of the 1st and 2nd Internationals. Paras 33—45.

33. The early Proletarian Movements up to Chartism.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie i. e. Capital is developed, in the same proportion is the Proletariat, the modern working class developed, a class of labourers who live only so long as they find work and who find work only so long as their labour increases Capital. These labourers, who sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity like every other article of commerce and are consequently exposed to all the fluctuations of the market. The Proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the work people of a factory, then by the operatives of one trade in one locality against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attack not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares, that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion and is moreover, yet for a time, able to do so. At this stage therefore the proletarians do not fight their enemies but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie. Modern capitalist industry had its birth in England. Therefore the first struggles of the working class began in England. The echoes of the French Revolution were not heard amongst the bourgeoisie, which had already received a share in the political power with the fast declining feudal class. Some societies of workmen were founded having sympathy with the revolutionary principles of the French Revolution and aiming at the radical transformation of the British political system. Bread riots broke

out in 1790 and the Government fearing a revolutionary movement, transported the radical leaders of Edinburgh (1793), suspended the Habeas Corpus Act (1794), passed a Seditious Meetings Act (1795). In 1797 a mutiny took place at Nellore which led to the prohibition of what we now call the right of free assembly. In 1811 a sect of Luddites started attacking and destroying machinery. In 1819 a large assembly of workers at Peterloo was set upon by the military, and a general massacre like that of the Jallianwala Bagh in India was carried out and the movement suppressed. The repressive Legislation was repealed in 1844, still a great restriction was exercised on the Trade Union Movement.

At the same time the middle-class petty bourgeoisie had not received the desired share of the political power, which was still dominated by the landowners combined with the big bourgeoisie of that period. The result was, that the petty bourgeoisie seemingly fought for the workers' rights and the workers' movement was led into the channel of the struggle for Parliamentary vote. The Reform Bill of 1832 gave much to the petty bourgeois middle class but nothing to the workers, who then turned to industrial action. Just after the Reform Act there was an industrial crisis, and the workers forming themselves in Trade Unions, established the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union (1834) and planned a General Strike. The employers attacked the workers before the strike could come about by involving them in sectional disputes. The aid of bourgeois law was invoked and in 1834 a group of six workers in Dorchester were sentenced to seven years' transportation on the plea of taking illegal oaths i.e. joining the trade unions. Thus the first phase of the Trade Union Movement ended in a failure. This period was dominated by the Utopian Socialism of Owen, St. Simon and Fourier, who thought that model experiments in humane capitalist management or cooperative production imposed on society by determined pioneers who are out to change society, would be sufficient. These theories certainly criticised the existing capitalist structure; but the secrets of that structure were not yet understood by them. Because as yet the mode of production and with it the antagonisms between Labour and Capital were incomplete. They could not see that the stage was historically inevitable, neither could they discern its roots.

The period of trade union outburst was followed by Chartism in 1838. The movement got its impetus by the crisis of production and marketing in British industry. The workers drafted a petition to Parliament in which they asked for (1) Equal Electoral Districts (2) Universal male suffrage (3) Annual Parliaments

- (4) No property qualifications for M. P.s (5) Vote by ballot
(6) Payment of members.

This was the "Charter" they wanted from the Parliament of the bourgeoisie. A great agitation was raised throughout the country and all the revolutionary energies were directed to obtaining signatures, explaining the points and forming a Convention to adopt a Charter and send it to Parliament. A million and a quarter signatures were obtained and the petition sent to Parliament, which kept silent over it for some time, Chartism gathered strength and became more expressed as regards its aim. It was not to be a harmless petition asking for voting rights. The more energetic and rank-and-file leaders like O'Brien and Julian Harney who was later on associated with Marx for a time, wanted political power, social equality and almost an imitation of the French Revolution. The Parliament rejected the petition and the advanced Proletarian section of the Convention wanted to take direct action, though it contained strong elements who wanted to rely on "moral force". The Convention was overtaken by hesitation. It wanted to call a General Strike, gave notice of it and then withdrew it. Amidst differences it adjourned and ended. But one revolutionary section, the Welsh Chartists prepared for an armed rising, which was suppressed. The leaders of Chartism were transported in 1840. When the movement subsided some of the leaders were released. In 1842 the movement revived and another petition this time with three million signatures was sent. Again the movement was confronted with the question, 'what is to be done next if the petition is rejected'. The leadership could not think beyond a strike action. Armed uprising was opposed by a section. A strike ultimately did take place. But the trade being bad the employers simply shut their factories and waited. The strike collapsed due to exhaustion. After this there was confusion within the ranks of the leadership. O'Connor, the organiser of the movement, took to the fantastic scheme of independent communes on land settlements built by floating workers' companies. The gradual disillusionment coming to the workers through the failure of Utopian schemes, parliamentary petitions, and unorganised strikes was leading them to the undiluted class outlook which found expression through the columns of the "People's Paper". The revolutionary upheavals on the Continent in 1848 blew a breath of life into the Chartist Movement; there was a demonstration in London, where an attempt was made for the new concentration of forces. But removed as it was from the large working-class centres it collapsed without any achievement. Remnants of the movement persisted, though it was in

a decline due to the industrial situation becoming favourable.

The discovery of new regions of mining outside England fostered emigration, which drained off the youthful forces that were behind Chartism. Ernest Jones, a far more revolutionary agitator than the previous Chartists, carried on the movement based on the textile struggles in Preston and Wigan in 1853, formed a "Mass Movement Committee" and worked for the establishment of the rival parliament, "The Labour Parliament," at Manchester. The Parliament was still within the confines of utopian ideology. It wanted to collect national revenue by a levy on wages, support strikes and settle the unemployed workers on land, without any programme of political power. Of course, the scheme could not but collapse. But it was a landmark in the Labour Movement. Marx in his letter to the Parliament dated 9/3/1854 says, "the mere assembling of such a Parliament marks a new epoch in the history of the world...The labouring classes have conquered nature; they have now to conquer men. To succeed in this attempt they do not want strength but the organisation of their common strength, organisation of the labouring classes on a national scale, such I suppose is the great end aimed at by the Labour Parliament. If the Parliament proves true to the idea that called it into being, some future historian will have to record that there existed in the year 1854 two Parliaments: a Parliament at London and a Parliament at Manchester—a Parliament of the rich and a Parliament of the Poor—but that men sat only in the Parliament of the men and not in the Parliament of the masters."

*34. Continental Movements—the Communist League—1848
Revolutions—The League disbands—the Cologne Trial.*

On the continent of Europe the workers' movement had not taken any organisational shape as there a capitalist development had not taken place on such a large scale as in England. There the working class was fighting the battles of its enemies, under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie, who betrayed the workers after each fight. The struggles of 1848 however finally disillusioned the workers and freed them from petty bourgeois leadership though not from its ideology. The February Revolution in France and the March Revolution in Germany in 1848 were the first great battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. On 24-2-1848 Louis Philippe was driven out of Paris and the French Republic was proclaimed. On the 13-3-1848 the people of Vienna broke the power of the Austrian monarchy. On the 18th the people in

Berlin rose in arms and after an obstinate struggle of 18 hours had the satisfaction of seeing the king surrender himself into their hands. All these upheavals were in fact the urge of the petty bourgeoisie towards political power for its own class, a desire for freedom to develop Capitalism and enthrone it in the State in place of the feudal class that held power. The petty bourgeoisie on the basis of the great revolutionary energies of the young working class of the cities had succeeded in defeating the feudal aristocracy. But when once feudal aristocracy was removed the further revolutionary steps that the working class wanted to take for its class emancipation alarmed the petty bourgeoisie. In Paris, Vienna and Berlin along with the petty bourgeoisie the working class was also armed. When the revolutions expelled the aristocracy from the big cities, the petty bourgeois shopkeepers suffered in trade and the workers were thrown out on the streets. Now as regards the political and armed control, the working class helped by 4,000 students in Vienna was strong enough to overawe the petty bourgeois section of the revolutionary front. They had borne the burnt of the fight. They wanted the unemployed to be maintained by taxing the cities, that is taxing the petty bourgeois traders and merchants. This naturally alarmed the petty bourgeoisie which was already alarmed over the loss of trade due to the flight of the nobility. Capitalism had not yet become so consolidated as to flourish on the markets of an independent petty bourgeois farming class, the largest and the real market of capitalist trade. The proposals of taxations and maintenance out of State funds which meant a cleavage of classes on the economic front led to a cleavage on the political front. The clash between the petty bourgeoisie and the workers came to a head in Paris. "It could be fought in France only; for France, as long as England took no part in the revolutionary strife, or as Germany remained divided, was by its national independence, civilisation, and centralisation the only country to impart the impulse of a mighty convulsion to the surrounding countries. On June 23-1848, the bloody struggle began in Paris, between the mass of the working people on one side and all the other classes of the population on the other. The counter revolutionary forces succeeded after severe fighting. The working class was crushed by the petty bourgeoisie whom it had raised to power. The French example encouraged the petty bourgeoisie in Berlin and Vienna. In Berlin they prayed only for a constitutional monarchy; in Vienna when the counter-revolutionary nobility was at the gates they remained passive. Naturally the counter-revolution smashed the working-class forces that offered resistance. The revolution had never changed the old state machinery. Not

even the old officers of the army were dismissed, and when the counter-revolutionary attack commenced the old state officers turned traitors from inside. The result was the immediate restoration of the monarchies in Germany and Vienna. It took some time in France, till Louis Bonaparte could muster the peasantry in his favour and carry out the *coup* in 1852. The petty bourgeoisie that had been frightened by the strength of the working class, had betrayed it and cheated it out of power, was itself overthrown by the counter-revolution.

The revolution fell because there was not as yet a solid class organisation of the workers, leading them as a class in the struggle for power, under their own banner, and for their own class Programme. The proletariat was not yet internationally united, just as the bourgeoisie too was not yet internationally developed and interconnected. Thus in the words of Marx, "every victory so obtained was a victory for the bourgeoisie". In France, the bourgeoisie had succeeded in rallying the peasantry to its aid, for reasons which we have already noted before (Para 24). This period is described by Lenin as "the first period in the birth of socialist ideas and the germs of class struggle of the proletariat. This is the period of the preparation and birth of Marxism, the only doctrine of Socialism which has stood the test of history."

The gradual developing class consciousness of the workers in England, France and Germany found its expression in the formation of the Communist League, a working class association, which was first exclusively German, but later on International. It had its roots in Paris and Berlin, its activities were directed first from Brussels and then from London. The moving spirits of the League were Marx, Engels, Karl Schapper, Moll and Harney of the Chartists.

The Communist Manifesto, now the most famous and classical document of Communism, was issued on behalf of this League, which in its London Congress in November 1847 had directed Marx and Engels to prepare a complete theoretical and practical Party Programme. The Manifesto is the first clear and comprehensive statement of the ideals of the working class, as a class, and is the first formulation of the slogan of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." The Manifesto was drafted in January 1848 and was in the last stages of publication when the February Revolution occurred in Paris. The League could do very little in the revolution as the active sympathisers of the League in Paris were in the ranks of the

Blanquists. After the defeat of all the revolutions the members of the League had to seek refuge in the various lands. Men like Schapper and Willich still dreamed of fresh revolutionary outbreaks. An attempt to link up with Germany was made but failed. Soon after in May 1851 the raid on the Central Committee in Cologne took place. The arrested persons were kept in prison without trial for seventeen months. The trial began on 4-10-1852 lasting up to 12-11-1853. Seven of them were sentenced to from three to six years. During that trial the capitalist counter-revolutionary prosecution and the court behaved as they are accustomed to behave under the bourgeois system. During the trial the principal forgerer witness admitted that the evidence which he supplied to the Government was forged in London at the instruction of Government. When the defence tried to procure evidence from London, the counsel's correspondence from Cologne with the London Communist refugees, made openly with the knowledge of the court, was treated as complicity in the alleged plot.

35. *British Unions—the 1st International—Statutes.*

With the development of industry, the proletariat not only grows in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The collisions between individual workman and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. The workers combine and give fight. Sometimes they are victorious, but only for a time. However, the real fruit of their battle lies not in the immediate result but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped by the improving means of communication created by modern industry.

Altogether collisions between the classes of the old society further, in many ways, the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle; at first with the aristocracy, then with certain sections of the bourgeoisie itself and at all times with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for help and thus drag it into political arena. The bourgeoisie itself therefore supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words it furnishes the proletariat with the weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie. Further entire sections of the ruling classes, like the petty bourgeoisie and tradesmen, are by the advance of industry precipitated into the ranks of the proletariat or at least are threatened in their conditions

of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

After the failure of the Chartist Movement the trade unions revived in England on a national scale. In 1850 the Amalgamated Society of Engineers was followed by other trade unions. In 1858 the Trades Councils were started to temporarily unite all the local unions in towns (The Bombay Trades Council was formed in 1928—70 years from London to Bombay!). The progress of trade unions evoked an attack from the employers, to counteract which a general conference was convened in 1864. Lockouts and strikes followed, as the trade crisis deepened. The attempt to suppress the movement did not succeed. Moreover the expansion in trade, the fall in prices and such other factors had created an aristocracy which in no way adhered to the revolutionary traditions of Chartism. In order to buy this off into peaceful parliamentary bourgeois methods, the Reform Act of 1867 gave voting rights to householders in towns and thus split off a section from the lower ranks of the proletariat. In 1868 the first regular Trade Union Congress met. The Criminal Breach of Contract Act (which prevailed in India till 1923) was repealed and the Trade Union Act was passed in 1871 (a measure which appeared in India in 1926).

At this time under the inspiration of Marx the English and French workers founded the International Working Men's Association or the First International in London on 28-9-1864. This First International inherited all the spirit of the Communist League, which later passed on in unbroken tradition to the Third Communist International. The aims and objects of the Third International are essentially the same as those of the First International. The statutes of the First International which were drafted by Marx and adopted with minor alterations by the Association stand as follows:— "That the emancipation of the working class is to be attained by the working class itself. That the struggle for the emancipation of the working class does not mean a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but a struggle for equal rights and equal obligations, for the abolition of every kind of class domination. That the economic subjection of the workers under the monopolists of the means of production, that is of the sources of life, is the cause of servitude in all its forms, the cause of all social miseries, all mental degradation, and political dependence. That the emancipation of the working class is therefore the great aim to which every political movement must be subordinated. That all endeavours for this great aim have failed as yet because of the lack of the solidarity between the various

branches of industry in all countries, because of the absence of the fraternal tie of unity between the working classes of the different countries. That the emancipation is neither a local nor a national problem but a problem of social character embracing every civilised country and the solution of which depends on the theoretical and practical cooperation of the most progressive countries. That the actual simultaneous revival of the workers' movement in the industrial countries of Europe on the one hand awakens new hopes, whilst on the other it is a solemn warning of the danger of relapse into the old errors and an appeal for the immediate union of the hitherto disconnected movement.

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The statutes are dominated by the thoughts proceeding from the experiences of 1848. The proletariat then had depended on the petty bourgeoisie. The workers in Vienna did not know what their comrades in Paris did, so successful was Metternich in isolating them ideologically. Moreover there was a danger of the workers busying themselves with constitution—making like the bourgeoisie, and forgetting its fundamental economic and social aim. Therefore the warning was sounded. It can be seen from this that if the Proletarian Parties of today—the Communist Parties—unite internationally in a centralised Communist International they are avoiding the blunders of 1848 and are following the directions of the First as much as of the Third International. If confiscation of bourgeois property along with the destruction of the bourgeois State looms so large in the Communist programme, it is the outcome of the betrayals of 1848 and 1871. We are following the First as much as the Third International in this also. To the philistine bourgeois brain this “conspiracy of ideas” begins with the Third International. Unfortunately for them, their list of “co-conspirators”, is sadly incomplete. This “conspiracy” began in 1847, is cemented by the blood of the heroes of 1848 and corrected by the subsequent experiences of the working class. We have been affiliated internationally in the ideals and statutes of 1864 of which 1919 is merely a repetition in a different epoch. Our chains are soldered with those of our Cologne comrades of the First Communist Trial eighty years ago. But we are more fortunate than they. Behind Cologne stood the unsuccessful June Rising of the Parisian workers, before it swung the future corpses of the heroic Paris communards. But behind Meerut stands the 12 year old proletarian power of the Soviet Union and before it swings the sweep of the mighty Indian revolution.

36. *The period of the First International—American Civil War—Marxist Address to Lincoln—British workers' attitude then and now.*

The period of the First International was the period of great upheavals and crises. * It was the period when the Italian petty bourgeoisie was fighting its class battles under the bourgeois republicanism of Mazzini, ultimately to end in monarchy supported by the former Commander Garibaldi. A revival of revolutionary activity was seen in France, in Russia under the influence of the bourgeois democratic ideas of its Western neighbours, the incapacity of absolutely feudal conditions of production to stand in competition against the production of the Western peasantry working under freer conditions, and the pressure from within of the ripening bourgeois economy led the autocratic Czar to decree the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, but it was niggardly carried out and defeated by the landowners till 1905; still not until 1917 was serfdom fully uprooted. In 1861, the Civil War in America began, the war for the extinction of slavery. Bourgeois history clothes this war in a lot of sentimental stuff about the humanitarian feelings of the North as against the slaveholders of the South that wished to retain the slaves. Most of our petty bourgeois intelligentsia who do not view this episode from the dialectical point of view are cheated by the manner in which the bourgeois historians present this episode and point with pride to the great achievements and civilising role of the "West." But in fact the bourgeoisie in England played the most reactionary role in this Civil War. The Southern States of America rested on the production of cotton through slave labour, while in the North the bourgeoisie was developing an advanced economy based on free labour and farming carried on by independent farmers on their field. The existence of the Southern slave system depended on its extension to larger territories. America with its vast virgin land provided good field for such an expansion. The expansion of slavery of the South meant the extinction of the freedom of the Northern farmers and with it of the bourgeoisie and working class. "The present struggle between South and North is nothing but a struggle between two social systems, the system of slavery and the system of free labour. Because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American Continent, the struggle has broken out. It can only be ended by the victory of one or the other." (Marx, 7th November 1861). The Civil War was fought on these issues. The bourgeoisie of the North, suffering from the corruption inherent in the class took up the

question in a lukewarm manner. It was even prepared to compromise with the South. In his letter to Engels dated July 1, 1861, Marx says, "I found that the conflict between the South and the North—after the latter had been degrading itself for the last 30 years from one concession to another—finally came to blows through the weight cast into the balance by the extraordinary development of the North West States. This population, richly mixed with fresh German and English elements, besides that, essentially self-working farmers, was naturally not so inclined to be intimidated as the gentlemen of the Wall Street and the Quakers of Boston." The population of these North West States was 7,870,869 as against the 5,000,000 of the seceding slave States. The corruption in the bourgeois management of the war was overcome by the revolutionary elements of the farmers and workers and the war was won.

The first International on its foundation sent an address to Abraham Lincoln, congratulating him on his re-election to the Presidency which he had held during the anti-slavery struggle. Marx, the founder of Communism, which is the enemy of the bourgeoisie, sending an address to the President of the bourgeois Republic! Why? Because historically a bourgeois republic involving the destruction of the slave oligarchy is a forward step in the progress of society to a Socialist revolution. Enemy of all slavery, communism considers the wage-slavery of the modern worker as a higher stage in the social advance to freedom. Hence the address. But the address itself is not a piece of vulgar sycophancy, as is found in the innumerable addresses that are presented by the Indian bourgeoisie to their Imperialist masters or its patriotic agents. The address did not want the American people to be lost in wage slavery after overthrowing chattel slavery. It wanted death to all forms of slavery. "We congratulate the American people on your re-election by large majority. If resistance to the slave power were the reserved watchwords upon your first election, the triumphant war cry of your re-election is 'death to slavery'. From the commencement of the titanic American strife the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner carried the destiny of their class. The contest for the territories that opened the dire epogee, was it not to decide whether the virgin soil of the immense tracts should be wedded to the labour of the immigrant or the prostituted tramp of the slaveholder? When an oligarchy of three hundred thousand slave-holders dared to inscribe for the first time in the history of the world, slavery on the banner of armed revolt, when on the very spot where hardly a century ago an idea of one great Republic had first sprung up, whence the first declarations of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulses given to the

European revolutions of the 18th century; when on those very spots counter-revolution, with systematic thoroughness, gloried in rescinding the ideas entertained at the time of the formation of the old constitution and maintained slavery to be a beneficent institution, indeed the only solution of the great problem of relation of Capital to Labour, and cynically proclaimed property in men the corner stone of the new edifice; then the working classes of Europe understood at once, even before the frantic partisanship of the upper classes for the Confederate gentry had given its dismal warning that the slaveholders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for the general holy crusade of property against labour and that for the men of labour with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic. Everywhere they bore therefore patiently the hardships imposed upon them by the cotton crises, opposed enthusiastically the pro-slavery intervention importunities of their betters, and from most parts of Europe contributed their quota of blood to the good cause. While the workmen, the true political power of the North, allowed slavery to defile their Republic, while before the negro mastered and sold without his concurrence they boasted in the highest prerogative of the white skinned labourer to sell himself and choose his own master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of Labour, or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation; but this barrier of progress has been swept off by the Red Sea of Civil War.

The working men of Europe feel sure that as the American war of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class so the American anti-slavery war will do for the working classes."

The attitude of the European workers and especially of the British and French referred to above affords a strong contrast to the attitude that they are now asked to adopt towards the Indian and colonial struggle for emancipation. The American Civil War stopped the exports of cotton which was supplied from the Southern plantations to the British textile mills. The import of raw cotton fell from 1140.6 million pounds in 1860 to 309.3 in 1862. Thereby 60.3 per cent spindles and 58 per cent looms were rendered idle. Mills were closed down, and workers in England and also in France were thrown out on the streets. A similar result has happened due to the revolutionary situation in China and India. In 1862, the workers in spite of starvation supported their comrades in the North because the Civil War was a crusade of slave property against free labour. The British bourgeoisie whose profits were threatened by

the closure of mills, though at home it had voted 20 million pounds for the liberation of slaves, sympathised with the Southern slave holding States. "The entire official English Press," wrote Marx to Lassalle on 29th May 1861, "is naturally for the slaveholders. They are the same fellows who have tired the world with their anti-slave-trade philanthropy. But, cotton, cotton!" The bourgeoisie tried to incite the workers to demonstrate against the North and bring pressure for compromise. But it failed. And today the same tale is repeated. The whole bourgeoisie is trying to suppress the movements in China, India and the Soviet Republic, and inciting the workers to side with it in its counter-revolutionary activities by telling them that they are losing their bread due to the revolutionary activities of the working class in other countries. What a strange contrast the attitude of Lancashire workers of 1862 presents to that now adopted by their trade union bureaucracy, that allows gun-boats to be manned by the British workers against the Chinese and Indian workers. The International solidarity of the working class written on the banner of the Comintern is thus a principle which in history has brought freedom from slavery to the whole American Republic and will now bring freedom from wage slavery to whole world. We are but continuing the traditions of the Lancashire workers of 1862, when we ask them to keep "Hands Off" the revolutionary working class and peasantry of India and China who are waging a war of freedom from slavery to Imperialism and capitalism.

37. *The Paris Commune.*

The period of the First International was enriched by another experience, very valuable to the proletarian class struggle. That was the lesson of the Paris Commune. With the establishment and fall of the Commune closes a period, which completes the task of laying completely the theoretical foundations of Marxism, ideologically tested in the revolutionary struggles of 1848 and 1871. With the fall of the Commune the ideological bondage of the European working class to the glamour and promises of bourgeois democracy also fell. With the fall of the Commune, the highest experience of the First International, the International also collapsed. But it left a complete system of Marxism, a complete and scientific understanding of the foundations of the bourgeois order that killed the Commune, and a formulation of the proletarian revolutionary movement that would resurrect the Commune over the ruins of its murderers on a colossal scale.

On the eve of the Franco-German War of 1870, the Paris members of the First International issued a Manifesto "to the

workmen of all nations", in which they said, "brothers of Germany! our division would result only in the complete triumph of despotism on both sides of the Rhine.....workmen of all countries! Whatever may for the present become of our common efforts, we the members of the International Working Men's Association, who know of no frontiers, we send you as a pledge of indissoluble solidarity, the good wishes and the salutations of the workmen of France." (Exh. P 1179-D 409). The workmen of Paris and Germany protested against the war under the leadership of the International, but the forces of reaction had their game alright. At the commencement of the war, the German Emperor and Bismark had made it appear that for them it was a war of defence. But when, after the battle of Sedan, the rottenness of the "Second Empire" of France became visible, the war was turned into a war of annexations. Germany asked for "guarantees" from France (just as today France asks "guarantees" from Germany). The guarantees were the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and an indemnity of five milliard francs. On hearing of the defeat and the news that the German armies were marching on Paris, the workers of Paris overthrew the Empire and declared a Republic on 4-9-1870. In this rising the workers were led by the secret organisations of Blanqui, the most redoubtable and uncompromising leader of the revolution, and also by the representatives of the First International. Though this time as in every other case, the workers were the revolutionary forces, the actual Government was set up by "a Cabal of place-hunting barristers with Thiers as their statesman." The Blanquist and Marxist sections though quite aware of the reactionary bourgeois character of the Government so formed allowed it to function as the Prussians were at the gates of the Republic to drown it in blood. Blanqui wrote, "all opposition, all contradiction must disappear before the common need. There is only one enemy, the Prussian and his allies, the partisan of the fallen dynasty who wishes Prussian bayonets to restore order in Paris." But the new Government was a hive of treacherous fellows who under the cloak of putting up a defence of Paris against the invaders were in fact trying to sell it. "Paris, however, was not to be defended without arming its workers, organising them into an effective force and training their ranks by the war itself. But Paris armed was revolution armed. A victory of Paris over the Prussian aggressors would have been a victory of the French workman over the French capitalist and his State parasites. In this conflict between national duty and class interest, the Government of National Defence did not hesitate one moment to turn into a Government of National Defection." (Here one may

well be reminded of the refusal of the Indian bourgeoisie to draw the revolutionary working class and peasantry in India into a direct and active conflict with Imperialism. The victory of the Indian workers and peasants over Imperialism is a victory of the Indian workers over the Indian bourgeoisie. In this conflict between national duty and class interest the Congress of national independence does not hesitate one moment to turn into a Congress of national defection by the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement.)

The Republican Government was headed by Thiers that monstrous gnome who had charmed the French bourgeoisie for almost half a century, because he was the most consummate intellectual expression of their own class corruption. Before he became a statesman, he had already proved his lying powers as a historian. The chronicle of his public life is a record of misfortunes of France. Scentsing a popular commotion in the February Revolution of 1848, he had declared "I shall always be of the party of the revolution." When the revolution came and the working class instead of changing one ministry for another superseded Louis Philippe by the Republic, Thiers was disappointed and carefully hid himself, "forgetting that the contempt of the working men screened him from their hatred. After the June Massacre of the revolutionary workers, he became the leading mind of the "Party of Order." Fond of brandishing with his dwarfish arms in the face of Europe the sword of the first Napoleon whose historical shoe-black he had become, his foreign policy always culminated in the utter humiliation of France. Despite his versatility of talent, and shiftiness of purpose, this man had his whole lifetime been wedded to the most fossil routine. To him the deeper under-currents of modern society remained forever hidden, but even the most palpable changes in its surface were abhorrent to a brain, all the vitality of which had fled to the tongue. Thus he never tired of denouncing as a sacrilege any deviation from the old French protective system. When a minister of Louis Philippe he railed at the railways as a wild chimera; and when in opposition under Louis Bonaparte he branded as a profanation every attempt to reform the rotten French army system. Thiers was consistent only in his greed for wealth and his hatred of the men that produced it. Having entered his first ministry under Louis Philippe poor as Job he left it a millionaire. A master in small State roguery, a virtuoso in perjury and treason a craftsman in all the petty stratagems, cunning devices and base perfidies of parliamentary party warfare, never scrupling when out of office, to fan the revolution, and to stifle it in blood when at the helm of the State; with class prejudices standing him

in place of ideas, and vanity in place of a heart; his private life as infamous as his public life was odious—even when playing the part of a French Sulla, he could not help setting off the abomination of his deeds by the ridicule of his ostentation. This Thiers, along with his "Cabinet" which was composed of Jules Favre, who by forgeries, proved in court, had become a rich man, of Ernest Piccard, who in conjunction with his brother, a man who was convicted of theft of 30,000 francs from the banks, set false news going about from his Home Office to contrive the Stock Exchange rates to suit his speculation, and such others, set about electing a bogus Assembly and in its name convincing Paris and France of the necessity of surrender to Bismark. By their conspiracy and treason the Fort of Metz fell. When the workers of Paris heard this they attempted on 31/10/1870 to drive the Government out. But they did not succeed. The forces led by Blanqui recoiled before the idea of turning the national war into a civil war which alone was the guarantee of success of the national war. Blanqui yielded and a compromise again took place. It was agreed that the old Government should return, should hold new elections and make no prosecutions. Thiers, consistent in his treachery, carried out the first two conditions but arrested as many opponents as he could. Elections were bound to be as desired by him, as one third of the territory was under the Germans; and the capital was cut off from the provinces. Thiers fooled the peasantry by the most lying statements about the revolutionary workers in Paris. A show Assembly sat and decided on capitulation on 27/1/1871.

The workers of Paris who were the real revolutionary sections behind the Republic were now confronted with the treachery of the bourgeoisie, which had surrendered to the enemy because its class interests were threatened. Paris had either to lay down her arms at the insulting behest of the rebellious slave-holders of Bordeaux and acknowledge that her revolution of 4-9-1870 meant nothing but a simple transfer of power from Louis Bonaparte to his royal rivals; or she had to stand forward as the self-sacrificing champion of France, whose salvation from ruin and regeneration were impossible without the revolutionary overthrow of the political and social conditions that had engendered the Second Empire and under its fostering care matured into rotteness. Paris emaciated by a five months' famine did not hesitate one moment. The civil war was opened by Thiers who sent some regiments to seize the artillery of the National Guards. The attempt failed, the usurpers were driven out. Thiers and his gang fled to Versailles.

On 18.3.1871 the glorious workingmen's revolution took undisputed sway of Paris. The Paris Commune, the first embodiment of Marxism, of Proletarian Revolution, came into existence under the shadows of the frowning artillery of the Prussians and the treacherous French bourgeoisie at Versailles calling itself the National Government.

38. We stand by the Commune—the French bourgeoisie killed the French Workers' Commune.

Who had overthrown the corrupt debt-ridden Empire of Louis Bonaparte? The working class. Who were fighting uncompromisingly against the Prussian army? The workers. What were the patriotic bourgeoisie led by Thiers doing? Arranging the terms of capitulation and the massacre of revolutionary Paris. In spite of exasperation, the workers, so long as capitulation was not a fact, bore with the Government of patriotic forgers and Stock exchange robbers, in order not to hamper the defence of France. It is not they who started the civil war. It was the patriotic and treacherous counter revolutionary bourgeoisie, who with the aid of the invaders' guns attacked Paris in order to make the revolutionary workers agree to the Thiers-Bismark Agreement. "The Paris workers were putting the pact in danger", so cried Thiers, and his patriotic gangs. "The pact is in danger", so cries Mahatma Gandhi and his patriotic gangs, sixty years after the Commune, in a different part of the world. Thiers, that monstrous gnome, called in the aid of the Prussian enemies' bayonets to compel revolutionary Paris to observe the "pact" and pay five milliard indemnity to the German King. Gandhi, the Mahatma, and his patriotic bourgeoisie helped the British bayonets, realise from the revolutionary peasantry forty crores of the annual British land revenue loot. In subjective idealism Thiers was corruption and cowardice. In subjective idealism the Mahatma is self-sacrifice and heroism. But though in personal character the two are poles apart, objectively the effect of the actions of both is the defence of the reactionary exploiting interests of the bourgeoisie. Success of the Communards meant the repudiation of the huge national debts held mostly by the patriotic French bourgeoisie. Success to the revolutionary peasantry in India means the repudiation not only of the national debts but also of the six hundred crores of peasant debts held by the patriotic moneylenders in India. Thiers asked Bismark to lend the Prussian guns to support the "pact". Gandhi asks Irwin to lend his "goodwill" to support the "pact"—the goodwill behind which stand the good and willing bayonets of the Empire.

Thiers was not a Mahatma. When his counter-revolutionary forces entered Paris on the corpses of the workers, he left them to rot and stink and buried them even half alive. But the Congress of the Mahatmas is more subtle. It emasculates the revolutionary peasantry with slogans of peace and love, conferences and talks; disarms the revolution before it is bayoneted and afterwards provides "ambulance cars", a box of medicines and a box of Inquiry Committees, to inquire whether revolution clad in the rags of the starving peasant was shot with or without a warning of a Magistrate. Sixty years of Imperialist culture have given the patriotic Indian bourgeoisie a sense of humour, of which Thiers, the French Sulla, had not the advantage.

In this case we are alleged to have conspired with the Third International to establish a regime in India on the Soviet model. We are said to have received fantastic ideas and inspiration from "the penny yellow books found at the rickety bookshop windows in India, eagerly devoured by the sex-hungry youths of India", as Miss Mayo likes to put it. But unfortunately the blood-hungry historians of Imperialism have forgotten history. Before the Soviet was born, there was the Paris Commune. There was the First International that embodied all the ideology of the Commune, before the Third International contained the ideology of the Soviet. Gentlemen of the bourgeoisie, we uphold the principles of the Communist League classically expressed in its Manifesto of 1847; we are descended from the First International of 1864. We wave the banner of the Paris Commune of 1871, drowned in the red blood of the Paris workers by the patriotic French bourgeoisie and unfurled again 40 years later by the working class and peasantry of Russia. Our parentage is more ancient and nobler than the degenerate historians of the bourgeoisie think.

39. *The Commune and its degrees.*

What was the Commune? In what way did it distinguish itself from the Empire or the Republic? The Commune was that form of the State which the working class was trying to find and had failed to find since the February Revolution of 1848. On 18th March, the Central Committee in its Manifesto said, "Proletarians of Paris, amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs..... They have understood that it is their imperious and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies by seizing

upon the Governmental power." But the Governmental power of the working class essentially differs in form and content from that of the bourgeoisie. "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own purposes". The working class had made three revolutions and each time they had surrendered the State power into the hands of the bourgeoisie, who centralised and perfected the State machinery in order to suppress the working class and peasantry and exploit them with greater violence. In the 19th century took place the development of "the centralised State power, originating from the middle ages, with its ubiquitous organs, standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy and judges." With the development of class antagonisms between Capital and Labour, "the State assumed more and more the character of a public organisation for the oppression of labour i.e. of a machine for class domination. After every revolution marking a certain advance in the class-struggle the merely oppressive character of the power of the State became more and more apparent. The State, after the revolution of 1848-49, becomes the natural weapon of Capital in its war against Labour." The Second Empire had consolidated this. The Commune was the direct antithesis of the Empire. It was a definite form of a Republic which was to abolish not only the monarchical form of class rule but also class rule itself (References Exhs: P 528 and P 1179). The Commune was not a change over from the Government of a Conservative Party of the bourgeoisie to the Government by a Labour Party of His Majesty, the bourgeoisie. It was not a change over from the Government of Mahatma Irwin to the Government of His Excellency Gandhi. It was aimed at the fundamental alteration in the production relations of society. It was the transference of the productive forces held by the bourgeoisie to the direct administration of the producers. It was not a change merely in the superstructure but in the basis also. Therefore the Commune could not halt only with the expulsion of Thiers; it had to destroy the bourgeois State machine and replace it by one in which, the working class was organised as the ruling class.

The first decree of the Commune was the abolition of the standing army and its replacement by the nation in arms. The Police, until then merely an instrument of the Government, was immediately stripped of all its political functions and turned into the responsible and at any time replaceable organ of the Commune. The same was applied to the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Council of the Commune down to the humblest worker everybody in the public service was paid at the rate of workman's wages as an ordinary workingman.

All privileges and representation allowances attached to the high offices of the State disappeared along with the offices themselves. Having got rid of the standing Army and the Police, the material weapons of the old Government, the Commune turned its attention without delay to breaking the weapons of spiritual oppression the power of the priests. The judicial functionaries lost their sham independence. In future they were to be elected openly and to be responsible and revocable. The Commune realised that ideal of all bourgeois revolutions, cheap Government, by eliminating the two largest items of expenditure—the Army and the bureaucracy. But neither cheap Government nor the "true Republic" was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants. Its true secret was this. It was essentially a working-class Government, the produce of struggle of the producing class against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of Labour.

The Council of the Commune consisted of Municipal representatives elected by universal suffrage in the various districts of Paris. They were responsible and could be recalled at any time. The majority were naturally working men or acknowledged representatives of the working class. But this form of the Commune is not to be confounded with breaking up of a centralised apparatus into decentralised piecemeal social groups of Communes or Panchayats (as dreamed of by the reactionary Utopian petty bourgeois) Modern methods of industrial production and planning rule this out. The decentralisation, as it appears, is merely an instrument to bring out the great initiative of the Proletariat and to associate it directly with every function of the State authority of its own class. In spite of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workman and manager in his business. The Commune was to have been not a Parliamentary but working corporation, Legislative and Executive at the same time. Its special measures could not but betoken the tendency of the Government of the people by the people. Such were the abolition of the night work of journeymen bakers; the prohibition under penalty of the employers' practice to reduce wages by levying upon their work people fines under manifold pretexts—a process in which the employer combines in his own person the parts of Legislator, Judge and executioner, and filches the money to boot. Another measure of this class was the surrender to associations of working men,

under reserve of compensation of all closed workshops and factories, no matter whether the respective capitalists had absconded or preferred to strike work. The Commune relieved the middle class of Paris—shopkeepers, tradesmen, merchants—of the ever-recurring cause of dispute, the debtor and the creditor accounts. This was the first and the last revolution in which the working class was openly acknowledged as the only class capable of social initiative by the great bulk of the middle class. The Parisian middle class unlike that of Soviet Russia, due to its circumstances under the Empire, the robbery and suppression it had to undergo then in the interest of the big capitalists, stood by the Commune.

The Commune declared to the peasants that "its victory was their only hope". The bourgeoisie in 1848 had burdened him with additional taxation and wanted to shift on his shoulder the indemnity. The commune declared that the peasant would be relieved of the blood tax and transform his blood-suckers, the notary, advocate, executor, and other judicial vampires into salaried communal agents elected by and responsible to himself. The French peasantry was thoroughly debt-ridden and was getting ready to overthrow its oppressors. The bourgeoisie at Versailles saw this already and they cut off Paris from the peasantry, spread lies about the Commune and massacred the Commune before the peasantry could come to its aid.

Since the establishment of the Commune, whilst robbery and thieving had left Paris along with Thiers and the bourgeoisie to reign at Versailles, there were no massacres or murders in Paris under the Commune. Through Thiers was sending spies to provoke attacks and pogroms, the Commune used the bullet on very few occasions. While Thiers was everyday shooting the national guards and Communards that strayed by chance in his range, the Commune did not shoot the hostages retained by it as guarantee for its men held by Thiers. On the very day when the Commune's Red Flag was raised Thiers arrested Blanqui and hurried out of Paris with his valuable prisoners. The Commune negotiated for exchange of prisoners, offered to release and give every man of Thiers in exchange for Blanqui. But the Versailles bourgeoisie replied "to give Blanqui to the Commune is to give it a head." Blanqui was imprisoned in a fortress with death sentence hanging over him for the rising of October 31, for daring to oppose the sale of France to Prussia by the patriots.

The Central Committee of the Commune elected on 26th March 1871 consisted of 92 members of whom 72 were Socialists.

Amongst them the Blanquists were in a majority, while only 17 were Marxists, i. e. members of the First International. All of them were not men of calibre. Some were pure boasters and talkers. But that was inevitable in view of the youth and inexperience of the working class of that period. The Commune had failed to seize the Bank of France, a fatal mistake which embarrassed it financially. On the 18th March when Thiers fled to Versailles the Commune did not attack Versailles and thus break the counter-revolutionary stronghold which, if done, would have prevented the subsequent isolation of the Commune from the peasantry. When the spies of Thiers and his agents entered the Commune sufficient Red Terror was not established against them. These mistakes, the mistakes of the youthful working class in the face of the bourgeoisie that commanded a huge military machine and all the roguery and treachery of years of bourgeois State craft were great mistakes. The bourgeoisie consolidated its position and attacked the Commune. The heroic Communards, workmen and women fought to the last. The last fortress of the Commune fell on 29th May. The bourgeoisie shot and massacred thousands of men and women first in the battle and then in the orgy of judicial murders when the bourgeois Government was restored.

40. *What did Marxism learn from the Commune ?*

The experience of the Commune completed the part of Marxian theory on the question of the State. The Commune fell on 29th May. Marx considered the Commune such an important event in history that the very next day he read in London before the General Council of the International his thesis "The Civil War in France." (P. 1179). The work is not only a theoretical exposition but a defence of the Commune, a classical and most brilliant account of the whole course of events and the only true and correct account of the Commune up till now.

As early as the Manifesto of 1847, Marx had come to the conclusion that the whole course of development must lead to the seizure of political power by the working class which then becomes organised as the ruling class. The experiences of the revolutionary period of 1848-51 had shown that after each revolution the workers were armed. Consequently the first commandment of every bourgeois at the head of the State was the disarmament of the workers. Accordingly after every revolution won by the workers a new struggle arose which ended with their defeat. The oppressing class did not leave arms with the oppressed class. It perfected the machinery of oppression the more irrespective of the

fact whether the form of the State so established was monarchy or a Parliamentary democracy. Naturally the working class when it becomes the ruling class must suppress the overthrown bourgeoisie. This suppression is not the same as the suppression of the working class and peasantry by the bourgeoisie. The former is a suppression of a parasitic minority by the majority, the people, who are producers of wealth. The latter is a counter-revolutionary suppression of the majority, the people, by the minority, the bourgeoisie, in order to continue the appropriation of wealth socially produced by the majority. As this oppression and exploitation of the working class is upheld and organised through the state, the working class has to destroy this bourgeois State. Marx had not yet found what the working class will substitute in its place. The idea of a Dictatorship of the Proletariat was born in the forties but its form was not clear. Marxists are not speculators or Utopians. Marx waited for history to give the answer. The Commune was the answer. The working class does not set up a Parliamentary democracy of the bourgeois type. The working class cannot continue with the old bureaucratic machine. The bourgeois State, i.e. its bureaucracy, Army, Police, Judiciary has to be replaced by the Commune State, now called the Soviet State. That was the form "discovered at last" by the working class to administer its Dictatorship during the transition to Socialism.

The new State administering the Dictatorship of the Proletariat for the minority composed of the parasites, who are now deprived of their political power and therefore plot the counter-revolution with tenfold intensity, is not a "State in the proper sense of the word" because it is no longer an organ of an exploiting class to hold down by organised violence the exploited class. Petty bourgeois writers fail to understand this character of the new State. And some of them think that whereas formerly the capitalists exploited the workers, now the workers will exploit the capitalists. Such thinking betrays a lack of understanding of the essence of the social relation of classes in economy. The essence of capitalist economy is that a parasitic non-working bourgeois class, by its ownership of the instruments of production which is fortified by its militarism organised in the State, extracts surplus values from the working class and peasantry which is compelled to sell its labour power to the bourgeoisie, and appropriates it for its own class interests. That is exploitation of one class by another. In the proletarian State, the working class organised in the State "owns" the means of production and "employs" itself to work them. The surplus they produce is not surplus value in the

former sense, that it is not produced by the sale of wage labour of one class to another class and is not appropriated by or for that parasitic class, to again become capital, that is a further means of extracting more surplus value. Now in such a State, if the former dispossessed bourgeoisie is forced to work in the factories and fields, it is not selling its wage-labour to any parasitic class in order to produce profits for that class, because the bourgeois turned into a workman is now his own employer, a member of the working class. It is obvious that we cannot be said to "exploit" ourselves when we work to produce values, which come back to us in another form and are not appropriated by a parasitic class. The bourgeois State and the feudal State were organised to uphold the "exploiting" and "exploited" relations between two classes and to keep the exploiting in power and exploited in subjection. Since the economic category of exploitation which is the basis of all the previous States vanishes when the proletariat abolishes private ownership and appropriation of social necessities, the proletarian State ceases to possess the essence of the former State. Therefore it is no longer a State in the proper sense of the word.

Neither the Commune nor the Soviet resembles the parliamentary institutions of the bourgeoisie. The parliamentary institutions as found in the bourgeois State are merely a screen to delude the working class and peasantry into thinking that they themselves determine their own fate through the suffrage, that in spite of this, if their poverty is not removed, the evil lies in the "eternity of poverty" or an "unknowable force." The Commune or the Soviet differs from the parliamentary institution in that it is a "working institution." It undertakes both the executive and legislative functions, is directly engaged in the production and distribution of commodities. The Commune or Soviet is also based on the elective principle. Only so long as the former dispossessed bourgeoisie is not rendered harmless, the suffrage is restricted to the workers and poorer peasants. The Soviet is the present form of the Commune which accomplishes in the best available manner the association of the producers directly in the administration of things.

41. *Close of the First International period—factions in the First International—growth of the State machine—decline of Blanquism and Anarchism—International Congresses—literature of Communism—works of Marx and Engels.*

The fall of the Commune closed one historical period in

the growth of the bourgeoisie as well as of the proletarian class struggle. As we have seen earlier (para 26) the bourgeoisie embarked on a period of large scale production, trustification and colonial expansion. The capitalist State became more centralised, more perfected in its technique that is its bureaucracy, military, police prisons etc. This made it invulnerable to Blanquist coups or anarchist (Bakunist) attacks. It was not possible any longer to overthrow the bourgeoisie by the strength of a secret "Society of Seasons" in the absence of an all national crisis. With the expansion of Capitalism and conquest of colonies, a section of the working class began to be bought over and turned into an aristocracy of labour amenable to bourgeois influence. The continuous fall in prices led to a more or less general increase in real wages and reduced the incentive to risings. The strong wave of repression that was set in motion by the bourgeoisie alarmed at the Commune and all that it signified, rooted out many a revolutionary working class group and the working class transferred its struggle to the industrial front.

The experience of the Commune completed the revolutionary theory of Marxism especially on the question of the bourgeois State machinery. But with the fall of the Commune also fell the International. The International was not a strong party organisation exclusively of Communists or Marxists as the Third International is. The First International served as a federation of trade unions as also an organisation of revolutionaries, who took their stand on Socialism as their final aim. This was due to the fact that the bourgeoisie, and the petty bourgeoisie especially, had not yet perfected their political domination as against the feudal elements and were therefore compelled to call the workers into directly political conflicts which led to the trade unions being participants in purely political action. The rigid limitation of trade unions to industrial action was a growth of the later period when the sharp division of classes led to the system of party, each class creating its own political party, which of course, was bound to rest basically on the economic organisation of the particular class. The socialism of the revolutionaries in the International, though one in its main outlines and agreeing with Marxism, was not agreed as to the correct methods of its achievement. There were in the International Proudhonists, Bakuninists, Mazzinists, Blanquists and Marxists, all with different ideas regarding the course which the revolution ought to take, the role of the State, the nature of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and such other vital questions. The Proudhonists thought that with their very radical description of property as theft

they were Socialists; while in practice and after a further elaboration of theory they were found to be merely against the excessive concentration of property and upheld the small Capitalists. They were opposed to strikes also. It was the "Socialism" of the shopkeepers. The Mazzinists shouted for God and thus made room for the clergy under whose ample cloak masqueraded 'mammon'. The Mazzinist's bourgeois God was pounced upon by the Bakuninist's campaign against "God and State". And the latter would even bring the forces of the nether world to smash the State "now and at once, in any way you can, wherever you can." Smash the State and society and its economy will take care of itself. He also considered the petty bourgeois middle class a stronger revolutionary element than the working class. The Blanquists were nearest to the Marxists but they believed in the secret society and the military coup by the workers, as the sole form of revolutionary action for establishing the Dictatorship of the proletariat. Marxism included and was greater than Blanquism had nothing in common with Bakuninism, except the final stage of society wherein, both agreed, there would be no state. It was absolutely marked off from the Proudhonists and the Mazzinists. The Commune precipitated these differences into active demarcation. The strongest quarrel was waged between Bakuninist anarchists and Marxists, wherein the latter won in all the Congresses of the International and the Bakuninists were expelled in 1872 at the Hague Congress. But this was not the real cause of the break-up of the International which could have continued to work with greater vigour, with the disappearance of non-Marxist elements. The real cause, as noted above, is the change in the material conditions of the workers and the objective situation which grew less favourable for a proletarian revolution as Capitalism ascended and grew.

The achievements of the First International were mainly amalgamations of national socialist parties into a centralised body and building a revolutionary Marxist basis for them. It also introduced international trade union unity. The General Council resolution of 1866 on the Austro-Prussian War, directed that the national war must be used by the workers for advancement of their struggle for emancipation. The Lausanne resolution of 1867 said that wars are not prevented merely by the abolition of the army but it requires a change in the social system. The Brussels resolution of 1868 recommended that "workers down tools in case of war breaking out in their countries, for war today is civil war, workers fighting against workers." This famous attitude was adopted by the Second International but betrayed by it in the Imperialist war of 1914. And it is the same attitude which is being insisted upon

by the Communist Parties of the world today. (Reference E P 527.)

After the dissensions of the Bakuninists assumed an acerbic form and they were expelled, and the other parties, especially the British Trade Unions, grew cold, the headquarters of the International were transferred to New York. After two years it was disbanded in 1874.

The revolutionary philosophy of the working class which was formulated from the "existing class struggle, from a movement going on before our very eyes", and which was tried, tested and enriched by the revolutionary experiences of the workers of 1848-51 and 1871 received the most brilliant and profound expression in the works of Marx and Engels. The theory of class struggle was already advocated before them. But the fundamental proposition of historical materialism was Marx's own discovery, as also the theory of surplus value. Side by side with the organisation work carried out by Marx he supplied the movement with the rare production of his genius, which carried Socialism from a realm of utopianism on to a scientific basis. Marx's outstanding works are the "Manifesto" (1847)—Ex. P 21; "The Critique of Political Economy", (1859); "Capital" (1867, 1885, 1894)—Ex. P 44; "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" (1851)—Ex. P 1193 D 408; "The Civil War in France" (1871)—Ex. P 1179—D 40. Engels collaborated with Marx in many of his writings. The work "Revolution and Counter-revolution" which goes in the name of Marx was written by Engels. Engels edited the two volumes of "Capital" after Marx's death. He also wrote the most popular exposition of Communism, "The anti-Duhring" (1877) when the German Professor Duhring who, though blind, was a brilliant and learned author, had undertaken the work of smashing Marxism. Engels' most original study is the "Peasant war in Germany"—(Ex. P 1183-D 407). Both in their life had become the acknowledged leaders of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. Marxism had become the basis to which most of the parties in Europe were veering.

42. *Founding of the Second International—its period—work and the Second International.*

The disbanding of the First International did not mean the breakdown of the working class socialist parties or the international alliance. Some sort of international contact was

maintained by the Bakuninists, who, when expelled from the first International after its disbanding, continued to hold International conferences, calling themselves the real First International. These conferences ceased in 1881 on the death of Bakunin and the ebb of anarchism in the Continental countries, due to the growth of class consciousness amongst the workers and all the socialist parties. Each country was building a strong socialist party of its own, the strongest being the Social Democratic Party of Germany, which was declared illegal by Bismark in 1879. It continued to function, issued a newspaper from Switzerland, scored heavily at the elections and was legalised in 1890 when Bismark was removed. The socialist organisation of the German working class was far ahead of the other countries and remained so far a long time till the Russian Communist Party outstripped it. In England the Social Democratic Federation was formed in 1881, the Fabian Society in 1885, the Socialist League in 1885 and the Independent Labour Party in 1893. In 1899 on 14th July fell the 100th Anniversary of the capture of Bastille, the first rising of the workers which began the French Revolution. On this occasion delegates from all the Socialist Parties assembled in Paris for the celebration of the anniversary and it was decided to form the Second International. There it was also decided that "at a definite moment a wide scale international demonstration is to be organised in such a way that in all countries and all towns simultaneously on a definite date the workers submit to the State Power the demand for the introduction of the eight hour day and proclaim aloud the other decisions of the International Paris Congress". (References Ex. P 2491.)

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The American Federation of Labour had fixed the 1st of May 1890 for such a demonstration even before this Congress had met, so the Second International adopted that date. Thus the May Day came into existence. It is not a day of merriment but a day of demonstration of the International class solidarity of the Proletariat, a day to summarise each year's experiences of the class struggle and to formulate and propagate the demands of the Proletariat. (References P 2491).

The Second International was born in a period when the national bourgeoisie of the big capitalist powers was partitioning the world amongst themselves, and bringing the loot to the home countries. On the basis of this colonial loot, the bourgeoisie succeeded in bribing sections of workers with high wages and ameliorations. It resulted in deflecting the working class on to a

policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and renouncing the path of class struggle. The Trade Union struggle for partial demands, for less hours and higher wages, for Parliamentary suffrage became the leading issues before the workers. The effect of this was that a tendency arose to "revise" the revolutionary side of Marxism. The "Revision Movement" was undertaken by Bernstein, an engineer and a brilliant pupil of Engels, who, at the time of his death, had entrusted all his library and papers to Bernstein. Bernstein belonged to the German Party, was exiled by Bismark, went to stay in England after a short stay in other countries, and remained there for several years. While there he came under the influence of the British bourgeoisie and the aristocracy of Labour which had become "responsible" and "reasonable" by the share in the colonial loot. The cardinal point of the "Revisionists" was that it was not necessary, after all, for the working class to seize and smash the bourgeois State by violent revolution. A gradual transformation through the Parliamentary and other institutions would do the task; "co-operate with the bourgeoisie," "industrial peace" etc. were naturally the slogans of the new pseudo-Marxists and Socialists. The worst danger was that they justified all this by reference to Marxism itself.

The Second International became a loose Federation of all sorts of Socialists, who were agreed that capitalist society should be superseded by Socialist society and that the political struggle was a necessity for the workers. It is interesting to note that amongst the adherents of the Second International in India, who have, since the growth of the Communist Movement, found themselves suddenly in love with the Second International or the Indian National Congress, there are several groups, who would not like the workers in India "to dabble in politics". But the Second International in 1891 and 1893 emphasised the importance of the political struggle, and debarred organisations which did not recognise this from entering it. But having no really Marxist or revolutionary basis, the individual sections deteriorated, and in France the "Socialists" Millerand joined the French Ministry of the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet. This was the first betrayal by the National Socialist Party and created a storm in the Socialist Parties of the world. The Paris Conference of 1900 and the Amsterdam Conference of 1904 by a majority decided that Socialists should not join a bourgeois Government but those who had already done so refused to resign. So in 1904 Millerand, Vivian and Briand were expelled. In 1907, at the Stuttgart

Congress the opportunists moved that the Trade Unions should not be controlled by Social Democratic Parties, thus trying to rescue the mass organisations from the direction of their revolutionary sections organised into party. The increasing hunt for colonies and the clashes of the Imperialist powers over them, the trustification of industry and friction arising from international cartels and their division of the world into reserved markets, led to threats of war and a tremendous increase in militarism. The war danger became very imminent by 1912 when an International crisis threatened Imperialism. The crisis was getting more and more acute since 1910 and England was in the grip of a big strike wave. The reason was that while the period before 1900 was one of falling prices the growth of monopoly in all its forms had checked that tendency and prices were rising steadily from 1900 to 1910 leading to a fall in real wages. In England the seamen and dockers struck in 1911 and won. They were followed by the railwaymen. 1912 saw a great miners' strike. In 1913 the Dublin Capitalists locked out their workers. It was followed by a building workers' strike in 1914. If the War had not broken out, 1914 would have seen a tremendous All National General Strike with revolutionary consequences in England. The workers in Russia who had been suppressed after the revolution of 1905 had begun to rise again with the Lena Gold-Fields massacre. The atmosphere was filled with the talk of war and strikes.

What was the reaction of the Second International to this rising revolutionary wave? The International had already failed to keep the Social Democrats from joining bourgeois Government, because joining a bourgeois Government means aiding the bourgeois State in its function of suppressing the working class. When War was threatened the International in its Congress at Stuttgart (1907) and Copenhagen (1910) considered the question and betrayed its opportunist character. The Left Wing at this Congress headed by Keir Hardie of the British Labour Movement and Vaillant, a French Socialist (not the Bakuninist anarchist) advocated that if a war broke out, the workers of all countries should immediately declare a General Strike as the war would be a war of Imperialists. This proposal was rejected by 131 to 51. The International abandoned its character of an International of workers and left its Parties to fight for their own bourgeoisie in case of war.

43. *What it did when war actually broke out—the role of the Labour Party—the vote for war credits in Germany.*

When the War actually broke out the Socialist deputies of the Second International, sitting in the Parliaments of their respective countries, voted for the war credits. All the talk of preventing war by a General Strike or by any other means "most appropriate" was thrown overboard. The Socialists of the Second International led the workers to fight the battles of their bourgeoisie. The heritage of the First International, the lessons of the Paris Commune, of Marxism, were forgotten, and the betrayal was great because the Second International influenced a membership of 12 millions from 27 countries. The International crisis threatening capitalism was jumped over by the war. The patriotic mania, the supposed danger of being wiped away from the face of the earth that was held by the bourgeoisie of each warring nation before its workers and peasants, the false propaganda of the bourgeois Press and the cooperation of the leaders of the working class with the bourgeoisie, set aside the strike wave, the militant action of the working class against the capitalist system, in the belief that the war would solve the problem of poverty. The working class and peasantry of each nation was led to believe that the defeat of the bourgeoisie of its enemy would mean victory for itself. The exploitation of India at present is being directed in the interest of British Imperialism by the so-called Labour Party. The Indian bourgeoisie and its petty bourgeois intellectuals grasped the Imperialist nature of this "Labour Party" only when it hit them by an ordinance in 1924, and its policy in 1929 and 1930. But the Communists have exposed the opportunist and Imperialist role of the Labour Party since the War, when it joined hands with the Imperialists of its country. When Austria declared war on July 25, 1914, the Parliamentary Labour Party expressed its gratification at the "peace efforts" of Sir Edward Grey and asked all Labour organisations "to watch events vigilantly so as to oppose if need be in the most effective way any action which may involve us in war". On August 1, the Brist section of the Bureau of the Second International issued a manifesto over the signatures of Keir Hardie and Arthur Henderson calling upon Labour to hold vast demonstrations against war in every industrial centre. "Combine and conquer the Militarist enemy. Down with class rule." Two days after this the British bourgeoisie declared war. The anti-war resolution of the Second International at Basle called for every means to prevent war, having regard to the sharpness of class struggle and the general political situation. What was the position of the class

struggle in England at this time ? Mr. Syday Webb, now the bulwark of Imperialism, says, "The number of disputes culminated in the latter half of 1913 and the first half of 1914 in the outbreak of something like 150 strikes per month. British Trade Unionism was, in fact, in the summer of 1914 working up for an almost revolutionary outburst of gigantic industrial disputes which could not have failed to be seriously embarrassing for the political organisation to which the movement had committed itself, when in August 1914 war was declared and all internal conflicts had perforce to be suspended". Webb omits to mention that the suspension was not voluntarily done by British Labour but under the false leadership of its Labour-Imperialists. The Basle resolution declared that, "should the war none the less break out, every effort must be made to utilise the crisis and hasten the fall of capitalist domination." The leadership of the British workers failed to carry this out. On 7th August 1914 the Labour Party decided to make no pronouncement on the vote of war credits. August 29, the E. C. of the Party "agreed with the policy of the Parliamentary Party in joining the campaign to strengthen the British Army," and promised the support of its organisations ! The betrayal was made complete by sending the Secretary to the Party, Mr. Arthur Henderson, to enter the Cabinet in July 1915. On August 24, the Trade Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour Party decided to terminate all the existing trade disputes. Fearing that the workers would denounce them, they also cancelled the T. U. C. Session. In March 1915 the T. U. leaders entered into an agreement with Lloyd George by which the workers surrendered every right of theirs. Holidays and the eight-hour-work day were abrogated, employment of women and children in mines was introduced, all former wage agreements were suspended and the workers were not to get even overtime pay or compensatory allowance for all these sacrifices to Imperialism. (Webb's History of Trade Unionism). The Munitions of War Act of 1915 prevented a worker from leaving his work without the consent of the employer. The result was that wholesale robbery of workers' wages was practised by the employers and if they protested, they were sent to the Army.

The Indian bourgeoisie draws a different lesson from this. It asks the Indian workers and peasants to emulate the patriotism and self-sacrifice of the British workers in stopping class war when threatened by an enemy from outside. But it fails to mention the role of the British bourgeoisie. It was the workers who were killed on the battle-field. On the economic field it was the workers who bore the war burden. The bourgeoisie bought war

bonds and is even now after 12 years living on the interest. The war profiteers in every country are well-known to the workers. The bourgeoisie in every country reaped a harvest of wealth from the war while the workers were thrown in the harvest of tornadoes of high prices, disease and massacres.

It is wrong to suppose that British workers did not strike for wages during the patriotic war. The engineers, miners, armament workers, all had to strike for higher wages as the prices were rising. The employers called for Government intervention but the workers refused to be intimidated and in some cases they won. The Clyde workers, in a manifesto, denounced the Trade Union officials' support to the Government as "an act of treachery to the working class". With the sanction of the treacherous leadership the workers' leaders in the armament works were deported in March—April 1916. Thus throughout 1915 and 1916 the workers were carrying on class war on the industrial front, while the bourgeoisie and the opportunist Second International leadership of the British Labour Party, the I. L. P. and the T. U. C. were cooperating against the British workers to carry out an Imperialist war. It was the natural outcome of becoming renegade to Imperialism. (References Exh: P 1270, "The Communist", January 1928).

The social democratic deputies in the Reichstag voted for war credits. The French deputies did the same. In Russia the Duma copied the betrayal. The International solidarity of Labour against the bourgeoisie was forgotten.

44. Attitude of Communists to war—Lenin's slogans—the work of Leibknecht and Rosa Luxembourg—the perversion of Lenin's slogans by the Social Democrats.

But was there none in that huge organisation of 12 million workers of 27 countries to oppose the war, to denounce it and give the correct Communist lead to the working class of the world? Was none so courageous and faithful as to stand out in that international fever of patriotism fanned by the Imperialist Press in every country and give the slogan of the Proletarian Revolution? There was, and it was the small Left Wing section of the Second International under the leadership of Lenin, Luxembourg and Leibknecht. We have already seen the revolutionary attitude to war as indicated by Marx and the First International. The same attitude was endorsed by the Second International, but whereas the Paris Commune carried out its revolutionary duty, the

Second International failed to do so. The attitude of the Communist of the Third International to the question of war is a continuation of the Marxist attitude and a continuation of the Leninist preaching during the last Imperialist war.

The Leninist attitude to war is determined from the class point of view. Is the war waged in the interest of the working class by the revolutionary working class? Is the war a progressive one leading to a further unfolding of the class struggle or is it reactionary? For example, the wars waged by the bourgeoisie in the 18th and 19th centuries were progressive wars. Because they were wars waged by the bourgeoisie against the absolute feudal order, thus leading to the development of capitalism, the development of productive forces and of the Proletarian struggle bringing the whole epoch nearer to the fight for Socialism. The war waged by the Indian or the Chinese bourgeoisie would be a progressive war in the same sense.

But the war of 1914 was a reactionary war. It was a war of Imperialist Powers, who fought in order to destroy the productive forces of one another, as there was no room for further expansion or growth. An Imperialist war signifies the end of the progressive growth of Capitalism and is therefore a sequel for proletarian revolution. It shows decline, not progress. This has been amply proved by the post-war experience. In Europe, the France-German War was the last *national* war. Today in the world, the wars waged by the colonies for Independence from the Imperialist yoke can be said to be progressive national wars. So also the war waged by the Proletarian Soviet State against an Imperialist State would be a revolutionary progressive War.

In the second address of the First International to the workers, Marx therefore asked the workers to do their duty as *citizens*, but at the same time to consolidate their position as *workers*. In 1848, he also advised a war against Russian Czarism, in order to weaken the reactionary feudal forces, which every time suppressed the progressive forces of the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and workers from developing. But the same position did not remain in 1914 when German and Russian Imperialisms fought each other. Because now both of them were ripe for being overthrown and there could be no preference. The productive forces in both had reached their maximum within the bourgeois structure and could be pushed further only by being liberated from the shackles of private ownership. Hence Communists oppose the Imperialist war but support the revolutionary war of one proletarian State against the bourgeois

state, or of the colonies against their Imperialist masters or of workers against the bourgeoisie. Our anti-war attitude is not that of Pacifists or humanitarians; it is a class attitude. The Social Democrats in the Second International failed to see this. Outwardly every Imperialist State called the war one of "defence". But in fact every Imperialist State wanted to destroy the other, with the net result that one Imperialism is substituted for another; one reaction for another reaction. It was not a question of substituting feudalism by Capitalism or Capitalism by Socialism.

There were some sections of Social Democrats, who took the slogan of "Neither peace nor war". This attitude also was wrong. If the war was reactionary it had to be opposed. Such an opposition could not be neutrality like that of the Pacifists. When the bourgeois State forced the working class to fight its war, the opposition to the fight could only be a civil war. This was the attitude adopted by the revolutionary wing of the Second International under the leadership of Lenin. The Social Democratic Labour Party of Russia in its manifesto in November 1914 said: "It is the task of the Social Democrats in every country to wage in the first and foremost place a fight against Chauvinism in their respective countries. The overthrow of Czarism, the United States of Europe, erected on the ruins of Russian, German, Austro-Hungarian monarchies, the Socialist Revolution in the advanced countries, the Democratic Revolution in Russia, were to be the aims of the struggle. The transformation of the Imperialist war into civil war, such was to be the road." On 15th July 1915 writing in the "Social Democrat", the paper of the Russian Party, Lenin wrote "During a reactionary war the revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its own government". (Reference P 2391). Revolution in war time is Civil War and the transformation of the war of States into a civil war is facilitated by military failures (defeat) on the part of the Governments of the States. It is in fact impossible to bring about such a transformation without encouraging defeat." (Ex. P 247 page 58). Against the Imperialist slogan of "Save your country," the Bolshevik slogan was "Welcome defeat—" "Change Imperialist war into civil war." Anybody who has lived through the war craze can see what tremendous revolutionary courage was required to stand in the centre of Europe and issue such a slogan when even the mightiest Second International leaders had joined on the side of the war in their respective countries.

The Imperialists tried to pervert the slogan. In Russia they argued that Lenin wanted Germany to be victorious. But this was not so. The slogan was to be acted upon by the workers in every

country. So there could not be a question of wishing the victory of one Imperialism as against another. Some Social Democrats formulated the question that if the workers and peasants of one country, misled by its bourgeoisie, did attack another, where the workers were not in a position to overthrow their bourgeoisie, should these social democrats simply see their workers and peasants massacred? The answer is that whatever be the position of the party it cannot support its bourgeoisie in the war. It must oppose it. Secondly the attack on the bourgeoisie affects the bourgeois State, which is bound to arm the workers and peasants for the war. So the question of impotent massacre is ruled out by the bourgeoisie itself. The Party has to utilise this position, overthrow its bourgeoisie and then, if peace becomes impossible, to conduct a revolutionary war. That is what the Russian Social Democrats—the Bolsheviks—did.

The Social Democratic members of the Russian Duma refused to sanction war credits—the Bolsheviks were not opportunists like the Labour Party. In Germany the banner of revolt was led by Leibknecht in the German Reichstag. At the first voting, he was led by the idea of party discipline and as the German Social Democrats had decided to vote for war, Leibknecht obeyed the mandate. But later he rebelled and in March 1915 he voted against war. He was immediately drafted as a common soldier in the army. Exactly the Leninist attitude was taken by the great Irish leader James Connolly, who was not in touch with Lenin at all. Connolly advocated that the Irish workers must begin the war of national independence immediately, taking advantage of the Imperialist carnage. The most consistent and virulent opposition was organised by the Bolsheviks in Russia and Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg in Germany. At first the British, French and Russian Imperialists applauded the "German" Liebknecht and Luxembourg for taking up the slogan of "Civil War." The German Imperialists cheered the "Russian" Bolsheviks for advocating the overthrow of Czarism. Thus the Imperialists of every warring country wanted to use the Communists in the enemy countries for their own victory. While the Communists in all the Imperialist countries wanted to unite internationally for the overthrow of all the bourgeois States by using their mutual military conflict.

45. *Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences—proposal of founding the Third International—the Russian Revolution.*

For three years the struggle did not bear fruit. The masses had not yet been convinced by their own experience of the correctness

of the Bolshevik lead. Without such an experience, the finest theory and leadership falls flat. For two years the Left Wing of the Second International could do nothing except issuing manifestoes to the workers, forming propaganda centres wherever possible and organising fractions. The greatest work in this direction was carried on by Liebknecht in Germany and the Leninists in Russia. Within the Second International a revolutionary Left Wing had been growing since 1907 under the leadership of Lenin and Luxembourg. In 1910 they tried to organise a Conference of the revolutionary Left Wing but did not succeed as the members were afraid of the powerful International throwing them out. In the quarrel between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, the International sided with the Mensheviks. After the war, opportunism became still more vivid. So when a Conference was held at Zimmerwald in September 1915, the Leftists formed the Zimmerwald Left and issued a manifesto against the war calling upon the workers to turn the Imperialist war into a civil war. Both at Zimmerwald and Kienthal the Left were not in a majority. Though they were not full congresses of the Second International yet they were congresses for all purposes of its adherents. At these conferences, Lenin brought forward a proposal of founding the Third International. Every one except a few members considered it a mad proposal. It was unthinkable that any one could propose a Third International against the most powerful Second International of twelve million members. Even within the Russian Bolshevik Party the proposal was considered to be too radical. Lenin wanted the Party to break with the Zimmerwald platform and form a Third International. The majority opposed and the Bolsheviks remained in the Second International. According to Zinovieff, the nucleus of the Comintern was begun since 1907, the proposal made openly in 1915 and carried out in March 1919, after the Russian and German Revolutions. Three years of the Imperialist war convinced the workers that "one's enemy is in one's own country." That the Imperialist war must be turned into the civil war.

The exhaustion was felt first in the country which was the least strong in its organisation, where the Imperialist chain was the weakest and the workers' revolutionary party strongest. It was Russia. The shortage of bread, the mismanagement of munitions at the front exasperated the workers and soldiers until the revolutionary tide could not be stemmed. The Czar was overthrown and a provisional Government was established in March 1917. The tide was rising in Germany also. On 28th June 1916, 50,000 workers in Berlin struck work for Liebknecht's release. Next day Brunswick joined it. It was the first political strike in Germany.

But the revolution there took time to mature. It was one year after the Russian Revolution that the Kaiser fled on 9th November 1918.

The two Russian Revolutions of 1917 and the subsequent revolutions in the Central European countries were the direct outcome of the Imperialist war. But in the former, there was a party and a proletariat schooled in the experiences of the revolution of 1905. In the latter, there was no such party nor a proletariat that had gone through a revolutionary baptism, showing it the treacherous role of the pseudo-revolutionary petty bourgeois parties. Moreover the Russian proletariat had the unique fortune of possessing the extraordinary genius of Lenin. The Russian Imperialist system was not so strong as the German or British. These and other factors gave birth to a successful proletarian revolution in Russia, while the proletarian revolutions and revolutionary attempts in other countries were betrayed and drowned in blood.

The Russian Revolution ushers in an epoch of proletarian revolutions and the emancipatory wars of the colonies. The Russian Revolution has been inspiring the world revolutionary movement of the workers for the last thirteen years. We stand here charged with advocating the same ideals and the same methods as were used by the Russian working class and peasantry in their fight against Czarism and Capitalism. Every bourgeois leader in India today tries to frighten British Imperialism with the prospect of the Indian Bolsheviks getting stronger if Dominion Status were not given to the Indian bourgeoisie. There is a worldwide war against the Bolsheviks. We will therefore see what the Russian experience teaches us and what lessons we draw from it for the proletarian struggle in India.

D/- 5. 11. 31.

SECTION 3.—The Russian Phase of the class-struggle from 1905 to 5 Year Plan; Paras 466-6.

46. Early Russian developments till 1905.

The development of capitalism began in Russia, later than in England, France and Germany. While Europe and America as a whole were going swiftly on the road of capitalist development, the peasant was still a serf in Russia. The incapacity of feudal economy to compete with products of capitalist economy, the effects of the Crimean war and such other factors compelled the Czar to decree the abolition of serfdom in 1861. But the "abolition" was

such that the peasant had literally to buy his freedom. If he wanted to cultivate his land as an independent peasant, the feudal lord demanded a price that he could never pay, or, if he could pay, he was given such a piece that he had to hire himself out to the landlord for more money as the small piece was insufficient to meet his needs. Thirty years after the emancipation, the peasants were still being flogged and sold as serfs. However, a certain stratum of small peasants and "free" labour was created. A part of the peasantry when completely ruined went to the town industry.

The republican ideas of the French Revolution had their influence upon the small middle class in Russia. Discontent against the Czarist system grew amongst them. When many of them, tired with the conditions in Russia, went abroad for education and "Western" acquirements, they came in contact with the adherents of Marx and Bakunin, and imbibed their teachings, especially of the latter. The Russian intelligentsia was already filled with the Slavophil mania, that is the notion that the Russian Slavs have a special message to give to the world (just like the Indian Rabindra Nath Tagore and Gandhi wandering about to give the "special message" of India to the world). There was prevalent in Russia the "Mir," an ancient system by which land was held in common by the village. The intelligentsia idealised the "Mir," idealised the peasants. The whole literary activity of the eighteen-sixties was full of an idealisation of the peasants. Bakunin gave the slogan "To the people. Go amongst the peasantry, teach them, do good work for them and society will be cured of all ills including Czarism." One of the advocates of this movement, Pisarev, added one more slogan—that the intelligentsia must undergo the same physical inconveniences as the peasantry, as a means for genuine approximation to the people. The Czar fearing the growth of revolutionary tendencies amongst the immigrant students called them back and threatened banishment if they did not return. They came back and went to the "people", started schools, became doctors, teachers and preachers and began to mildly stir up the peasants. Even this peaceful welfare work was not tolerated by the Czar. The natural reaction was that they determined to leave "peace and welfare" and take to the road of violent terrorism. Terrorist activity was at its height during the period of 1870-80, its greatest action being the assassination of the Czar Alexander II in 1881. The reaction of the Government to this was an increase in the secret Police force (the Okhrana) from whose operations even the members of the royal family were not left free. According to Masaryk, the average duration of the life of the Russian terrorist was two years. During the years 1860-92

the number of victims of the terrorist revolution is stated to have been 30,000 (Masaryk, "Spirit of Russia," Volume II). The presiding genius of Russian anarchism was Bakunin. It was not the anarchism, as we find it in India, the only factor common between the two being the name and terrorist attack against the members of the bureaucracy. Bakunin's mature philosophy was summed up in two words "against God and the State". Russian anarchism was atheistic, while the Indian is crudely superstitious, religious and even communal. The Russian anarchists were in fact anarcho-Communists, i.e. they wanted to abolish immediately the State, and institute Socialism, something of the Mir type. Therefore they asked for "Land and Freedom," of which only the latter is heard amongst the so-called Indian anarchists.

The absence of any outlet for the middle class intelligentsia in industries, the absence of liberal bourgeois Parliamentary institutions, combined with monstrous rigour of repression, made Bakuninist anarchism strong. But when during the latter part of the 19th century, capitalism began to develop in Russia, conditions altered. A stable Proletariat began to grow and with it the influence of Marxism, also. In 1883, Plekhanov, Vera Zasulich and Axelrod formed the first Communist Group that began popularising and applying to Russian conditions the theory of Marxism. These pioneers of Communism in Russia were drawn from the disillusioned ranks of the "Populists" (as the anarchists were called because of their slogan "To the people"). By 1895 there were three political groups contending for the leadership of the movement—one was the liberal bourgeoisie only supplicating for a constitution; second, the Populist Socialists advocating destruction of autocracy and feudalism to be followed by a return to the old social life of the village Commune; third, the Social Democrats or Communists whose ultimate aim was a Communist society and immediate demands were the overthrow of Czarism, destruction of feudalism, a Constituent Assembly and the minimum demands of the workers: in fact a bourgeois democracy such as was obtainable in Western Europe.

Russian capitalism grew very rapidly between 1890 and 1900, whereas the rate of increase in the other countries was slowing down and they were hunting for division of the world market. The impetus to this production was given by the growth of railways which were needed for the movement of the grain trade of the land owners. Railways which were 1488 versts in 1860

increased to 41714 by 1900. Along with them rose allied industries. The cheapness of labour brought in French and German Capital. The development took place mostly on large scale production, from the very beginning, as it was built on the technical experiences of the Western bourgeoisie.

But side by side with this development there existed, unlike France or England, the all-powerful land-owning class whose parasitic demand of rent did not allow the growth of a middle peasantry but impoverished the whole strata. Between 1888 and 1898 in 50 provinces of European Russia the number of horses owned by the peasants declined from 19.6 millions to 17 millions and cattle from 34.6 millions to 24.5 millions. The peasantry was destitute, cruelly exploited, flogged and shot for disobedience or refusal to do any serf labour. Its condition can be compared with that of our peasantry under the Talukdars of Oudh. The growth of industry on the one hand and complete ruination of the peasantry on the other, was bound to lead to the depression in trade and industry, which set in at the beginning of 1900 and lasted in a more or less degree till 1910 and was the cause of the revolutionary upheavals slowly breaking out in 1901 and culminating in the revolutionary of 1905. (References P. 247).

47. *Rise of various parties—Economists, Anarchists, Social Democrats, etc.*

Petrograd was the first centre of railways and industry and therefore the first of strikes also, which had begun as early as 1875. With the development of capitalism, the Proletariat began to appear on the scene as a separate force and claim attention from the revolutionary schools of thought. The Marxian viewpoint found adherents amongst the intelligentsia through the activities of the Plekhanov group. But Communist thought was as yet confined merely to the intellectuals and had not yet become the basis of Proletarian struggle. This was the first task carried out by Lenin. The economic struggle of the workers for wages and hours with their employers had attracted many intellectuals to the industrial centres for conducting the workers' movement and amongst them had sprung up various shades of thought. The activity of even the most mild welfare workers being forbidden by the Czarist Police, most of these circles were secret and Lenin worked amongst one of them. He had mastered Marxian Economics and political theory in his college days and was already under Police surveillance, his brother having been hanged for an anarchist attempt on the Czar. Lenin was a great admirer of the

revolutionaries of the preceding epoch, their courage, methods of organisation and sacrifices. But he was convinced of the petty bourgeois nature and the futility of their struggle, and he exposed their reactionary Socialism, which wanted to return to the pre-capitalist and feudal State in which Russia had been rotting so far. He began this with his articles "The heritage we renounce" and "The friends of the people—who are they?"

The depression in industry brought on a strike wave. Lenin had not remained content with merely exposing the horrible conditions of work of the workers. His circle while secretly circulating leaflets on workers' demands and exposing abuses, explained to them that the solution of the evil lay not *only* in economic struggle, but that the overthrow of autocracy and a social revolution alone could finally solve the problem.

Now there were in Russia Marxists-Communists, who believed as Lenin believed, but who did not act up to their belief in the correct manner. By the time that the workers had begun to revolt and the political activity of the petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie on constitutional lines was gathering strength, the Communists in Russia found themselves involved in immense ideological and organisational controversies out of which arose Leninism. There were the Economists. They considered the economic struggle of the workers as the only and most important struggle. They wanted the movement to be limited to minor demands and improvement of material conditions. Political struggle against autocracy and for democracy they liked to leave to the petty bourgeoisie. Thus this school though calling itself "Social Democratic or Communist" was like our pure Trade Unionists or Social Welfare workers of the type illustrated by the Servants of India society or the Servants of the People Society, who send organisers amongst workers for economic struggle, sometimes even with the ideal of Socialist society before them, but who in politics follow the pro-Imperialist Liberal Federation or such other institutions. The Socialism of this group consists in vaguely conceiving a socialist society to which the working class along with the other classes will somehow gradually evolve. The Economists laid great emphasis on "spontaneity of the masses." They considered that out of Trade Unions, out of the daily economic struggle, the masses will spontaneously rise to a higher class-consciousness and the needs of the struggle. Next to the Economists was one group of Social Democrats or Communists who went a step further than the Economists. By all means the working class must take part in the political struggle. They admitted the Marxian slogan that

every class struggle is a political struggle. But then they conceived it as a "process". The working class must first carry on "mild politics", the politics arising from Trade Unionism. It must learn by experience what politics is, slowly and step by step. The working class is incapable, according to them, of building up a revolutionary party at once, or grasping the revolutionary content of the anti-Czarist democratic movement, without a long course of training. Therefore, a Communist, they said, must not incessantly call upon the workers for revolutionary action. This school also took the colour of maintaining the most uncompromising "class outlook". They would not like the workers to take part in the demonstrations of the petty bourgeois. They would not like the workers to take part in any democratic movement conducted by the bourgeoisie. On the face of it this looked very Marxian and an unadulterated class outlook. But in fact it hopelessly misunderstood the tactic and strategy of Marxism. The Communist Manifesto had long ago said that a Communist must support every revolutionary movement, even that conducted by the bourgeoisie and use it for his own revolutionary aim. The Leninist line had to fight against all these tendencies and groups. It should be remembered that all these groups were in one party, the Social Democratic Labour Party of Russia and agreed on one programme, but they differed in its application, in the line of struggle and also in the interpretation of Marxism. All of them relied on Marx just as today in India even the anti-Communist quotes Lenin in his support.

48. *Lenin opposes them—"What is to be done"—organisation of professional revolutionaries.*

The most exhaustive refutation of the various wrong tendencies in Communism and the first clear formulation of Leninism is to be found in Lenin's work "What is to be done" which he wrote between 1901 and 1902. The outline of thoughts in this booklet had already appeared in the controversial articles of Lenin in the "Iskra". The Social Democratic Party was split into two sections in the Second Congress in 1903, nominally on the question whether or not to have a centralised organisation but really on the question of different tendencies with regard to the revolutionary struggle which later on crystallised into Menshevism and Bolshevism. When the controversies broke out there were Social Democrats of the economist school who said, "Leave controversies of theories, or quarrels between leaders, or exaggeration of the importance of ideology, to the people who are outside Russia, in exile. Here concentrate on the organisation of workers and Trade Unions.

Lenin opposed this "freedom" to every tendency taking the lead of the workers' organisation. Because such a freedom ultimately led to chaos and absence of united action. The advocates of "no theoretical quarrels before the workers" (because the workers do not know or care to know what is Moscow and what is Geneva, so say our Indian pseudo-Socialists) quoted even Marx that:—"A single step of the real movement is worth a dozen programmes." Lenin pointed out that to repeat these words in the epoch of theoretical chaos is sheer mockery, and if quarrels have to be set aside for the sake of tactical alliances, then you must remember Marx again, who wrote "if you must combine, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not haggle over principles, do not make 'concessions' in theory." The theoretical struggle is absolutely necessary.

Writing on the question of spontaneity of the masses Lenin says that the strikes and revolts of the workers ending in destruction of machinery began in Russia in 1870, but they were merely signs of coming consciousness, they were simply trade union struggles. There was no Communist consciousness, that is, the workers were not and could not be conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interest to the whole of the modern political and social system. This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, that is, it may itself realise the necessity for combining in unions, to fight against the employers and to strive to compel the Government to pass necessary labour legislation etc. The working class organisations out of their own evolution can only find the way to trade union politics, which confines itself to bourgeois parliamentary system. The slogan of giving the "economic struggle a political character" as a tactical slogan of using the trade union struggle to infuse Communist consciousness and convert that politics into the revolutionary politics of Communism looks most profound and alluring. But such a conversion is not possible by limiting the movement to the economic sphere only. It must spread over all forms of social life taking note of the struggle of all classes and their alignments. The workers can acquire class political consciousness *only from without*, that is only outside of the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relations between the workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationship between *all* classes and the State and the Government—the sphere of the inter-relations between all classes. For that reason the reply to the question what must be done in order that the workers may acquire political knowledge cannot be merely one

which in the majority of cases the practical workers, especially those who are inclined towards economism, usually content themselves with, that is "go amongst the workers." To bring political knowledge to the workers the social democrats (Communists) must go among all classes of the population, must despatch the units of their army in all directions. The Communist ideal should not be a trade union secretary but a *tribune of the people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of people it affects.

But the widening of the field of struggle is likely to lead to another deviation in the field of organisation—one is likely to attempt to convert a whole trade union into a "party" and neglect the question of revolutionary organisation. In the zeal to widen the movement a criticism is made that unless the rank and file take part, the continuity cannot be maintained; when a handful of leaders are arrested, the whole movement comes to an end. Lenin admitted the correctness of the description of the state of affairs. But the lesson that his critics drew that the masses must take the movement "out of the hands of revolutionary leaders—the workers must rely on workers, on the rank and file only and not on a set of ten wise men," was mischievous and demagogic. It was an attempt to set the worst instinct of the crowd against the "leaders." Lenin fought this. "A committee of students is no good, it is not stable," the critics said. "Quite good," said Lenin, "but the conclusion to be drawn from this is that we must have a committee of professional revolutionists, and it does not matter whether a student or a worker is capable of qualifying himself as a professional revolutionist. The conclusion that you draw however, (like some of the Indian comrades who favour debarring intellectuals from holding trade union posts and restricting the posts to workers exclusively) is that the working class must not be pushed from outside. I would like to ask what is meant by the students "pushing on" the workers. All it means is that the students bring to the workers the fragments of political knowledge they possess, the crumbs of socialist ideas they have managed to acquire. Such pushing on from outside can never be too excessive; on the contrary so far there has been too little of it in our movement; we have been stewing in our own juice far too long. We have bowed down far too slavishly before the spontaneous "economic struggle" of the workers against the employers and Government." Next to the theory, the question of organisation is most important. In this the wide organisation of workers like trade unions must not be confused with the organisation of revolutionists which is the *party*. On this his view may be summarised thus:— (1) that no movement can be durable without a stable organisation of leaders

to maintain continuity—(2) that the more widely the masses are drawn into the struggle and form the basis of the movement, the more necessary is it to have such an organisation and the more stable must it be (for it is much easier then for demagogues to sidetrack the most backward masses). (3) That the organisation must consist chiefly of persons engaged in revolution as a profession. (4) That in a country with despotic Government the more we restrict the membership of this organisation to persons who are engaged in revolution as a profession and who have been trained, the better will it be for the safety of the organisation, (5) the wider will be the circle of men and women of the working class or of other classes of society able to join the movement and perform active work in it. The centralisation of the secret functions of the organisation does not mean the centralisation of all functions of the movement; neither does it mean violation of democracy within the party. Applying the conclusion that he drew to himself and his comrades Lenin wrote "the most grievous sin that we have committed in regard to organisation is that by our primitiveness we have lowered the prestige of revolutionists in Russia. A man who is weak and vacillating on theoretical questions, who had a narrow outlook, who makes excuses for his own slackness, on the ground that the masses are awakening spontaneously, who resembles a trade that union secretary more than a peoples' tribune, who is unable to conceive a broad and bold plain, who is incapable of inspiring even his enemies with respect for himself, and who is inexperienced and clumsy in his own professional art, such a man is not a revolutionist but a hopeless amateur. Let no active worker take offence at these frank remarks, for as far as insufficient training is concerned I apply them first and foremost to myself. I used to work in a circle that set itself a great and all embracing task and every member of that circle suffered to the point of torture from the realisation that we were proving ourselves to be amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say—paraphrasing a wellknown epigram "give us an organisation of revolutionists and we shall overturn the whole of Russia." And the more I recall the burning sense of shams I then experienced, the more bitter are my feelings towards those pseudo social democrats whose teachings bring disgrace on the calling of a revolutionist, who fail to understand that our task is not to degrade the revolutionist to the level of an amateur but to exalt the amateur to the level of a revolutionist."

The programme of spreading Communist consciousness to all, of taking the lead of every real revolutionary struggle had its

dangers also, to which Lenin paid careful attention. The question of alliances with non-Communist parties for tactical purposes, to set the broadest strata of the masses in a revolutionary motion, brought forth the danger of the real Marxian principles getting adulterated at the hands of the petty bourgeois adherents. To overcome this and to guarantee the organisation of revolutionists from being swamped by opportunists, Lenin advocated alliances with non-Marxist parties and groups only in separate concrete instances for a limited purpose with the proviso that the party was at complete liberty to criticise and expose the ideological differences between the party and its ally. Secondly the alliances took place not between individuals but between the party as a whole and the ally, that is the party did not merge into or become the organic member of the other body but retained its identity and separate command in all spheres. This method worked very well, so much so that in the several alliances that the Bolsheviks formed with other parties, though for a time they looked as if they were compromising or losing hold, they came out successful and stronger than before. The Bolsheviks split from the Mensheviks in the Second Congress and built up their revolutionary organisation. When in the rising wave after 1902, the Czarist autocracy attacked even the most moderate bourgeois liberals, as were found in the Zemstvos, the "Iskra" goaded the Zemstvos to put up a fight; when the students were attacked or drafted into the army as a punishment, the workers were brought to demonstrate in support of them. The Bolshevik organisers were already in the industrial centres and had even reached the army and navy to a small extent.

49. *Social Democratic Party organisation—the Zubatov Unions—January 1905—tactics of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks—announcement of the Duma.*

At this time the Police Chief Zubatov advised the Government to start unions of workers through police help—thus keeping the workers under the influence of leaders who would be loyal to the Czar. The Zubatov Unions sprang up in many centres. But the result was that when the workers got organised and strikes arose, the workers amongst whom the Bolsheviks had spread their influence refused the loyalists' lead and took a revolutionary turn. Lenin's line was: "Let Zubatov organise the unions since the Czar would not allow the Bolsheviks to organise one; the Bolsheviks must work amongst these unions on their own lines and, when conflicts arise, win over the workers to their side." The increasing depression in trade and the failure of the Czar in the

Russo-Japanese War precipitated a crisis. When the revolutionary atmosphere was being smelt, the question of strategy arose. The Mensheviks said that the revolution would be led by the bourgeoisie against the Czarist feudalism, just as it did in the French and other revolutions of the previous century. The revolution would be bourgeois democratic, that is free the bourgeois productive forces from the feudal fetters. Therefore the workers should only "spur" the bourgeoisie on but without intimidation. ("Just mildly warn them against compromise" as many a petty bourgeois in India today does in the name of the working-class organisation). They must not "repel" the bourgeoisie, which showed opposition to the Czar. As for the peasantry, it still had faith in the Czar and therefore would not fight against monarchy. The Bolsheviks had quite a different line. The bourgeoisie according to them merely showed imbecile opposition, but it was incapable of revolutionary fight. A few concessions from the Czar and a few thrusts of the class struggle from the workers would throw it in the arms of Czarism. Therefore the only revolutionary force was the workers. As for the peasantry it could not take the lead, but it was getting revolutionary as its conditions forced it to fight the landowners and hence Czarism. The revolution would be bourgeois democratic, but it would be carried out by the working class and the peasantry—not by the bourgeoisie. The political power would be a Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the peasantry. The economic organisation would not be socialist and industry would not be nationalised, but remain private property, but under workers' control. It meant that the owners would have no secrecy of accounts and management, the factory committee would see how things were done; no more than 5.7 per cent net profit would be allowed; and out of this profit, to guarantee expansion and further investments 25 per cent would have to be reinvested in industry. The land would be redistributed amongst the peasantry and landlordism abolished. The Government would be workers' and peasants' Government, without bureaucracy and army, the whole people being armed against the counter-revolution.

On 9th January 1905 the Czarist police fired on a procession that was going to see the Czar with a petition for democratic rights and a constitution. It was the signal for intense resentment. A wave of strikes spread throughout Russia. Their demands were a Constituent Assembly and an eight-hours' day. Czarism was too strong to be defeated by mere strikes, which soon were exhausted. Under the pressure of the movement the Czar appointed a Commission to inquire into the reasons of working class discontent (that should remind us of the Whitley Commission) and

asked his Minister Bulygin on 18th February 1905 to prepare a draft for calling of a Duma with a right of discussion but not of legislation. A draft did come out in which the workers, nine-tenth of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie had no vote. These concessions were received with interest though not with satisfaction by the liberal bourgeoisie. But they were repudiated by the workers. The movement was now spreading into the agrarian districts. In the summer of 1905 14 per cent of all country districts were drawn into the agrarian movement. The movement of the peasantry had not a purely political character just as it had for the workers who now used the weapon of strike for political ends. Political consciousness was to be found in those peasants who had been in the army and navy. The naval disaster in the Russo-Japanese War in May 1905 gave an impetus to the revolution. The revolt of the "Potemkin" shook the belief of the masses in the absolute power of the Government. It created revolutionary traditions in the army and prepared the way for armed risings. Therefore Lenin wrote several articles on the Potemkin Risings. Just before this the Czar published information about the formation of the Duma. The franchise was to be given to the bourgeoisie and property-holding peasants, merchants, big landlords and higher ranks of professors, but not to the workers, poor peasants and poor intellectuals. But the textile strike of Lodz, the barricade fighting, and the Potemkin Rising, the repression and massacres by Government continued and therefore the announcement had not much effect. Still at this time the question of the boycott of the Duma came to the front. The attitude of Lenin on this question has been a subject of reference from a very well renowned social revolutionary in India. During our work we ourselves had been confronted with this problem. Boycott of Councils and Assembly has been a pet thing of Gandhism, irrespective of the situation in the country. The Leninist attitude on this is relative. It is not for or against the boycott of the Duma, councils or parliament per se. In the middle of 1905 he supported boycott of the Bulygin Duma but in 1907 he and the Party lifted the boycott of the Duma.

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It was not done in order to wring some reforms from Czarism and to compromise with it or for "breaking Czarism from within" as our Indian Assembly heroes would like to put it.

50. *Lenin and the boycott of the Duma.*

When the character of the Duma was announced the Third

Congress of the Union of Unions decided on July 3 to launch a campaign of protest, a few days' strike and demonstrations. It advocated boycott of elections. The party of the Zemstvo constitutionalists, like our bourgeois Liberals of Sastri and Sapru type, decided to take part in the elections and formed a party of the Constitutional Democrats or Cadets. This was the Right Wing of the bourgeoisie already on the road to compromise with Czarism. In the Congress of the Zemstvos and urban municipalities (July 6-8), the majority was for boycott while the Organising Committee was for constitutional monarchy. This was the Left Wing of the bourgeoisie which was thus split into two sections. Amongst the Communists there was a divergence of opinion. The Mensheviks proposed that semi-legal workers' committees should be formed which in cooperation with the illegal party should make use of the electoral campaign and compel the enfranchised classes through their representatives in the Duma to press for a Constituent Assembly. Further these committees would hold their own elections, in which quite a network of representative organs of revolutionary Self-Government, crowned by a nationally elected revolutionary Assembly, would be created, which would be dictating its will to all other progressive groups. It was the deceptive tactic of raising "organs of parallel Government" without having first overthrown Czarism and its State. The petty bourgeoisie in India has been toying with such an idea for the last ten years, with deceptive schemes of "parallel Government".

Lenin took stand against both these tactics. The Third Congress of the Party (both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks joining in it), held in London in 1905, had left the question open. So he wrote in the "The Proletari," August 3, 1905 an article headed "The boycott of the Bulygin Duma and insurrection." The Leninist or Marxist formulation of the question was not in the manner of sentimental or moral stupidity, as we find it in Gandhism. The boycott was not decided on the question whether it is moral or immoral to sit in the Duma of the "satanic" Czar. The decision depended on the concrete objective condition—was the insurrection developing or not? What was the Duma in the alignment of class forces? The Duma was "a deal between Czarism and the landlords and the bourgeoisie who for the sake of alleged constitutional doles, absolutely harmless to the autocracy, are gradually to dissociate themselves from the revolution, i. e. from the militant people, and effect a reconciliation with the autocracy. The political position of the bourgeoisie is between the Czar and the people. It desires to play the part of the honest broker and steal into power behind the backs of the fighting people. That is why one day the

bourgeoisie appeals to the Czar and, another day, to the people. To the former it makes serious and business-like proposals for the political deal, and, to the latter it appeals with high-sounding phrases about liberty. The bourgeoisie in its fight against autocracy is compelled to rouse the political consciousness of the people. We must take advantage of it and sow our theory among the working class. So when the Left Wing of the bourgeoisie itself is advancing the slogan of a direct fight with the Duma by means of the boycott, the Bolsheviks must support the boycott." "The question of boycott is in itself a question of International bourgeois democracy. The working class is not directly interested in it except in supporting that section of bourgeois democracy which is most revolutionary." For this purpose Lenin says, "It will be expedient to come to temporary agreements with various groups of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy. But in doing this the class distinction of the Party of the Proletariat must be maintained and the Party must, not for a single moment, cease Communist criticism of its bourgeois allies. It must advance the slogan of the democratic revolution."

On the proposals of the Mensheviks that workers should elect their own deputies outside the legal elections and form a revolutionary assembly, he says: "Such slogans are worthless. They represent a confusion of ideas from the point of view of political tasks and serve as grist to the mill of the Loyalists from the point of view of the immediate political situation. The organisation of revolutionary Self-Government, the election of deputies by the people is not a *prologue* but an *epilogue* of the rebellion. To attempt to establish these organisations now, prior to the rebellion and without a rebellion, means to strive after absurd aims and to carry confusion in the minds of the revolutionary Proletariat. To attempt to eclipse the slogan of rebellion by the slogan of organising revolutionary Self-Government or even to push the former into the background is like advising us first to catch a fly and then to stick it on the fly paper."

51. *The October General Strike—December Rising—re-action—participation in the Duma—the liquidators.*

The growing revolutionary situation threw the Duma into the background. In September another strike wave began, with the economic strike of 6,000 Moscow printers. With them joined the printers of Petersburg. A bakers' strike fought with the soldiers on September 25. On September 20 a Conference of railway workers' delegates met in Petersburg for their service grievances.

A rumour of its arrest spread and the railway strike began on 7th October. It spread throughout Russia and became the carrier of the great Political General Strike of October. Not a single industrial centre or a large shop or factory was left which had not joined the strike. Economic demands went to the background and the demand of the eight-hour day and Constituent Assembly became the chief demands of the strikers. There were street battles in Kharkov, Odessa and other places. The strike influenced even the liberal land owners, merchants, professors and officials. But though these people took part in the movement the leadership of the fight was taken by the workers. During the strike the Petrograd workers elected a Council of 26 deputies from 100 works. This Council took the name of "Soviet of Workers' Deputies." The name Soviet spread to other centres of the strike where such councils were being formed. The Soviet was the representative fighting organisation of the workers, brought into being when the revolutionary struggle was intensified. Since then the Soviet has become a recognised form of the workers' State. On October 17, the Czar issued a Manifesto sanctioning the rights already seized by the people. But it did not break the strike because no one believed in the promises of the Czar. The workers had to call off the strike on 21st October as they were exhausted. The liberal bourgeoisie was won over by the Czarist Manifesto. It refused to render help to the strikers. The revolutionary phrases disappeared from their speeches and conferences. Five days after the Petersburg workers had to come out in sympathy with the mutiny of the Kronstadt sailors. This time Czarism brought all its military forces to crush the movement. In reply the Soviet decided on November 27 to prepare for an armed uprising. On December 3, the Petrograd Soviet was arrested. As a result the second Political General Strike began in Petersburg and Moscow on 7th and 8th and developed into a siege and barricade fighting with the troops. The Moscow workers fought for ten days and were defeated on the 18th. Such fights took place in several centres. This was the first armed uprising of the masses.

Even before the echoes of firing had died away the Menshevik leader Plekhanov wrote that the workers had gone too far and they should not have taken to arms. Instead of finding out what was necessary to have made the revolution a success the Mensheviks sabotaged the spirit of the workers. Lenin's deductions were quite different. In answer to Plekhanov he wrote, "To keep from the masses the knowledge that a desperate war of extermination is necessary as a preliminary to our eventual programme, that would be self-deception and false leadership of the people." One of the

main causes of the failure of the rising in Moscow was, the inadequate revolutionary work done in the Army and one of the chief errors lay in the uncertainty and hesitation of the leaders as to their military and strategic policy. He writes, "The December Rising has confirmed yet another profound saying of Karl Marx which has been forgotten by the opportunists. Marx says that insurrection is an art where the chief quality is a desperate daring and a resolute offensive. We must not preach passivity or wait inactively for the troops to come to our side. No, we must advocate from the house-tops the need for a daring attack, for an armed uprising, for the extermination of all masters, and for a most active fight to win over the allegiance of the irresolute soldiery. We must apply all the new discoveries of science. Our workers' battalions must be trained for the mass production of bombs, they must be helped to provide themselves with explosives, fuses and automatics." That was Lenin's conception of the lessons of the Moscow insurrection.

When insurrectionist risings were taking place the Czar passed a new electoral law on December 11 making liberal changes in the August law. By this in many places the middle and petty bourgeoisie gained ten times more votes. In addition to those of the landed proprietors, peasants and town dwellers an electoral college for workers was also established. The Cadet bourgeoisie was reinforced by these concessions and moved towards the Czar, who on the other hand carried on a ruthless suppression of Trade Unions, radical papers, shot leaders of the workers and sent punitive expeditions into the villages. After the close of the strike wave the Duma was announced to meet on April 27, 1906. But before it could meet, the Czar announced that the Duma would be merely a consultative body. The bourgeoisie accepted it and started the electoral campaign.

The communists were again confronted with the question of boycott. Both the Bolshevik and Menshevik sections of the Party argued that the halt in the revolutionary wave was temporary (February 1906), that the Duma was a pretence of popular representation and that it was necessary to combat it and prepare for a better insurrection. But the Mensheviks held that the Party should use the first stages of the electoral campaign to rally all the forces of opposition to Government. The Bolshevik section opposed this and wanted the direct continuation of the December line of action. No decision was taken though the majority of both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were inclined towards boycott. Only in Georgia, where the Party was very strong, the Communists

swept the elections and got 18 seats. The bourgeois and petty bourgeois sections captured the elections in all other places. The peasantry, which had rallied to the insurrection, was in a mood to see what the Duma could do for it since the insurrection had not been of much help. From the results it was clear that there was no sign of insurrectionary wave, that the opposition had not even been actively expressed in the form of the boycott. So the 4th Stockholm Congress of the Social Democratic Party which was a General Conference of both Bolshevik and Menshevik sections, called off the boycott and decided to form its block in the Duma, and tried to push the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties in the Duma into a definite opposition to the Government. All the Bolsheviks did not favour this but Lenin and a few others voted for the proposal. (April 1906). When the first Duma met on 10th May 1906 the Cadets disagreed with the Labour and peasant deputies (Trudoviki) who wanted the Government to carry out the agrarian reforms immediately.

The Social Democrats sided with the Trudoviki, and urged for radical action. The Cadets after some hesitation joined in, 120 Deputies issued the Vyborg Manifesto asking the people not to pay taxes. The Social Democrats conjointly with three organisations of railwaymen, peasants and teachers issued a separate manifesto declaring the Government illegal and called upon the Peasants Committees to seize lands and the army and navy not to fire on the people. When the Government threatened action, the Cadets retracted their manifesto and the Duma was dissolved. Afterwards the representation of land owners was increased. The new second Duma met on 20th February 1907. It had sixty Social Democrats in it. The Government soon arrested and exiled some of them on the charge of having made propaganda in the army. The Duma again dissolved in June 1907. The same day the law was again changed, the workers, intellectuals and peasants were all disfranchised. It was a complete destruction of even small popular representation. This brought forth the boycott tendency again to the forefront, the initiative being taken by the Teachers' Organisation. Some of the Bolsheviks showed even now signs of favouring boycott. But Lenin unequivocally was against boycott and for participation. This conduct of his has been cited in India several times in order to show that in a great revolutionary fight, even Lenin had compromised and allowed the Party to join the Czarist Duma. From this it was argued that the compromise in Indian politics need not be condemned because it is a compromise. It must be studied and valued in relation to the concrete objective situation. Exactly for these reasons as

given by the critic, Lenin explained his reasons for participation in the Duma in an article headed "Against the Boycott." The situation at the time of the Bulygin Duma in August 1905 was quite different from that in 1907. The boycott of the Bulygin Duma was a complete success and was necessary because at that time the revolutionary wave was rising (something like our boycott of the Assembly in 1920.) The old regime was trying to sidetrack the people from the path of direct action and revolution to the zigzag path of the Duma. To have told the people at that time to give up their rising strikes and insurrections for the promises of a constitution was to strengthen Czarism, deprive the people of the lessons of revolutionary activity, the exposure of the real nature of Czarism. Then even the bourgeoisie was showing opposition. After December, the situation had changed. The insurrection was defeated. The revolution had receded. The Czarist terror had suppressed all organisations, the bourgeoisie had joined hands with Czarism. When revolutionary activity was suppressed, there must be some links for the revolutionary party to keep touch with the people. When the wide popular press was destroyed, the Duma was the best loud speaker. It had to be used. Participation after the failure of the insurrection was not to be used for purposes of forming alliances with the bourgeois parties, for bourgeois methods of parliamentary wire-pulling, or for smashing autocracy from within. The participation was for unmasking Czarism, for broadcasting the ideology of revolution to the masses. In the third Duma (November 1907 to June 1912) the Social Democrats had fifteen seats and they sat there throughout the period of reaction.

What was the policy followed by the Bolsheviks and other parties with regard to the organisational work, when it became clear that the risings had failed and the revolutionary wave receded? The workers had to bear the brunt of the Czarist attack of repression. The strike movement weakened every year. The percentage of the success for the employers increased year by year, being 29.4 per cent in 1905, 68.8 in 1908 and 80 in 1909. The number of the members of Social Democratic Party fell, the largest number of resignations being from the intellectuals who could not stand the hardships of the period of reaction. Many of them lost themselves in mysticism and God. The literary intellectuals gave prominence to sex problems in literature. The largest number of defections were in the Menshevik sections, who amongst themselves had not evolved ideological solidarity and discipline, and had followed the policy of live and let live. The result was that a section of the Mensheviks called for a policy of "liquidation" of the illegal party.

The law was ruthlessly suppressing all organisations which were not monarchist or loyally inclined. The liquidators advocated that illegal secret work was futile. That its gains were not worth the sacrifice. They considered the Duma to be sufficiently democratic to indicate a "change of heart" on the part of Czarism and progress towards the Democratic parliamentarism of the bourgeoisie of Western Europe. They called upon the workers to give up secret revolutionary organisations and strictly limit themselves to legal unions, welfare, clubs etc. Their party in the Duma gave up the demand of expropriation of landlordism in order to please and ally itself with the Cadet bourgeoisie. This move of cooperation with Czarism was so cowardly that some of the Mensheviks revolted against this new legal Marxism and communism. Plekhanov wrote: "Revolutionary conspiracy is now frequently attacked precisely by those who are unfit for any revolutionary action. They are tired; they want rest, the heavy ceaseless martyrdom of the self-sacrificing rank-and-file workers is beyond their strength, they escape from their circles and try to make themselves and others believe that their flight is no treachery to the cause but merely passing over on to a wider basis."

The Bolsheviks emphasised that Czarism was still the reactionary machine of the feudal aristocracy; that only illegal revolutionary activity could provide the workers with true socialist ideology and it alone could direct the revolutionary labour organisations. The workers must be rallied by this organisation to the three fundamental slogans of 8 hour day, expropriation of the big land-owners and Democratic Republic.

Amongst the Bolsheviks there was a section of "Left Liquidators". They wanted to concentrate solely on illegal work. They upheld the boycott of the Duma. This group was formed by Bogdanov, Lunacharski and Gorky. This tactic was opposed by Lenin who saw that unless the available legal connections were maintained the Party would become a sectarian organisation cut off from the workers. Under Lenin's leadership the Party stuck to the policy of revolutionary work very carefully done through Trade Unions, newspapers etc. and also spread their programme through the Duma.

52. *Stolypin's Agrarian Reforms—revival of trade—strikes begin—parties during reaction—isolation of bourgeois*

parties—Bolshevik and Menshevik divisions—philosophical struggle—the problems of bourgeois revolution and the peculiarity of the Russian Revolution.

Czarism had not relied merely on violent suppression. It also created a class of supporters for itself. The new policy was worked out by Minister Stolypin who is known for his bloody suppression as also the new agrarian policy. The agrarian policy was to break up the old Mir or the agrarian communes holding land in common. A law of November 1905 allowed the peasant to claim his share and withdraw from the Mir. This resulted in creating a class of middle peasantry with sufficient land and goods to be called even "rich" and become a market for capitalist goods and form a village bourgeoisie to support the Czar. Also in the plains cultivation had become difficult for the landowners due to the revolutionary risings. The Government followed the policy of asking the landowners to sell lands directly or through the Agrarian Bank to individual peasants. Thus ten per cent. of the land of the great proprietors was sold during four years, of course at high prices. The lands concentrated in the hands of the rich peasants, and the poor peasants became workers in the industries. After the revolution till the war 2½ million peasants thus became industrial workers.

On the "peace" restarted by Black Hundred pogroms and seven thousand death sentences on workers, artisans and peasants, on the market created of the middle peasantry by the Stolypin Reforms and on the cheap labour of the impoverished peasantry pushed into the towns, Czarist reaction triumphed. Industrial production grew and the depression lessened after 1910. It is shown that in the demands for articles required in the countryside there was special rise. The rise in the heavy industries like manufacture of steel and iron was an index of the growth. Metal manufacture rose by 51.3 per cent, pig iron by 65.5 per cent. This industrial boom revived the workers' movement, which began to be seen in the revival of strikes for higher wages. The bourgeoisie in order not to harm its production made a few concessions. But they were meagre and the political demands came forward again. In April 1912 the gold miners in Lena made economic demands on the company which was a British concern. The mines were situated far away in Siberia. The company was the sole ruler and exploitation was particularly brutal. The company's armed guards attacked the workers and about fifteen hundred strikers were shot dead. One can imagine the brutality of the company against the gold miners

from what we see about their brother exploiters in India in the Oorgaon Gold Mines in Mysore. The Lena Blood-bath called forth protests throughout Russia by strikes and demonstrations. About a million workers had struck, in 1913 $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions struck. During first half of 1914 the figure had risen to $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions.

What was the reaction of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks to this rising wave, and what was the attitude of the workers to these parties? The Menshevik Liquidators wanted to limit the movement to the fight for associatfon, trade unionism and reformism. The Bolsheviks in contrast to this brought forth their programme of the three fundamental aims—8 hour day, expropriation of land owners and a Democratic Republic. The workers to the surprise of the Mensheviks flocked under the lead of the Bolsheviks. It was surprising because during the period of reaction the legal organisations (Trade Unions etc) of the Mensheviks showed a large and substantial membership while the Bolsheviks were hunted out and looked like a corpse. When the revolutionary tide rose, the Bolsheviks suddenly seemed to have come to life and captured the masses, who refused to continue themselves within the bounds of the advice of respectable leaders” or radical-looking “Menshevik Communists”. T. Dab, the historian and leader of the Menshevik Communists writes: “As a result the liquidators who had up to now been of the opinion that their obvious task in the years of preparation would create a position of advantage for them when the workers’ movement revived, noted much to their surprise that their monopolist position was shaken by that illegal Bolshevik Party which they had looked upon as a “living corpse.”

During the period of reaction another development had taken place. That was the separation of the Boleshevik section of the Social Democratic Party from its Menshevik section. This occurred at the Prague Conference in 1912. As a result the Bolsheviks formed their own Central Committees, their own newspapers, the “Pravda” and “Ivestia”. The labour organisations were also split on the issue of leadership and programme. It may be noted here that the present Communist Party of Russia dates its foundation from 1898, when the Social Democratic Labour Party of Russia was founded. A change in the name of the Party was proposed by Lenin in the Party Conference in May 1917. But it was not changed as there was no time for discussions. The name Social Democrats now signifies with us the pseudo-Socialists like Kautsky, MacDonalld and such others. It is also to be noted that the programme of the Party was the same since its foundation and was not changed till after the February Revolution of 1917. Both the

Bolsheviks and Mensheviks attended the Congresses of the Party, (except when one or the other section could not or did not send their delegates. This happened with the Mensheviks many a time). Many "Unity Conferences" were held between the two sections of the same Party but nothing came out of them. Thus the Bolsheviks had a separate discipline, separate principles and policy though both the sections called themselves Social Democrats. Both preached adherence to Marxism and the necessity of overthrowing Czarism and bringing about a Democratic Republic. In spite of bitter controversies temporary alliances were formed, the most notable being in 1907-09, the alliance between Lenin and Plekhanov, who had become politically a Menshevik, on the question of the philosophical revision of Marxist materialism by prominent Bolsheviks like Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, Gorki, into the channel of subjective idealism, "God-creating" tendencies making way for the priest, the church and ultimately the overthrow of Socialism. In this philosophic controversy a strange combination of the Bolshevik Lenin and the Menshevik Plekhanov was formed against a group which included many Bolsheviks, for example Bogdanov who was still a joint editor with Lenin on the "Proletari". In the present conditions of Party development throughout the world amongst Communists such an anomalous position may not be allowed and the Russian Party developments on these separate incidents may not be taken as precedents because at that time the demarcation of parties and the class struggle had not become so acute, a world Communist Party had not been born, and the critical epoch of proletarian revolutions though in embryo had not yet set in in any active form.

The formation of the Russian Communist Party as separate from Menshevik and other groups, constitutionally sanctioned by the Conference in 1918, was really accomplished in 1912, its elements and adherents were formed during the period of 1905 Revolution, and the reaction and the nucleus of its Leninist leadership laid in the Party disputes of 1906 when a Bolshevik section was formed by Lenin. On the eve of the world war there was no country where such a strong party development had taken place. The largest Party of Europe, the Social Democratic Party of Germany, had a group led by Rosa Luxemburg who was nearest to Lenin, as much uncompromising and theoretically correct in all the major planks of Marxism. This group had not evolved a separate leadership, separate organisation, and separate disillusioned class conscious proletarian following. It had not gone through the splits and cleanings. Liebkuecht, and Luxemburg began that work when the war broke out, when in the fever of patriotism and military dictator-

ship it had become extremely difficult to plant a revolutionary nucleus amongst the works and prevent them from marching under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. In Russia the Bolsheviks had a ready apparatus to lead the revolution when need arose. The first characterisation that the war is a robber war of Imperialists came from the Russian Party, from Lenin.

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Another advantage was that the Russian proletariat and peasantry had the latest experience of 1905, a rehearsal of the coming revolution. In Western Europe after 1848 and 1871 the Imperialist development and colonial loot had prevented such a rehearsal. They had a whole period of 50 years of ascending capitalism. While in Russia neither the peasantry could be given land at the expense of the landlord nor could the workers' conditions be improved as Imperialist-capitalist development had already brought capitalism to the plane of decline. Thus after 1905 there could not be a long spell of inactivity or materially improved objective conditions for the bribery of the proletariat. And whatever was wanting was completed by the experience of the war.

Another peculiarity of Russia at the beginning of the war was that there the power of the feudal land owning class had not been overthrown and the bourgeoisie had not yet been installed in the control of the State, i.e. the bourgeois revolution had not been carried out. Land-owning Czarism crushed all the classes except that of the feudal landlordism and even bourgeois democratic freedom was not allowed. Therefore the petty bourgeois intellectuals were in opposition to Czarism. The problem of the bourgeois revolution had been solved in the previous century by the revolutionary bourgeoisie in cooperation with the peasantry, both of whom attacked the feudal power. At that time there was no proletariat strong enough to lead the peasantry or threaten the bourgeoisie in such a manner as to make it counter-revolutionary and give up attacking feudalism. This condition had now been changed. In Russia the proletariat, as soon as it grew to a certain extent, imbibed the lessons of Marxism under the influence of the proletarian movements from the West. The autocracy having prevented even the growth of Trade Unionism helped the growth of revolutionary traditions in the workers from the beginning, which was assisted by the fact that the revolutionary intellectuals finding no outlet in the channel of bourgeois democracy devoted their energies to the workers' and peasants' organisations. The

bourgeoisie as it developed saw the revolutionary movement of the workers under the influence of Marxism, saw that if it helped the peasantry to the revolutionary overthrow of the land-owning class, the proletariat would follow the same example against itself also. Therefore the bourgeoisie in Russia could not lead the peasantry of Russia against feudalism as it had done in England and France. Naturally the question arose who would carry out the bourgeois revolution, overthrow feudalism and set the productive forces free for capitalist development, which is a higher stage than feudalism? That was the crux of the Party quarrels since 1903 to 1917. The Bolsheviks said that the peasantry was a great revolutionary factor and would fight against landlordism under the leadership of the proletariat and establish a workers' and peasants' Republic as the proletariat alone would give land to the peasantry. The Cadets hoped to solve the problem by reforms through the Duma and giving land to peasants on payment of compensation. The Trotskites considered that a backward country like Russia could not hold out as a workers' and peasants' Republic unless the proletariat of the West accomplished their Socialist revolution. The Mensheviks though in agreement with the Bolshevik programme considered that the Cadets (the Liberal bourgeoisie, like that formed of our Malaviyas, Patels etc.) would be good ally for the Proletarian parties against Czarism. But the Bolsheviks concentrated their attack on the Cadets more than on any other Party. Why? Because that determined the question under whose leadership the peasantry would march. Without the alliance of the peasantry there could be no revolution. Now the peasantry had illusions that the Cadets would give them land through the Duma. It had to be freed from these illusions; otherwise it would not take to revolutionary attack on feudalism. The Proletariat had to be freed from any alliances with bourgeois parties, since these parties would lead it into illusive compromises. In a revolutionary struggle the compromisers are the greatest danger. Because under the illusion of compromise the revolutionary class postpones or gives up the struggle, the autocracy which is tottering then consolidates itself and massacres revolution. Therefore the Bolsheviks paid more attention to isolating the peasantry and workers from the Cadets and Mensheviks. Hence they were nicknamed "the Cadet eaters." Had they not done so, there would not have remained a single party ready to lead the revolution and to take power from the Provisional Government after March 1917. This is the most significant part of the Bolshevik tactic. The correctness of this tactic is demonstrated by the mess made of the Indian mass movement of emancipation by the Indian "Cadet" Congress. The achievement of the Bolsheviks in the period of

1903 to 1917 was the isolation of the bourgeoisie from the peasantry, the isolation of the Mensheviks from the Proletariat, formation of a well disciplined and tested organisation of revolutionists drawn from the workers, peasants and intellectuals, guided by the theory of Marxism, rescued from the hands of "respectable Marxists" who tried to revise it:

53. *Russia joins war—the crisis—the February overthrow—Provisional Government and the Soviets—Lenin's return.*

It is well-known to the students of history that during the 19th century Russia had acted as a great bogey to Britain in the East. In the Crimean-War Britain and France had united against Russia but the export of Capital from France, and England to finance Czarist loans and Russian industry had liquidated the old Russo-British friction and Russia had to join the allies in the war because the Russian bourgeoisie was interlocked with Allied Capital which was invested in Russian heavy industry.

During the war Czarist Militarism was helped by money and munitions from the allies. But a corrupt bureaucracy and a weak bourgeoisie which had not yet advanced to the stage of efficiency of Allied Imperialism was exhausted soon and could not manage the war. The production of munitions began to break down to such an extent that on some fronts the soldiers had not even cartridges for their rifles and were simply killed under fire from German artillery. Discontent grew at the front. Shortage of food led to severe crises in the towns, and shortage of manufactured goods and absence of cultivators on the land led to crises in the countryside. Above all this the peasantry had to maintain parasitic feudalism as before. The first protest came from the Petrograd workers who refused to send delegates to the War Industry Committee, which was an organisation to ensure class peace and bring the workers to cooperate with Czarism to fight the war. The Mensheviks joined the Committee. The Bolsheviks refused. By January 1917 the crisis had become acute and food riots began in Petrograd. These were followed by strike of workers in the factories. The Petrograd garrison was won over by the workers. That settled the fate of Czarism. The soldiers and workers elected their deputies and formed their Soviets. The prison was stormed and political prisoners released. The workers however did not form a revolutionary Government. The Soviet was under the influence of the Mensheviks. In the Duma the Bolshevik deputies had been exiled to Siberia for having opposed the war. The real cadre of Bolshevik leadership was either in prison or exile. Therefore the Duma and

the Mensheviks in the Soviet succeeded in introducing compromising hesitation in the Soviet. The Duma formed a Provisional Committee of monarchists and Cadets to conduct the Government of the Czar, but the Soviet would have no Czar. By a resolution it decided to confiscate the financial resources of the old State, i. e. the State Bank, Currency Printing Press etc but asked the Duma Finance Commission to carry out the decision. Thus it showed inclination towards the historical step that the Paris Commune had failed to take but left its carrying out in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The President of the State Duma issued an appeal to preserve constitutional and social order and to allow no attacks on life and property. In the meanwhile the Czarist forces tried to restore the old regime. So the workers and soldiers fought on the barricades and streets of Petrograd and Moscow, secured victory and the abdication of the Czar. When the Provisional Government was formed by the Bourgeoisie the Petrograd Soviet discussed the question of participation in the Government. The Mensheviks were for participation. However the proposal was rejected. But in its policy the Soviet adopted the policy of support to the Government (March 1917). On the same day the Soviet of workers and the Soviet of soldiers amalgamated and issued the famous Army Order No. 1. This order asked the soldiers to elect their own committees and send delegates to the Soviets. The troops were subordinated to the orders of the Soviet and their committees on all political matters. The soldiers were given complete citizen right to participate in politics, were asked to observe military discipline when on duty, but the salute and standing at attention when off duty was abolished. Officers were forbidden to bully or abuse the soldiers. On 16th March the Provisional Government issued its manifesto which granted complete amnesty to political prisoners, liberty of speech, association, press, unions, strikes etc; promised immediate preparation for summoning a Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage to determine the constitution and form of State, substitution of a State militia with elected officers in place of the former Police and abolition of the disabilities of the soldiers. This manifesto was endorsed by the Soviets. But in the manifesto the Government avoided the vital question of the termination of war, the confiscation of land, and an unequivocal declaration of Republic. Having left the whole matter to the Constituent Assembly there was the danger of the Provisional Government sabotaging the revolution, starving Petrograd and its Soviet, continuing the war and ultimately restoring monarchy. The Bolsheviks saw this. But the Soviets at that time flushed with the overthrow of the age-old oppression of Czarism were carried away and supported

the bourgeoisie in the Provisional Government. The game of the bourgeoisie was to put the Liberal Democrats, and if necessary even the Menshevik leaders of the Proletariat on the Government seats, then turn to the people and say that the attack of the Germans against Russia with such a 'revolutionary' Government was an attack on the revolution itself; therefore the people must go on with the war. In fact the allied powers had hailed the revolution and acknowledged the new Government and promised it support because the bourgeoisie in power would conduct the war more enthusiastically and efficiently than the decrepit landlordism. The bourgeoisie wanted to hold power on the back of the peasantry and the working class. It could have done so if it could have solved the land problem. But the land-owning class by its mortgages to the banks, was linked to the bourgeoisie which, if it expropriated the land-owners, would be expropriating itself. Thus when it could not close the war nor give land to the peasantry, it was bound to fall. But this conception about the new Government was not grasped by the Soviets, the Government was not yet discredited before the workers and peasants. Therefore many of the Bolsheviks like Kamenev and Rykov supported the Government. Many believed in the Constituent Assembly, the ideal of the last 20 years, to cure the evils.

This mistake was exposed by Lenin when he returned to Petrograd from exile on April 16. As soon as he landed he chastised the Bolsheviks who had supported the Provisional Government. He at once gave the slogan "No support at all to the Provisional Government," and formulated the famous April Theses which became the basis of the November Revolution.

54. The first Soviet Congress—Coalition Government—July Demonstration—Kornilov March—Masses turn Left—percentage of the Bolsheviks in the Soviets—Lenin urges Soviets to take power by peaceful revolution—then calls upon Bolsheviks for insurrection—Peasant Congress and compromise with the Left Social Revolutionaries.

The first All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the real barometer of the opinion of the people, that is the workers and peasants, met in June 1917. This Congress, under the influence of the petty bourgeois parties, of the Socialist Revolutionaries which had the largest influence amongst the peasantry, and the Mensheviks, who called themselves Communists and had a majority influence in the Town Soviets, supported the Imperialist war policy and the Coalition Government of Kerensky. The first Provisional Government

when it issued the Note to the Allies stating that they would continue the war to the end had called forth a protest from the soldiers which led to a crisis in the Government. The Foreign Minister Miliukov was made to resign under pressure from the Soviets, and the First Government dissolved. The masses had to be deceived by a better method. So a Coalition Government was formed with the support of the Soviet of Petrograd (May 1917). In the Government the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks had responsible ministries, thus giving the appearance to the Government of being formed of the real representatives of the masses. For example the Ministry of Agriculture was given to V. Cheronov, the most influential man amongst the peasants. (It was like giving Pandit Jawahar Lal the portfolio of agriculture in U.P., while retaining the Imperialist army, the peasant debts and all capitalist relations intact and yet calling it a Government of the Masses). Naturally the Congress of the Soviets supported the Government and its policy. The Bolsheviks who differed were hooted. Lenin considered the support of the Soviets so important that he attended the Congress as a rank and file delegate and addressed the Congress on the Bolshevik programme. With the support of the Soviet Congress Kerensky planned a big offensive on the front. But the soldiers were exhausted, technique had broken down and the Russian army was massacred. When the news of the tragedy reached Petrograd, the workers and soldiers came out on the streets. They took the slogan "Down with the Government, all power to the Soviet." The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was asked to direct the operations and seize power. The Central Committee flatly refused. The masses were veering to the Left but had not done so completely. The Government of the popular parties of Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks was not yet discredited completely in the eyes of the majority of the people. Hence the Central Committee refused. The July Demonstration was turned into a peaceful demonstration and a premature rising was prevented, with the result that Kerensky arrested some of the leading Bolsheviks and suppressed their papers.

The petty bourgeois Government, incapable of carrying out the proletarian programme or even the bourgeois programme could not satisfy either a revolution or a counter-revolution. The situation of 1848 was brought back. Therefore the bourgeoisie, the landowners and the Allied Imperialists planned a military coup to overthrow both the Soviets and the Government. General Kornilov marched on Petrograd with some monarchist troops. The Soviets came out to a man to give battle to the monarchist coup and Kornilov was beaten. This roused the workers and peasants to

the danger of the counter-revolution. The capitalists began to corner food stuffs and goods and planned a famine in the cities which were the strongholds of the revolution. The failure to introduce 8 hours day and workers' control even six months after the revolution, increased the Bolshevik adherents in the ranks of the workers. The petty bourgeois parties held a Democratic Conference, promised speedy summoning of the Constituent Assembly, but by September end the masses were completely disillusioned and were ready for seizure of power by the Soviets. The growth of Bolshevik majority was felt in the numerous non-party conferences of the workers and peasants, in the Democratic conference, and in the Trade Unions and the Soviets. The growth of Bolshevik majority in the Soviets can be seen from their percentage of delegates to the Congress. The implicit support was of course much more than is illustrated in the figures:—

All Russian Congress of Soviets.	No. of Delegates.	No. of Bolsheviks.	% of Bolsheviks.
1st. 16 June 1917.	790	103	13
2nd. 10 November 1917	675	343	51
3rd. 23 January 1918	710	434	61
4th. 20 March 1918.	1232	795	64
5th. 7 July 1918.	1164	773	66

These figures ought to shatter the statements of the bourgeois intellectuals and the "purely democratic" gentlemen Socialists of the Second International that the Bolsheviks seized power as a minority clique of a few—only it was a determined and efficient minority (Reference Public Prosecutors' Address to the Court).

Though the Bolsheviks were in majority and had the backing of the working class and peasantry it did not mean that power was surrendered by the bourgeoisie of its own accord or in recognition of "the right of majority to rule the country." Neither did the Bolsheviks beseech Kerensky on "bended knees" to give power in the hands of the Soviets because the people were behind them. When the crisis intensified in September, the peasants began to confiscate the big estates on their own initiative and formed local Soviets to supervise distribution and control. The so-called Revolutionary Government sent troops to protect the landowners, but the troops in some cases soon fraternised with the peasantry and in others were driven by it. In September the Railway workers struck for higher wages, the landowners asked the Government to double the price of corn bought by the Government from them which was agreed to by Kerensky who would not, however, increase the wages of Railway

men. Relying on these symptoms Lenin urged the preparation for insurrection and a forcible overthrow of the Government. Before he urged this measure, it is worthy to note that he tried much to form a Coalition Government with Left Socialist Elements and even the Mensheviks in the Soviets, urging them to supersede the Provincial Government and take power in their hands. From his retreat, on September 26-27, Lenin wrote "The Russian Democracy, the Soviets, the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties have before them now an opportunity which is rare in the history of revolution. They can assure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed without adjournment, they can preserve the country from military and economic disaster, they can safeguard the peaceful development of events.....there could be no longer any question of resistance to the Soviets but their hesitations. No class will dare to provoke insurrection against them, and enlightened by the Kornilov experience the big proprietors will peacefully surrender power before the Soviets' ultimatum. In order to overcome the capitalists' resistance to the Soviet programme it will suffice to institute a vigilant supervision by the peasants and workers over the exploiters and a short time imprisonment upon the recalcitrants. If the Soviets seized power they could still—and it is probably the last chance—assure the peaceful development of the revolution, the peaceful election by the people of their representatives, the peaceful competition of parties within the bosom of the Soviets, the experiments of different party programmes and the peaceful transference of power from one party to another." This peaceful development of the revolution, however, cannot be confounded with the non-violent revolution of the Indian bourgeoisie. The political and economic content of the former was quite different from that of the latter. The transference of power from the bourgeoisie to the Soviets involved a complete destruction of feudal economy depriving the bourgeoisie of political power, and if necessary the nationalisation of key industries accompanied by workers' control, in those that were not nationalised. It was a transference of economic and political power from one class to another. Lenin contemplated the possibility at that particular moment of a "peaceful development", because, as he clearly states, "the whole mass of the working class and peasantry and the military forces were behind the Soviets and ready to support the seizure of power; since they had lost faith in the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties of which the Provincial Government was formed by reason of the Kornilov rising and the economic sabotage of the bourgeoisie. (On August 1, 1917, before the Bolshevik Revolution, 568 concerns had been closed down by the owners on various pretexts). The Indian petty bourgeois parties when they talk of

their peaceful revolution, have none of these class forces in their minds or objectively before them either in their economic or political content.

But the conditions favourable for the proposal had vanished within four days by the rapid march of events. So by the beginning of October Lenin was urging the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks to seize power immediately either in Moscow or in Petrograd. There were a few members in the Central Committee who considered the movement still premature. But Lenin's view point secured a majority. Complete preparations were made keeping in mind the profound instructions of Marx "insurrection is an art; defensive is the death of insurrection". Reliable battalions were converged on strategic points, the battleship Aurora, whose sailors were the staunchest Bolsheviks, was brought to play its guns and exactly seven hours before this time today, the 7th of November, fourteen years ago, Krylenko staggering with fatigue climbed to the tribune of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets with a telegram in his hand, just as today we climbed into the dock with a telegram but differently worded—to the Soviet. "Comrades, from the northern front the army sends greetings to the Soviets announcing the formation of a Military Revolutionary Committee which has taken over the command of the northern front". It is a sorry spectacle, yet full of revolutionary hopes that we on the Indian front cannot send a like telegram to the First Workers' Republic announcing them the victory of the Indian revolution. We could simply express the revolutionary greetings, which we have done today, congratulating them on their victory which also is partially a victory for the Indian working class and peasantry.

D/- 12.11.31

The seizure of power by the Bolsheviks means the seizure by the workers and peasants. But the Bolshevik Party had its strongest organisations in the workers of the towns. In the vast peasant land of Russia, a purely workers' organisation could not be expected to run the Government without the support of the peasantry. The Bolsheviks had not a vast network of their leadership in the peasantry, which though quite sympathetic to the Bolsheviks was organisationally bound in the organisation of the Socialist Revolutionaries. The All-Russian Congress of peasants assembled in Petrograd, refused to recognise the Bolshevik Military Revolutionary Committee and the Government formed by it. But the great peasant party of the S.R.s was itself split in a Right and Left section, the Left being in the majority

and sympathetic to the Bolsheviki. Lenin proposed a compromise to them, included three representatives of theirs in the Council of Peoples Commissars on certain ministerial posts and won over the support of the leading influences in the villages and small towns. But it must be noted that the compromise did not surrender the hegemony of the Bolshevik Party, i.e. of the factory workers.

55. *Land Decree—Brest Peace—Sabotage of the petty bourgeoisie—Dispersal of the Constituent Assembly.*

The Government of the bourgeoisie and land-owners was overthrown and that of the workers and peasants enthroned. What were the consequences of this revolutionary change? The new Government was not like that of the Labour Party, administering the affairs of the bourgeoisie. It was to be the smashing of the feudal bourgeois State and its replacement by the worker's State. But this workers' State was not immediately carrying out a Socialist revolution, i.e. overthrow of the bourgeoisie in social economy altogether. The first act in the economic transformation was the Land Decree by which the feudal ownership of land was abolished. Henceforth land ownership was vested in the State. Land ownership is nominally vested in the State in British India also. In Britain and France, feudal land ownership was destroyed a century earlier; so in this respect the Soviet Land Decree was merely carrying out the bourgeois revolution. But there was a complementary part to the decree, to this bourgeois revolution which was absent in the former revolutions. The political power in the present case was held by the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet led by the Communist Party. What difference did this make? In the former case, the land got into the hands of the rich peasants and ultimately into the hands of Banks and agricultural financiers. The land workers and poor peasants were expropriated. In the Soviet State this was prevented. The seizure was now an *organised seizure*—i.e. the local peasant committees and Soviets seized the land, and expelled the feudal landlords. Then the disposal of the land was made according to the needs and capacity. There was another danger lurking in this. The landless worker or poor peasant having no cattle and Capital was bound to be exploited by the richer peasant who possessed cattle and Capital. Thus gradually the land of the poor peasant was bound to be concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie and become the basis for the reintroduction of the bourgeoisie into political power, acting from the base of the villages and therefore more powerful and dangerous. The insurance against this was the

formation of separate committees of the poor peasants and land workers, holding the live stock and farm tools of the big estates by the village Soviets and lending them to the poor peasants for use. This weightage, political and economic, is completely absent under the bourgeois State, though the land may be nominally nationalised and owned by the State.

Next to the land question came the question of peace. The Soviet Government at once asked all the belligerent powers to convene a delegate conference for cessation of war and making "a peace without annexation and indemnities." The Allies refused. German Imperialism hoped to defeat the disorganised Russian armies thoroughly, seize the grain and coal areas in South Russia and thus with renewed strength attack the Allies. The Bolsheviks refused the peace terms leaving to the Germans the conquered territories. During the negotiations Trotsky utilised the conference to broadcast his appeals to the workers of the belligerent countries to revolt and stop the war. He appealed to the German proletariat to rise and stop the German attack on workers' Russia. The German workers responded. There were strikes in Berlin and in the Navy. But there was not as yet a desire for general revolutionary upheaval. German Imperialism succeeded in crushing the workers at home. In Ukraine they exploited the bourgeois nationalists, set up a Rada which refused to join hands with the Soviet negotiations for peace and concluded a separate peace with Germany in such a manner that Ukraine became a base of German Imperialism. There was a great crisis in Russia over the German peace terms. The Communists refused to yield an inch of ground. Would it not be betrayal of their declarations for peace without annexations? How could they surrender the border line workers and peasants to German rule? The Russian Party was rent with controversies. The Leninists wanted even to go to Siberia, if the Germans conquered Petrograd and Moscow, and conduct the Soviet Government there. Lenin at this stage intervened and was the sole person responsible for defeating this Leftist heroism. The Proletarian Revolution rested on the workers and peasants of European Russia. A transfer of the peoples Commissariats with the whole band of the excellent brains of the revolution to the Siberian forests would not mean a transfer of the real basis of the revolution. It would be merely a romanticism of the Robin Hood type and not a Proletarian State. The conquest of the revolution required "a breathing space" which must be bought if necessary at the expense of a peace dictated by a robber Imperialism, "with its knee on the chest" of the revolution. The peace terms would

leave the Proletarian basis of power in all branches untouched, and even the few territories now lost would be restored soon, if the German workers made a revolution in their country, signs of which had already become visible. After a tremendous intra-party struggle the Brest-Litovsk peace was signed on 18th March, 1918, after the Allies had refused help against Germany.

More serious to combat was the internal danger of sabotage by the petty bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeois middle class employees of the railways organised in the Vikzel, refused to transport the troops of the Soviet Government against the counter-revolutionary Kerensky, under the plea that it took no sides until the Constituent Assembly decided the question of power. Here again the class consciousness of workers came to the rescue. Though the middle class staff was not richly paid by the bourgeoisie and was as much exploited as the lower grade manual workers, like the signallers, pointsmen, coalers, enginemen etc. yet the petty bourgeoisie of the Station-masters and such others were ideologically and culturally allied with the bourgeoisie, while the other sections were not. The Proletarian rank and file, as against the Trade Union petty bourgeois bureaucracy, ran the trains, helped the Soviet, and the Vikzel's sabotage was broken. Then there was the sabotage of the State Bank clerks and salaried officers, and of the telephone bourgeois girls. Here too the Soviet appointed its own officers, who went to the Bank and learnt from the peons the allocation of duties. At the prospect of such a powerful sabotage many a Bolshevik weakened, but Lenin stood firm and asked the Party to learn from the peons and the lowest grade employees the work of the State. A lot of venomous propaganda is carried on against the Soviet that it wanted to destroy the intellectuals, the middle-class, petty bourgeoisie, "the salaried Proletariat", who under the Bolshevik terror were compelled to flee the country. The British Imperialist propaganda agents in India frighten the petty bourgeoisie by their imaginary fate under a Proletarian rule. But all this is mere misrepresentation. There is no doubt that the higher civilian bureaucracy whether Indian or British will be removed from its posts altogether. It cannot be retained even on the low salaries proposed in the Commune State (even on the Rs 500/- as found in the Mahatma's proposal) because that bureaucracy is in most cases directly related in blood and money to the land owners and the bourgeoisie. The heads and most important sub-heads of the bureaucratic machine have to be removed altogether, otherwise the continuity of the previous bureaucratism cannot be broken. But such need not be the case with the lower subordinates and the staff. Lenin wrote, "Besides the

preponderatingly 'repressive part' of the apparatus, the standing army, police, officialdom, there is in the contemporary State machine another part, closely interconnected with banks and syndicates fulfilling a great mass of work of account keeping and registration, if one may so express it. This part of the apparatus cannot and must not be broken up. It must only be torn from subjection to capitalists with their wire-pulling influence. It must be subjected to the Proletarian Soviets. Thus when the State Bank was seized, only the former Governor was removed and replaced by the Bolshevik Finance expert, Piatakov. But wherever such steps were taken the petty bourgeoisie, incited by the former masters, sabotaged or struck work. When their resistance was met with firmness and the Soviet State could not be overthrown by them, the sabotage collapsed within four months. Only the higher bureaucracy migrated out of Russia, along with the landowners and capitalists; (and one of them has found his way into India to become the most imaginative Prosecution witness, Inspector Derojmsky, P. W. No. 182.)

All the counter-revolutionary groups, the non-Bolshevik Parties and even honest petty bourgeois elements, who did not believe in the efficacy of the Soviet system, concentrated their energies on the Constituent Assembly. The slogan of the Constituent Assembly had been adopted and made popular by all the revolutionary parties, including the Bolsheviks, for the last 20 years. Every strike, every demonstration asked for a Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage to determine the constitution of Russia. Land to the peasants, ordinary rights of citizens in a bourgeois democracy such as were found in the West were to come to the people only through the Constituent Assembly. Now when the Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies were the political power what was to be done with the Constituent Assembly which the Provisional Government had failed to call, and which failure was one of the reasons of popular opinion veering towards the Bolsheviks who asked for the immediate convening of the Assembly? Here was a problem of first-rate importance before the Communist Party. Was the Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage to be allowed to determine the constitution of the new State and act as the sanction for the new State, or was the Soviet Congress to predominate. A large number of Bolsheviks were under the infatuation of the last 20 years' propaganda. They thought that if the Constituent Assembly supported them and the Government then alone would they enjoy the support of all the people, i.e. all the workers and peasants.

But Lenin struck quite a different note. The Soviet form of democracy was a higher form than parliamentary democracy as represented by the Constituent Assembly. To allow the C. A. to act as a sanction for the Soviet State was to go back a stage. The C. A. was now the rallying centre of the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolution, while the workers and peasants solidly stood behind the Soviets as is shown in the table quoted in para 54. The C. A. therefore should be allowed to meet but it must be dispersed after it had shown its bankruptcy in meeting the demands of the workers and peasants. Lenin arrived at this formulation and was confident that the C. A. would not meet the demands of the masses because out of the 36 million votes that were polled the S. Rs. had polled 20 million, the Bolsheviks 9 million and other parties 6 million, which presented quite a different contrast to the percentage of seats held by the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Congress. Of the elected members again 535 were anti-Bolsheviks and 168 Bolsheviks. When the date of the Convocation came near, the S. Rs. tried to mobilise battalions to protect the C. A. from dispersing. When the preliminary conferences of the delegates took place, the Bolshevik group proposed to them that they ratify the land decree of the Soviet. The conferences with a majority of petty bourgeois elements under the leadership of the bourgeois groups refused. That much was sufficient to expose the "bourgeois parliament" in the eyes of the masses. The Bolsheviks, when the C. A. met, sent an order for the deputies to disperse. Thus the long dreamt of bourgeois parliament that was to give democratic freedom was superseded by the Soviets and the leadership of the C. P. The "constitutional screen" of the landowners and the bourgeoisie to hide their class dictatorship and delude the workers and peasants was torn away.

56. *What is International in the Russian Revolution—tendency to partial acceptance of Leninism Lenin shows four specific conditions of the Russian Revolution—Leninism is not mere application of Marxism—the eleven points that enriched Marxism—Indian tendency to reject certain points—accept whole or reject whole—no non-party attitude.*

The facts and significance of the Russian Revolution were at first perverted by the intellectual agents of the world bourgeoisie. But when the Soviet grew stronger and withstood all attacks, there was a rush of visitors and delegations to study the new phenomenon of the working class building up Socialist Society. (For example delegations from the Labour Party). When the

workers of the world, under the leadership of the Communist Parties, began to hold the ideal of the Soviet before themselves, the petty bourgeois intelligentsia and the labour aristocracy acting as the agents of Capitalism within the Labour Movement adopted a new tactic. In the European countries, they had adulterated Marxism, tried to "revise" and "correct" it, on the ground that after the experiences of the new stage of Capitalism—Imperialism which was not prevalent when Marx formulated his doctrines, Marxism requires "correction" or "revision". They have produced a breed which says "we are Marxists—but not Leninists. We are Communists but not of the Third International type." (As is hinted in the cross examination of Mr. Brailsford). Some have gone further and say, "we are Leninists, but not according as the Comintern understands it today." Now what is the result of such an attitudes? We are familiar with this sort of political acrobatics even in the camp of the Indian national bourgeoisie. When a certain slogan or political principle becomes popular with the masses, the politically worn out reactionary groups change their outer skin in order to ingratiate themselves with the new trend of mass psychology. If the masses accept them, they become the settled centres of reaction within the growing movement and betray at the time of crisis. For example the big Indian bourgeoisie with its land-owning affiliations, refused to accept the word "Swaraj" at the 1906 Congress and broke the Session. Next they fought the introduction of the Home Rule ideal of the radical petty bourgeoisie in 1917. When Home Rule became popular and the masses began to march under its flag, they adopted the Home Rule ideal. When the petty bourgeois Congress chucked out the word Dominion Status from its constitution in 1920 they held away for a time but re-entered it and from within sidetracked the mass forces on to the line of reaction. Today even the most counter-revolutionary bourgeois talks of complete Independence, but "honestly" differs on the nature of that Independence as conceived by the revolutionary parties. Similarly when Marxism became the accepted creed of the working class, the petty bourgeoisie accepted it but wanted to revise it. The attempts at revision were strongly fought by the Bolsheviks. The erstwhile Marxists like Plekhanov and Kautsky denounced the Russian Revolution and its methods lest the working-class of every country be enamoured into following them. But when the workers of the industrial countries and the oppressed toilers of the subject countries gravitated towards the Soviet idea, the opportunists in the revolutionary proletarian movement adopted a new tactic. They said that the Soviet is really the workers' State. Lenin was really the greatest leader of the proletariat.

But then you cannot accept his principles and methods in other countries. Russia had her own "peculiarities." We cannot learn lessons of the Russian Revolution, because our country's development is "peculiar" (as Jawahar Lal and Subash Bose would like to put it). We admire Leninism but only when it is restricted to Russia. Moreover even if Leninism is to be applied to the conditions in our country the application as suggested by the Comintern is wrong. Thus argues a certain section of the radical intellectuals in India, who finding that the Labour Parties of Europe and even the Liberal and Labour Imperialists have succeeded in their career-making before the workers on the slogan of Socialism and Marxism (adulterated, perverted and revised) writ large on their flag to deceive the working-class, and are giving up their wholesale opposition to Marxism and Socialism. Socialism and Marxism are becoming a fashion with some of the Indian warlords and even a man like Sir Fazle Hussain confessed with great pride before the Session of the Federation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in 1930 that he too was "something of a Socialist." A man like Subash Bose when faced with the strength and solidarity of the workers' demonstration at the Calcutta Congress in 1928 was hesitating whether to choose between the workers or his petty bourgeois volunteers. But when he became conscious of the new forces he began to wear the borrowed Trade Union and Socialist feathers, to strut as a genuine eagle among the revolutionary working-class, but at the same time would like to keep some mental reservations on the question of what attitude the working-class should adopt towards the problem of Geneva. We meet with the spectacle of a Congress President declaring his "Socialist" solidarity with the working-class and peasantry and in his actual politics paying homage to the "discipline" imposed by a counter-revolutionary compromise or a Pact. All of them praise Marx and Lenin, because the revolutionary working-class in India is by the instinct of an oppressed class moving towards the Soviet idea, towards Leninism, though even advanced members of that class may not be able to express it scientifically in so many words. Lenin himself had anticipated these trickeries and when he was alive he pointed out that the Russian Revolution has its own peculiarities no doubt, but there are "some fundamental features of our revolution to be of such international significance.....The advanced workers in every land have long understood—although in many cases they did not so much understand it as feel it through the instinct of their revolutionary class." (Reference Ext. P 975). But neither Lenin nor the Comintern insist that every feature of the Russian Revolution or the Russian Party will be copied in other countries, including the bald head of Lenin or the beard of

Marx. Such slavish unscientific imitations are left to the degenerate petty bourgeoisie or the religious fanatics who would follow their prophets to the length of wearing a *langoti* or having their heads shaved in three places. Lenin said "Of course it would be the greatest mistake to exaggerate this truth (of international application of the Russian experience) and apply more than the fundamental features of our revolution. It would be likewise erroneous not to keep in mind that after the Proletarian Revolution in one of the advanced countries, things will in all probability take a sharp turn; Russia will cease to be the model and will become again the backward (in Soviet or Socialist sense) country." Because a highly industrialised country like England, Germany or U. S. A. can build Socialism faster and more easily than an agrarian country like Russia. What were the peculiar conditions according to Lenin helping the Russian Revolution whose repetition in another country is not very probable? These specific conditions were (1) The possibility of connecting the Soviet Revolution with the conclusion, thanks to it, of the Imperialist war which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible extent. (2) The possibility of making use for a certain time of the deadly struggle of two world powerful groups of Imperialist plunderers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy. (3) The possibility of withstanding a comparatively lengthy civil war partly because of the gigantic dimensions of the country and the bad means of communication. (4) The existence of such a profound bourgeois revolutionary movement amongst the peasantry that the Proletarian Party included in its programme the revolutionary demands of the Peasant Party (the S. Rs., a Party which was sharply hostile to Bolshevism) and at once realised these demands through the proletarian conquest of power.

But Leninism is not merely the application of Marxism to these specific conditions of the Russian struggle. Leninism is a further development of Marxism in the epoch of Imperialism and Proletarian revolutions. You cannot be a Marxist without being a Leninist, nor can you be a Leninist without learning the lessons of the Russian Revolution, because Leninism developed in relation to certain class forces and their conflict, in relation to a bourgeois revolution as well as a proletarian revolution, the general features of which apart from its Russian peculiarities are bound to be reproduced in every country, in so far as the general features of feudalism or capitalism are reproduced in the same way in every country. We have seen the general deductions of Marxism from the class struggle of Marx's time. Leninism enriched that experience

by the solution of the following questions:— (1) The theory of Imperialism and of the Proletarian Revolution. (2) The conditions and the forms of realising the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (3) The mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry. (4) The significance of the national question generally. (5) Particularly the significance for the World Proletarian Revolution of national movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries. (6) The role of the Party. (7) The tactics of the Proletariat in the epoch of Imperialist wars. (8) The role of the Proletarian State in the transition period. (9) The Soviet State as a concrete type of the Proletarian State in that period. (10) The problem of social subdivisions in the Proletariat itself as a source of the division of the Labour Movement into an opportunist and revolutionary tendency. (11) Overcoming both the Right Social Democratic tendencies and Left deviations in the Communist Movement.

D/- 13.11.31

Those who accept "Marxism", (as they would call it) but say that they are not Leninists or communists, accept mostly the Marxian critique of Capitalism but reject its revolutionary part, especially on the question of the overthrow of the capitalist political power, with its corrupt bourgeois Parliamentarism, and its replacement by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The opportunist Socialists of the Imperialist countries reject Leninism because they do not want to strive for the separation and independence of those countries that are subject to their Imperialisms. The "Marxists" of the Second International in England, France, U. S. A. would desire the independence of India, China etc. but would not aid the revolutionary movements of those countries for independence. They would rather persuade the subject countries not to press for independence though they would recognise the abstract right to independence of these countries (e. g. Mr. Brailsford's view, as is seen in his evidence before this Court). In India also we find the petty bourgeois Socialist parties of the Punjab, and C. P., adopting the fashion of Socialism but preaching against Leninism and the Comintern. We find the President of the Trade Union Congress-Ruitar-asking for immediate establishment of Socialism and in the same breath urging for more representation at the Round Table Conference which is the summum bonum of class-collaboration on the part of petty bourgeois nationalists, Labour Imperialists, feudal land-owners, princes and the industrial bourgeoisie all trying to reconcile their irreconcilable contradictions.

We have to reject all such deviations. We stand for complete application of Leninism to the Indian conditions, unequivocal

adherence to Marxism—Leninism by every one who is a Communist, and further complete adherence to the Comintern. There are some who would like to accept Leninism but would hesitate to adhere to the C. I. Such an attitude is a contradiction because it rejects the Leninist line on point no: 6 in the eleven points noted above. If you accept Marxism thoroughly, you have to logically accept Leninism, the Party and the Comintern. If you deny the Comintern you then naturally deny the Party, and “only that much part of Leninism and Marxism” as some people express it. Then you create a dual Party or no Party. In the former case, if a more or less good party exists already, it is bound to lead to a conflict and sabotage of the Proletarian struggle which then becomes divided under dual leadership. In the latter case no party means no correct leadership which leads to aimless piecemeal disorderly struggle. Thus in both cases you arrive ultimately at the negation of Leninism and the proletarian revolution. The whole chain is quite indivisible. I will deal with the Indian aspect of this question as found in the exhibits a little latter on. Suffice it to say that the attempt of the Prosecution and some pseudo-Socialists to separate Marxism from Leninism and contrapose them is an attempt to introduce opportunism in the Indian Communist Movement. For us there can be no such thing as an “independent attitude” of taking “the good points” of both Moscow and Geneva and rejecting the bad. For us Moscow is all truth and Geneva all lie.

57. *Bolsheviks and Red Terror—how it arose—causes of allied hatred of the November Revolution—the wild stories against the Soviets—Anarchism of the Bakuninist Anarchists—casualties in Petrograd fighting—no restrictions on political parties except the bourgeois—intervention in Civil War—the S. R. rising and attempt on Lenin's life—Red Terror instituted—Kautsky's books and Lenin's answer to him—formal democracy and dictatorship.*

Did the Bolsheviks on their installation in power start a reign of terror? (The late Mr. Langford James in his address to the court drew a very vivid picture of this supposed Red Terror). Capitalist propoganda between February and November 1917 was overflowing with the praise of the bloodless Russian Revolution, because that revolution had put into power the bourgeoisie, which was pledged to war. After November the intense venom of the bourgeois press was released against the Bolsheviks, because in the

first place they repudiated Imperialist war and signed peace with Germany. But this they did after calling upon all the Allies to stop the war and join a peace conference which they refused. There were 18 such attempts and appeals from the Soviet between November 1917 and December 1919. The second reason was that the Soviet repudiated the Czarist debts, on the strength of which the Czar had maintained his autocracy. The third was that the new State was not a bourgeois Parliamentary State but a proletarian class State. If it were allowed to exist it would be an inspiration to the world proletariat and peasantry. The world propaganda against the Soviet was thus the concentrated hatred of the world bourgeoisie against the world proletariat and peasantry. The innumerable lies that were spread about the Bolsheviks have now died down, exposed and smashed by the most progressive and healthy development of Soviet Russia and the necessity forced upon decaying Imperialism to come to terms with her. The hideous form of the propaganda of early days has now been replaced by a subtle method which trade in India on the ignorance of the people helped by the rigorous censorship maintained by the Government. Mr. Langford James in his address to the Court repeated almost all the old stories about Soviet Russia, and the attempt was so disgusting that even the "Daily Herald" of London which has no love for the Soviet was ashamed of it and denounced it. It is not necessary here to recount all those lies. You can find them systematically put down and exposed by an American author, E. A. Ross, who has gone into the question in his book "The Russian Soviet Republic." Immediately after the November Revolution there was no Red Terror. Neither was there a general confiscation of the belongings of the bourgeoisie. The Soviet had not even declared the factories nationalised. The seizure of power in Petrograd resulted only in 1408 casualties and the so-called bombardment had not gone beyond the smashing of window panes of the Palace. Immediately after the conquest the Anarchists had issued an appeal according to their principles of abolishing the State immediately (of whatever class) urging upon the people to seize every thing they liked, and calling upon every section of them, including thieves and robbers to abolish society. In order to abolish the State they encouraged the weakening of centralisation of power. They said, "Village, ignore the orders of the city, disobey the centre. Organise the Commune. Ye Gulls of Religion, destroy the churches. Blow up the universities." (Full text of this interesting Manifesto can be found in Ross' book). Such attempts of the Bakuninist Anarchists were bound to result in a certain disorder and they were attributed to the Bolsheviks who in the first days allowed full freedom to all the

revolutionary political parties and did not take any steps against the propaganda of the parties like those of the S. Rs. and Anarchists. There was no terror either against the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. But the overthrown bourgeoisie fights for its counter-revolution with tenfold vigour. Even before November Petrograd and the big cities were threatened with famine. The Bolsheviks began to take energetic steps against this. The bourgeoisie supported the Czarist Generals in their revolt. The French, British, American and all the other bourgeois powers united to smash the Soviet and aided the Czarist Generals in starting the Civil War. In March 1918 when the Germans were silenced by the Brest Treaty, the British landed marines on the Murmansk Coast on the plea that they wanted only to protect their base in the Baltic against the Germans and would vacate it very soon. But after landing they massacred the whole of the Kem Soviet in July 1918. The Czecho-Slovaks who were on Russian soil and wanted to go back to fight on the side of France were allowed to proceed to Vladivostok to board their ships. On the way, at the instigation of France, which paid them 11 million roubles and England which paid 3½ millions, they seized the Siberian Railway and fought the Soviets in May 1918. The Japanese, the British and the Americans landed troops in Siberia on 6th April and July 17th, 1918. The Czech treachery starved Moscow as they held up the food transport in Samara and Simbrisk. From the North the British advanced from Archangel. The plan was to join hands with the Czechs and Kolchak who was advancing from the Urals. From the South the Cossacks helped by the British and French guns advanced towards North. Thus when the foreign Imperialist powers were out to overthrow the Soviet by armed intervention, in Moscow and Petrograd they carried on conspiracies with the S. R.s and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The head of this was Lockhart of the British Mission. The conspiracy was hatched in the extra-territorial grounds of the Consulate. The British Lieutenant Riley got into touch with the Commander of the Lettish Guard of the Smolny, by name Berzin, and promised him several hundred thousand roubles. Forged documents purporting to be secret Russo-German treaties were to be planted in the peoples' commissariats. The question was seriously debated whether Lenin or Trotsky should be merely kidnapped, or should be killed on the spot. Some one pointed out that these two had such uncanny powers that if kidnapped they would win over their kidnapers on the way by propaganda and get free. So they must be killed. But Berzin was a Bolshevik Commander. He joined the conspiracy but took instructions from the Bolshevik Cheka. When everything was ready the Mission was raided and

the whole conspiracy exposed in August 1918. Just then the Socialist revolutionaries, becoming reactionary, arose in revolt. They murdered the German ambassador, Count Mirbach, to show that they did not like the Brest peace with Germany. It was an attempt to involve Soviet Russia in war with Germany, a suicidal policy at that moment. The S. R.s were suppressed and expelled from the Government. The coalition of 18th November 1917 was ended and henceforth the peoples' Commissariat was wholly a Proletarian Government under the guidance of the Communists. The S.R.s however did not stay their hands. Their Party head quarters had now become the rendezvous for bourgeois conspirators. On 5th September an attempt was made on Lenin's life in Moscow. Uritsky of the Cheka was killed in Petrograd and Volodarsky in Moscow. This was the last blow to the freedom of the political parties and the more or less absence of any rigorous restrictions on the bourgeoisie. The working class of Russia was profoundly moved by this attack on their greatest leader. The effect was exactly contrary to the expectations of the bourgeoisie. The workers and peasants gathered round the banner of Bolshevism more solidly than before. A complete extermination of the counter-revolutionaries was demanded and hence the Red Terror came into existence. The difference between the Red Terror and White Terror is that the former is exercised by the overwhelming majority of the people through their State power, which is frankly a class State, against the minority—the exploiters. The White Terror is exercised by a minority against the whole people to protect its parasitic and decaying existence against social progress. Every new revolutionary class, when it rises to power, has to exercise its revolutionary terror against the class which is overthrown. Every new class power is threatened by armed intervention and the violation of its integrity by the surrounding exploiters. The bourgeois French Revolution of 1793, whose principles are now taught even in school text-books of the bourgeoisie, had to institute its terror against feudalism and its Allies. The French bourgeoisie was attacked by the British bourgeoisie allied with the European feudal States, consistently for 22 years (1793-1815). To combat the attack, the hives of the enemy inside the bosom of the revolution had to be cleaned out. The Bolshevik terror was nothing compared to the French terror. The Red Terror did not use its proletarian revolutionary arm against more than 10,000 counter-revolutionaries. The French, the British and other bourgeois States, that had risen to power by exterminating feudalism on the shoulders of the peasantry, were now sending their armed forces to kill the revolution of the workers and peasants of Russia, because it had dared to rise to power against the bourgeoisie.

We hear a lot about the Communist International "interfering in the internal affairs" of the British Empire, trying to overthrow the Empire and fomenting revolution. But Mr. Churchill and the renegades of the Labour Party try to hide from the workers that they spent millions of pounds in supplying arms and officers to the counter-revolutionary Denikins, Kolchaks and Wrangels in Russia, that they interfered most violently in the internal affairs of Russia. Mr. Churchill, fearing that the British soldiers might refuse to fight against Russia, cheated them into landing at Archangel on the pretence that British missions and troops had been stranded and required a rescue. For two years the bourgeois bandits of England, France, U. S. A. and Japan killed thousands of peasants and workers of Russia until the Red Army drove them out.

And now they complain of the Comintern sending into their countries not armed battalions but revolutionary leaflets. Can these assassins of Lenin and thousands of Soviet workers show a single instance of the Comintern or its members having ever attempted to kill any one of these Imperialist bandits? The Social Democratic and petty bourgeois lackeys of Imperialism forgot this. Kautsky wrote a book entitled "Communism and Terrorism" perverting the historical experience and lessons of the Paris Commune and the teachings of Marx. He cried for democracy and freedom for the bourgeoisie saying that the Soviet State was not a democracy like the Paris Commune, which had allowed even the bourgeoisie to take part in its Commune Elections. He also wrote another book, which tried to show from the point of view of "Marxism" that the Soviet State, the dictatorship of the proletariat, was not the real proper form of the proletarian State because it had rejected formal democracy. The answer to the former work was written by Trotsky in the midst of his military expeditions against the counter-revolution. The latter was answered by Lenin in his book "The Proletarian Revolution and the renegade Kautsky" (Ext. P 898). The Soviet State is the real democratic dictatorship of the proletariat, because it is a dictatorship of the majority of the people (who are the workers and peasants) against the bourgeoisie. It is democracy for the proletarians and the dispossessed. Does the bourgeoisie in its State allow democracy to the workers and poor peasants? Not even the shadow of it.

58. *The difference between the economic and political content of bourgeois and proletarian revolutions—did Bolshevism introduce Socialism after October 1917—October was not*

a Socialist revolution.

From what has been stated so far it must have been made clear that the immediate and ultimate ideals of the Communists arise directly from the development of productive forces and the consequent changes in the condition of society calling for a constant struggle towards a change in the production, or property relations of classes. In order to bring about the necessary change in the economy of society the class struggle is fought on the question of political power, since all regulation of class monopoly of wealth or of property relations is done in the final instance by the class State which pours its class content in its law of property. But having conquered the political power, the changes in social economy follow two different roads for two different kinds of class power. When the change from feudalism to capitalism takes place, the bourgeois productive forces have already ripened within the womb of the old society; bourgeois economy has already developed to such an extent that it only now requires to take political power from feudalism in order to enable its further development and progress. But it is quite a different case with socialist economy. The basis of socialist economy ripens within the womb of Capitalism but the actual transfer of production and distribution on to socialist methods follows the conquests of power by the proletariat. For example the bourgeois property relations, in which the worker sells his labour power for a wage develop within feudalism, wherein the serf is not free to sell his labour power on the market. It is also possible to find feudal and bourgeois economy prevailing side by side, and its reflex in the State power being shared by a bourgeois-feudal bloc as was found in Germany before the 1918 Revolution. You can find feudal and bourgeois economy living side by side with both the classes sharing political power in the State. Similarly you can find socialist economy living side by side with a survival of capitalist economy. But there is this vital difference that the State in the latter case cannot be jointly controlled by the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It must be exclusively a proletarian State. What is the specific and vital demarcation between socialist and capitalist economy? This question is answered by the question who appropriates the surplus produce of labour? Under Capitalism the wage-earner sells his labour power, and the surplus value produced by him is appropriated as private property of the capitalist class. Now private appropriation of surplus value, by a class in common both to feudalism and capitalism. That is why both can share economic and political power. But private accumulation of surplus value by a class is definitely the thing that is absent in socialist economy. Socialist economy is a far more

serious contradiction of capitalist economy than the latter is of feudal economy. The function of the proletarian State is to bring within the sphere of socialist economy all the productive forces of the given society, that is it must move constantly towards destruction of capitalist relations. Therefore the two cannot be reconciled within one State, one political power. Now though they cannot co-exist in one State, they can for a time co-exist in one society in the economic field. And this happens for a long time in a petty bourgeois country like Russia (or China or India in the future) because in these countries agriculture is still petty bourgeois and the predominating productive force. Even if the State is proletarian, supported by the peasantry, even if it has nationalised all the big industries, the society or the whole economy of it has not yet become socialist. In the socialised sector of economy the worker produces values and his surplus comes to him through his State, that is it does not become private appropriation for further exploitation. But then there is the vast number of private farms where labour is hired and sold and the surplus value produced accumulates for further exploitation. There is there capitalist economy. Unless they are collectivised, mechanised and socialised a proper distribution of all goods produced in the whole of the society can not be brought about. The sale and purchase of labour power of one by another cannot be eliminated. This process can be swiftly carried out in industrialised countries like England, U. S. A. and Germany because there large scale mechanised production already exists in agriculture, along with a highly centralised industrial production. There is however one thing to be noticed. Under the capitalist State (especially in a highly industrialised country), though socialised economy cannot be introduced, yet forms of its introduction have already got ready. Highly centralised large scale production with its planned methods on a sufficiently big scale is built up within Capitalism. What socialist economy requires is to destroy the private appropriation of the surplus which compels the vast technique to function only on condition that it can produce profits for the owning class and not for use. Thus we get the following formulations:—(1) Feudal and bourgeois economy can exist side by side in one society. Any one of them can be predominant without very acute conflicts. The State can be wielded by any one of them exclusively or jointly, (2) Capitalist economy does not tolerate socialist economy within itself. The State is wholly a bourgeois State, even if a few representatives of the Trade Unions or workers' parties are to be found in the Government. (3) Socialist economy can tolerate survival of capitalist economy within itself. But the State must be exclusively under proletarian control, even if

the petty bourgeois peasantry is found in the Government. At the same time, the movement of growth must be in favour of socialist economy and against capitalist or petty bourgeois economy, or else the latter will engulf the former. (4) In the first two it is economy that predominantly determines the nature of political power. In the third it is predominantly the political power that governs and shapes economy.

Having seen this we shall now clear a few perversions made by the bourgeois propagandists about Soviet Russia, the perversions which are believed in many quarters in India. These perversions are built by postulating wrong premises, calling them Marxist premises, and then trying to show that Soviet Russia does not specify them. Questions such as these are raised often. The Communists captured political power. Now when there is Communism in Russia, why is there inequality of wages? Why do they want Capital? Have they not destroyed Capital? How much Communism is there now? They introduced Communism and then had to scrap it out and introduce the New Economic Policy and bring back Capitalism. So have they not failed? When there is Communism why is there the system of wages at all? Why not anybody go and take any thing he likes? If the whole authority belongs to workers and peasants is it not natural that intellectuals should be exiled and killed; so on and so on. Now there is nothing wrong if such questions are framed by workers who may not have read Marxism. But we find hundreds of bourgeois professors and lawyers and socialists in the Second International raising these questions and triumphantly pointing out that in spite of a workers' State there is some economic trouble and no Communism in Russia.

In the first place such questions are unscientifically worded. No Communist ever can say that on the morrow of the revolution or even within a decade of it there will be Communism. Communism is the final stage of society which comes after Socialism, the two are not the same. Under Communism there is no State, because there are no classes left. The productive forces and relations are so organised that there is bound to be plenty of everything and no restriction then need be exercised on the question of hours of work or distribution of things produced. So in all the above questions the use of the word Communism is un-Marxian. Again if you formulate all the questions with the word Socialism in place of Communism, what does Soviet Russia show in answer? The Revolution of November 1917 did not destroy classes. It destroyed only the class State of the bourgeoisie. But it could not destroy the economic and cultural stratification of classes. The Revolution of

November 1917 was *not* a Socialist Revolution, in the sense that it did not introduce Socialism in Russia. It only produced political conditions that prepared the pre-requisites of starting the real socialist revolution, that is large scale socialist planned production both in industry and agriculture. The revolution destroyed landlordism. But that does not mean that it was a socialist measure. Because this was done by bourgeois revolutions also in the 18th century and it helps capitalist economy to grow. The revolution nationalised some industries. Is not nationalisation of industries a socialist measure? Not in all conditions. During the war, in many countries, the industries were taken over from private owners and controlled by the State. But the State was a bourgeois State, paid tribute to the bourgeoisie for this temporary nationalisation, which again was in no way controlled by the proletariat in its interest. The Government of India has nationalised railways, roads, post, telegraphs, salt mines, opium etc. Does it mean that it has introduced Socialism? Not at all. But the condition of nationalisation in Russia was different. The State belonged to the proletariat. If it nationalised the factories, was it introducing Socialism? Was it not a Socialist Revolution? No. Because the ownership of some industries may go into the hands of the proletarian State but it may lease out these industries to capitalists as concessions. It then only becomes State Capitalism, with the proletariat in control of the State. It is not Socialism. Next, even if a few industries are managed by the workers' State itself through its soviets and other organs, that is, even if the surplus produce of the workers in these industries goes to the working class State and therefore to itself, those industries constitute fractions of socialist elements only and not socialist revolution, so long as it does not become a predominant form of production in the total productive forces and production of the given society. The Socialist Revolution in Russia thus did not take place in November 1917 but started in 1928.

59. *Economic developments and nationalisation—decline from March to November 1917—arrested by the October Revolution—decline during the civil war.*

People have got very fantastic notions about nationalisation in Russia and judge the programme of the Indian Communist Party from those wrong notions. Therefore we shall see what is the progress of nationalisation of industries in Soviet Russia and incidentally the economic measures of the revolution—because we must not forget that the essential motive of the conquest of political

power is fundamentally "the economic emancipation of the working class to which every political movement must be subordinated."

The economic breakdown of Russia which bourgeois propagandists tell us was the result of the revolution really began even before the February Revolution. "By the end of the third winter of the war (1916) the economic disorganisation in Russia had reached its breaking point", writes Maurice Dobb ("Russian economic developments since the revolution") and he quotes Baerlein as follows: "As early as 1916 the railway system was in a grievous condition. Cartloads of fresh roses came from the Riviera for the Petrograd aristocracy, but in the Viatka Government of North Russia there was no means of transporting wheat." While sums amounting to seven to eight thousand million roubles had been borrowed from abroad and while gold reserves had been shifted to France and England to the amount of 460 million roubles in payment of war equipment, the deficit in the State Budget in 1916 amounted to 76 per cent of the whole expenditure and inflation had swollen the currency issue by nearly four times to nine milliard roubles at the end of 1916.

Did the February Revolution and the Provisional Government of the middle classes, supported by the bourgeoisie and landlords, improve matters in any way? No. The position got worse still. One of the first acts of the Provisional Government was to declare a State monopoly of the Corn Trade, in an attempt to tackle the food problem and to prevent the rise in prices of corn. But illegal speculation, in food stuffs and evasion of the grain monopoly grew apace. A worsening of the transport chaos took place. By October 1917 the number of locomotives awaiting repair had increased to 5,500 or nearly 30 per cent of the whole—an increase of some 2,200 as compared with the previous autumn." Between March and November 1917 the currency in circulation nearly doubled, while prices rose as much as 224 per cent. The Provisional Government could not arrest the decline as it could only be done by handing over the lands to the peasantry, who then would release food for the towns and would themselves act as a watch on the corn speculations and by the introduction of workers' control in industry. But these measures meant expropriation of land owners and severe curbing of the capitalists of which the petty bourgeois Government was incapable.

What did the November Proletarian Revolution accomplish in this respect? Is it not a fact that the economic decline went deeper during the next two years, followed by a severe famine? Yes,

it did. But the Proletarian Government did not cause it or aggravate the decline. On the contrary it reduced the terrible and inevitable misery. The Bolshevik Government after taking over the State Bank found that the private banks financed the strikes and sabotage of the petty bourgeoisie against the Workers' State and acted as mediaries for the flight of Capital. Only then was a decree nationalising banks issued on December 30, 1917. Thus this nationalisation was forced by the political exigencies and not as a measure "to introduce Socialism." The merchant fleet and corn depots were nationalised in February 1918. But it was not till June 1918 that a general decree of nationalisation of firms with a capital of over one million roubles was passed. Thus not a single branch of industry was nationalised before May and June 1918, as an act of general socialist policy of nationalisation. Even this general decree and other confiscations prior to it were due to purely political reasons. One was that the capitalists in order to overthrow the Workers' State conspired with the German Government by which Germany was to declare a large number of concerns as having been bought by her and as such putting them beyond the pale of nationalisation. The second reason was that the civil war had begun and in order to cope with it several factories and concerns had to be nationalised in order to break the resistance of the bourgeoisie. Prior to June 1918 in 50 per cent of the cases of nationalisation the reason was the sabotage of the owner, unwillingness to continue production or flight of the owners. But the greatest resistance that the owners offered was to workers' control. The workers' factory committees were claiming the right to inspect the accounts and books of the management and to see that no material left the factory without reason. As early as June 1917 that is before the Bolshevik November Revolution Kerensky had to tolerate this because the bourgeois sabotage and sale to foreigners had begun even then in order to coerce Government into surrender, and complete the restoration of the capitalist dictatorship. In order to prevent this a decree on workers' control was issued on November 14, 1917. Workers' control did not mean nationalisation or confiscation. By Articles 1 and 6 the Workers' Committee was given the right to be consulted on matters of sale and purchase, of fixing the output programme and even of determining the selling price. If the Committee's opinion was contrary to the wish of the owner the former prevailed, subject to an appeal to a superior economic organisation. The Committee had the right of inspection of account books without regard to commercial secrecy, which is nothing but a method of secret appropriation of profits. The Committee at the same time was charged with the maintenance

of workers' discipline and Article 7 reserved to the proprietor the sole executive right of giving orders as to the running of the concern and forbade the Factory Committee to countermand them. The effects of this decree were both good and bad. The good result was that the capitalist counter-revolutionary activities were severely watched and crippled on the industrial field. The bad result was that in many cases the workers went further than mere control and seized the factories. Before July 1918 only hundred businesses were nationalised by decrees of the Centre and 400 by local organisations on their own initiative. In some production was disorganised. Separatist, syndicalist and centripetal tendencies grew in many cases. But Socialism is not decentralisation and anarchic production by each productive unit as it likes. It requires strict control and planning, a well-regulated equilibrium between all branches of social production, which is not possible by syndicalist methods. Within the Bolshevik Party there had grown a Left Wing Communist section, which favoured immediate nationalisation of all small and big enterprises directly by the workers. This section was also the one most vehement in denouncing the Brest peace with Germany. This group issued a separate paper of its own and was led by Bukharin, Rykov and others. Lenin called for a cautious policy in nationalisation in as much as there was no cadre of trained workers or Communist technicians in sufficient number to organise production and distribution. Lenin vigorously slashed the Left Wingers as "slaves of phrases." He called for central control on production, and the occupation by the Germans of the Ukraine called for a speedy reorganisation. The Factory Committees were brought under the control of Trade Unions and these in matters of industrial management were subordinated to State control, at the Third Congress of the Trade Unions in April 1918. This was opposed severely on the ground that it would destroy the independence of Trade Unions and all those arguments used against the capitalist State encroaching on the rights of workers. But these objectors forgot the fundamental point that more work or sacrifices of other kinds, State control etc. were not now exercised by the enemy class for its interests but by the Workers' State that is by the workers over themselves voluntarily.

Another important measure of the most serious character was the repudiation of the Czarist debts by a decree in January 1918. The decree was issued when the Allied Powers refused to enter into peace without annexations and indemnities, and to stop helping the counter-revolution. Foreign capital invested in State, municipal and guaranteed loans in Russia was 5,400 million gold roubles.

The foreign bandits had helped the Czar against a revolution with several loans. The revolutionary proletariat already impoverished could hope to reconstruct its life only by repudiating this huge liability, the simple interest charges on which would have absorbed a large percentage of the output of their productive capacity.

The cancellation of debts, nationalisation of businesses sabotaged by the bourgeoisie and abolition of landlordism could not produce their results immediately. On the contrary the revolutionary disturbance of the normal productive process was bound to cause a decline for which the previous period was responsible to a greater degree than the Bolsheviks. Still during the first year of the Revolution the deficit in the budget was 66.6 per cent of the total expenditure while it was 81.7 per cent in 1917 and 74 per cent in 1915. "In the first 8 months of the revolution the rate of increase of paper money was slower than it had been in the period of the Provisional Government" (Dobb). Had the Imperialist interventionists not financed the counter-revolution and devastated the whole country even up to the gates of Moscow, this process of recovery would have gone on more speedily with only "the key positions", of industry in the hands of the State and perhaps those too would have been given for a time to private industry as concessions for some period. But the bourgeoisie hoped to restore its dictatorship over the masses by force and civil war.

60. *Decline and war Communism—breakdown of economy—cessation of civil war—currency—agricultural production and wages.*

Most of the economic measures that were introduced during the civil war are considered by the intellectuals to be the normal ideals and methods of the Communists. Hence when they were abandoned, they pointed to the introduction of other economic measures as failure of "Communism" and the necessity of restoring capitalism. As has already been shown, the majority of the Bolshevik Party did not want to nationalise any and every business. First it was limited to industries that were strategically to maintain the new political power and breakdown the sabotage. But when the civil war began this policy had to be abandoned and a system of war Communism came to be introduced. Under it every concern employing over five persons was nationalised. The decree of general nationalisation was issued in June 1918, that is when civil war had already begun. The number of enterprises administered by the State rapidly rose to 1,000 at the beginning of 1919 and passed 3,000 by January 1920. At the end of 1920 to the State

normally belonged 37,000 enterprises of which 18,000 had no mechanical power while over 5,000 businesses were with only one employee. Was this the normal economic need of socialising industry and building up large scale planned production? No. It was an outcome of civil war, when the petty bourgeoisie hoped to join the counter-revolution, sabotage economic life and production, and bring about the overthrow of the Workers' State. Nationalisation of enterprises with one employee or even a hundred for that matter was a war measure and not the method to bring about socialist society. That is why in our programme you can never find a mention except of "key positions."

In management, the civil war introduced "militarisation". The anarchic control of individual factory groups was abolished and all were rigidly submitted to the control of the Vesenha, (the Supreme Economic Council). Due to the necessities of civil war even the Trade Unions were deprived of their powers and made subject to the State. Without strict order and discipline the workers would not win against the powerful land owners and the bourgeoisie. These measures naturally gave birth to a huge bureaucratic apparatus distorting the nature of a socialist State. Bureaucracy is the direct antithesis of Socialism. Neither could the economic life be pushed forward with such bureaucracy. They did not know what warehouses and goods they had nor could they manage them. Business got stuck up in these "bottle necks" of bureaucracy. The demand of the civil war on the resources of the State in money and reliable fighting workers for the front dislocated production. The largest centres of fuel and corn supply were in the hands of the enemy. The result was starvation of workers in cities, fall in wages, and the State living on piles of paper money. In the winter of 1919 when Yudenich's guns could be heard on the Nevsky, men fell dead of exhaustion and hunger on the streets. The real wages of the workers in 1918 were 40 per cent of pre-war, in 1919 they were 30·8 per cent. Their productivity was reduced to one-third while the total output of industry on an average was 14·5 per cent. The currency circulation which stood at 30 milliard until March 1918 went up to 60·8 in January 1919. Inflation multiplied three times in 1919 and four times in 1920. The real value of all the circulating media fell from 2,200 million roubles in November 1917 to 152·9 millions in July 1918-1919 and to 29·1 in 1921. While the note issue rose by leaps and bounds, the real value of Government revenue from such issue fell from 163 million roubles to 20 million in 1920.

Taking advantage of this state of affairs, the Kulaks in the

peasantry began to speculate on food stuffs and the masses of peasantry refused to bring food stuffs on the exchange market, as the high prices of manufactured goods and paper roubles devaluing every moment gave them nothing real in exchange for their goods. But grain was an absolute necessity and unless the bulk of the peasantry sided with the revolution, the civil war could not be won. Therefore a ruthless grain monopoly and a compulsory grain levy had to be instituted in order to save the towns and the revolution. But who was to carry that out? Merely an armed force in the name of the revolution or a bureaucracy could not have succeeded. It was a question of class forces. The revolutionary class force in the countryside was the poor peasants and the land workers. The February and November Revolutions had helped the whole peasantry to seize lands and drive away the big land owners. But in that process the richer strata of the peasantry began to appropriate the whole land as against the poor peasants, who had no capital or implements to work with. Now in the middle of 1918 the class war spread to the peasantry, the land workers and poor peasants coming out against the richer and middle peasantry. Land workers and poor peasant committees (decree, June 1918) and Soviets were formed, who helped the revolution to carry out the corn levy and the fight against the civil war. The richer peasants therefore helped the Czarist generals for a time, until they found that the generals stood for the restoration of landowners. The middle peasantry did not take any active side and simply waited to see the result. The poor peasants siding militantly with the town workers helped, and beat the counter-revolution. However when civil war had come to an end, the method of corn levy had exhausted its possibilities. The sowings had gone down heavily, as the middle peasantry refused to grow things only to be exchanged for paper or a whole crop for a pair of boots. The rate of exchange between town and village lost all basis of incentive to production. In pre-war days a pood of rye was exchanged for about 8 archins of cheap cotton goods. This rate of exchange in the civil war had fallen very heavily as is shown below:—

Grain collected.	Textile goods	Ratio of one pood
(Mil. poods).	supplied.	grain to archins,
	(Mil. archins).	of textiles.
1919 108	325	1:3
1920 212	180	1:0.85

Now was this policy a normal socialist policy? No. It was the result of the civil war, it was the result of the millions of pounds spent by the foreign Imperialists to kill the Proletarian

Revolution. Both the workers and peasants suffered by the war, underproduction, famine and bureaucracy. But this was not the result of socialist policy, not the result of "an experiment in Communism" as bourgeois scholars term it. But an abnormality produced by the Imperialist attack. That is why when the civil war was won, war Communism, grain levy, militarisation of labour were at once scrapped out by the introduction of the new economic policy (NEP) in August 1921.

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61. Introduction of NEP—alliance with the middle peasantry—educative functions of the dictatorship.

Within the Communist Party there were two wings who opposed the NEP. One was the Left constituted of Trotsky and others, who wanted militarisation of Labour to continue, who viewed the peasantry as a backward mass, with whom a class war is inevitable, and therefore who are to be forced into Socialism. The Right Opposition wanted complete decentralisation of the State apparatus of industry, on the syndicalist lines. This group was led by Madam Kollantai and sympathised with by Bukharin. Lenin who led the majority attacked both these groups and especially the latter as it was a disintegrating factor in the centralisation policy of the proletarian State. The discussions on the question of NEP show very clearly how according to Lenin Socialism was going to be built up. It was not going to be an overnight process. He characterised war Communism as a "jump" and a "mistake," "in complete contradiction to all we wrote concerning the transition from capitalism to Socialism." For the capture of power he had advocated "Two Tactics" for two stages. (Exh: P 1207 (2)). In the first the feudal autocracy was to be overthrown by the workers and peasants as a whole and the bourgeoisie neutralised. In the second the workers allied with the poor peasants were to overthrow the bourgeoisie and neutralise the petty bourgeoisie of the middle peasants. After the proletarian revolution had been carried and the Civil War won the third tactic was "alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasants with the middle peasants." This alliance with the middle peasants who now formed the bulk of the peasant population was to be effected by the NEP; the NEP would reintroduce free trade, the free market. It also meant a policy of concessions to capitalists for developing industry. To that extent it meant a certain growth of capitalism. In the absence of large scale industry, socialised by the State, small scale production has to be reinvigorated. It will give birth to capitalism. "But

have we any occasion to fear this capitalism provided we keep the factories, the big enterprises, the means of transport and foreign commerce in our hands," asked Lenin and replied 'No'. To those impatient Leftists he answered, "during the Dictatorship of the Proletariat it will be necessary to re-educate millions of peasants and petty proprietors, hundreds of thousands of employees, officials and bourgeois intellectuals: to subject them all to the proletarian State and to proletarian guidance to rid them of bourgeois habits and traditions..... In like manner it will be necessary, in the course of a long struggle and under the aegis of the Dictatorship, to re-educate the proletarians themselves—for even the proletarians do not shake off their petty bourgeois prejudices in the twinkling of an eye, as if by miracle through the grace of virgin Mary, thanks to watchwards, resolutions or decrees; but only as the outcome of a tedious and difficult mass struggle against massed petty bourgeois influences." "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is a hard fought fight against the forces and traditions of the old society; a fight that is both bloody and unbloody, both violent and passive, both military and economic, both educational and administrative." The NEP was now a class struggle, as a Dictatorship of the Proletariat functioning under new forms, not the spectacular victories of glorious battles but slow constructive work. Thus those who think that Leninism is opportunism and a weathercock policy of compromises are great ignoramuses. The NEP was not a deviation—it was the natural outcome of the revolution in a backward agricultural country of small scale production, and every country of this type will more or less have to go through the NEP development. Those who say that we first massacre the peasants and then when in danger compromise with them are simply slandering us. (The address of the late Mr. Langford James). The Communists are the only Party that stands for the vast mass of the poor and middle peasantry, for this development of small scale industry to supplement the large scale socialist industry till the latter can supply the needs of the whole population, and till small scale agriculture by the voluntary will of the peasantry becomes mechanised and collectivised.

62. *Restoration of economy without foreign loans—scissors crisis—solution by lowering cost etc.—results as at the 14th Congress, May 1925 and 15th Congress, December 1927 of the C. P. S. U. regarding industry and agriculture.*

The period of 1921 to 1925 was a period of restoration and rehabilitation. After the introduction of the NEP, Soviet Russia

tried to secure Capital from the industrial countries. But they insisted on the recognition of the Czarist debts and restoration of nationalist property, abolition of the State monopoly of export and import trade. The Bolsheviks who were in need of Capital were prepared to yield on the question of debts in return for guarantees of long-term credits, but they were adamant on the question of nationalised large scale industries and monopoly of the export-import trade, through which the superior technique of the Imperialist countries batters down national economies of the backward countries. After the defeat of the Allied Imperialism in their attempt to forcibly overthrow the Soviet, a new orientation towards Russia took place and she was eagerly asked to come into the whirlpool of international imperialist conspiracies at Geneva and of the League of Nations. But many States refused recognition to the Soviet Government hoping that it would be overthrown soon. The first recognition came from Great Britain in 1924. Then other countries followed. When the results of the industrial revival were seen in 1922 and 1923, the attitude of Soviet Russia towards the need for foreign Capital changed. A larger confidence in the creative power of the workers was generated and a policy of complete self-reliance and less dependence on foreign Capital was followed.

We have already seen the depths to which production had sunk during the three years after the revolution. When the Soviet was freed from foreign attacks, the huge military forces were demobilised. The grain levy was abolished and the single agricultural tax took its place. Four thousand enterprises were released by the State and leased out. They were all small scale businesses employing not more than 18 workers each. The State industries were reorganised under industrial Trusts, their coordinated control for general policy lying in the hands of the Supreme Economic Council but for all other purposes acting as separate commercial concerns. A new gold rouble was issued as currency. The Budget was cut down and made dependent on real revenue. The result was that gross industrial production which was 18 per cent of pre-war level in 1920 rose to 27 per cent in 1921 and 35 per cent in 1922. In 1923, the Soviet was faced with a serious "scissors" crisis, the industrial prices rising far above the agricultural prices. In September 1923, on a pre-war ratio of 100 the industrial prices had risen to 195 and agricultural prices had fallen to 60. Soviet Russia was again faced with as much peasant discontent as in the days of compulsory grain requisition. This time the State had an organised control over the major part of industry. Party discussions on the causes and remedies of the crisis were opened, the problem

thrashed out and drastic remedies applied. The most drastic remedy was in the field of State industry. A liberal supply of currency and credit to the State industry had made the Trusts careless of commercial values, they had instituted monopoly prices, and neglected to secure a rapid turnover of capital through sales. The indiscriminate supply of credit was cut down. The divergence between wholesale and retail prices, the difference being pocketed by the NEP man was fought through the cooperatives. Costs of production were cut down by retrenchment drive against bureaucracy. Such and other measures closed the scissors within six months. The political report of the C. C. of the C. P. S. U. to the 14th Congress in May 1925 shows the rate of growth of restoration thus:—Agriculture. In the economic years of 1924-25 the gross production of 9 milliard roubles amounted to 71 per cent of pre-war production of 1913, of 12 milliard roubles. Next year it was expected to rise up to 88 per cent. Industry—gross production in 1924-1925 of all industry i. e. State, concessions and private was 5 milliards, i. e. 71 per cent of the pre-war 7 milliards. In this productive activity, was capitalist development gaining the upper hand or the socialised sector? This was the most crucial question since on the answer to this depended the answer to the question—will capitalism return or will the Soviet march towards Socialism? The share of State and cooperative industries in production in 1923-24 was 76 per cent of the total industrial production; in 1924-25 it was 79.3 per cent. The property concentrated in the hands of the workers' State was 11.7 milliards in Capital funds and 7.5 milliards in private enterprise, chiefly in the form of peasant enterprises. The central administered State industry and the Metal Trust made a profit of 142 million chervonetz roubles in 1923-24. In 1925, it rose to 350 millions of which 173 millions were handed over to the State treasury. Similarly in the matter of the internal trade. The supply of raw materials and grains, the share of the State organs dominated the share of private capitalist enterprise. Thus when in Western capitalist countries they were restoring industry enriching capitalism and accumulating social wealth in the hands of a parasitic class, in Soviet Russia the gains were being concentrated in the hands of the workers' State to form the foundations of further socialist expansion. When the workers in the West were being attacked in the matter of wages and hours of work, in Russia they were slowly rising to above the pre-War level. The average monthly wage of the workers in Chervonetz roubles was 35 per head in April 1924 i.e. 62 per cent of the pre-war; in September 1925 it was 50 roubles or 95 per cent. The total sum paid in wages was rising. In 1923-24 it was 808 millions, in 1924-25 1300 millions.

in 1925-26 1700 millions. The assistance to the poor peasants amounted to 100 millions.

This state of affairs changed even more hopefully by the time of the 15th Congress of the C. P. S. U. in December 1927. The gross output of the whole of agriculture (1926-27) had risen to 12370 millions of pre-war roubles, i. e. 160.6 per cent of the pre-war level. In industry it was 8641 million roubles, i. e. 102.5 per cent.

We have already seen (in para 31) that the capitalist countries involved in war also regained their pre-war production and even surpassed it. But at the same time the workers' and peasants' share in the increased national income was not increasing. The capitalist recovery was being accomplished there by means of the growth of unemployment, rationalisation, increase in hours of work, strikes and risings, wholesale wage-cuts and increased taxation. In Soviet Russia the growth was accompanied by a well regulated distribution of the national income in favour of the workers and poor peasants. The capitalist class was slowly losing its share even in the small scale trade and industry. In the rural areas the rich peasants living on the rents of land workers and poor peasants had strengthened a bit, but the vast strata of middle peasantry was consolidating its position in a far greater degree without which there could not have been the increase in the production figures seen above.

63. Construction problems—whence to bring Capital—pre-revolutionary Russia built on foreign Capital—socialist rationalisation—Party Congress discussions to increase industrialisation—collectivisation of agriculture—pre-mature scheme of the opposition—two deviations and the real equilibrium between town and country.

But a restoration was easier because it only meant putting into order what was already there. The Soviet was now confronted with the problem of reconstruction, new investments and further production. Where was Capital for this to come from? Pre-revolutionary capitalist Russia had been built by foreign Capitalism. The total foreign Capital invested in Russian industry (excluding State loans etc.) before the war was 2,200 million gold roubles of which 32 per cent was French and 22 per cent British. 90 per cent of the Capital in metallurgy and 87 per cent in oil was foreign. A considerable proportion of the cotton mills were staffed by English managers and foremen as we find in

India. In the Engineering and other works English and German technicians predominated. When the revolution confiscated all this capital on the profits of which foreign imperialism fattened, the foreign Powers refused to give capital to the U. S. S. R. for reconstruction. The foreign intellectuals, technicians and managers, hating to see the workers beneath them in political power working with a new spirit of freedom, sabotaged and conspired to destroy industry. Under such conditions it was natural that various groups should arise in the Communist Party advocating different methods of reconstruction. Uptil now the main basis was to allow unrestricted growth to middle and poor peasants and some incidental growth of the Kulaks. A section got alarmed at the growth of Kulaks and advocated a campaign of extermination. They hoped to build the basis of industrial capital on the expropriations of the Kulak class and push forth heavy industrialisation. If this policy had been followed in 1925 it would have meant kindling an immediate class war in villages on a large scale and a campaign of collectivisation. But for this there must be a basis of supplying goods and machinery to the villages, which was not there. It would have meant a drop in food supplies, crisis in the towns and retarding industrialisation. So this policy was rejected. The Fourteenth Congress decided on industrialisation by a campaign of socialist rationalisation, drastic economy without lowering working-class standards. Grain reserves were built up for the expanding industry. Having followed this policy for two years, a policy which on the political field meant a fight against Trotskyism, the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1927 December chalked the programme of making a drive for collectivisation of agriculture. This meant bringing the middle peasants to form collectives of their farms, introduce mechanised production, increase production and consequently their surplus return. On the industrial field the famous Five Year Plan was adopted, the problem of Capital being solved not by making concessions to foreign capital but by socialised accumulation of the State industry, by the voluntary raising of productivity by the working-class, by continuous working weeks, by shock battalions of work etc. When the Five Year Plan had sufficiently built up the technical basis for supplying the villages with tractors and tools and when the grain problem was well in hand, the Sixteenth Party Congress decided on the general socialist offensive along the whole line, for the final suppression of Kulak economy for converting petty agricultural economy into a predominantly socialist and collectivised economy. The real socialist revolution was thus begun. Anybody who knows a bit of economics can easily understand why the alternate offensives have to be well timed, once pushing on

industrialisation and once pushing on the agricultural front. Soviet economy is not anarchic economy but planned in so far as its conscious direction is not vitiated by a private small scale production scattered in the 22 million small farms. It cannot leave the economic forces to their own working. If it were to push up industrialisation and neglect agriculture, the result would be that the peasants' capacity to produce not having risen, there would be an industrial crisis as under capitalism. But to increase the peasants capacity to buy means to increase productivity by mechanisation. Mechanisation cannot take place on isolated small farms. They must therefore be collectivised and then mechanised. Under Capitalism, this process takes the form of ruination of the small and middle peasantry, concentration of farms in large capitalist estates and then their mechanisation. But as capitalism in decline cannot absorb the pauperised peasant in industry, he is thrown on the unemployed market. Thus under Capitalism the growth either way leads to crisis and ultimately to decline. Under the Socialist State, the conscious direction of economic forces eliminates this conflict. But there is one type of conflict that remains in the Soviet. That is the class struggle. Collectivisation is met with resistance by the Kulaks, who are capitalist elements. They incite the deep-rooted property instinct of the middle peasants. But it does not work long. The middle peasants finding the gains of productivity obtained in collectivisation soon join in by millions. Their higher productivity helps the market for industrial goods in the rural districts and for their own in the towns. Thus the two forces create an equilibrium.

Why was it said that the real Socialist Revolution began in 1928? Because it was then that the plan was laid in Soviet economy to make the ratio of socialist production to small scale petty commodity production larger. The Five Year Plan put on the agenda to transform agricultural Russia into an industrial country. Secondly, agriculture itself was going to be brought into collectivisation and socialist construction. Once the output of socialist production becomes or has begun to be dominant both in industry and agriculture the real Socialist Revolution has begun: such a beginning was made in 1928.

When the bourgeois world heard of the Five Year Plan, it first laughed at the idea, at the immense rates of development planned therein. When under the drive of collectivisation the Kulak elements began to resist the measure, the capitalist world predicted the downfall of the Soviet. The usual Riga stories of revolts were broadcasted. After two years of the Plan this attitude

changed and capitalism in every country has accepted the fact that the Five Year Plan is going to succeed and if it succeeds, it will be a menace to world capitalism.

64. *Indices of growth—rates of development high but not so the level of development—comparisons—areas under Soviet and collective farms—Distribution of National Income—pages—hours—number of workers.*

The relationship between industry and agriculture from the point of view of the relative importance of industry in the gross output of the whole of national income began to change thus:—

	Share of Industry	Of Agriculture.
Pre-war	42.1 %	57.9 %
1927-28	45.2 "	54.8 "
1928-29	48.7 "	51.3 "
1929-30	53 "	47 "

What is however of greater importance is the relative shares of the socialised sector and private capitalist sector.

Capital investments in industry.

	Socialised.	Capitalist.
1926-27	1270 Ml.Rbs.	63
1927-28	1640 "	64
1928-29	2046 "	56
1929-30	4275 "	51

Capitalism was completely beaten especially in large scale industry, its share in 1929-30 being 0.7 per cent and that of the socialist sector being 99.3 per cent. The rate of development of State industry planned by the Supreme Economic Council grew in 1929-30 to 209.8 per cent on 1926-27. The rate of development however must not be confused with the level of development. Such a rate of growth is not shown by any capitalist country in the world. But Soviet Russia has not yet caught up with the highly industrialised countries. For example her electrical power output in 1929 was 64-65 million kilowatt hours while in U.S.A. it was 126000 million, in Canada 17628 million, in Germany 33000 million. Similarly in pig iron the output was 5.5 million tons while in U.S.A. it was 42.3 million, Germany 13.4 and Britain 7.7.

The most remarkable growth was in increase of area under Soviet and collective farms. In this the Five Year Plan is being completed in two years. A general comparative statement of the

Sixteenth Party Congress showed this. The Soviet farms organised under the grain Trust "will have by the end of the Five Year Plan as much area under grain as the whole of the Argentine today. (1930)," secondly all the Soviet farms taken together will have one million hectares more under grain than the whole of Canada has today. The results in collective farming showed that in three years the area sown in the collective farms increased forty times. Secondly their area shown today is as large as France and Italy put together.

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Such a growth in the capitalist system leads to concentration of wealth in the hands of a parasitic class. In the U. S. S. R. it leads to improvement in the workers' standards. What sections of the population have how much share in the national income in the workers' State? The share of the workers and toiling peasantry who do not exploit the Labour of others represented in 1927-28 75.2 per cent of the total national income, in 1928-29 76.5 per cent, in 1929-30 77.1 per cent. The share of the State sector which is generally the income of working class and peasantry constituted 8.4 per cent in 1927-28, 10 per cent in 1928-29 and 15.2 per cent in 1929-30. The share of the rich peasants and town capitalists decreased to 1.8 per cent in 1929-30. This shows that while in the most prosperous capitalist countries the share of the exploiting classes is over 50 per cent, in the Soviet Union it is no more than 2 per cent. That is why in the Soviet Union increased production does not lead to a crisis of over-production as it is doing in other parts of the world today.

As regards hours of work, in the capitalist countries, they are increasing while in the Soviet Union they are decreasing. In 1929-30 960,000 workers or 40 per cent of the total industrial wage-earners were on seven-hour-day. Today the working day is shorter by 2.18 hours than the pre-revolutionary working day and will be 3.21 hours shorter by the end of the Five Year Plan. The working week in Russia compares thus with other countries:—

U. S. S. R.	40.2	Hours.
England	47.1	"
U. S. A.	49.6	"
Germany	47 to 52	"
India	60 to 72	"

Side by side with this the real wages increased to 167 per cent of the pre-war level. In the most prosperous country of capitalism—the U. S. A., the number of employed workers has

declined absolutely while production has increased. In England, the number of workers has been stationary since 1890. In Soviet Russia it rose from 10.99 millions in 1926-27 to 13.12 millions in 1929-30.

65. *Preparing for war—anti-Soviet Propaganda—Indian bourgeoisie joins in—Paris International Chamber of Commerce on the causes of the world crisis—the Indian professors repeat them—Is Soviet dumping one of them—Litvinoff's reply.*

This tremendous orderly Socialist growth in Soviet Russia acts like a thorn in the sides of the declining world capitalism. Having failed once in overthrowing the workers' State by armed intervention ten years ago, Imperialism is again rallying its forces of war against the Soviet Union. Soviet ambassadors and officials have been murdered in the capitalist countries; their shipments of gold were seized (by France); their merchant fleet which was carried away in the Civil War by the bandit Wrangel with the help of the British and French has not been returned; the Chinese counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie seized the Soviet's section of the Far Eastern railway; Soviet embassies are raided on the pretext of hunting for "lost State documents" by the Imperialists. All this with the hope of preparing the world for war against the Soviet Union. But how are we in India concerned with this? Why should we, workers and peasants of India, celebrate the anniversaries of the Russian Revolution and Lenin days? Why should we congratulate the U. S. S. R. on the success of the Five Year Plan? In the first place because success of the Soviet Union means success of the world's working-class movement. Secondly because, the success of the Plan shows the inevitable success of Socialism, of the revolutionary initiative and creative powers of the workers and the failure of the capitalist system. Thirdly because, it shows how the tremendous increase of productive forces under Socialism alone is now capable of increasing the prosperity of the working class and peasants, and fourthly because it shows that all this can only be done by a successful proletarian revolution. In India the Five Year Plan is being actively used by the British bourgeoisie to enlist the Indian bourgeoisie in a fight against the Soviet Union. So long, since the Russian Revolution, only an ideological anti-Bolshevik campaign was being waged. When strikes occurred anywhere the Communists and the Comintern were sought out for abuse and attack. But actually, the Indian bourgeoisie had

not joined hands in an economic fight against the Soviet Union and the Five Year Plan. When the world slump in industry and agriculture hit all the capitalist nations but could not hit the Soviet Union, the shrieks of capitalist hatred against Socialist economy became more universal and desperate. In this the Indian bourgeoisie joined, though in fact it had nothing to fear from the Five Year Plan and its success. The world bourgeoisie opened its new attack against the Soviet Union, in order to divert the attention of their workers and peasants from seeking the cause of the world slump in capitalism, and attributing it to Soviet competition. The International proletariat was definitely pro-Soviet. Such a psychology is harmful to the war aims of capitalism. Hence in 1930 the world bourgeois press was flooded with stories about slave conditions of labour in Russia, of political prisoners rotting in lumber camps, of priests being persecuted and intellectuals being shot. The International Chamber of Commerce meeting in Paris considered the world crisis and found 12 causes of the crisis amongst which no. 10 was "the forcing on the world markets of large quantities of grain, raw materials and semi-finished products by Soviet Russia at prices less than the normal cost of production." In this meeting the Indian bourgeoisie had its representative in Mr. Devid Erulkar. When the whole International bourgeoisie was against the Soviet, the Indian representative did not care to see whether his class in India had any reason to subscribe to the above proposition of the Chamber. But the Indian bourgeoisie has never been known to have shown an ounce of understanding even of its own bourgeois Economics and the world forces. In the most advanced bourgeois countries the bourgeois intelligentsia, the professors and experts, help their bourgeoisie in understanding its class interests more intelligently by means of painstaking scientific productions. But in India, the bourgeois intelligentsia has failed even to explain to its class its real class interests, because its master, the Indian bourgeoisie, is incapable of independent class action against Imperialism. The result is that we find a professor of the department of Economic and Sociology of the Lucknow University. Mr. R. B. Gupta, M.A.P.H.D., repeating parrot-like that Soviet dumping is one of the causes of the world and Indian crisis. Not only that but he betrays the interests of his class by saying that "the boycott of foreign goods has intensified the depression in trade" while in fact the boycott is the defence of the weak national bourgeoisie in India against the cheap commodity production of the European and American bourgeoisie. We find another professor, Mr. G. D. Karwal in his article in the "Leader," December 1930 repeating the same tune and approvingly quoting

one writer that "the unloading of Russian products is taking place in many countries and with the Russian Government controlling production and wage scales it is possible for the Communistic regime to underbid the workmen of other countries". In this the writer cleverly misrepresents the fact or does not understand that if there is to be underbidding it is with the bourgeoisie of the other countries and not the workmen. We next find a representative of the land owners in the Council of State, Rai Bahadur Lala Ramsaran Dass putting the following question: —

"Will Government state whether its attention has been drawn to the contents of the book, "the Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union" by G.T. Grinko, published by Messrs. Martin Lawrence and Company Ltd. London and what steps, if any, Government contemplates to safe-guard the interests of those engaged in agriculture in India against the effects of the impending heavy dumping of wheat, oilseeds, cotton and other produce by Russia on the Indian market?" (The "Capital", May 7, 1931). The Hon'ble member engaged in "agriculturing" millions of profits from his tenants was naturally frightened by the tremendous increase in the productivity of Soviet agriculture and began to gasp for fear that all that produce would come here to kill his trade. He still retained some sobriety in that, he did not, like our learned professor, talk of *actual* dumping but of *impending* dumping. However, the Rai Bahadur forgot to read at the same time that all the increase in productivity under the Soviets is not skimmed off the producer but is left to him in increasing proportion. The Government's reply given by Hon'ble Mr. J.A. Woodhead said, "Government have not yet seen the publication referred to but have taken steps to obtain a copy. (It seems they did it free of cost by at once confiscating a few copies under the Sea Customs Act—an excellent practice in days of deficit Budgets). They have as yet no evidence of dumping on the part of Russia." If the learned professors had consulted this land-owner in the Council of State who had the copy of the Five Year Plan or spent a few shillings over the Soviet Union Year Book published by George Allen and Unwin, they would have found that they were purely humbugging the Indian bourgeoisie, the workers and peasants by saying that Russian exports of either raw materials or industrial goods were the cause of trade crisis. These professors quote the high production figures of world productive forces. But they did not care to see what share of the export trade Russia had. Russia was an exporter of goods in 1913 also. In 1928 she did not export even 60 per cent of her pre-war exports. Her export trade in 1913 was 1,520

million roubles. In 1928-29, it was 877.6 millions. She has left to the rapacious capitalists 40 per cent of her former field, at a time when the total volume of world export trade has not fallen but risen. Moreover if these Indian intellectuals had dived deeper they would have found that their country, their bourgeoisie had gained rather than lost from Soviet Russia. India's exports to Soviet Russia in 1928-29 were 24,362,000 roubles while imports from the U.S.S.R. were only 5,775,000 roubles. What were these imports? Only oil which India or any section of the Indian bourgeoisie does not produce (page 304 of the Soviet Union Year Book, 1930, Edition.) Though latest figures on this point were not available and though it is a fact that the howling about Soviet dumping gathered strength in this and the last year particularly, the proceedings of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce sufficiently show that the bogey of dumping has not a serious foundation. "The Capital" of 7th May 1931 quotes the proceedings of the Committee of the Chamber in which we find it stated, "The attention of the committee was drawn recently to the heavy increases in the imports of goods of Russian origin into India particularly in the case of sugar, timber (aspen logs) soda-ash and other chemicals—The Chamber wrote to Government on the matter saying, 'While the Committee did not suggest that the existing situation was such as to cause alarm it appeared to require watching!'" It should first be noted that in the above nowhere does the Chamber mention wheat, cotton etc: which the Rai Bahadur mentioned in his question. The Chamber mentions sugar and aspen logs, used for matches, and chemicals. The Chamber is not interested in minimising but rather exaggerating the problem of Russian imports as its constituents are the largest importers from Britain and other countries. Now as regards sugar and chemicals we are completely at the mercy of the International sugar combines, who, by international cartel agreements, fix monopoly prices for export. Last year there were several conferences to fix the export quota of each country at agreed prices. But the contradictions of capitalism break such attempts and the charge of dumping is now levelled not at Russia but at the Java Trust, a British concern. The Trade correspondent of the "Times of India," an intensely anti-Soviet paper writes, "The Java Trust action in dumping the old crop sugar at low rates is being criticised in some quarters as the Trust was expected to maintain the rate at F.I. 8-25. It is feared that this may create an uneasy feeling among the other participants of the Chadbourne Plan. Germany and other central European countries with Bank rates of 12 to 15 percent are already finding it very difficult to carry the segregated stocks." (29th August, 1931.)

During the week the correspondent wrote this the Java Trust sold all their old crop of whites of about 270,000 tons and of browns of about 150,000 tons to Export Houses. "The latter in their turn were offering these purchases on the Indian markets." Does all this sound like Russian dumping? These Leviathan Trusts in sugar have such a hold that while prices of all other commodities crashed by nearly 50 per cent, sugar prices were higher than in 1930.

August 24th, 1931, at Karachi.

	1931.	1930.	1929. (September)
	Rs.-as.-p.	Rs. - as. - p.	Rs. - as. - p.
Wheat white ready.	17-0-0	26 - 8 - 0	40 - 4 - 0
Sugar Java ready.	12-9-0	11 - 15 - 6	12 - 10 - 0
Cotton New York. (October).	6'87 C	11'20 C	18'56 C

From this it can be seen how strong the Sugar Trusts are and how little there is of Soviet dumping. In chemicals, the German cartels and the British combine of the Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. of Lord Melchett with a capitalisation of 62 million pounds monopolise the whole supply for India. The charge of Russian dumping when thus reduced to figures becomes a myth, a bogey to frighten the gullible: The counter-revolutionary Indian bourgeoisie is not daring to take strong capitalist class action against Australia and wants to steal into a tariff barrier under the excuse of combatting Russian wheat imports. But it dares not offend or abuse the big sections of the Imperialist bourgeoisie. The following comparisons of exportable surplus of wheat show how Russia which had been the granary of Europe is now very low in wheat exports.

Estimated exportable surplus during season, 1st August 1930 to 31st July 1931:—

Country.	Million Bushels.
U. S. A.	240
Canada	352
Argentina	200
Australia	152
Russia	120
Balkans and Hungary	48
India	24

If we look at the actual imports by India, the Indian Trade Journal, a Government publication, for August 13, states that during the three months April to June 1931, the imports of wheat in India were 80,562 tons out of which 79,150 tons, that is almost the entire quantity, came from Australia. Now if you shout to the peasant the other way round and say to him that his wheat is not sold on the foreign markets because Russia competes with him in the foreign markets, the peasant can easily see, that exports of Indian wheat were greater in 1931 than in the previous two years.

Wheat Exports from India.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
1928-29.	114,700.
1929-30.	13,000.
1930-31.	196,500.

Thus even here the Russia of workers and peasants is in no way a direct or indirect cause of the worsening of Indian exports or imports. India is an exporter of agricultural goods to the world market. What is the Russian character of competition in this with India? None. Not only from her total volume over the pre-war level she has left 40 per cent of her "claims," but her ratio of agricultural goods has come down from 70 per cent, in 1913 to 38.9 per cent in 1928-29. In view of this the Indian representative, while consenting to Clause 10 of the International Chamber, was betraying his bourgeoisie and doing the work of the Imperialisms of France, U. S. A. and Britain, who chafed at the success of the Five Year Plan because the efforts of the Russian working-class and peasantry, which are now becoming the socialist accumulation of their own industry, would have been available as the profits of the Imperialist bourgeoisie, if Russia had been the same bourgeois country as theirs. The lie of bourgeois propaganda was exposed by M. Litvinoff, the Soviet delegate at the Commission of Inquiry for the European Union at Geneva. He asked whether it was not a fact that Soviet exports rather mitigated the world's crisis? Did the fact that the Soviet Union was absorbing from 50 to 75 per cent in the total export of certain branches of machine industry in Germany, Austria, England and Poland intensify or mitigate the crisis? In 1930 53.5 per cent of the total tractor exports of the U.S.A. went to the Soviet Union and in the same year the Soviet Union received 12 per cent of the textile machinery export of Great Britain, and from Germany 25 per cent of the total export of agricultural machinery. It was unnecessary to point out that once the importance of Soviet

imports was admitted, it was impossible to object to Soviet exports, which must be made to balance the imports. There was a loud cry against Soviet wheat, whose export was negligible. On the other hand the exports of Canadian wheat increased from 2,350,000 tons in 1913 to 10,900,000 tons in 1928 and there had been an increase of 810 percent in the Argentine butter exports. Why had these increases evoked no protest? The Soviet was not 'dumping' her products though in some cases her prices are certainly lower than world capitalist prices. The reason was that export trade is a monopoly of the Proletarian State. "The normal cost of production" under capitalism includes a heavy toll of rent and interest in agriculture of profits of the bourgeoisie, of exchange speculation, and the middle men. The elimination of these under the socialist form of production and exchange was bound to lower the prices. But it cannot be said to be "dumping" which is the policy of high prices on home markets and cut prices for exports made possible by high protectionist duties, and this was done by the capitalist countries. For example in Czecho-Slovakia the price of sugar on the home market was 555 Kroners for 100 Kilogrammes and the export price was 80. In Germany the price was 48 marks at home and 11 marks for exports. The cost of production, so far as wage charges, whether in reduced hours and other amenities or in actual wages, are concerned, is higher in Russia than in India. The Indian bourgeoisie has most shamelessly allowed the Burma Shell group to rule the Indian market by a monopoly price above world parity, which fact was exposed by the Tariff Board on oil at the time of the oil rate war in 1928. It was the Soviet oil at that time that saved the Indian workers, peasants and other poor consumers, crores of rupees, until the two Imperialist groups of Britain and America came to a compromise and reimposed their monopoly prices on their Indian consumers.

66. *India's trade with the Soviet—adverse balance of Britain—favourable balance of U. S. A.—India's gain of three crores suppressed in official statistics—Government Report and the Soviet Union Year Book—Indian bourgeoisie does not see its own interest—the petty bourgeois attitude—want of technicians in the U.S.S.R.—migration from U. S. A.—the fate of inventors under Capitalism and under the Soviet—wages of technicians—beauty under Socialism and Rama Nand Babu.*

When Indian exports are not competed with by the Soviet, when her exports to Russia are greater than her imports, when

economically and politically even the Indian bourgeoisie, let alone the workers and peasants, can benefit from a pro-Soviet policy, why do the Indians bourgeoisie and its intellectual agents pick up the anti-Soviet cries? In the first place because the Indian bourgeoisie is more afraid of the Indian workers and peasants pro-Soviet inclinations than of the British Imperialist suppression of its industry. And secondly because it is not strong enough and willing enough to go against the British capitalist dictation. The British policy of anti-Soviet propaganda is greatly in contradiction to her political relations with Soviet Russia. Britain recognised Soviet Russia earlier than any other country. America has not done so upto now. Yet in trade what do we find? British imports of Russia for the period of 1920-29 were 165,108,000 pounds while exports were 113,017,000. Adding to this invisible exports in the form of freight, insurance etc. of 27 millions, the Soviet Union had a favourable balance of 23 million pounds. In contrast to this the trade with U. S. A. with whom there are no political relations or any treaty as with England, the American imports from Russia for the six years, 1923-29 were 120 million dollars while her exports to Russia were 450 million dollars. Herein lies the reason why Soviet propaganda about dumping is led by Britain. The British bourgeoisie wants to develop trade with Russia but cannot. Her inability she disguises as a moral unwillingness to trade with the Soviet. The British bourgeoisie is unable to finance long term credits like the U. S. A. and sell as cheap as Germany and U. S. A. the machinery tools etc. required by the Soviet. In order to spite herself she can do nothing but shriek against the Soviet, and the Indian bourgeoisie is foolish enough to be cheated in this. Has the Indian bourgeoisie demanded direct trade relations with Soviet Russia, during the last nine years, that Great Britain has been trading with the "abominable" Bolsheviks? The Statistical Abstract of British India published by the Government of India, shows that the Indian exports (1928 edition page 487) to Russia to have been 49,51,000 rupees in 1927 and imports (page 475) of 48,52,000 rupees. In the first place we find in this a balance of only 99,000 rupees in favour of India. But the figures given by the Soviet Union Year Book show a balance of Rs. 3,02,73,015 (This is worked out as follows:- Exports to Russia in 1927 roubles 25,633,000, and imports from Russia roubles 4,177,000- Balance in favour of India roubles 21,456,000. Converted into pounds at the exchange rate of 9.45 roubles and then in rupees at 18 pence to the rupee). Where has the huge difference of over three crores disappeared? Why is that trade figure suppressed? Obviously

to cheat the Indian bourgeoisie and the people, in order to make them believe that a direct trade with Russia for the negligible sum of 50 lakhs giving the poor favourable balance of one lakh is not worth the trouble. The Indian bourgeoisie and its intellectual agents have proved dull enough to shut their eyes and not push the question ahead even in their own interest. The Indian bourgeoisie has failed to see that British capitalists re-export to Russia tons of commodities bought in the cheap Indian market and needed by Russia. Russia makes huge purchases of cotton, hides and tea all over the world and from Great Britain. Every one knows that Great Britain does not produce any of these three. How does it then sell them to Soviet Russia? Obviously by buying them from the Indian and Chinese markets. 60 per cent of British sales to Russia are of goods not produced in Great Britain and of this 60 per cent, half comes from the colonies and dominions. As regards dominions like Canada and Australia the Soviet makes purchases directly from them. Even Egypt sells her cotton directly to them. Then who remains of importance except India? A large volume of tea, cotton, jute and hides is re-exported by Britain to Russia at high prices after purchasing from India at low prices and the gain is skimmed off the Indian producers to make up for the adverse balance of British trade with Russia. In 1925 the British bourgeoisie purchased at preferential rates 5 million pounds of hides and skins from India and sold 2,892,000 pounds worth to the Soviet. Has the Indian bourgeoisie ever claimed trade facilities with Russia? The smallest stripling of a nation keeps an independent consulate in India. Italian textiles compete directly here in Indian markets with Indian textiles. The Indian bourgeoisie with its reactionary outlook kindles communal feeling on a Tripoli issue to incite a boycott of Italian textile goods. The Indian Nationalist papers however eagerly broadcasted the communiques of the Italian Consul denying the Tripoli massacres. But they suppressed Litvinoff's exposure of the Imperialist lies about dumping; they tolerate false statistics, sell their produce to British agents and do not ask for direct relations with Russia. Why? Because the Indian bourgeoisie is counter-revolutionary and weak.

What does the petty bourgeoisie, the middle class that every day sentimentally weeps for India's progress, for employment and prospects think of the Five Year Plan? Its attitude is of a type that has no class line of its own, because it is not a class at all. The petty bourgeois has ambitions, and dreams of becoming a bourgeois some day, of becoming "independent" as he flauntingly likes to put it. But in reality he never rises above the poverty

line and is constantly tumbled into the proletarian class economically. Naturally he hates the working-class and is ideologically the slave of the bourgeoisie. You can go in any hive of these men and even when they are starving unemployed or hawking two annas patriot-pictures on the streets, they will ask you "how can the workers create art and literature, how can they do the work of intellectuals? Is not art killed in Russia? Have they not driven away the technicians, professors and intellectuals? What incentive is there for creating art, for inventions etc. if you can not make money and be rich?" These questions have been repeated in every age by every class whose class rule has been threatened by the oppressed class. The capitalist press has frightened the intelligentsia of every country by the concocted massacres of professors and technicians and their flight from Russia. There is no doubt that any counter-revolutionary attempts are punished. The bourgeois state having been smashed its highly paid bureaucracy has been broken up. So the bourgeois intellectuals cannot expect any longer to get fabulous salaries that are allowed even by the cheapest bourgeois Government in the world. There can be no question of the State supporting writers, scribes and poets who write mere nonsense about the pale moon and the pale damsels. The proletariat has no place for pale idling damsels and therefore no need for such poetry. But there are poets, writers, and novelists rising from the proletariat, creating proletarian culture, and they have not to spend their lives sleeping under hedges, catching tuberculosis and seeing bourgeois society awakening to the existence of the great artist just when the great artist is sinking into the grave, starved and broken.

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Let the bourgeois intelligentsia look up the life sketches of the artists of every country and they will find the edifice of bourgeois art built on the bones and tears of starved genius. Shakespeare died in a poor man's tavern. Chatterton was starved to death. Rembrandt, whose works now sell for thousands of guineas at Christie's in London, had to be declared a bankrupt. Kepler's life was a continual struggle with poverty and debt. Success in the lifetime of the artist is a rarity. Yet bourgeois art has not ceased being created. So it is with inventions, the authors of which have died in poverty while the financiers have made millions from them. The modern scientists and inventors are the contracted servants of mighty syndicates who have bought their production in advance. There are hundreds of processes, the inventors of which are kept in obscurity but which yields millions to the Trusts. To give one

or two examples. Charles Tellier, who invented a boat in which ammonia was used as a motive power, was sent to a debtor's prison and his inventions stolen. On his release he invented the system of freezing food and thus preserving it. This invention was a revolutionary one. Food products could be transported over vast distances and the shortage of one kind of food of one place could be repaired by imports from another. What happened to the inventor? While the cold storage syndicates made millions, the law courts refused to acknowledge Tellier's rights over the patent and he died of starvation in 1913. Demsy, a chemical genius, invented dyeing formulas while working in a factory. His employers came to know of this. They dismissed him suddenly one day, raided his rooms on some pretext and seized the notebooks in which the formulas were noted. The law courts decided in favour of the rich company and against the poor genius. The invention of agricultural machinery was stolen by the house of Mackormicks, who have become millionaires on it and also the benefactors of many a nationalist newspaper in India through their contributions of large advertisements (e. g. the Mackormick ploughs). The inventor of the ginning machine, which created a revolution in cotton industry, was robbed of his patent rights; the financiers denied that he had any rights at all. He, Eli Whitney, died in poverty. The linotype machines, which have revolutionised the newspaper plants have the same history. While their inventor, Mergenthaler, was dying in poverty, a set of millionaires fattened on it. One of them, by name Whitelaw Reid, while an ambassador at London, spent some of his millions on keeping such a luxurious garden at his palace, that Queen Victoria became its frequent visitor. Dive at the root of every great creation in bourgeois society and you will find its wealth built on the poverty of its real worker. Still inventions have not ceased to be created. Soviet Russia, Socialist society has no need to suppress the genius because it has no millionaires ready to rob the inventor for their private gains. Soviet Russia feeds, maintains and honours its artists and inventors, and gives them whatever facilities they want. They are not required to pass through a school of tuberculosis, the streets and the insults of an arrogant publisher or an employer. The proletarian State welcomes them on the slightest request.

Even taking the question of the ordinary technicians and experts they are given preferential treatment and emoluments. Socialist society does not equalise wages at once. This point was made clear by Lenin long before the Bolsheviki captured the State. Inequality of wages between the skilled and unskilled and of other

types of workers has prevailed all along and therefore the statements of the bourgeoisie that inequality of wages is now introduced by Stalin are false. Since 1921 September there have been 17 categories of wages. Before 1921 the difference between the lowest and highest was 1 to 9. It was widened in 1921 to 1 to 5. Categories 1 to 2 covered workers and 10 to 17 covered technical and administrative personal. The ratio 1 to 3 existed between 1st and 9th categories and 3 to 5 between 9 to 17. What has been done from time to time was still further widened by these ratios in order to attract experts and technicians, as the Five Year Plan requires a large number of these. It must not however be understood that inequality will never be abolished. It is only a temporary measure of the transition stage. The "changed outlook" towards technicians, as it is called, was outlined by Lenin as early as 1921. "To conceal from the masses that the enlistment of bourgeois specialists, who are given an exceptionally high compensation, is a deviation from the principles of the Commune would be to stoop to the level of the bourgeois politicians. To openly explain how and why we made a step backward and then to discuss publicly what means are available in order to recover the loss is to make the masses learn, from actual experience in working with the enlisted specialists, how to build Socialism. It is necessary to enlist a thousand men, first class specialists in their respective branches, who are devoted to their work, who love large scale production because they know that in large scale production a high level of technical efficiency is reached. And when it is said that it is possible to build Socialism without an apprenticeship to the bourgeoisie, I know that such words come from the psychology of the inhabitants of Central Africa. We cannot imagine a Socialism not based on all the lessons derived from the large scale capitalist culture. Only those are worthy of the name Communists who understand that it is impossible to create or introduce Socialism without taking lessons from the organisers of what has been created by the Trusts. For Socialism is not idle invention but an appropriation by the proletarian vanguard who conquered the power. It is an appropriation and an application. We, the Party of the proletariat, and the proletariat can secure the ability to organise the largest enterprises of the Trust type only from the first class specialists of capitalism." Speaking at the 9th Congress of the C. P. R. in 1920 Lenin said, "The task of the Communists in the State Commission for electrification is to refrain from commanding, or rather not to command at all, but to approach these scientific and technical specialists (who in most cases are inevitably steeped in capitalist predilections and attitudes) with every care and tactfulness, learning from them and helping them to widen their horizon, starting out from the data

and the achievements of the respective sciences. It is necessary to remember that, if the engineer is ever to come to Communism, he will do so not in the same way as the underground worker, the agitator and the writer, but through the portals of his science; equally the agronomist will come to Communism in his own way; and this holds good for every technician and scientist in his own field." How does this compare with the statement of the late Mr. James that our method to deal with the intellectuals, peasants and everybody else with whom we might differ is simply to kill him ?

The very fact that the Soviet has taken 40,000 American technicians in her employ while the most prosperous Imperialism with half the world's gold in her chests cannot find employment for them, ought to be a sufficient answer to the carping petty-bourgeois in India about the success of the Soviet and the life under it.

In spite of this we find a man like Mr. Ramanand Chatterji, a rational bourgeois journalist, but Philistine all the same, saying in a meeting in Bombay in June 1931 that the equality which Soviet Russia was trying to introduce would destroy all beauty. Now it is a hard task to find the real meaning of beauty as conceived by an elusive Brahma-metaphysician and a journalist at that. But on second thoughts I think Ramanand Baboo and those critics of Socialism who agree with him are quite right. Soviet Russia does destroy the beauty of a Philistine Brahma in a snug palace glorying over how our feudal ancestors invaded Java and carried there the "Pan-India culture," the researches into which give employment now to so many bourgeois professors. Soviet India will not tolerate these hives of Pan-Hindu, Pan-Islam or any Pans and their 'beauties', when within ten miles of them three hundred thousand jute workers starve on Rs 15/- a month and live in the filth of the *bastees* and yet do not rise in revolt when they find that their neighbour Ramanandji and his ilk pay a year's wages of a jute worker for the beautiful photograph in ten colours of an idler vagabond poet. Ramanandji is again right, for on the filth of the proletariat thrives bourgeois beauty. If the one fails, so does the other. I will only quote Lady Astor who returned from Russia in August 1931 in company with Bernard Shaw and Lord Lothian at present the Under Secretary of State for India. Lady Astor describing Soviet conditions in a lecture at the Liberal Summer School in Cambridge said, "the only drawback about the treatment of babies was that they were so anxious to get the babies clean that they would not allow them to get dirty." Lord Lothian describing peasant conditions said, "While the ordinary peasant lived in a small house full of flies and vermin, occupied also by domestic

animals, the ideal collective farm consisted of one thousand families with a communal kitchen, very clean, with competent cooks, five hundred cows in milk, tractors, builders, reapers, a large number of horses, a timber mill, a forge, a doctor, a clinic, an office with typewriters and calculating machines and a creche for babies." But our learned Brahmo shouts: "I want that hut of flies and vermin. For on them are reared the beautiful palaces of the Bengal Zamindars and merchants. From them pour the advertisements of my Review and on the Review thrives my sublime beauty." What is the cure for such petty bourgeois reactionary breed that will not see and yet blasphemes the revolutionary workers' ideals and Socialism? Lord Lothian says, "There is a proletarian amusement park, shooting galleries, swings and circuses. The shooting galleries are adorned with pictures of Sir Austin Chamberlain and M. Poincare, dark objects at which the proletariat learns to shoot." Will it not be necessary to add some pictures from the bourgeoisie of this country also?

Lenin while commencing to write his book, "Left Wing Communism," quotes Kautsky, who, in 1902, wrote in the *Iskra*, when the Russian revolutionary tide was just rising, "But, however the peasant struggle in Russia may end, the blood of the martyrs who have sprung from it, unfortunately in too great numbers will not have been shed in vain. It will nourish the shootings of the social revolution throughout the civilised world and make them flourish more quickly. In 1848 the Slavs were the crackling of frost which killed the flowers of spring of the awakening peoples. Perhaps now they are destined to be that storm which breaks through the ice of reaction and will irresistably bring with it the new happy spring of the peoples." The November Revolution broke through the ice of reaction in Western Europe as well in Asia but it has not yet brought with it the new spring. Why?

SECTION 4. The Direction Of The Class Struggle In The Parliamentary Countries: Paras 67-72.

67. Experience of Russia exceptional or general—will it be the same in parliamentary countries.

The lessons of the class struggle, formulated by Marx in the most scientific manner, later on enriched by the experience of their thorough and correct application under the leadership of Leninism, left very little to be added on the question of the bourgeois democratic and proletarian revolution, of the new form of the proletarian State, of the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the role of the party, trade unions, parliament etc. The

newest experience came only from colonial countries. The Russian revolutionary developments, however, were for a long time considered either exceptional or to be applied immediately in all their fullness by the Communists of western Europe. Post war revolutionary developments of Europe therefore vindicated Bolshevism, showed it to be a model tactic for all to follow. The question had been already raised by the Mensheviks in all countries that under a full-fledged parliamentary democracy, the transition to socialism will not require a dictatorship of the proletariat, established on the strength of the successful armed revolution, but that power would peacefully pass into the hands of the workers through the successful wielding of the ballot box. (Vide the evidence of Mr. Brailsford). They argue that there is no parliament, no adult suffrage, no trade unionism and collective agreements in the power of millions of organised workers in trade unions as in England, Germany and elsewhere. Where these exist a violent revolution is unnecessary. The Magistrate in this case also told us that the law of his Majesty allows you to overthrow his Majesty's sovereignty through the institutions created under that law, under the constitution. You can strive to do anything through it, but not outside it. It is a difficult logic to understand and believe that (to take a simile) a robber, who carries a club to keep his head from being broken by those whom he daily robs, can allow that very club to be used for breaking his head, simply because one day he finds all his victims voting for such a procedure. Commonsense will tell that the club simply requires to be seized and broken. In Marx's time this truth did not require explanation. But later on adult suffrage, parliamentary acts, collective agreements and ameliorations received under them had clothed the club with so many cotton paddings, silken covers and embroidery that the workers had ceased to see that behind all these there lay the club, the violence of the bourgeois State, which throws away the paddings and embroidery when its real power is threatened. Imperialism in India tells us, "we give you a constitution, even almost to the extent that our home country has got. Therefore these revolutionary theories are all useless." Gandhism believes in these promises, agreements and settlements. But does history justify that? Has the bourgeoisie of the freest parliamentary country consented to the workers' desire to transform capitalism into socialism? Have those middle class parties and the so-called Communist but not Leninist parties ever stood by the proletarian class interest and revolution?

68. *The German rising—murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg—Republic with a Social Democratic Government—the conclusion from it.*

The Imperialist war, after four years of the massacre of workers and peasants and enrichment of the bourgeoisie of all countries, was broken by the workers in Russia. The next step was taken by the German workers. In November 1918 in the first week almost every industrial town had a rising and the bourgeoisie seeing that the soldiers and sailors sided with the workers gave in and started the game played by the Russian bourgeoisie a year earlier. (For the various risings see Diary in P 2491). They procured the abdication of the Kaiser and the power was handed over into the hands of the Social Democrat leaders, Ebert and Scheidemann. In Russia when the Czar abdicated, the power was not "handed over" to the Social Democrats (the Leninists). That is sufficient to show that the Social Democrats in Germany were not the Social Democrats or Communists of Russia. They swore in the name of Marx. But Marxism was at that time voicing itself through Liebknecht and Luxemburg, who were released from prison by the revolution. Just as the revolution began with the setting up of Soviets in Russia, the German workers also set up Soviets. It showed that the Soviet is not a peculiarly Russian phenomenon, but an internationally expressed form of the proletarian State. The workers in industrial centres took action to capture power, the peasants in agrarian districts and land workers on big estates seized land. But the revolutionary action of the masses is not alone sufficient for a successful revolution. There must be a strong Communist leadership. In 1905 in Russia there was a mass revolutionary action but no C.P. leadership. In 1917 February there was C.P. leadership but not the right situation. In November 1917 both were present. Germany had had no 1905. It was having it. The Spartacist group under Liebknecht and Luxemburg called for a dictatorship of the proletariat. But the Social Democrats as before betrayed. They argued about the collapse of the industry, about the enemy at the door, and the difficulty of a revolution at that moment, as if revolution comes without it at any time. The majority of the working class had not yet been disillusioned about the Social Democrats, as the Russian workers were about the Mensheviks. Moreover, the only revolutionary group, the Spartacists, were suffering from four Luxemburist errors which have appeared from time to time among many Communist Parties. It paid no attention to the technical preparation for the revolution. It believed too much in the spontaneity of the masses. It considered

the peasantry in all stages of the revolution as a petty bourgeois force against the proletariat. It identified membership of the Party with the membership of Trade Unions unlike the Bolsheviks. The national question was underestimated as being no concern of Communism and impossible of solution under world Imperialism. In spite of these errors the Spartacists were real revolutionaries. The result was that the patriotic bourgeoisie got Luxembourg and Liebknecht murdered by monarchist assassins. Both of them were hammered to death and thrown into the river in January 1919. The financiers of the country helped by the Social Democrats in smashing the Soviets, organized the officers' corps against the revolutionary workers. The Soviets were liquidated and a Republican Constitution was evolved. The Constitution made the National Labour Council, elected by Factory Committees, a part of the Constitution. But the Factory Committees, without a workers' State, remained only watchful guards and later became ineffective. Though a Republic was founded and the Social Democrats, the Party commanding the largest following amongst the workers, formed the Government of Scheidemann and Noske, what did the masses of workers and peasants gain? The monarchists of Prussia, seeing that the industrial north was getting Communist, migrated to Bavaria, and in alliance with Poland and France conspired to overthrow the Republic. But the French, thinking it might restore militarism and hence resistance to its own loot, backed out. In Bavaria they raised the "Orgesch," those counter-revolutionary petty bourgeois guards, whose business was to smash revolutionary trade unions and organisations. In 1871, counter-revolutionary Thiers had taken the help of Bismark against the Paris Commune. In 1919 the German bourgeoisie and counter-revolution took the help of France to behead the German workers revolution. In a class war the bourgeoisie recognises no nationalism and boundaries. When the Allies by the Versailles Treaty demanded reparations, France wanted deliveries of Ruhr coal for her iron foundaries seized from Lorraine, the industrialists of Germany transferred their capital to foreign banks and in the name of the fatherland asked the workers to accept ten hours' day and two hours' extra levy for reparations. When the French seized Ruhr the workers resisted the deliveries of coal to France. The German and French militarism after coming to an understanding about the share of each from the exploitation of the iron and steel industry, crushed the workers' resistance. The big Finance kings of the AEG, Krapps and Stinnes in Germany were quarreling not about the freedom of German Nationalism but about the percentage of shares that they would be allotted in the new Franco-German

mixed concerns to be floated to exploit the coal mines and steel industry under the domination of the French banks and The Comite des Forges. When they could not agree on the shares, they quarrelled. The British incited the German bourgeoisie to quarrel because the delivery and smooth production of German coal was a set back to their coal. The occupation of the Ruhr, the seizure of plants and furnaces destroyed the German credit and the German Mark. The latter began to collapse just as the Russian Rouble had collapsed during the civil war. By October 1923 the par value of the Mark to sterling had come down from 20'40 to 80,000 millions. It became impossible to pay wages, or continue production, when the money basis of the whole economy had lost its significance. By October 1923 the crisis had developed into a revolutionary situation. The Allies expected a Bolshevik revolution. They sent warships in the Baltic to be in readiness for intervention just as in Russia. The Polish and French prepared for intervention from the east and south, if the workers succeeded in their revolution. All the forces of revolutionary outburst were ready, but there was no leadership. For 40 years the working class in Germany had been organised in the Social Democratic Party. That Party had never seen the struggles like the Russian. The war gave birth to a Left Wing in it—the Independent Socialists within whom were included the Spartacists. The Spartacists stood for revolutionary action and later became the Communist Party of Germany in 1919. But they committed Left Wing mistakes. They underestimated the role of the Parliament and thought that the masses—the workers and peasants—were disillusioned with the Reich, while in fact large sections of the masses expected very much from the Republican Constitution. Thus instead of exposing bourgeois parliamentarism they boycotted it. A large number of workers were followers of the independent Socialists from amongst whom the Left Wing section was amalgamated with the C. P. G. But as yet the exposure of the Left Wing revolutionary phrase-mongering was not carried out. Thus a strong, centralised and well-distributed Communist leadership with its roots in the masses had not been born. In the October crisis the Social Democrats refused to support a General Strike demand. The Communist Party issued a manifesto in which it took the correct line of not advising immediate insurrection. But if partial actions took place they did not particularly disown them. They also called for a thorough isolation of the Left Wing Social Democrats and for the formation of a united front from below. But the German revolution was not given time to collect its forces. The workers' Government set up in Saxony was overthrown, the rich peasantry supporting the reaction

and the small peasantry not siding with the revolution as it had done in Russia.

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The insurrection in Hamburg was drowned in blood. It was premature for the fact that several thousands of workers were found actively fighting against the insurrection on behalf of the S. D.s. The German revolutions confirmed the lessons of the Russian Revolution. The bourgeois constitution, bourgeois Parliamentaryism is not a cure for capitalism. The masses must be taught by experience to throw away the Parliamentary machine. Only the leaders being convinced of its futility is no use. For a revolutionary situation there must be an experienced Communist Party. That Party must have ideologically and organisationally demarcated itself from all other compromise parties, and especially the Left Wing parties and Reformist Labour leadership. There must be a thorough technical organisation for the revolution.

After the abortive revolution of 1923, Allied Imperialism saw the foolishness and danger of fleecing Germany by the old primitive method of direct loot. They adopted the course of "reconstructing" Germany as a highly industrialised colony of Allied Imperialism. The German working class, massacred and maimed in the war, starved and forced to work on 30 per cent of pre-war wages, riddled with famine and disease, sank into exhaustion. From 1923 to 1931 Germany has been reconstructing its capitalist economy on the workers' back, with the glorious result that in 1931 it has applied for insolvency again, with 7 million unemployed starving on the streets. An intensely patriotic republic, an intensely efficient capitalism, the most efficient technique and Labour at the end of 8 years find themselves unable to reconstruct capitalism on a stable basis.

69. *The period of proletarian revolutions—revolutions in the smaller countries—France, the classical land of class struggle comes out as the hangman of revolutions—results of these revolutions.*

That the epoch of proletarian revolutions had begun, that capitalism was unable to reconstruct itself can be seen from the most important revolutions and insurrections following upon the Russian Revolution. A few of them may be quoted.

1. March 1917—The bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia.

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2. November 1917—The proletarian revolution in Russia.
3. March 1918—The workers' revolution in Finland.
4. November 1918—The bourgeois revolution in Germany and Austria carried out by workers and peasants.
5. March 1919—The bourgeois revolution in Hungary carried out by workers and peasants.
6. January 1920—The bourgeois revolution in Turkey carried out by the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry.
7. September 1920—The revolutionary seizure of factories by the workers in Italy.
8. March 1921—The March rising in Germany.
(References till 1921, P 2396).
9. September 1923—Revolution in Bulgaria.
10. Autumn 1923—semi-revolution of the German proletariat.
11. December 1924—rising in Esthonia.
12. May 1926—General Strike in Great Britain.
13. 1927 rising in Vienna.
14. The revolution in China began in 1919.
15. The rising in India in 1921.
16. The rising in Morocco in April 1925.
17. The rising in Syria in August 1925.
18. Agrarian revolt in Java 1923-24.
(References, article by Bukharin, Exh. P. 1220).

In all these revolutions the two Imperialisms that poured their millions and used their vast military machine to massacre the revolutions were those of England and France. British Imperialism sent its forces against the Chinese, Indian and Turkish revolutions. The French massacred the Riffs in Morocco and the Syrian rising. In Syria, they bombarded the Velvet City of Damascus for three days and razed it to the ground, and yet this very French bourgeoisie was telling the world that the Germans were Vandals as they had bombarded the cathedral of Rheims and the Bolsheviks had aimed guns at the treasures of the Winter Palace. In Bulgaria the peasant party came to power under Stambulisky, but the peasantry without the leadership of

the workers cannot hold out long against the bourgeoisie. A coup d'etat of the bourgeoisie killed Stambulsky* and a Civil War was begun. The Communists committed there the grave blunder of not calling out the proletarians to aid the peasants. The result was the restoration of bourgeois dictatorship. In Poland, Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia, the French bourgeoisie lent 8 million francs credit in 1923. They were not in cash but in the form of purchases of war materials from France by these countries to arm the counter-revolution in Central Europe. In Italy the mistake was that the opportunist wings of the Socialist Party were not denounced in time, Serratti, the Communist leader sabotaged the carrying out of the leadership of the Comintern and failed therefore to advance for the seizure of political power when the workers began to seize factories. The Government was powerless and was saved only by the treachery of the Trade Union leaders and the Right Socialists, who agreed to hand the factories back to the capitalists, on the ground that the workers were not in a position to work them as the raw materials were held up by the bourgeoisie which had control in other centres. But that exactly is the reason why the base of the struggle should have been extended and not curtailed. The result was that the petty bourgeois middle class and the disbanded soldiery which first inclined towards the proletariat went over to the counter-revolution and the Fascist Dictatorship was established. Fascism started as a party of the middle class, professing to be both against high finance and against its anti-thesis, the revolutionary proletariat. But Fascism has no economic programme, because the middle class, aided by the aristocratic upper sections of the bourgeoisie and the rich peasantry, ultimately is based upon private property in instruments of production, i. e. upon capitalism. As such it is bound to carry out the policy of capitalism. It started with the tall talk of petty bourgeois economy, something quite new in social working. What was the result? When the Lira fell in value and currency collapsed as in Germany, the American financiers were called in for help. The Italian bourgeoisie supported by the Americans became the ruler behind Fascism. Its only hope now remained in making petty bourgeois stunts and feeding the people on dreams of prosperity—on what basis—on the basis of militarist expansion and seizure of colonies for exploitation. Thus Fascism becomes full-fledged Imperialism; and yet there are in India petty bourgeois leaders who call themselves Socialists and at the same time proudly declare the ideal of Fascism for Indian youths. That means that they recommend to the Indian petty bourgeois to attack the Indian workers and poor peasants to enthroned armed capitalism in Indian economy. Everyone who

recommends Fascist ideals in India must therefore be thrown out of the workers' platform by the Indian workers and poor peasants. Every admirer of Fascism is a potential hangman of the worker. They must remember that Mussolini too had begun as a Socialist. In India we have to be careful from the very beginning and cannot coquet with such elements on any conditions.

70. *The lesson of the British experience—struggles on the railways, coal mines etc.—the results of Commissions—Triple Alliance—fall in wages—unemployment.*

The Indian workers and peasants are told today to believe in the "satisfactory assurances" of the Indian Viceroy and British statesmen. The whole of the Indian National Congress leadership has been spending millions of the workers' and peasants' contributions to make the people put faith in the "gentleman's agreement." The Government tells the workers also to follow the "gentleman's way" of Geneva and get what they want by negotiations. Has the British bourgeoisie which preaches the above lesson observed any agreements with its own workers? I am purposely limiting myself to the relations and agreements between the British workers and the British bourgeoisie, because it may be said that as conquerors of India the British bourgeoisie might lie and deceive to retain its rule, but so far as its own workers are concerned it must be behaving like brothers with them. But all such "household" theories do not hold good so far as class relations of the exploited and exploiters are concerned. We have seen how the British workers received a share of capitalist prosperity and colonial loot from their bourgeoisie and therefore abandoned the revolutionary struggle. We have also seen in para 43 how during the Imperialist war the British Labour Parties, one and all, joined hands with their Imperialism, with the slogan of protecting the rights of smaller nations, of culture and civilisation, of self-determination etc. We have also seen in para 28 how the British bourgeoisie has never been able to secure its pre-war leadership of world finance and the workers have been losing heavily in their wages. I shall now mention the biggest attempts of the British workers to improve their conditions through the bourgeois Parliamentary machine and through direct action and how these constitute the premises on which the Communist platform of the Comintern, the C. P. G. B. and the C. P. I. is raised.

In para 43 we have seen that, according to Webb, almost a revolutionary out-burst was developing in Great Britain when the War broke out. The workers were forced by the Second International leadership to stop this class struggle. When the Armistice

was signed the same struggle was renewed and the workers in every industry brought forth their demands. The peace brought back the soldiers, who had to be found a place in the industry on demobilisation, while the industries themselves were under the necessity to curtail their capacity as the war industries would have to be closed down. The bourgeoisie clearly saw the revolutionary implications of the situation and like the most class-conscious very shrewd bourgeoisie with vast reserves that it is, it set to work. A system of "out-of-work donation" to ex-soldiers and civilians was instituted in November 1918. The war-time restriction on wages was abolished and a Minimum Wage Act was passed, first for six months and then renewed in May 1919. On November 14th the National Conference of the Labour Party asked the Labour members to withdraw from the coalition Government. The General Election fought by the wily Lloyd George on the slogans of "Making Germany pay for the war" and "Trial of the Kaiser" was won by the coalition. The trade unions began their offensive first on the question of hours of work. The railway-men secured eight hour day in February 1919. The engineering and ship-building workers got 47 hour week instead of 54. Similarly cotton, iron and other workers in organised industries got the eight hour day, but not the other sections of the working class in most of the unorganised industries.

In January 1919 the miners formulated their programme of demands. Along with the demand for shorter hours of work and increased wages, it asked for public ownership and democratic control of the mines. The miners issued strike notices and secured the support of the railwaymen and transport workers forming the famous Triple Alliance. A strike at this juncture of such a powerful combination would have developed into a serious situation. The military forces were impatient for demobilisation and might not have stood by the Government, though Government tried to placate them by the donation fund. The British bourgeoisie has been famous for leaving aside all scruples and entering into negotiations promising anything to tide over the crisis and then smash the opponent. And this they did. They negotiated with the miners, appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into their demands, with the result that the strike notices were suspended though not withdrawn. They also called a National Industry Conference of employers and Labour for the usual programme of class peace. The Government at the same time gave an advance promise that they would scrupulously carry out the recommendation of the Commission both in letter and in spirit. But the Triple

Alliance refused to join. Still the Conference and the Royal Commission were successful in lessening the crisis. The Commission even issued an interim report (20th March 1919) and recommended a wage advance of 2 shillings a shift, a reduction of hours of underground workers from 8 to 7 and gave the opinion that even on the small evidence given so far, some system of public ownership or joint control was desirable.

Such a radical recommendation cheated the workers and the immediate crisis was averted. But the railwaymen came out in September on the question of hours and wages. The Government denounced the strike as an "anarchist conspiracy." In spite of military force the Government had to yield to some of the demands of the railwaymen.

With these struggles the organisation of the workers expanded and the trade union membership rose from 4,189,000 in 1913 to over 8 millions in 1919. The expanding needs of the struggle required coordination and unification. So the General Council of the Trade Union Congress was formed for the first time in 1921. But the British workers had not as yet a revolutionary leadership a strong Communist Party. The young C.P.G.B. was formed only in August 1920. The result was that when the Coal Commission recommended the nationalisation of the mines, the Government refused to carry it out. On the contrary the bourgeoisie decided to launch an offensive and suppress the movement. A slump in prices and trade had begun. The German revolution had been smashed, the reparations paid in kind by Germany were hitting British trade and in the colonies the Indian struggle was showing its head.

Uptil now since the war, the mines and railways had been under Government control. It was suddenly decided to hand them back to the owners, five months in advance of the time originally fixed and announced. The miners opposed the decontrol as it would have destroyed the all-national wages system and introduced competitive district arrangements. The decontrol was carried out, the owners issued a notice of wage reductions and lockouts, which began on March 31, 1921. The miners called in the aid of the Triple Alliance which decided to strike on 12th April. The Government called out the military forces and a civil war was looming on the horizon. But again the spirit of 1848 dominated. The leadership afraid of the revolutionary consequences collapsed and the Triple Alliance betrayed the miners on "Black Friday" (15th April 1921). That set back the whole movement for a time. Nationalisation,

wages, hours etc. were promised to be brought about through the next fight in the general election. The bourgeois attack on workers' standards commenced. But the resistance had broken down. In 1921 the working days lost in disputes were 86 millions, in 1922 they fell to 20 millions and in 1923 to 10 millions. During these two years the workers lost 10 million pounds per week in wages. Why this failure? Because the leadership had all along advised the workers to rely on negotiations and class collaboration, to keep faith in the bourgeois Government, the Royal Commission etc. The leadership of the Second International Socialists sabotaged the struggle at this point, hence the failure. Hence the Government appointed Commissions and Committees to tide over the crisis and afterwards when the crisis was over it attacked the workers. The extent of this attack can be seen from the single fact that the total weekly wages change between 1914 and 1920 was an advance of 13,332,300 pounds and the decrease since 1920 to 1923 was 10½ million pounds. Where as the cost of living from 1914 to 1920 had risen from 100 to 269, the wages had risen to 226.6. At the end of 1923 the cost of living had fallen to 177 and the wages to about 130 to 140. (L.R.D. Monthly Circular for January 1926, page 8). Yet British capitalism had failed to restore its economy or give work to all. By the fall in wages, goods become cheap, work increases and workers get work, so argues the the bourgeoisie. But the unemployed army has become a permanent one in England as in every other country. Since 1920 it has never gone below one million.

71. British workers tried two weapons—Labour Government and the General Strike—the achievements of the Labour Government—its fall.

The working class had not yet definitely experienced the result of two weapons, which, they had been taught, would be the most effective, in giving them political power and bring about socialist society. One was a Labour Government in Parliament, and the second such a mighty all-national general strike that the whole bourgeois socialist order would come to a stand-still. The British workers had the opportunity to taste the fruits of both these weapons in 1924, 1926 and 1929. Do those lessons tell us to give up Marxism as the only weapon to change production relations in society and free its productive forces for further development?

The Labour Party had 191 members in the Parliament in 1924. In January of that year, the Conservatives resigned the

Government and the Liberals having agreed to support the Labour Party, the first Labour Government of England came into being. While in opposition the Labour Party had denounced the capitalist robbery of Germany by the seizure of Ruhr and heavy reparations. It had denounced the refusal of the bourgeoisie to recognise Russia, the only Workers' Government in the world. The whole British Empire, the European Continent, in fact the whole world looked with interest at the Labour Party forming the Government. The Communists only did not expect the Labour Party to do anything that would break the capitalist system inside the country or the capitalist foreign relations of Great Britain. The Labour Party in the U. S. A. had already allowed the workers to be duped by Coal Commissions and Industrial Peace Conferences. The Party could not be expected to change the capitalist foundations and relations of British economy. Still the Communists supported the Labour Government, and asked for its formation because, unless it had become a fact and the workers confronted with the living fact of it, unless it had had its run to expose its futility, the idea of realising socialism through a parliamentary vote could not be got out of their minds. Hence Lenin had said that the Communists would support the Labour Government just as the rope supports the man who has hanged himself. (Ext. P 975).

India knows very well what the Labour Government of 1924 did to its bourgeois nationalist movement as also the workers' movement. The first Labour Government attacked the Communist movement and the Communist International by instituting the Cawnpore Conspiracy Case. They imprisoned the revolutionary youths of Bengal. The Labour Government left the Bombay textile workers' strike "in the hands of the Government of India and saw no reason to interfere with it", as they said in an official statement. The Labour Government in the approved Imperialist style warned China against taking action against British capitalists in China and sent its gunboats to massacre the Chinese Revolution. It threatened Mexico and showed to Egypt the warships in Alexandria.

(The Prosecution Counsel, the late Mr. Langford James, as if in pity for the fate of Mr. MacDonald, had read out in his address to the Court several extracts from the Inprecorr, in order to show what an abominable set the Bolsheviks were in the Comintern who wrote about MacDonald and prophesied his renegacy to the cause of the working-class). The first Labour Government had elected Mr. MacDonald as its first Premier and Foreign Secretary. In the hands of the most expert and reactionary bureaucrats of the

Foreign Office he behaved worse than Lord Curzon towards India, Russia and Germany. On assuming office the question of treaty with Russia was forgotten until Neil Maclean opened the question publicly. The London Labour Party was about to threaten a protest meeting and MacDonald had to yield and give recognition to the Soviet. But he was a puppet in the hands of the Foreign Office. They flattered his egomania, they praised him and got very important work done exactly in the traditions of Imperialism. "For this egoist was to prove at bottom as weak and unstable a man as that one of whom Mrs. Elphinstone said, 'he has a leg! 'He had a leg' will serve for MacDonald's epitaph. His inevitable abbeyside statue will, one trusts, show him in Court dress". This was written not by the Inprecorr or any rabid Bolshevik but by one who signed himself as "U. D. C." and who was probably his colleague in the Cabinet in the first Labour Government. Though recognition was given to Russia he never sent an ambassador and pushed energetically with the Exports, Credit Scheme. In the traditions of the Foreign Office he even forgot that he was once a Socialist. He wrote pompous letters to Tchicherin and Rakovsky. In a public speech he called the President of the U.S.S.R., "a Mr. Rykov", as a man not of "real political authority". In one letter he wrote that a settlement with Russia would be reached "Satisfactory to the people of Russia and to us and our subjects." It is a matter for wonder, writes U. D. C., that he never began a note, "We, James Ramsay, by the grace of God". Think of the workers' Socialist leader writing himself "us and our subjects." He had already become in his ideology an Imperialist oppressor. In his relation with the arch Imperialist Poincare, he was fawning and currying favours. He promised full cooperation in the French occupation of the Ruhr, enforcing the Dawes Plan on Germany, and he, a Socialist, declared that Germany must be forced to pay heavy reparations, else she might compete with "our industry". Such a Premier the Indian bourgeoisie applauded, in the hope that they would be granted a capitalist Swaraj without safeguards for British Imperialism.

As regards the workers themselves, the Government had failed to do anything to better their conditions. The unemployment figure remained over a million as before. There was a textile workers' strike which was only patched up. Only a direct attack of Government on the trade unions was stayed which allowed them a few opportunities of consolidation. The fall of the Government was cleverly engineered by the bourgeoisie through its Foreign Office, who arranged the clever forgery of the Zinovieff Letter and MacDonald's bungling about it. The Government might

have changed but the bureaucracy of capitalism was still there running its capitalist system. The experiences of the Labour Government thoroughly justified the Marxist doctrine that for any change in the capitalist system the old State with its bureaucracy has first to go.

72. The Coal Crisis—the Samuel Commission—Government preparations and T.U.C. bungling—secret conversations—Soviet help refused—British experience confirms Russian experience—the vote cannot stop attack on wages—that the general strike without a revolutionary party has no use—Leninism derived from history.

With the fall of the Labour Government, the British workers, under the reconstruction drive of capitalism turned towards the left and headed for the general strike of 1926. Capitalism in Central Europe had succeeded in beheading all the revolutionary forces and had started on the road of partial reconstruction. It was necessary now for British capitalism to smash the radical working-class forces. The revolutionary forces of the British workers have always been the miners, and every offensive of capitalism has begun with the miners. On June 30, 1925 the mine-owners gave one month's notice of abolition of the national minimum of wages, reducing wages by 13 to 49 per cent and increasing the hours of work to eight. The Miners' Executive refused to accept the proposal. The Communist Party had been warning the British workers of the impending attack for months and months previously, pointing out that the attack on miners was the beginning of an attack on the wages of all workers. The miners were now supported by the Trade Union Congress, the railwaymen, transport workers and engineers. A strong quadruple alliance was formed and a big battle seemed to be approaching.

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The Communist Party however pointed out that unless workers defence corps were set up, unless a strong leadership was built in every local the great action would collapse. The immediate lock-out, however, was averted by the Government guaranteeing 20 million pounds subsidy to the mine-owners, who would then continue the present scale of wages and hours. The compromising leadership of the workers as represented by the T. U. C. and MacDonald was elated with the action of the Government. They spoke of "bloodless victory" and agreed to help the Commission which Government appointed to enquire

into the miners' conditions. But, as the Communist Party alone pointed out, the subsidy and the Truce were only a screen behind which the Government prepared its forces. Police forces and the Military were organised to meet the strike situation on a large scale. The Fascist organisation for maintenance of supplies was set up. During all this time the Labour Party and the Truce remained inactive and abused the Communists for raising baseless bogeys of capitalist attack, while the shrewd Mr. Wheatley declared, "that we were rapidly moving towards a revolutionary crisis, when the fate of the working class would depend upon whether their working-class brothers in the army and navy would shoot them or live with them." The Government showed itself alive to this situation and attacked the Communist Party and sentenced 11 of its leaders for inciting the army to overthrow the Government and join the revolutionary workers.

The Samuel Commission reported in March 1926. It turned down the demands of nationalisation and it gave some very scientific reasons which ought to have taught even the Socialists some sense. It agreed with the statement of the miners' Federation that mining concerns are now complex heavy industry units, which comprise electricity, gas, oil, chemical products, blast furnaces and other activities. When the huge capitalist concerns are so interlocked, what meaning does a proposal of nationalising only one of them carry. The Commission said, "By removing these mines into State ownership the very sections of the industry which already approached the standards that are likely to prevail in the future would be the most injured. Existing combinations would be disintegrated and a serious obstacle would be raised against further integration." In plain language the Commission told the Socialists that modern monopoly capitalism is so interlocked that you cannot nationalise only one part of it; and if you argue that the part which is highly developed only should be nationalised then the capitalists would not develop the other. The MacDonald Socialists surrendered before such an argument, because the only answer to this is that the capitalist economy itself has to be overthrown, ruling out the policy of "serious obstacles" and sabotage to further development under Socialist nationalisation. On the publication of the report all the pseudo Socialists refused definitely to state at once that they rejected it and that a serious fight would have to be given. Only the C. P. G. B. called for a definite organised united front against the attack. On April 30th 1926 the mine-owners tabled their demands of eight hour day and 13 per cent wage-cut. The Trade Union Congress took the stand that the miners would not accept reduction *before* the reorganisation of the

industry, implying that they would do so (or at least the leaders would do so) at a later stage. But the Conservative Government intent upon smashing the Union refused to allow the leaders to save their faces. The General Strike was in fact begun by the workers themselves over the heads of their hesitating leadership. The printers of the Daily Mail refused to print an article containing a violent attack on the workers, and went on strike. The Government considered it as an act of hostility and broke off negotiations. The General Strike began on 3rd May 1926.

The General Strike, the great ideal of every Trade Unionist which was to bring everything to a stand-still, and thus force Government to yield to the demands of the workers, had at last come. It was being conceived for the last 75 years since the Chartist Movement. At that time it was to be brought about for a definite political issue, for gaining political rights for the working class. The attainment of franchise had removed that issue. Now it was purely for the wages and hours of the miners. The strike, threatened since the war terminated, had at last come and revealed the vast incapacity of the leadership, the absence of any really sincere organisations on a nation-wide scale closely and solidly interlinked to function in a crisis. The General Strike revealed that each group of workers, each organisation, though appearing to be of vast dimensions was like the vans of a railway train, scattered over several railways and incapable of forming a single train except after immense loss of time, and unavailable when required. The leadership at the top simply thought of "somehow" ending the dispute. The local groups did not know what the top was doing or thinking and what exactly was required to be done. On the call they simply struck work and asked everyone else to strike, which everyone did. Each day the strike spread and every service and industry stopped. The Trade Union leaders called out the printing workers and in loyalty to bourgeois fairness to show how "good boys" they were, they closed their own paper and press also. When the workers clamoured they tried to issue the 'British Worker' as a small sheet, but the Government raided the press and allowed the paper to appear only after censoring. The Government took over the "Morning Post" plant and issued their own paper, "The British Gazette". The Trade Union leaders again bungled and offered the Government the cooperative food supply services. The Government refused and under military protection made its own arrangements. The leaders prohibited picketing, but the workers refused to obey and prevented blacklegging. The Government called out the students of the universities, clerks, and petty bourgeois girls to become volunteers and run the trains, buses etc. The T. U. leaders had not even a

Defence Corps to protect their pickets. We have had in this Court a witness (Mr. Fordham, P. W. 16) who is now a Magistrate in U. P., who was at that time a student in Cambridge and took part in breaking the strike and is proud of it (vide his evidence). Blacklegs who fought against the workers in Britain, are bound to get their rewards in the colonial loot. The British Government in England behaved towards its workers just as ruthlessly and armed the petty bourgeois Fascists thus to shoot the workers as ruthlessly as they do today in India, the latest example of which is the White Terror they are practising in Dacca against both workers and radical sections of the middle class.

When the strike had lasted four days and even showed signs of intensifying the Government called it "illegal," and an attack on the constitution of the Kingdom. The T. U. leaders trembled and protested their loyalty to the bourgeois Government and to the bourgeois Parliament. On 8th May, Sir Herbert Samuel, the Chairman of the Commission, whose report was the immediate cause of the strike, returned to England and saw some of the T. U. leaders. Secret conversations took place. The workers never knew what they were. On 11th May, the workers were trying to extend the strike to the engineering and ship-building trades also, while the leaders were talking with Sir Herbert. On 12th May suddenly the announcement was made that the strike was called off. The workers for a time were puzzled. Then they thought the Government might have yielded, so magnificent and powerful had been the response of the workers. They held meetings to celebrate the "victory". The capitalist press called it an "abject surrender", and the T. U. C. General Council called it an "honourable settlement." We in India now know what an honourable settlement means. The General Council had negotiated with Sir Herbert in his "private capacity" only, as he himself put it. He had no instructions from Government to negotiate. The T. U. leaders accepted a scheme of wage reduction and all that was connoted by the Coal Commission. Not only that. They had not even stipulated that the existing Trade Union agreements would continue. So that when the workers went to resume work the employers exacted new agreements. The miners after the termination of the General Strike continued their struggle but were beaten in the single-handed fight against the strength of the whole bourgeois State machine. (Some of the references—P. 901).

The workers of every country (including India, Exh. P. 1381) had rallied to the help of the General Strike, the greatest help having been rendered by the Russian workers. But the T. U. C.

General Council, afraid of capitalist ill-will, refused to receive the money sent by the Russian workers. It is therefore quite natural that when the Indian workers accept the fraternal help of the workers of every country including Russia, that the General Council of the British T. U. C. should denounce us. The slave of Baldwin assuming the airs of the boss cannot but denounce the disciples of Leninism.

The British General Strike shows that the widest strike of all industries cannot automatically overthrow the capitalist system, that in the strictly economic strike the capitalist State comes to the aid of the bourgeoisie. Every big strike becomes a political strike. Without a revolutionary organisation and seizure of power a General Strike alone can never succeed in overthrowing capitalism. The conclusions are that the Russian experience holds good even in the freest bourgeois country in the world; that the ballot-box does not help you even to defend your wages from the attacks of the bourgeoisie. That even the most powerful General Strike without a revolutionary party and revolutionary action does not succeed even in its economic aims, let alone the political; that before the workers can become revolutionary they must be rescued from the leadership of the Menshevik, the petty bourgeois Trade Unionist and Labour aristocrats. The freest Parliament is a speculators' den (as Mr. Bernard Shaw calls it.) and can never lead to Socialist society. It may elect pseudo Labour Governments but it cannot change the fundamental class relations and destroy the capitalist organ.

PART II.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN INDIA.

SECTION I.—Democracy. And British Dictatorship In India : Paras 73—81.

73. *Role of the individual in the Indian conquest negligible—conquest of superior social groups by the inferior—British not inferior—our standards applied to them are subjective and therefore wrong—no return to pre-British era.*

We have seen so far the activities of the human social groups in other parts of the world; their struggle with nature resulting in

inventions and increase of immense productive powers, the private appropriation of the increased wealth of society by a class, at one time the feudal class and at another the bourgeoisie, the socio-political class struggles arising out of such appropriation, the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, its new socio-political outlook and the method of reconstruction of society on Socialist basis in Russia. We shall now see how much of this is applicable to the Indian conditions in which we have worked.

When all this mighty drive of social development and revolutionary class struggles for a happier world had been going on, the independent feudal economy of India was seized and crushed in the steel wheels of British Imperialism. Feudal India of 18th century was stagnant, while bourgeois Europe was constructing the giant wheels of capitalist production to storm the vast closed lands of Asia. We have seen in para 21 the frivolous analysis of the history of Indian conquest by bourgeois writers, who see our fall either in superstition of the priests or the treachery of unpatriotic Sardars, Nawabs and Peshwas.

While separate battles can be explained by such reasons, the whole epoch of the conquest or subjugation not only of India, but of China, Africa, Egypt, Turkey, Persia, to the bourgeoisie of Europe and America cannot be explained except by the development of the superior technology alias civilisation of their bourgeois society. The historical materialist method of Marx (which the late Mr. James in his address to the Court said is not of any use to the Bolsheviks) alone shows us the right way, a method now being adopted though with some adulteration by the bourgeois writers also. We were conquered by force, by violence. But this violence was superior to ours, was the bourgeois violence of Britain against the feudal violence of India. It was neither just nor unjust because it was a force that was submerging the world like a flood from the excess of productive forces, that must find markets if it is to progress and sustain itself. Hastings may have been a scoundrel and a murderer when he despoiled the Begums of Oudh and hanged Nand Kumar. But he did not succeed in India because he was so and we were excellent religious angels. His successor Cornwallis when matched with the young and virile bourgeoisie of America had failed. The young and unadulterated bourgeoisie of U.S.A. had stood against the partially feudal bourgeoisie of England. But Cornwallis succeeded against the old and stagnant feudalism of India. A scoundrel in both the places—yet when contending against two types of technology, he produced two different results. Marxism does not neglect to count the human intellectual quantity

as a definite quantity in the shaping of history and its separate events. But it assigns it a negligible role in relation to a whole epoch, an appreciable role in relation to its component separate events, but never the predominant role of the "sole cause" in the complex of social history. That place is assigned to the totality of productive forces and production relations. I do not mean that every conquest is a result of superior technology attacking an inferior one. There are instances of the conquest of a culturally advanced social group by a barbarous one. But almost every such conquest has resulted in the conquerer having ended by being merged in the conquered group. Our historians cite hundreds of instances wherein the invaders had been successful but ultimately merged into the social order they had conquered. Our historians at the same time say that the Britisher had conquered us and, though culturally of an "inferior civilisation", had not yet been submerged in Indian society but had succeeded in keeping aloof and destroying our "old civilisation", culture, religion etc. Now when these historians called the "British" civilisation (it is not British as such but capitalist) inferior, their standards of measurement are the subjective, moral or ethical notions and as such quite unreliable. The Hindus do not kill a cow and the British do. But such standards are useless, as can be seen from the fact that Hindu society itself at an early stage in its development ate cows and bullocks. Ethical Codes are basically the prejudices of the dominant class, which imposes them on society as their own safeguards against the revolt of the exploited. As the process of ideological development is intensely complex and subtle, it does not serve as an objective material standard of measuring superior or inferior civilisation. The Indian historian calls the British civilisation inferior from the standpoint of his feudal Imperialism, which spread its culture to China, Java and other countries. The remnant of that psychological arrogance, coupled with an impotent, inferior economy that has saved the social group from complete extermination like the Red Indians because of its vast population, accumulated reserves of wealth and an old agrarian feudal economy entrenched on fertile land, makes us dream of "giving messages to the west" and spiritual leadership. The Imperialists cheer us, when we indulge in this gaseous imaginery superior leadership, so long as it does not attempt to take the concrete material socio-political shape. Let us once for all admit that we have been conquered by a superior economy, by superior productive forces which have called violence, subterfuge, massacre, murder and diplomacy to their aid, just as Indians also have done in relation to other countries in their

past history. Let us once for all admit that its productive forces in the end lead to a higher stage of social development, that there is not going to be a "return" but a march forward by assimilating all the achievements of the bourgeois technology that has conquered us.

74. *Has Britain civilised us?—introduction of industries—feudalism not destroyed—degeneration of revolutionary slogans—1857, fight of a revolutionary class under reactionary leadership—what we would have done in 1857?*

Does this mean that British Imperialism has "civilised" us? In Europe when the economically powerful bourgeoisie overthrew its feudal order and destroyed the feudal relations, it liberated the forces of production in its own country. In some colonial possessions till the war the Imperialist export of capital resulted in development of industries, a growth of the colonial and dominion bourgeoisie which soon became politically powerful enough to refuse to be expropriated in the interests of the mother country. British Imperialism in India did not carry out this task of developing the productive forces of the country. It deprived the feudal order of its political power but retained its socio-economic character, making it serve the needs of the Imperialist country. To serve the needs of British industry means to serve as its suppliers of raw materials and markets. If it were to develop as a bourgeois capitalist country it would be an industrial power competing with the Imperialist countries. Imperialism so far as it can prevent it will not carry out such a suicidal function, though in the very act of transforming a huge feudal economy into a raw material base of modern industry, a certain amount of industrialisation does take place. (Reference P 90).

We consider the British conquest as an aggravated evil for two reasons. If as a capitalist civilisation it had properly destroyed the feudal order, it would not have been such an evil; because in that case it would have generated the proletariat, a revolutionary force that would have in time overthrown it. The British conquest started by destroying the political power of the Indian feudal emperors, purely as a proposition of merchantile loot in the first instance. It was nothing but simple violent primitive robbery. However when it embarked on the campaign of destroying the power of the princes and lords, the work was left half done due to a series of historical impediments. One was the threat of Napoleon,

necessitating in some cases an alliance with the princes; secondly the opposition of feudal lords in England to a thorough destruction of their class allies in India; thirdly the numerical strength of the princes and lords and the rising of 1857. These three prevented the thorough disappearance of the princes and their allies and this abortion has now choked the new India in a peculiarly horrible manner, a small representation of which can be seen in the proceedings of the Round Table Conference.

The late Mr. Langford James did us a service, when in his opening address he brought to the forefront the slogans we shout every day. Revolutionary slogans by the prisoners of Imperialism in India owe their birth to the indomitable spirit of the great Bhagat Singh and Dutt. But I am sorry to say that those who profess to follow the great revolutionary have failed to understand his later development and have degraded the revolutionary slogans many a time into a shout of reaction. Slogans of the prisoners are not jokes nor lung exercises. They are not veils to shut out in a loud noise your innermost pain of suffering. You do not shout slogans to tell the world how cheerful or romantic you are in sufferings. Slogans in a way are a revolutionary duty. The revolutionary duty in such a case is to keep up the correct self-training from degeneration, and the correct leadership. In a simple concentrated manner they represent your revolutionary class outlook in relation to a whole movement or its separate events. "Down with Imperialism" and "Long live revolution" summarise the aims of the national movement for Independence. But they have been so vulgarised now that even the reactionary supporters of the Round Table Conference shouted them at the Ballard Pier in Bombay and some introduce even a communal riot with them. Therefore they have to be amplified. We amplify by adding, "Up with the rule of the proletariat and peasantry," "Long live the Communist International". Now it will be very difficult to confuse us and our aims when one hears these slogans with any other school of revolutionaries. The followers of Bhagat Singh have forgotten that he had blossomed into a socialist and was on his way to becoming a Leninist (1930) though he was confused in his ideology for want of proper literature. But none could have expected from him in 1931 the slogans "Long live Bahadur Shah" or the observance of the "1857 Day" as some of his followers have been doing. Such slogans and such Days betray the class outlook, the romanticist in his hatred of the present rule trying to idealise rank reaction and becoming an utopian. Why so? Because the movement of 1857 is not scientifically understood. We are simply deceived into idealising it by its anti-British character. The war of

-1857 was a war of reaction of feudal lords to restore their former role of uncontrolled exploiters of the peasantry. The peasantry, and artisans, in so far as they supported them, were strengthening anew their weapons of feudal slavery. They fought under their former oppressors' banner because the new British rule had introduced money rents and was ruining handicrafts without substituting industry in their place. Thus the class which ordinarily would have played a revolutionary role was supporting a reactionary war. What has been the outcome of 1857? The present native states, the present taluqdars and jagirdars and the strongholds of feudal oppression allied with British Imperialist exploitation are the legacy left by 1857. I would have considered it a great historical service if Dalhousie had succeeded in wiping out all these yellow patches from our map. In that case we would have been saved the trouble of carrying out one more task in the revolutionary programme—that of destroying these reactionary strongholds of princes—and we would have better concentrated on Imperialism alone. That is why we do not shed tears over the fall of Bahadur Shah, though we may over his poems, if you like, or over the last of the Peshwas. I should also dispose of one fantastic question that is likely to be raised. If a communist had been alive in India in say 1800 or 1850 would he then have helped the British into consolidating their rule over India because they represented a bourgeois economy which according to Marxism is superior to feudalism. Now it is not possible to project the historical forces of one epoch into another and begin arguing about the resultant complex. History is not a chemist's tube. What we can do is only to analyse the process with the given forces and later developments. Still this much can be said in answer. The existence of a communist pre-supposes a certain development of the proletariat. If it had been there it would have fought both against the British and the Indian feudal forces. There would have been no question of choice. Such hypothetical questions can best find their answer in the "1848 of Europe".

75. *Do we deplore British conquest?—effects of it—first Company loot—reasons for Crown control in 1858—British Imperialism expands from the Indian base—commercial and legal forms of loot—why British writers expose British doings in India—sum total of the results of British rule.*

Does this mean we do not deplore the conquest of India by Britain? No, it does not mean that. Because in the course of

ordinary development, in the absence of British conquest the bourgeois forces would have been generated within the womb of Indian feudalism, the class struggle would have been fought out as in Europe. If not that we would have gone through a Chinese experience which would also have been far better than ours. As it is we have a single efficient Imperialist militarism in power, superimposing Capitalist relations of the market on a peasantry that carries on production under feudal conditions. The result is the absence of the development of the productive forces, a double exploitation of the masses and complete disarming of the people. We deplore British conquest as much as we deplore the desire of some revolutionaries to go back to the pre-British days.

The first period of the conquest of India by the East India Company, was a period of indiscriminate and unlimited loot of wealth. It was not the indirect loot carried on under the cover of commercial relations between a conquered agrarian country and an industrial country. But it was a direct one in such an open manner that the proprietors of the East India Company, when they saw their servants coming loaded with wealth, demanded an increase of their dividends, and the House of Commons rushed in to lay claim to all the territorial possessions of the Company and the gains accruing therefrom in 1773. By 1858 it was clear that the possibilities of such a loot had decreased. The capitalist crises had begun to make its appearance in a regular manner in Europe, the first to experience them being England, calling for more systematic export of goods to foreign markets and their exploitation than had hitherto been done. We have seen elsewhere how the production of iron and steel jumped in England from 18 million tons in 1840-50 to 32.5 million in 1850-60. It may well be remembered that the system of guaranteeing fixed returns on railway capital invested by British companies, and the construction of railways begun during this period, were in a measure the reason of this development of British steel production.

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The revolutions of 1848 were the outcome of the crises of 1840 but England was saved from the intensity of the storm, as India was already serving her as a safety valve. As the bourgeoisie developed and obtained control over the Parliamentary machine and ousted the land owners from the State power, the bourgeois power began to grow more systematic and organised. The vast wealth taken from India had given a stable basis of liquid Capital to British industries, but a disturbed state of affairs in India, and

unregulated rapacious Company control, wherein the traders were directly administrators both of the political rule and commercial development, was not in accordance with the idea of a bourgeois State, which in outward form appears to be above classes and therefore functions better in the business of deception. The time was ripe economically and politically to constitute India into a State subordinate to the British Imperialist State. The 1857 War only served as a very suitable pretext.

The second use to which India was put was to serve as the eastern base for the British militarism. As yet the British State had not developed fully into a militarist State with a regular standing army and vast armaments. This development took place in Britain later than in the other continental countries. (Reference Exh: P 898). One of the reasons I think is that much of its work of combatting the advance of its rivals was done through the armies raised in India. The Imperialist expansion of England, unlike that of other countries, proceeded from its richest colony India, after it had struck its roots there on a sufficiently large scale. The penetration in South Africa, China, Egypt, Persia etc. was done from the Indian base, on a large scale. The expenditure on such wars till 1857 was 35 crores besides the regular normal military expenditure of 15 crores a year. Mr. Buchanan, a member of the Welby Commission, in his report says, "The military strength of India is the main factor in the strength of our Empire in the East." As an example of the aid that these forces render, he says, "Nearly 6,000 British troops on a complete war footing were rapidly despatched at a critical moment from India to Natal; others have followed, and Indian regiments now garrison Mauritius, Ceylon, Singapore and other places." (He is referring here to the time of the Boer War). It is perhaps this factor which hid from the European world that England had a standing army on the Indian soil which led Marx to believe that Britain as such had not developed into a militarism, though Britain had become the biggest colonial power before 1880 while the other continental powers only began after 1880.

When the military dictatorship of the British traders was divorced in outward form from their economic functions, the dictatorship assumed the form of Government established by law in India. The openly violent expropriation of Indian wealth was clothed in the peaceful forms of commercial relations and bourgeois property laws. As the British bourgeoisie did not intend to completely destroy the feudal system, since it was the only class with which it could enter into an alliance of exploitation of the peasantry, the

basic property laws whether of Hindu or Mohammadan feudal systems, were left as they were. But the new ideology of the bourgeois property relations and status appeared through the new procedure, the Law of Torts, Civil Procedure and even new values of 'truth'—the bourgeois truth appearing through the Evidence Act. Bourgeois "law" was raised above society, all were equal before law was the new principle substituted for the old feudal principle of rank and status holding their own in all spheres. This subtle form of bourgeois dictatorship, which in the last instance is the arbiter and sanction of the law, serves to partially obliterate the class character of the State. But in India the Imperialist nature of the State could not be hidden successfully, due to the national factor, which keeps alive the differences.

The exploitation of India by the British bourgeoisie has been exposed in great detail with voluminous facts and figures by the Indian bourgeoisie and also by many liberal bourgeois intellectuals in England. Especially before the last quarter of the 19th century, when capitalism had not yet become Imperialism, when peaceful trade and commercial exploitation of markets was predominantly the policy of capitalism, when heavy industry and export of capital had not become dominant in England, you could see many champions of India in the House of Commons, indignant at the policy of conquest, at the forward policy of the Afghan frontier, men who could spend years in impeaching Hastings, and shouting themselves hoarse over the robbery of the *begums*. At that time very interesting works, exposing the violence and loot as practised by the British, could and did appear. But later on, when capitalism had become Imperialism living on the incomes derived from export of capital to the colonies, the spring source of liberalism dried up. India became an All-Party or non-Party question—even for the Labour Party. Because every section of the bourgeoisie including the upper strata of Labour became a partner in the profits from the colonies. That is why the best exposures of British writers have appeared mostly before 1900 and some till 1914, but rarely after that. The Indian bourgeoisie awakened after the war. Hence its activity in this matter belongs to the post-war period.

The sum total of results of British rule according to us (as expressed in the Colonial Thesis of the C. I. Exh. P. 90) are: the handicrafts and manufactures were destroyed first by extra economic force and violent destruction and a vast number of artisans were thrown on the land. The character of agriculture was thoroughly changed. The growing of crops was subjected to

the needs of the exchange market and the peasant economy was brought within the orbit of capitalist market. The peasant still remained burdened with feudal slavery, while his productive activity became economically subject to the capitalist market. This double burden impoverished him completely. Absence of industry gave him no outlet. Land values and rents rose excessively. Indebtedness of the peasantry increased and the number of parasites feeding on him grew (some of these things are also set down in the Resolution on Peasants in the general political resolution of the W.P.P. vide Exh. P 135 and also in some of the articles in the Masses). The low level of productive forces, the poor national income was burdened with an expensive bureaucracy and disproportionate militarism, the resulting discrepancy being filled up by high taxation and public debt. Famines, poverty, illiteracy, disease and high death rate, all leading to pacifism and mysticism from the petty bourgeois to the peasantry, are the heritage of British rule in India.

76. *Our reasons and policy of national struggle—gains of the British bourgeoisie from India—what loss our independence will cause to them—the basis of some of our resolutions.*

Everybody in India and outside agrees with the fact that we are poor and undeveloped, and everybody agrees that we must develop and not remain poor. Even the Government says (vide its Annual Reports to Parliament) that India is poor, that Indians should ultimately get complete political power, and that the British shall have ultimately to relinquish control over this poor ward entrusted to their charge by Providence working through the pious souls of the East India Company and its artillery fire. We communists also say that it is high time that this excellent guardian policeman should give up our necks to ourselves. So every one seems to be agreed—and yet it does not happen. Because in the first place it is a thing that does not "happen" but is "brought about." Secondly because the chorus of agreement is false. It is false because the problem as stated looks like a problem to be solved upon an all-class agreement. While in fact it is a problem of class struggle and national struggle. It is a problem of contradictions embracing the very basis of the structure. The contradictions or the class struggle is not created as is alleged in the Crown complaint.

The first contradiction is between the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie and those of British Imperialism. The natural ambition

of the Indian bourgeoisie is to develop the productive forces of India, that is building up industries. The desire of the British bourgeoisie is to employ the Indian masses as markets for its goods, prevent industrialisation and the growth of the industrial bourgeoisie. Thus the two ambitions conflict and they certainly are not the creation of communists. This conflict affects the other classes also. Without industrialisation, the growing petty bourgeois intellectuals cannot find their living. Without industrialisation the pauperised peasant cannot find a place to sell his labour power. Without the destruction of Imperialism the peasantry cannot be saved from the burden of maintaining a costly foreign bureaucracy. Without industrialisation the working class cannot grow. All this gives birth to the necessity of a united front against Imperialism, to an intensified national struggle.

British Imperialism has invested in India about 1,000 million pounds, in industries, railways, shipping, mines, banks, Government and Municipal Loans. Total British investments outside the United Kingdom are computed to be 4,000 million pounds; India therefore holds one-fourth of the total exported capital of Great Britain. More British capital is invested in India than any other single country. The gain from India to Britain accruing in the [form of profits over imports and exports, over investments, currency manipulations, payments of services etc. are said to be roughly 150 million pounds per year. This is only 4 per cent of the total national income of Great Britain. If it is such a small part then why is it that British Imperialism holds so tenaciously to India? The importance of this 150 million pounds drained from India cannot be realised by comparing it to the national income. The question is, who realises this money and how is it employed? It is the income of the uppermost bourgeoisie in England. The incomes of this class being large, their consumption percentage is low, I should take it to be one-third. The question would arise—are all these investments, the sources of its parasitic income necessarily held by the big bourgeoisie? Anyone who knows how high is the modern concentration of capital will not doubt that it is so held. It is essentially so in England. There you do not get that kind of joint stock company development as in America or Germany, in which the stock is split into millions of small units. So very little stock is held by the small well-to-do petty bourgeoisie. Secondly England with its small area, the incomplete liquidation of the big land-holders and a very old capitalism has a very high percentage of the proletarian population and no rich farmer class of any considerable size. It is the farmer class which forms the big strata of petty bourgeois

small holders of foreign stock in other countries. It is not there in England. Whatever small share may have been so long held by the aristocracy of labour and the middle class of the "offices" has been now thrown off by them or expropriated from them in the last ten years of severe fluctuations and crisis. Hence almost all the holdings are concentrated in the hands of the big bourgeoisie. To consider that two-thirds of their incomes become savings, that is, reinvested to draw more surplus values, is not an exaggeration. Even if the whole sum of national savings of 500 million pounds is distributed over the whole national income (4,000 millions) which means that even the two million unemployed are supposed to have savings, the percentage comes on the average to 12.5. To consider that a bourgeois drawing over 2,000 pounds a year saves two-thirds would not be much wide of the mark. With those who draw hundreds of thousands, the percentage would run still higher. The Liberal Industrial Inquiry says, "That something like three-fourths of the new capital invested in industry is set aside out of profits". So out of the 150 millions from India, the British bourgeoisie can be said to reinvest as its national savings 100 millions. The annual national savings made available for re-investment are 500 millions (Ibid page 108). Thus the Indian drain contributes 20 per cent to the annual basic capital of the British bourgeoisie. I think this is what Lord Rothermere had in his mind when he said that England would lose 20 per cent of her national income by the loss of India. With the usual method of capitalism, he described the loss of the bourgeoisie as the loss of the whole nation. India is the brightest jewel in the British Crown because no other single country contributes such a large bright block of capital to the British bourgeoisie. The loss of India does not mean only the loss of these 150 million pounds. India is the basis of Britain's eastern militarism and trade. India maintains an efficient military machine for the British bourgeoisie. (That it is so can be seen from the latest speech of Sir Samuel Hoare). Such extra expenditure after deducting what may be considered the normal for Indian purposes would amount to 25 crores of rupees per year. But more than this is the question of the threat of trouble in England itself, that would be given by the loss of India. The loss means the beginning of the disintegration of the Empire, and the fall of the Empire means the almost complete collapse of world capitalism. Apart from this ultimate release of vast revolutionary momentum there will be serious complications immediately in the British internal situation. The Indian imports provide work for about a million workers in England. I arrive at this figure in the following manner. The

total number of workers in England is 16 million. Commodity production in England is mainly for exports. We find that 70 percent of textile production is exported; of coal 33 p. c.; of iron and steel 50 per cent. These three are the staple and exporting industries. (vide the Report of the Liberal Industrial Commission 1926, pages 334 and 343). In the minor industries also not less than 25 per cent product is exported. (L. R. D. Monthly Circular 1926). I therefore consider 50 per cent of the whole productive capacity being engaged in production for exports that is 8 million workers. The Indian share of British exports for 1925 was 86.1 million pounds. This would absorb 900,000 workers for Indian exports. This number does not include the British workers engaged in the sea-borne export trade from India, nor the intellectual proletariat engaged in the Clearing House operations of Indian financial transactions with the whole world, all of which pass through London. I would therefore put generally one million British workers as being provided for by the monopoly of Indian trade which would be wiped out almost entirely by the loss of India. It means the revolutionary pressure of one-sixteenth population on the British bourgeoisie. Revolutionary India nationalising all the capital invested here means the expropriation of 1/17th part of the total effective capital of the British bourgeoisie.

77. *All classes here tend to gain from independence— question of revolution raised by whom?— the state of British Imperialism— is it democracy or dictatorship— the apparatus of force— its costs— force matched against whom?*

Though all classes in India apparently stand to gain by carrying out the struggle for independence from Imperialism, there is another set of contradictions within India itself, which prevents an all-class front against Imperialism. Indian society like any other society (quite contrary to the statements of the Prosecution) is divided into classes. We have the bourgeoisie living on profits produced by the workers. We have the land-owners living on the rents from the peasantry. The function of these classes is to exploit the working class and peasantry. The bourgeoisie is opposed to Imperialism so far as it is deprived of the 150 crores of rupees drained off by England annually and prevented from increasing the productive forces in the country and enriching itself more. The big land owning class grumbles but is not opposed to Imperialism like the bourgeoisie, because it is itself a creation of the

British Raj. The former land-owning class being wiped out in the wars, the present land-owning class which was at first merely the tax-gatherers' class, was confirmed in its allotments as land-owners in order to form a solid class supporter of British Imperialism. (Vide Reference Ex. P. 759). The interests of both these classes conflict with those of the working-class and the peasantry. We have a class struggle as in every other country. The working class and peasantry have thus to fight out a class struggle and a national struggle. For the workers and peasantry the struggle against Imperialism is as much necessary as the struggle against their immediate oppressors, the land-owners and capitalists. They have to carry out both at one and the same time. The communists stand for revolutionary struggle against Imperialism and Indian capitalism and feudalism. We do not believe that the Indian bourgeoisie, though it stands to gain by independence, is going to fight for it. Therefore the workers aided by the peasantry and the revolutionary elements of the petty bourgeoisie have to carry out the task, because the fear of the social revolution ultimately throws the national bourgeoisie into the arms of Imperialism.

When we present the question of the national struggle as being a part of the revolutionary class struggle, to be carried out by the working class and peasantry under the leadership of the working class as organised in the Communist Party, we are said to be talking prescribed Moscow receipts, having no relation in fact to the needs of the Indian situation. We are said to be importing a class war in a country where there is none and where there is love between all classes. We are said to be unnecessarily importing the question of revolution when everything seems to be attainable by the conference method". We maintain that the question of revolution is not unnecessarily and artificially raised by us. It is there in actual life in India. The class struggle exists, it is not created. We have seen from other countries how all the tenets of Marxism and Leninism are derived from and applied to the existing conditions of the social struggle. India is no exception.

No one in India, not even the most moderate nationalist requires to be convinced of the fact that the State in India is a class State of the British bourgeoisie maintained by force. (Even Mahatma Gandhi, the advocate of the conference method, now-a-days admits that the army in India is an army of occupation). The main function of Government, as is always stated by the bourgeoisie, is maintenance of law and order. The maintenance is done by force;

it is of law that is existing property relations, the Imperialist—capitalist system; of order that is the peaceful conditions guaranteeing a continuity of present relations to facilitate the process of exploitation. What is the cost borne by the masses of this apparatus of force? The whole State being an organ of the dictatorship of one class against another, all the revenues raised by it can be said to be its maintenance cost.

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The revenue raised by the Central organ of the Imperialist dictatorship was Rs. 127,22,77,920 and by the subordinate provincial organs Rs. 93,29,54,406. The dictatorship of the modern bourgeoisie undertakes directly some of the economic functions of the bourgeoisie, which have become so wide and so necessary for all classes and at the same time so vitally necessary for the maintenance of the dictatorship that it becomes dangerous to leave them in the hands of the bourgeoisie with its internal competition and contradictions. Such departments are the posts and telegraph, the railways, customs, land revenue, income-tax etc. For example, if the assessment and realisation of income-tax were left to a limited company it may collapse due to the contradictions amongst the bourgeoisie itself. Therefore the bourgeoisie voluntarily surrenders the functions to its own organ, which is not so fluctuating as a limited company but for all purposes subject to their control like their own company. It is not that the bourgeoisie cannot manage these departments. The railway systems of America and England are privately owned. But in times of war, the State, in order to protect the bourgeoisie from itself, is forced to take over their control. The wireless telegraphic system of the British Empire is managed privately by the big combine, the Imperial and International Communications Limited, formed of 12 separate companies with a capital of 30 million pounds. In spite of this the State has to take control in times when ordinary profit-making competitive management becomes dangerous. The British dictatorship in India, being every day threatened with the revolutionary movement and international complications, is increasing its hold on several vital services and undertakes many economic functions which in a normal bourgeois State are left to the bourgeoisie itself. The latest example is its refusal to give to a private company, the firm of the Tatas, the institution of the air-service for internal purposes in India. So from the revenue budgets, if we omit the ordinary capitalist functions discharged by the State and those that are undertaken in order to realise money for the apparatus of force, the State is reduced in its essence to a dictatorship based on force

composed of the Military, Police and Bureaucracy. (The judiciary is included in the bureaucracy.) The Central and Provincial expenditure on its essential apparatus of force in 1927-28 was distributed thus :

		1927—1928.	
Money spent on the machinery of force behind the Dictatorship.		Central. Budget	Provincial. Budget.
General administrative Bureaucracy	..	1,72,17,998	11,17,70,093
Pensioned Bureaucracy	...	2,79,14,206	3,80,54,880
Military	... ..	56,33,94,893	...
Police	... ..	68,99,654	11,55,00,135
Prisons	... ..	34,96,100	2,32,57,545
Bourgeois Justice	... ..	13,90,211	5,68,06,953
Political (Interstate relations)	...	1,57,74,479	...
Frontier bribery and Force	...	2,49,68,001	...
Total		66,10,55,542	34,53,88,706
Total revenues Central and Provincial		...	220,52,32,326
Spent on exercise of undiluted violence (Central and Provincial)		...	100,64,44,248

These figures are for a year which was quite normal. In times of popular upheavals the expense on State violence increases. It would seem that one hundred crores for a population of 24 crores and seventy lakhs in British India is not much. But such a comparison is misleading. The comparison can properly be made only in relation to the effective mass of the population that comes out on the streets for active participation in the political movement, such as demonstrations, raids, breaking of laws, political strikes etc. In British India the population of both the sexes between the ages of 15 and 50, the period of possible effective action is about 124 millions, a little over half the total. But the whole of this never takes part even in the most intense period of agitation. A large part remains sympathetic and benevolently neutral. The big bourgeoisie and land-owners go on the side of Government. The richer sections of the petty bourgeoisie in the towns and villages do not come out on the streets. In 1930, Bombay and Calcutta were the hottest places of Civil Disobedience, raids and street demonstrations. I do not think that at the most intense moment more than one lakh of persons took part even in a

demonstration pure and simple or active sympathetic raiding party. That means 1/6th of the active population, taking 6 lakhs of the age between 15—50 and nearly 1/12th of the total of the city of Bombay. By this we may say that in the whole of India the machinery of violence of the British dictatorship had to contend against the unarmed activity, even taking it to be fraught with the threat of mild violence as in the agrarian areas, of about 20 million persons. The violence of the British dictatorship is maintained at the cost of 100 crores of rupees per year armed with the deadliest mechanism of destruction against the potential unarmed violence of 20 million workers, peasants and youths.

78. *Share of the cost of the machinery of force in the total State expenditure—Dictatorship begins to assume constitutional forms—consolidation of the bourgeoisie—association of the feudal class in its work.*

Is the British dictatorship maintained and financed by a contribution of "equal sacrifices for all"? The yearly Government of India publications give very graphically how each rupee of the total Central and Provincial revenue is made up. It shows that 74 per cent of the revenue is made up of:

Customs.....	.22
Railways...	.17
Land Revenue.....	.15
Excise.....	.09
Salt.....	.04
Irrigation...	.04
Forest.....	.03

-74

Half of the Customs revenue is from taxation of imports of commodities consumed by the masses. Thus the bureaucracy and machinery of violence is fed by the working class and peasantry. Out of the total revenues of 220.52 crores we have to omit the revenue amounting to 45.63 crores derived by purely capitalist commercial activities of the State in the matter of railways and irrigation for which separate capital accounts are maintained. There remain then 174.89 crores for maintenance of the functions of the dictatorship. From this a part is allotted to clothe the dictatorship and its fundamental basis of unrestricted violence in diverse

deceitful forms, such as the "democratic" institutions, departments of education, religion etc. The remaining 101 crores, i. e. 57.5 per cent is spent on its organs of force and bureaucracy.

The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in its most subtle form becomes a Parliamentary democracy, which serves to create an illusion that the masses are being governed, not by a class but by themselves according to their own will as expressed through the ballot-box. In India the British dictatorship had no reason to undertake such a deception because immediately after the violent conquest, the military occupation and forcible imposition of new capitalist relations, the whole country was plunged in a social chaos. It took some time for the new forces to spring up and gather strength. The Civil War in America, 1860-65, produced a cotton famine in England, which made the textile owners look up for cultivating surer fields in their own Empire for cotton. The cotton boom affected India and gave impetus to the cultivation of commercial crops. Under the moving forces of the Imperialist capital exported to India, the means of communications linking the internal markets to the seas, the demand for raw materials for factories, created a new bourgeoisie with an International sense of the stock exchange market. The factories gave birth to a new working class, concentrated in large numbers, selling its Labour power to capital having nothing to lose but chains, disciplined by the machine and soldered into a strong class by the interdependence of its cooperative actions in the productive process. The factory owner and the factory worker were the inevitable creation of Imperialism. The Indian bourgeoisie arose slowly from 1860 to 1914, and the world war gave it a consciousness of strength. The result of the birth of the Indian bourgeoisie was the birth of the demand to convert the undiluted violent dictatorship into one functioning under the cover of Parliamentary democracy, with less rigour and with the consent of the Indian exploiters. The first demand was one of the rights of criticism of the severity of the dictatorship. The second was for "the association of Indians in the work of administration of the country" i. e. the association of the Indian bourgeoisie in the work carried on by the dictatorship.

The British bureaucracy in India was not that solid disciplined frame which it is today. At first it suffered from individual deviations, a conflict between members of the Viceroy's Executive Councillors or a conflict of Provincial Government members disobeying the Central. Then there was the second group of internal conflicts, that between the bureaucracy in England and the bureaucracy in India, which took the form of the question of

Parliament's control over the Indian affairs. Both these conflicts were settled by 1894. When Lord Mayo's Government grumbled about the introduction of the bourgeois legal system without knowing from the Councils of 1861 their opinion, he was told, "The Government established in India is from the nature of the case subordinate to the Imperial Government at home and no Government can be subordinate unless it is within the power of the superior Government to order what is to be done or left undone." (Montagu Chelmsford Report.) The dictatorship of the Imperialist bourgeoisie functions through the Parliament, whose Executive organ is the British Cabinet. A mitigation of the complete control of the Parliament means a mitigation of the dictatorship. "If the control they (the British Government) possess were to be in any respect less than complete, the power of Parliament over Indian questions would be necessarily annulled," wrote Disraeli's Government. The last occasion when the Indian bureaucracy tried to direct affairs according to its own sense of the need of the situation was in 1894, when the cotton duties were imposed against the growth of the Indian textile bourgeoisie (which later on was one of the causes of the 1925 Textile Strike in Bombay and partially that of 1928 about which evidence has been led and to which I shall come later on). When some prominent members of the bureaucracy differed, they were told by Sir Henry Fowler "to place their resignations in the hands of the Viceroy. The supremacy of Parliament over the Government of India and that of the Central Government over Local Governments were thus finally established.

These conflicts and objections about some separate measures being dictated from England were not due to any pious desire to annul the dictatorship. It was due to the fear that a very severe administration of the dictatorship might lead to a revolt like that of 1857. Even after 1857, though there was no bourgeoisie yet born and the landlords were completely bought over, the peasantry, wherever it was being pauperised, had continued to revolt as in the Déccan Riots of 1870. Hence the Indian bureaucracy wanted to institute a new policy. The second reason is that every bureaucracy is bound to overreach its limitations, forgetting, especially when it is in a formative stage, that it rests on the support of the class which has raised it to power to work out and administer in accordance with the interest of that class and not according to its "dictates of conscience."

In spite of this the rise of the bourgeoisie in India, the rush of the European bourgeoisie towards the colonies and partition of the world, the American Civil War, the emancipation of the serfs in Russia compelled from the hands of

Czarist dictatorship, were too great events, not to force the British bourgeoisie to think of finding a class in Indian society itself on which to rely for the continuance of its dictatorship. "Above all the terrible events of the mutiny brought home to men's minds the danger arising from the entire exclusion of Indians from association with the legislation of the country," so says the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. Thus it was the revolutionary action of the peasantry (though under the leadership of the reactionary feudal lords) that helped the feudal landlords, its own oppressors, and the growing bourgeoisie to become associates in the work of the dictatorship. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 and further that of 1892 gave the Indian bourgeoisie a right to tell British Imperialism how badly the dictatorship stood in the way of its development. The Indian bourgeoisie not having any means to tell this more plainly had started the Indian National Congress in 1884. When the working class in Europe had already produced Marx and the First International, had gone through the experiences of the Commune and was now going to found the Second International, we had no proletariat at all. A group of educated petty bourgeois were asking for increasing association of Indians in the administration of the dictatorship of Imperialism when the Paris Commune had already given the call to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

79. *Development of the radical bourgeois and petty bourgeoisie—the influence of 1905—attitude of the Dictatorship—evolving into a constitutional autocracy—difference between our "Democratic Dictatorship" and their "Constitutional Dictatorship."*

The developments after 1892 were far more serious. There were severe famines leading to the expropriation of the peasantry. The petty bourgeois youths, unable to find much outlet in the very slow growth of the minor industries, took to terrorism. The Continent of Europe was threatened with a severe crisis. The British bourgeoisie itself was in a crisis. The result was the Curzonian regime, the swing of the Indian bourgeoisie to the Left under pressure from the petty bourgeoisie. The Indian National Congress adopted the resolution for Swaraj. The Boycott movement arose as a protest against the suppression of the growth of the Indian bourgeoisie. The Montagu Report while referring to this period says that the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 was a contributory factor in the movement. The Russo-Japanese War in 1905 led to the 1905 Russian Revolution.

But Mr. Montagu does not say that *it* had any influence and he is right. There was no proletariat in India sufficiently class conscious yet to pick up the ideological radiation of the 1905 Revolution of Russia. Only the petty bourgeoisie had arisen to national consciousness and it naturally picked up the influence of its own class, that is the admiration for the rise of the Japanese bourgeoisie.

What was the attitude of the Imperialist Dictatorship to the rising consciousness of the Indian bourgeois and petty bourgeois ranks? It tried to suppress the revolutionary pressure of the petty bourgeoisie by repression and to buy over the feudal landlords and the upper bourgeoisie to the support of the dictatorship. When we communists use the language of the class struggle of the workers and the class alliance of the bourgeoisie with Imperialism we are said to be talking a language not accepted by responsible sane constitutionalists. But the evidence of the late Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India would show differently. Writing about the idea behind the Morley-Minto Reforms, he says "The problem which Lord Minto's Government set themselves to solve was how to fuse in one single Government the two elements which they observed in the origin of British power in India. They hoped to blend the principle of autocracy derived from the Moghul emperors and Hindu kings with the principle of constitutionalism derived from the British Crown and Parliament, to create a constitutional autocracy." The Prosecution in this case have several times ridiculed our slogan of "Democratic Dictatorship" (vide the Crown Counsel's Address page 7). Will they now laugh at this excellent representative of British Imperialism when he is speaking of creating constitutional dictatorship? Perhaps they may, seeing that the writer is dead and no longer a Secretary of State for India. But Mr. Montagu was quite right and frank in using the phrase "constitutional autocracy" and so are we. What is the difference between our 'Democratic Dictatorship' and Mr. Montagu's 'Constitutional Autocracy' or 'Dictatorship'? As he says, the British Government in India was composed of two principles. The principle of autocracy, which means the rule of force unrestricted by law, which under a feudal monarchy is open and unmitigated by any other element, and therefore "derived from Moghul emperors and Hindu kings". The second was the "principle of constitutionalism." It means the "rule of force" appearing as a rule of "law" or "a constitution", which is generally a form of the bourgeois dictatorship, and therefore "derived from the British Crown and Parliament." Under the bourgeois rule the task of administering this deception of the rule of constitution is generally handed over to the petty bourgeoisie

and even sometimes to a section of workers as in England and there the blending is easy. But it is difficult in a colonial country. There the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie are contradictory to those of the national bourgeoisie. The latter is not interested in administering the "unrestricted rule of force by Imperialism" in the guise of a constitution, unless it is surrendered a share, which the Imperialist bourgeoisie is unwilling to do. Hence the Morley-Minto problem was to find "a special blending" that is to keep the rule of the Imperialist bourgeoisie unrestricted and yet get it administered by a class which will not conflict with bourgeois Imperialist interests, and succeed in creating the illusion of a Constitution. Autocracy was to be a reality, and the Constitution a mere "principle." The autocracy of the Indian feudal kings was taken over by the Crown of the British bourgeoisie; now was the time for the "principle" of constitutionalism, the illusion to flow out from that Crown. To whom? To those "derived from the Moghul and the Hindu kings," that is to the feudal Nawabs, taluqdars and land-holders. "Constitutional autocracy" was a dictatorship of the British bourgeoisie administering as a Constitution of the Indian feudal class. It was time for the British king to appear in an Indian prince's dress to allay the revolt. He did it by the Morley-Minto Reforms. Mr. Montagu says "They anticipated that the aristocratic element in the society and the moderate men, for whom there was no place in Indian politics would range themselves on the side of the Government and oppose any further shifting of the balance of power and any attempt to democratise Indian institutions." (Mr. Montagu's soul may now look with satisfaction on the Round Table Conference).

This shows the difference between our Democratic Dictatorship and the Constitutional Dictatorship of the Morley-Minto Reforms. Ours is a Democracy for the proletarians and a dictatorship against the aristocratic element in society and the moderate men. Theirs is a Constitution for the feudal and now for the bourgeois class and the Dictatorship against the masses. You can not laugh at our terminology, for thereby you laugh at your own bourgeois Dictatorship. Now at least the Prosecution will not argue about a "Government established by law." They are of course at liberty to argue about their "Constitutional Dictatorship." But they cannot say it is democratic, as Mr. Montagu says "It is to prevent any attempt to democratise."

80. *The formula of August 1917—the hoodwinking inquiry—1919 Reforms—wide basis of class alliance.*

While trying to veil the rule of force with a Constitution giving the reactionary feudal landlords the opportunity to associate

with the work of British Imperialism, the furies of the Dictatorship were let loose against the radical wing of the petty bourgeoisie, the cases of Savarkar and Tilak being the most famous of them. The violence of the Imperialist Dictatorship against the Press, Demonstrations and Assemblies was sanctified as the administration of law by the Press Act (1910), The Seditious Meetings Act (1907 and 1911), The Criminal Law Amendment Act (1913) etc. The radical Press was suppressed and the heavy hand of repression stifled the bourgeois national movement till the war. The constitutional garment of the Dictatorship however had given no shelter to the bourgeoisie which was developing. The war boom gave the bourgeoisie a new strength, and even inside the Constitutional Dictatorship of the Imperialists and the zemindars they penetrated with a desire to expose it, not for the benefit of the working-class and peasantry, but for their own class. Amongst the non-official element in the Councils, the land-holders had nearly 70 per cent of the seats between 1909 and 1916, the rest going to the legal profession and others, that is the Indian bourgeoisie. By 1917 the land-holders lost much ground "to the commercial interest," and the Indian bourgeois and petty bourgeois interests began a mighty clamour not for a revolution but for a reformed Constitution. The Imperialist Dictatorship was engaged in a death struggle with another Imperialism. At first it totally denied the right to ask for a "Democratic Constitution," for Home Rule. Next when it found that the times had advanced beyond such Czarist outlook, and that a mass revolution was maturing, the Imperialist Dictatorship offered to the bourgeoisie association in its work. In 1917 when the rumblings of agrarian revolt were being heard, in the words of Mr. Montagu, "A ruling prince (feudalism), a Lieutenant Governor (bureaucracy of the Dictatorship) and an Indian ex-Member of the Council (Indian bourgeoisie) attended the Imperial Conference and shared "in the innermost deliberations of the Government of the Empire," shared in the innermost conspiracies of the Imperialist Dictatorship. But when the footman's stool, given to the Indian bourgeoisie at this Conference did not satisfy it, (about which there was a lot of row in the papers), the King Emperor was called to aid. The pronouncement of 20th August 1917 was made containing that long-winded formula, "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government." The formula served its purpose of silencing the Left Wing growth of the petty bourgeois and bourgeois sections. The leader of the Left, Mr. Tilak, congratulated His Majesty on the pronouncement

by the Gangapur telegram and promised "responsive cooperation" with the Imperialist Dictatorship. The formula, like a winding staircase, set the petty bourgeois Leftists on the "upward" path rising to the tops, where the golden seats of the bureaucracy appeared to lie, but giving them no opportunity to occupy the wide expanse of the wealthy plains around. The formula raised their hopes but did not widen their share in the exploited wealth of the country.

The pronouncement and the Reforms Inquiry was a "war measure" in order to keep something before the people in India till the crisis of war had been tided over. Mr. Montagu puts it quite frankly in his diary in which he says "I have set the politicians thinking of nothing else but my inquiry". Only he told the truth after his death when it was of no use to us.

The reforms of 1919 widened the basis from which the Imperialist Dictatorship hoped to draw its supporters. So long the land-holders predominated, now the predominance was given to the bourgeoisie, wherever it had grown during the war period. The upper strata of the intelligentsia, income tax payers, a section of the richer peasant petty bourgeoisie were enfranchised and given the majority in the Provincial Councils (70 per cent of the total seats). This class formed 28 per cent (6,375,000) of the total population of the eight provinces (excluding Burma), in 1921, (227,238,000) vide Simon Commission Report page 191. In the Central Legislative Assembly the electoral roll is of 1½ millions, half a per cent in a population of 240 millions. The Simon Commission says "The adoption of the property qualification as a basis for franchise gave a predominance and sometimes a monopoly in the vote to certain classes of the population". In clear terms, it means, only the bourgeoisie, the land-owning class with a small section of the richer sectors of the petty bourgeois were enfranchised.

81. *Enfranchisement does not give power to the bourgeoisie over the machinery of force-voted and non-voted budgets—certification by the Viceroy—73 years of progress—Dictatorship the same.*

Enfranchisement is not really the indicator of how far the Imperialist Dictatorship is prepared to allow room for the colonial bourgeoisie to develop industrially and to subject the State to its class control, by which alone it can hope to develop. The interests

of the Imperialist bourgeoisie and those of the colonial bourgeoisie are inherently contradictory. Therefore the Imperialist Dictatorship cannot allow its final authority, its organs of force, of army, bureaucracy and finance to be delivered into the hands of the Indian bourgeoisie. So under the new and enlarged constitutional form of the Dictatorship, the essence of Dictatorship having remained the same, conflicts broke out between the Indian Bourgeoisie and British Dictatorship within the Constitution itself. In the first place the Indian bourgeoisie was not allowed a vote on some of the financial items in the Central and Provincial Budgets. The financial requirement of the supreme organ of force, the army, was beyond its vote. The pay and pensions, the appointments and control of the upper sections of the bureaucracy, the real bureaucracy that administers the Imperialist Dictatorship, were non-votable. The third big item that it could not touch was the income of the British bourgeoisie, (the debt charges), from its investments in Government Loans. The smaller organs of force like the Provincial police, jails and justice were made subject to the financial vote of the bourgeoisie. But even here control is nil. If we take the expenditure on the organs of the Dictatorship for the year 1927-28 (see para 77) we find that 31 per cent of it is voted and 69 per cent non-voted. In the second place, even in cases where the vote is allowed, the Provincial or Central Head of the Dictatorship can set aside the vote and certify the requirements of the State. In the first Assembly (1920-23) wherein the largest section of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois class did not take part, the Viceregal dictation of Lord Reading certified the enhancement of the Salt Duty, and the Princes' Protection Act (1922). Even the most loyal land-owning and upper bourgeoisie, which had its interests completely identified with those of Imperialism, had to refuse to pass the Finance Bill of 1923 on the Income Tax question. Its opinion was contemptuously thrown aside and the Bill was certified. In the second Assembly (1923-26), in which the bourgeoisie after liquidating the mass revolutionary movement outside, entered "to wreck the legislature from within", the Government demand for finances was rejected as a protest against the refusal to give responsible Government to the Indian bourgeoisie. The Finance Bill was certified again. In 1925, the bourgeoisie refused to pass the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Bill, directed against the middle class revolutionaries of Bengal. The Bill was certified. In the life of the fourth Assembly the whole country was put under the direct open rule of force of Martial Law and Ordinances, and all the cant of the rule of law and Constitution was thrown aside. In the matter of giving the Indian bourgeoisie a share in the 5250 key positions in the All-Indian Central bureau-

cracy that runs the Dictatorship, the Lee Commission held before the bourgeoisie a hope that its sons would have one half the posts in the Civil Service by 1939 and half in the police by 1949. After nine years of the working of the Constitution and "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to a progressive realisation of responsible Government," of which the Legislative Assembly was supposed to be the highest expression, the point to which the "self-governing" and "progressive realisation" of the honour and responsibility of the most honourable members of that august body had reached is reflected in a scene which shows the Imperialist Dictatorship in its most vivid colours.

D/- 23. 11. 31.

On 11th April 1929, the President of the Assembly, Mr. V. J. Patel, a fine specimen of the most class-conscious and clever bourgeois, after ruling out the Public Safety Bill (which later on became an Ordinance, vide Exh: P 2579) said, "I have received the following communication from His Excellency, the Viceroy and Governor General. (The message was received standing by the Assembly, except the members of the Congress Party who continued to sit in their places): Will the Hon'ble members kindly stand in their places?" Pandit Motilal Nehru said, "Is it your decision, Sir, that we should stand?" Mr. President: "Courtesy requires that we should stand." (The Assembly then received the message standing). And what was the message and how was it written? "In pursuance of section I, Edward Frederick Lindley, Baron Irwin, hereby require the attendance of the Legislative Assembly in the Assembly Chamber at 11 o'clock on Friday, the 12th April 1929." (Assembly proceedings, page 2992 dated 11-4-1929). There are supercilious Rai Bahadurs and Knights who return letters addressed to them, if their titles are not properly superscribed on the envelope; Hon'ble members frown if they are not called honourable; but their relation to the Dictatorship of Imperialism is that of livery servants. The dictatorship of the Barons of British industry refuses to recognise their honour, insists on the homage of standing even to the scrap of paper that is to be read, the scrap, which "hereby requires"—not requests—their attendance. The Indian bourgeoisie attended at 11 o'clock on 12th April 1929, on Baron Irwin, who tells them, "you have refused to consent voluntarily to the Public Safety Bill, to the deportation and suppression of revolutionaries. But the organs of force, the Army and Finance are in my hands and not yours. Therefore, I promulgate the Public Safety Ordinance. I require your attendance to hear this. You

can now go and protest if you please." The violent open dictatorship, clothed in the Councils Act of 1861, coloured with the attribute of election conferred on the Indian landowners and big bourgeoisie in 1892 and 1909 and promising to become gradually a responsible Government of the Indian bourgeoisie, remains in essence the same dictatorship after 73 years of "constitutional progress," a rule of force unrestricted by law, of force imposed by the barons of British industry on the Indian working class and peasantry, on the Indian bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie alike. The Parliament of the British bourgeoisie has issued four constitutions for India and in all the four the essence and organs of the dictatorship are left intact.

SECTION 2.—Relation of the Indian Bourgeoisie to the British Dictatorship: paras 82—89.

82. *Attitude of the bourgeoisie—early Home Rule demand—loyalty to the Empire in the war—boycott of the first Assembly—Swaraj Party and the second Assembly—difference between their entry in the Assembly and that of the Bolsheviks in the Duma—wrecking the Dictatorship by the constitutional vote.*

What is the attitude of the Indian bourgeoisie and land-owning classes to this rule of force established by conquest? Its attitude has varied from time to time, partly influenced by the attitude of Imperialism towards its economic ambitions and partly by the revolutionary pressure from the masses and the petty bourgeoisie. The Indian bourgeoisie as a force did not exist before the war. Whatever of it there was, was the small hive of merchants engaged in export and import trade closely bound up with the foreign exchange banks and houses. Under the shelter of the war it developed on an appreciable scale possessed of a considerable amount of mobile capital and reserves expropriated from the peasantry and workers by high prices and low wages. Even then it did not develop any revolutionary bias. Its highest demand was Home Rule, and not independence. It spoke of the Irish struggle and threatened to copy it. But at the same time in the next breath it promised five million soldiers to defend the Empire and Imperialism, if a promise of Home Rule came forth. The Irish resisted conscription and organised the insurrection and yet our petty bourgeois heroes had the impudence to give a threat of the Irish example while promising millions of peasants to fight the battle of British Imperialism. You

can see this attitude in the most radical leader of the petty bourgeoisie of the war days, Lokamanya Tilak, in his speech at the Provincial Conference in Belgaum in April 1916, on the "Loyalty Resolution." He says, "In order to strengthen and consolidate the British rule, we have shown our willingness to sacrifice to the utmost our blood and our purse." (page 405, Writings and Speeches, published by Ganesh & Co., 1919 Edition). "We never entertained the idea of severing the British connection." (Ibid page 409). In the weak stage of the bourgeoisie of the time and when the masses had not been drawn into revolutionary movement this was the only policy that could suit the objective forces. The eminence of Tilak does not lie in his ideals, which especially in the latter stages were not at all revolutionary, when it may be remembered that just at the time he was supporting the loyalty resolution, James Conolly was organising the working class for insurrection against British Imperialism and Lenin was calling upon the working class to turn the Imperialist war into a civil war. The eminence of this leader of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois class, apart from his personal qualities lay in organising and directing the petty bourgeois movement in the capacity of sacrifice and preventing the compromising upper bourgeoisie from sudden collapse before Imperialist diplomacy. There lies the difference between his leadership of the bourgeoisie and that of Gandhi. Under the pressure of the mass movement and the shock of the competition revived by the close of the war, the ruined petty bourgeois turned more to the Left. The war profits began to decline and the bourgeoisie sympathised with the Non-Cooperation Movement under the leadership of Gandhi. When the constitutional reforms of 1919 were instituted and the Legislative Assembly set up, the mass revolutionary forces were on the rise and the working of the constitutional dictatorship was boycotted by a large section of the petty bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie was as always split into sections, the big financiers and those whose interests were completely linked with those of Imperialism, entering the Assembly and the more class-conscious and radical section desiring an independent growth, remaining out though not participating in the mass movement. The first Assembly was elected by less than 25 per cent of the voters. Though the official figures showed 25 per cent, ten per cent would be nearer the truth as the Government exercised a considerable amount of force and compulsion in the rural areas on the voters. When the mass revolutionary pressure collapsed on the surrender of Gandhi under the pressure of the bourgeoisie and the land-owners, the bourgeoisie which was

so long coquetting with the Left abandoned the revolution and entered the Assembly and the Local Councils under the leadership of the Swaraj Party. A section of the petty bourgeoisie representing the interests of those who had not the high property qualifications of the franchise kept on the boycott solgan and organised as the "No-Changers". What did the bourgeois and petty bourgeois sections that entered the Assembly do? Was their entry the same as that of the Bolsheviks in the Czarist Duma after the failure of the 1905 revolution? We have seen the reasons which urged the Bolsheviks to enter the Duma. The revolutionary situation was no longer present. Therefore it was necessary to use the Czarist Duma for reorganising the forces under the cover of legality, and for keeping the antagonism of masses to Czarism alive by revolutionary propaganda through the Parliament. The Bolsheviks were carrying out revolutionary Parliamentarism and they themselves were a party of the working class. The Swarajists were not a revolutionary party of the working class. Therefore their fundamental notions of social progress which were based on the development of capitalism were not intrinsically opposed to those of the Imperialist Dictatorship, which in other words means that, in relation to the working class and peasantry, both stood for the continuance of the present property or social relations. Their mutual opposition lay in bourgeois competition which had a revolutionary content only in so far as it desired the displacement of the foreign bourgeoisie from the field of the exploitation of the toilers in India. But it was not the opposition as between two mutually exclusive classes like the working class and bourgeoisie. The necessary outcome of such a position is that at a certain stage, the Indian bourgeois and British Imperialist interests can combine and compromise without each deserting its own class interests. The Swarajists entered the Assembly with the idea of constitutional opposition and not revolutionary Parliamentarism. Their earliest programme when the Swarajists had not yet cooperated with the British Dictatorship stated that they wanted to enter the legislatures with the policy "of uniform, continuous and constant obstruction, to make Government through the Assembly and Councils impossible, if the Government rejected the National Demand". The conditional clause "if the Government rejected the National Demand" itself is sufficient to show the non-revolutionary and compromising attitude of the Swaraj bourgeoisie to the Assembly. The Government had rejected the National Demand when made by millions of the revolutionary masses. The Dictatorship of Imperialism was not going to concede to the Assembly heroes what they had rejected to the mass

pressure. Secondly the policy shows that it has failed or purposely refuses to grasp the essential forms of the dictatorship. The above clause implicitly concedes that Government is carried on through the Assembly and Councils. The Government or the Imperialist Dictatorship is carried on through its machinery of force, the Army, Police, Bureaucracy, Justice, Prisons etc. None of these were governed in any sense by the Assembly or the Councils. And in the final instance, even if they are, a Parliamentary vote does not displace the dictatorship of a class. The Swarajist policy was not revolutionary Parliamentarism once more because it did not aim at rallying the disorganised forces in the country by propaganda through the Assembly. As a party of the bourgeoisie it adopted all the forms of bourgeois respectability and set on the road to participating in the work of the Assembly, i. e. participating in the deception carried on by the Imperialist Dictatorship.

83. *No-changers and Left Liquidators not comparable and not correct — opposition gives way to cooperation and acceptance of office — by 1926 Indian bourgeoisie participates in the rule of Imperialism completely.*

Does this mean that the No-changers were right in sticking to the boycott, saying that they would not participate in the councils of the satanic Government? We do not believe so. Czarism was as much satanic if not more. Yet the Bolsheviki used the Duma not for getting concessions but for organisation. The No-changers in no sense can be compared to the Left Liquidators who stood for continuous boycott of the Duma, because the latter did not advocate the abandonment of revolutionary activity. Their leftist mistake lay in insisting on the liquidation of all legal work. The attitude of the No-changers, while retaining the pseudo revolutionary attitude to the Assembly, was one of ignominious capitulation, liquidating all forms of political activity.

Even this mild attitude of playing with radical ideas of obstruction and wrecking was soon given up. The National Demand was rejected and while speaking on it Pandit Moti Lal Nehru said, "We Swarajists have come here to offer our cooperation. If the Government will receive this cooperation, they will find that we are their men." (Vide reference Ext. P. 908 page 56). When the Budget of 1924—25 came before the Assembly, Pandit Nehru in moving its rejection said "My present motion has nothing to do with the wrecking or destroying policy of the Non-cooperators; and is in fact a perfectly constitutional and legitimate means of

drawing attention to the grievances of the country." So he had already agreed to abide by the Constitution, that is the deceptive form adopted by the Dictatorship. In 1925, Mr. C.R. Dass carried on negotiations with Lord Lytton, the Governor of Bengal, for the formation of a Ministry, thus trying to lend direct support to the administration of Imperialist force against the masses. Acceptance of office under the Constitution has no other meaning. Any Constitution formulated by the British Parliament can only be a Constitution which at its most liberal interpretation is a violent Dictatorship, hidden in constitutional illusions, of the interests of the Imperialist bourgeoisie predominantly and of the Indian bourgeoisie as its minor partner. These negotiations were cut off by the death of Mr. Dass. In July 1925 Pandit Nehru accepted membership of the Skeen Committee. Soon after Mr. V. J. Patel accepted the Presidentship of the Assembly and declared, "from this moment I cease to be a party man. I belong to all parties. If the Viceroy wants I will attend him ten times a day and my assistance will always be at the disposal of the Government officials." Unfortunately for all his attendance he got his "Speaker's Peerage" in the Delhi Prison in 1930 (as he himself said it). In 1926 in the Provinces, sections of the Swarajists broke away and formed the Responsivist Party who stood for accepting office. The first acceptance of office was begun in the Central Provinces by Mr. Tambe who joined the Governor's Executive Council and later on became an Acting Governor for a few months. Thus by 1926 representatives of all sections of the Indian bourgeoisie and the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois intellectuals and rich peasants were found accepting offices and actively aiding, advising and administrating, wherever they were allowed to do so, the violent rule of Imperialism against the Indian working class and poor peasantry, until it was again forced into opposition by the refusal of the Dictatorship to accommodate the Indian bourgeois interests within its economic framework.

84. *Simon Commission—repression and turn to the left—revival of boycott fails—the talk of "action" of the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C.*

The announcement of the Simon Commission and the refusal to give the Indian bourgeoisie any place in it, coupled with the adverse Currency Legislation and a coolness in the policy of protective tariffs for the Indian bourgeoisie on the part of the British bourgeoisie forced on the bourgeois parties to once again talk of fight and challenges. The Congress again called upon the

bourgeoisie to boycott the legislatures. But the rewards of participation in the work of the Dictatorship were too tempting and valiant bourgeois, out for Independence, poured in hundreds of telegrams asking the Congress, which again was getting under the influence of the radical petty bourgeoisie, to excuse him as the "business was important". The boycott according to the General Secretary of the Congress proved a thorough failure (Annual Report to the Calcutta A. I. C. C. 1928 December page 54). When the Government continued its attack on the growing revolutionary trend of the movement, the bourgeoisie was forced to arrange a stage play of sacrifice, fight and challenge by the imbecile method of boycott. The Working Committee met on 5th July 1929 and found that it was not powerful enough to fight those vested interests, who profited by the participation in the work of the Imperialist Dictatorship and who would be hit by the boycott. "In view of the importance of the question" it shelved the question to the A. I. C. C. (Bulletin No. 11 of 1929 page 122). The A. I. C. C. met and "in view of the importance of the question" left it to the Lahore Session of the full Congress to decide. The source of these hesitations lay in the secret negotiations carried on by the bourgeois leaders with the Government on the question of giving a few crumbs. Membership of the Assembly and Councils provided the best screen for such secret treaties and stage shows. The Congress deliberately and knowingly upheld such secret negotiations while it openly bluffed the people with revolutionary phrases. The servility of the leadership of the Congress to the Constitution of the Imperialist Dictatorship, which we have criticised all along and against which the Prosecution had taken cudgels on behalf of the Congress at the beginning of this case, can be shown in the scene of the A. I. C. C. Meeting in Bombay. Secret negotiations had taken place between Pandit Moti Lalji and the Viceroy who had announced the extension of the life of the Assembly. The nature of these negotiations was not known to all. Therefore the President of the Congress, Pandit Moti Lalji, who sat in the Assembly at the mandate of the Congress made a statement in the A. I. C. C. He said "the announcement made by the Governor General is very important and calls for a definite action on the part of the A. I. C. C. There are however certain facts which it is necessary for the A. I. C. C. to know before it can decide upon the action to be taken". After such a grave and brave call for action backed by certain facts, the President told that 'revolutionary' flock before him, "I feel I must not disclose those facts without making a reference to the Governor General." A very grim call for "definite action", and also "certain facts which it is necessary to know in order to decide upon the action". But the facts

cannot be disclosed. To whom? To the Congress that put the honourable gentleman in a position of power to know those certain facts. The facts are known to the Imperialist Dictator, who has perhaps already decided what action he should take against the Congress. The Congress is out for complete Independence and "definite action" but it must first have the gracious kind consent from the Dictatorship giving it permission to become brave. What was the resolution of the A.I.C.C. on this? "This Committee having heard the important pronouncement from the President"—(the important pronouncement that the Viceroy had made an important pronouncement, certain facts about which could not be disclosed)—"realises the gravity of the situation"—and having realised it the A. I. C. C. took the important and "definite action of authorising the Working Committee "to take such action as may be necessary." As regards what? "As regards the action to be taken by the members of the Congress Party in the Assembly and Provincial Councils." The A. I. C. C. takes definite action to authorise the Working Committee to take such action as may be necessary regarding the action to be taken by the members. Tremendous revolutionary action! And all based on facts that cannot be disclosed, without reference to the Viceroy. What men of action and profoundly complete independence?

This is the herd that is going to free the country. The uncompromising policy of Imperialism put an end to all this farce and under the revolutionary pressure of the masses, for which the working class and peasantry did not make any "reference to the Governor General," the constitutional Dictatorship had to shed its deceptive colours and come out with its full force of violence against the toilers. Thus ended the fourth constitutional bribery of the Indian bourgeoisie. The foundations of the fifth on the bones and blood of the heroic struggle of 1930 are now being laid to meet with what fate?

85. *Indian Bourgeoisie and British Imperialism ask us to follow the constitutional example—what classes sit there?—legislation according to their interests—legislative gains of ten years—temporary policy of protection—Royal Commissions and Committees.*

The political career of the nationalist bourgeoisie in the Legislative Assembly shows that it had not at all carried out a consistent line of what we call "revolutionary parliamentarism." Its first boycott was forced on it by the mass pressure. As soon as it was withdrawn, it donned all the liveries, wigs and robes of

the lackeys of Imperialism in the Assembly with great pride, showing to the world that is to the world bourgeoisie, how soon an adept it can become in the art of parliamentary deception. It not only did not carry out revolutionary parliamentarism as it had boasted it would do, but it actually deserted to the Imperialists, accepted offices and became administrator of the Dictatorship.

The Imperialist Dictatorship points to this acceptance, by the nationalist bourgeoisie, of all the good points in the Constitution, its responsive cooperation in the working of it and asks the working-class and peasantry to follow the same road, to agitate for constitutional rights in a constitutional manner, just as the nationalist bourgeoisie did in the period 1923-29. The nationalist bourgeoisie when charged with having deserted to the camp of the enemy, turns round and says, "well, we cooperated when necessary with the Dictatorship. But it resulted in some good to the whole of India. We have fought for the workers and peasants on the floor of the Councils." The question is, can we with advantage follow the road of the bourgeoisie in the Councils? Does it lead to all-class-good, fall-class-welfare or only to the aggrandisement of the class of the exploiters? Does this road profit us, the workers and peasants in any way? We have already seen that the real power of the Dictatorship does not lie in the constitution conferred by it but outside it. The Constitution has conferred no rights on any class that can really invest it with political and economic power. So the recommendation of Imperialism to us to follow the way of the Indian bourgeoisie has no meaning. But what about the claims of bourgeois nationalism? It is known that even though the bourgeoisie has no power to control and to enforce the carrying out of its opinion as expressed in its resolutions in the Councils or the Assembly yet it has a complete majority in the Provincial Councils and the Assembly when allied with the land-holders. The Constitution divides the electorate on two bases—one, the communal and caste basis—Hindu, Mohammedan and Sikh etc.—another the social or class basis, landholders, Commerce Chambers etc. Though these bases appear to be different yet essentially they are one and the same; because the whole of the electorate is fundamentally based on high property qualifications, that is, it is composed of the land-holders, rich farmers, the bourgeoisie and the upper bourgeoisie. Naturally the social class of the representative, whether elected as a non-Mohammedan or Mohammedan, as a landholder or from the Chamber of Commerce is exactly one and the same—the exploiters' class of landholders and the bourgeoisie. The attempt to show that the representative elected on communal basis has different economic class allegiance

from the one elected on definitely economic or social class basis is pure cheating of the workers and peasants who are duped into believing that a Hindu or a Muslim landlord when elected on the Communal basis will fight for the economic rights of his co-religionist peasants without looking to his own class interests as such. Therefore for all material concrete everyday life purposes, we have to divide the representatives in the Councils on their economic class basis, as landlords, businessmen, manufacturers or their agents in the intelligentsia, and study them as such. The big landlords have never boycotted the Constitution at any period even at the time of intense revolutionary wave, when even the big nationalist bourgeoisie left the Assembly. They have ever been willing to aid the Imperialist Dictatorship whether in 1921 or 1930. As for the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, a larger part of it boycotted the Constitution in 1930 than in 1921 and consolidated its class ranks for its class interests within the Constitution since 1923. In the bourgeoisie also there are different interests. The export import traders have different interests from the manufacturers. The importers of steel will oppose protection to Tatas, others may not. The attitude of different sections of the landlords and the bourgeoisie towards the resolutions and bills coming up before the legislatures differs according to their economic class interests and not according to their communal or caste origin, except in cases which are purely communal which happens rarely. The Swarajist bourgeoisie which assumes very much of non-class airs and talks of sympathy to the workers and peasants is no exception to this. The competitive struggle of the exploiters amongst themselves, their internal class contradictions, lead to the formation of different parties amongst themselves such as the Swarajists, Independents, Nationalists, Responsivists Non-Brahmins etc. Their votings and combinations whether in relation to bills and proposals of Government or their own groups are guided purely by the question of class gain.

D/- 26.11.31

Their doings of the last ten years show four things justifying the view-point of Marxism-Leninism.

(1) That the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie in relation to Imperialism are fundamentally contradictory and therefore its problems insoluble constitutionally.

(2) That the Indian bourgeoisie, like any other, suffers from internal class contradictions and is incapable of fighting even for its own class demand.

(3) That the Indian bourgeoisie, like any other, is opposed to the working class and even the peasantry.

(4) That the landlords are completely allied with Imperialism and are opposed not only to the workers and peasants but even to the industrial bourgeoisie on vital points.

During ten years of working with constitutional dictatorship the bourgeoisie all long tried to secure gains for its own class. In the life of the first Assembly the revolutionary outburst overshadowed everything. But as soon as it was betrayed and finished the bourgeoisie which had remained outside the Councils went in and there began a period of small but important concessions to it from Imperialism. The greatest ambition of the Indian bourgeoisie is to build up a high tariff wall and grow behind it. Imperialism is naturally bound to oppose. But it looked as if the Imperialist Dictatorship had given up this policy, its own class interest and had adopted an attitude of allowing the Indian bourgeoisie to grow. It looked as if Imperialism was about to "decolonise" India and make big concessions to its bourgeoisie. This matter has been subject of great controversy but it has now been definitely shown by historical experience that Imperialism has no such desire. (For the controversy vide Exh: P 2491). The temporary manifestation of concessions was due to several factors, a few of which were:—

(1) The fright caused by the serious mass revolutionary upheaval of 1921 and the necessity of attempting to buy off sections of the bourgeoisie by promises and not very vital concessions.

(2) Capture of Indian markets by Continental and Japanese goods and the inability of British Imperialism to stop it by ordinary economic competition.

(3) The necessity of keeping the Indian bourgeoisie quiet when British capital would be engaged in attacking British Labour, which culminated in 1926 and 1927.

(4) The alarming deficit in Budgets necessitating the attempts to fill them up by increasing customs revenue etc. But all this policy of concessions was to be carried out in a very dilatory manner, the most usual method employed being that of commissions and committees. During the last ten years of the constitutional dictatorship we have had six Royal Commissions costing Rs. 54,04,537 (for complete list with the expenses incurred, see page 536, Legislative Assembly Report dated 6th February, 1929). There

was also a big crop of committees, the most important being the Inchoape Committee on retrenchment, External Capital Committee, Taxation Inquiry Committee, Muddiman Reforms Committee, Skeen Committee and the latest the Banking Enquiry Committee. The Lee Commission promised the petty bourgeoisie half the posts in the bureaucracy after 20 years of candidature, the Currency Commission refused to give gold currency to the Indian bourgeoisie and put on its head the weight of 18 pence ratio; the Simon Commission declared it unfit for Dominion Status and the Agricultural and Labour commissions revealed problems that neither Imperialism nor the Indian bourgeoisie can solve. The only concession that produced anything fruitful was the Fiscal Commission out of which arose the Tariff Board (whose recommendations have played such a havoc in the 1928 Textile Strike of Bombay: vide evidence). All other commissions and committees have served to collect some statistical material which can be used with benefit not by the bourgeoisie but by the class-conscious vanguard of the working class. To Imperialism the long rows of these reports are stretchers on which they aspire to carry declining British Imperialism to a revival. To the Indian bourgeoisie they are so many tombs of the frozen eggs of their future. To the Communists they are chalk lines on which to lay the rail roads of revolutionary strategy, after flashing on them the red searchlight of Marxism.

86. *The Tariff Board and war policy—steel, chemicals etc.—other big branches of production not in the hands of the Indian bourgeoisie—still their attitude to labour and peasants legislation hostile—success in furthering their class gain through the legislatures very poor—hence transference of the struggle outside the constitution and amongst the people.*

The only substantial gain to Indian capitalism during a decade of inquiries has been the protective Tariff granted to the cotton industry, wherein the Indian bourgeoisie is the strongest. Only in this field can there be said to be some concession from Imperialism to Indian capitalism. But in all other vital matters there has been none. The solid edifice of capitalism is built on the development of the machine industry, the production of the means of production. The index of this development is the production and consumption of iron and steel. In the whole of India there is only one plant of this industry—that of the Tatas. But though it is an iron and steel plant it is not one that produces machinery. Its largest capacity is engaged on the production of steel rails, wagons,

building materials etc. 2/3rd of its production is dependent on Government orders. It also exports a part of its big iron output to Japan. On the recommendation of the Tariff Board the Indian Steel Protection Act was passed in the interests of this one single company and the initiative came from the Government side in 1924. The Indian bourgeoisie tells us that this concern is a national industry. Is Imperialism then changing its policy and helping national industry i.e. helping its rival, the Indian bourgeoisie, to grow? No. The protection to iron and steel was given because the Tata Iron and Steel Company is necessary for the military purposes of Imperialism. Both the Government and the nationalist bourgeoisie accept this proposition. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is very proud that his bourgeoisie is able to manufacture rails on which the victorious British Imperialism can be carried to shoot the workers and peasants in Mesopotamia. "Without the rails which the Tata Steel Works supplied the success of the British arms in Mesopotamia would not have been so certain as it was," said the patriotic and the holy Pandit while supporting the Government Bill on protection. (Legislative Assembly proceedings, page 2320 dated 27th May 1924). Only two years before that he was vociferously supporting the Khilafat agitation against the dis-memberment of Turkey. Two years after he was boasting that it was the "national concern" of the Tatas that supplied rails to Imperialism in order to defeat Turkey and then asks, with the holy water of the Ganges in his hands, the masses of India to perform the shradha of the masses of Turkey by paying 1½ crores per year to the Tatas, the Indian bourgeoisie and the Pandit for helping to send the peasants of Turkey to Heaven with the aid of the British bullets. When a member pointed out, at the time of voting the reward to the Tatas, that there were many 'kept' members in the Assembly who had shares in the Tatas, the Pandit asked the members to trust to the sense of honour of those members not to vote protection to their pockets. So the protection to the steel industry was not given to build up the foundations of Indian capitalism, but to maintain a war plant. The protection approved lately to the chemical industry by the Government of India, on 4th September 1931, is also a part of the war policy. The Tatas are in a position to supply railway material to carry troops and even to turn out guns. But up till now there has been no basis for the supply of chemicals for war. England is a far off base and likely to be cut off by submarines. The Tariff Board in their report observed, "The case for protection of the chemical industry rests primarily on its supreme national importance. It is a key industry whose products are used in most other countries; it is indispensable for purposes of national defence.....". The Government accepted

the recommendation and imposed a duty of 7 annas per hundred-weight on magnesium chloride. Who can say that the protection policy is not a part of war preparations on the Asiatic frontier? The third industry which is protected is cotton. The protection granted to textiles is extorted by political and economic struggle in which the workers have played the largest part. Protection is a part of the bribe to the strongest section of the Indian bourgeoisie in order to wean it away from financial support to the political 'anti-Imperialist movement. It is also partially a deal between the Indian and British bourgeoisie to keep a third party, the Japanese, out. The success of the bribe can be seen from the fact that the Bombay Textile bourgeoisie which is most in need of protection has been the least supporter of the political movement and their representative at the R. T. C. was quite willing to barter away on the question of "safeguards."

The Tariffs approved in the matter of sugar, electrical wires, cables etc. play at present a negligible part in the productive forces exploited by the Indian bourgeoisie and therefore in no way hit the Imperialist economy in any way. Thus by a policy of mere protests, commissions and inquiry committees the Indian bourgeoisie has been able to secure protection worth the name for the textile industry only that may be said to affect the British bourgeoisie to a certain extent. The other tariffs are either for war equipments or for minor branches. Yet for so small a part from the exploited wealth of the workers and peasants, the Indian bourgeoisie abandons the political struggle outside the present constitution.

As against this the largest fields of exploitation are more or less exclusively controlled or dominated by British capital, and the Indian bourgeoisie has been straining every nerve to get a share in them, not by economic competition for which it is not powerful enough, but by using the extra economic force—legislation or political power. But the political power, the State, being the Imperialist State, it has been defeated in the attempt and even got the worse of it. In shipping, coal, banking, exchange and jute the Indian bourgeoisie is still a weak minor. A few members of its class have secured entrance as far as the outer gates of these huge British monopolies. In order to force that entrance further they tried to reserve the coastal shipping by the Haji Bill. But they failed. On the contrary they have lost heavily on the exchange ratio, and in this they were betrayed by their own allies, the landholders' representatives. The Steel Protection Bill in 1924 was passed by the Assembly without a division, so solidly they were united on it. But on the Currency Bill, in March 1927, the

industrial bourgeoisie was divided and the voting was 63 against 51. The internal class contradictions of exporters and importers, of currency speculators etc. left the industrial bourgeoisie in the lurch.

While they were thus pouring millions into their pockets by protection, wherever they could, what attitude did they take towards the working class and peasantry in legislation affecting them? They put a vehement opposition to the Trade Union Act of 1926, which Government had passed because the working class had advanced far beyond the stage of tolerating illegalisation of its Trade Union activity. But when Imperialism three years later introduced the Trades Disputes Act in order to keep down the militant direct action of the workers, the Indian bourgeoisie first "agreed to the principle" of the bill and ultimately passed it.

Not one of the members of the Assembly ever brought any private bill to improve the workers' lot. In the local Councils, when Bombay carried the Maternity Benefits Act it was done by the help of the rural land-holding members who had a grudge against the highly proud Bombay bourgeoisie. In the U. P. the Oudh Rent Act was opposed tooth and nail. In Madras, they fought the Malabar Tenancy Bill. Because both gave occupancy rights, though meagre, to the peasants. In Bengal the Swarajists fought the Bengal Tenancy Bill for the same reasons. In the Punjab they would not allow the Moneylenders' Bill to go through. It was passed due to the competition between two groups of exploiters, not due to any love for the peasantry. The whole history of legislation would show that all that benefits the workers and peasants was opposed, and if passed it was due to the pressure of the movement outside or by the opposition of the landholders to the industrial bourgeoisie and their mutual rivalries.

The conclusion from the ten years' experience of the Constitutional Dictatorship and the use made of it by the Indian bourgeoisie is this. The British bourgeoisie is not at all willing to allow its Indian competitor to use the political machine, the State, for its class aggrandisement, except in small matters. The Indian bourgeoisie has tried with some success to directly increase its profits of industry and commerce by the aid of the Imperialist State. But the same bourgeoisie refused to allow the workers and peasants the right of political movement in order to further their own economic interest. They are told not to mix politics with economy. The workers' and peasants' earnings are subject to "economic laws" with which politics should not be mixed up. But when the

bourgeoisie and land-owners are hit by the same economic laws. they want to use the State to protect their class interest. Both the Imperialist and the Indian bourgeoisie unite in protecting their economic interests by politics and prove the Marxian proposition that "politics is a concentrated expression of economy." The success of Indian Capitalism, however, was very poor. When the temporary policy of encouragement was abandoned by the British bourgeoisie in 1927, the Indian bourgeoisie transferred its economic struggle from the Assembly floor to the world outside. It wanted to use the revolutionary forces of the workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie against the growing pressure of Imperialism and to wrench some concessions for itself. The organisational expression of the bourgeoisie in the struggle is the Indian National Congress.

87. *The economic struggle even of the bourgeoisie necessarily becomes political—example of the control of the Imperial Bank and Chartered Bank—deposits policy—refusal of further liberalisation of the Dictatorship forces the bourgeoisie into opposition.*

The defenders of Imperialism tell the intellectual defenders of Indian Capitalism to learn to stand on their own legs and not rely so much on Government help. Why should not the Indian capitalists mobilise the resources of India and build industries of their own and compete with the foreign bourgeoisie? Why should they ask for protection from the Dictatorship, when they know that they are not going to get it? Why should they not build their own ships, their own banks on the moneys of their own countrymen and oust the foreign competitors? These are the typical questions put to the middle class patriots who fight for "Indian" industrial development. In the first place it is a general proposition proved by history that in no country has capitalist economy developed with full force without the bourgeoisie possessing the political power. The State is an indispensable instrument for that class which wants to build its economy, and India is no exception to this rule. Whatever capitalist development has taken place has come about in spite of and against the desire of Imperialism. But a further development is impossible without the constitutional dictatorship of Imperialism being converted into a constitutional dictatorship of Indian capitalism. For example we can take the field of banking. Industrial development in the present period means long term credits at cheap rates of interest, supposing for a moment that other favourable factors are in existence. Long term credits for Indian industries means a high development of centralised banking

facilities under the control of the Indian bourgeoisie. It is also necessary for financing of the trade in such a manner that it operates to the benefit of the Indian industry. Can the Indian bourgeoisie do without political power in this field? Take the Imperial Bank of India. It is constituted by an Act of the Legislative Assembly and is an accredited receiver of Government revenues which it holds as deposits. Thus the State here acts directly as the customer of the bank—a customer whose operations total more than the operations of all other customers. The deposits of the Imperial Bank are one-third of the total deposits of all the joint stock and exchange banks in India. Its total deposits in 1928 were Rs. 79·25 crores. The deposits in the biggest bank of the Indian bourgeoisie, the Central Bank of India, were only Rs 18·55 crores. Whence did the Imperial Bank get such a large amount? Its public deposits were only Rs. 7·64 crores while as a treasury holder of the Government it carried Rs. 71·30 crores so that when there was a run on the Central Bank it had to take assistance from the Imperial Bank. Who controls the Imperial Bank? The British Imperialist Dictatorship. How does the control affect the Indian bourgeoisie? It is reflected in the following table:—

(The Central Banking Inquiry Committee Report page 575).

Deposits

	<u>Lacs.</u>
Non-Indian current accounts	564
Non-Indian Fixed deposits	264
Total	<u>828</u>
Indian current account	1732
Indian Fixed account	2149
Total	<u>3881</u>

Advances.

Non-Indians	1170
Indians	3038

The table shows that while the British bourgeoisie deposits Rs. 828 lacs with the bank, it gets advances of Rs. 1170 lacs.—41·4 per cent more than what it deposits. In the case of the Indian bourgeoisie when it deposits Rs. 3881 lacs it is advanced Rs. 3038 lacs.—14 per cent less than what it deposits. If we calculate this:

difference on the fixed deposits, the advances to the British bourgeoisie are 436 per cent of its fixed deposits while those of the Indian bourgeoisie are only 141 per cent. In the evidence given before the Banking Inquiry Committee, it was shown that the bank insures its properties and mortgages with British and other foreign banks, it opens branches in competition with the Indian banks and captures customers by giving loans on lower rates to kill the competing bank and raises them when the competitor is wiped out. Though it has got Indian directors on the Management Board, yet its bureaucratic machinery being controlled by Europeans, the day to day custom of the bank operates in favour of British business. The majority of the shares of the bank are held by the British bourgeoisie—284 lacs—as against the Indian capitalists' shares—278 lacs. (Report C. B. I. Committee, page 574). No bank of the Indian bourgeoisie can beat the credit of the Imperial Bank with its huge Government balances of over 70 crores. Naturally the only way in which the Indian bourgeoisie can get hold of its power is to get a complete possession of the State. Hence the struggle for the Imperial Bank becomes a political struggle. One more example. The whole of the export import trade is in the hands of the exchange banks, nearly all of which are foreign. The most powerful of them, the five Anglo-Indian banks, are led by the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China. The bank is not like the other banks. It operates by a Royal Charter, the latest of which was renewed in 1927 for thirty years. "In China the bank has direct representation at the leading trading ports, including Shanghai, Tientsin, Hankow, Canton, while in Hongkong its status is such that it is permitted to issue notes up to 30 million dollars". ("The Statist"—9th November 1929—International Banking Section—page 716). This bank has also controlling interest in the P. and O. Banking Corporation which again has the controlling share in the Allahabad Bank. Can a bank which has political voice directly in the Chinese ports and controls the currency of one of them be overthrown in its trade supremacy without the seizure of political power by its competitors—the Indian bourgeoisie? So the economic struggle against the exchange banks becomes a political struggle which is not again localised to the Indian soil alone. The political struggle of the Indian bourgeoisie against them has to be linked up with and becomes a part of the Chinese struggle also. The struggle of the Indian bourgeoisie against Imperialism is now-a-days carried on so very plainly and openly in terms of banks, trade, and currency, that it is needless to show further examples illustrating our principle that its political struggle is essentially an economic struggle and that the latter to be successful cannot be limited

to economic competition but has to be waged against the political dictatorship as such.

It has already been shown that the Indian bourgeoisie has failed to gain anything notable by agreeing to work the constitutional machinery of the Dictatorship. We have also seen that, even when the Dictatorship was not giving the Indian bourgeoisie "equal partnership" in the profits of exploitation, the most radical section of it, the Swarajist, never tried to work the same constitution of the Dictatorship in favour of the workers and peasants but rather against them. In all tenancy legislations the feudal landlords and the Swarajist bourgeoisie have opposed liberal existence to the peasantry.

When the Dictatorship refused to liberalise its constitution further in favour of the Indian bourgeoisie in such a manner that it can have "the right to discriminate" against the giant of British finance and give thorough protection to the dwarfish Indian bourgeois finance, the bourgeoisie went to the masses and threatened a revolution against Imperialism.

88. Does it then lead to the revolution?—the idea of bourgeois independence—Canada and Britain as examples—is separatism a mere sentiment or a material objective necessity?

In order to give a successful and powerful threat, the bourgeoisie is forced to rouse the working-class and peasantry and to organise them for the threat. It calls upon the peasantry to fight for independence from British Imperialism so that the Indian masses may be freed from poverty and slavery. Is this not a sufficient reason for us to cooperate with the Indian bourgeoisie in an anti-Imperialist struggle? If the interests of Indian bourgeoisie are fundamentally opposed as shown above to those of Imperialism and if it has failed to achieve its interests through a constitutional agreement and if as a result of it, it is going to the country for support in a political struggle, is it not sufficient to show that it is the leader of the revolutionary struggle and that the bourgeois struggle is ultimately in the interest of the whole country irrespective of classes? Because after all a development of the Indian bourgeoisie means the development of the productive forces of the whole country. The communists also desire the development of productive forces. Theirs is also the complaint that British Imperialism does not develop the productive forces of the country.

Is it not then clear that the communists should lead the workers and peasants in the revolutionary struggle, not in opposition to the bourgeoisie but in cooperation with it. Why then should they shout in season and out of season against the Indian bourgeoisie? You may shout simply "Down with Imperialism" but why "Down with Capitalism"? The Prosecution in this case and some of our anti-communist co-accused also have picked up this argument and have held us before the people as rabid anti-nationalists because we oppose the Congress and its bourgeois leaders.

Is it absolutely necessary that anti-Imperialist struggle has to be a struggle for independence— independence in the sense of complete separation from the Empire? The realist spokesmen of the bourgeoisie do not admit that it must be so. The question of independence has to be viewed by the bourgeoisie and by us also from the point of view of the concrete material development of the country. The sentimental factor has very little place in the final outcome of the struggle. It serves only as an ideological incentive to rouse the forces. What after all is the difference between the status of Great Britain, France and Germany on the one hand and that of Canada, Australia on the other? The former are independent sovereign States and the latter are dominions. What is the difference in their status? Canada is within the Empire but raises a tariff wall against British goods, maintains a Consulate in U. S. A. signs separately all the agreements of the League of Nations, has a navy and an army. When England was in need of men and money in the Greco-Turkish War, Canada refused to be a party to the war against Turkey when requested by Lloyd George to send men and money to help Greece. As regards capital investments the American share in Canada is greater than that of England. So though not separated, yet is she not independent of the Empire?

D/- 27.11.31

Take Germany. She is an independent sovereign State, but is mortgaged to the capitalism of the Allied countries and all her economic life is at the mercy of America. Then take even England, "the most independent State." Though a victorious Imperialism, having the largest colonial possession, yet as a result of the economic crisis she has become a colony of America, not theoretically but in practical politics. In order to stabilise her currency and economy England had to change its Labour Party Government and instal the National Government at the bidding of the U. S. A. financiers. An ex-minister of this "most sovereign State" after the fall of the Government declared, "We were told that the country

would not have Russian Dictatorship, German Dictatorship or for that matter even the Dictatorship of the British Trade Union Council; but the so-called National Government is apparently prepared to accept the dictatorship of the American Banks at the cost of the British working class." The Daily Herald, the organ of Labour Imperialists wrote, "where is the patriotism, we may ask, in allowing the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to dictate as a condition for a further credit to the Bank of England, the policy to be pursued in relation to the unemployment benefit? This is not patriotism but acceptance of the dictatorship, not even of the British Bank, but of foreign finance. It is a blow to British prestige equalled only in recent history by the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Sterling may recover, the Banks of America and France may rally to the aid of Lombard Street, but more is at stake than the credit of the Banks." (September 1931). More is at stake and that is the sovereignty of British Imperialism. Neither is this sovereign independent State in a position to levy its own tariff without being challenged by another capitalism just as the Indian bourgeoisie cannot raise a tariff wall without opposition from the British bourgeoisie. When the British industrialists proposed to levy tariffs, the French Government threatened intervention, although in a very polite language because had it not a control in British affairs, because of the help of French Banks in the crisis? The Imperialist robbers guard each other's thin coating of sovereignty, even when exploiting each other, in order that the revolutionary masses should not be severed from their ideological mooring to the Imperialist class State and its all powerful sovereignty. Therefore, as the news says, M. Rollin, the French Minister of Commerce, approached a representative of the Board of Trade and expressed the view of the French Government that an imposition of customs duties for the purpose of remedying the adverse balance of trade would constitute an infringement of the elementary rights of the countries engaged in normal economic relations." (Times of India 19:9:31). Thus the independence of Germany is dependent on France and England and the independence of England and France is dependent on U. S. A. economically and politically, though theoretically all of them are quite separate from each other. The theoretical existence of Canada within the Empire harmonises completely with its political and economic independence from the Empire and a concrete existence within the American Empire. The theoretical independence of Germany, England, Belgium etc. harmonises completely with their concrete and practical subjection to the Dictatorship of American finance. When such is the case the continued insistence on the right to separate or the actual separation from the Empire is reduced to a

mere sentiment when read in terms of the Indian bourgeoisie or the Congress. Because you may separate from the Empire and yet be subject to the British Bank credits, or you may remain within the Empire and yet have the right of tariffs, your own army and navy, your own banks etc., by mutual compromise and adjustment. Therefore the Indian bourgeoisie reduces its anti-Imperialist struggle into one for Dominion Status, and the Congress reduces its anti-Imperialist struggle for independence to one for "substance of independence". Independence and Dominion Status in terms of the bourgeoisie are equivalent terms, provided the economic substance with its concomitant political super-structure is given into its hands.

The bourgeoisie is thoroughly right in this view. The world-wide development of modern capitalist Imperialism is internationally so interdependent that "absolute separation" and absolute independence of one bourgeoisie from another is not at all possible. Every bourgeois sovereignty in external relations is a limited sovereignty, and in the modern epoch of Imperialism even internal bourgeois sovereignty has become limited. In all practical working, the modern independent bourgeois States are one world State, with an extremely sensitive interdependence. In the pre-imperialist epoch the independent bourgeois State had the independence to develop the productive forces of its own country, to appropriate in a sovereign manner all the exploited surplus values produced by workers and peasants, and the power to resist by force the encroachment of another bourgeoisie. In the Imperialist epoch with the system of international investment of capital, irrespective of political boundaries of independent States, the former economic content of absolute independence is lost. So what remains now is the possession of the machinery of force by a bourgeoisie which if independent can use it in order to smash the productive forces of another, if they are getting stronger, or to resist the others' attack, if its own development, its own appropriation of the producers' wealth, is becoming a danger to another. Thus the bourgeois struggle for independence becomes in the modern Imperialist epoch a struggle to obtain freedom to develop a strong machinery of force on the basis of which to create or preserve its International share of the wealth expropriated from the workers and peasants. Absolute and complete economic financial independence is an impossibility for any bourgeois State, because in all essence its whole fabric is a part of world finance. Hence the demand of the bourgeoisie and the Congress is "for equal partnership," "for substance," meaning thereby a satisfactory share in the exploitation.

It is not insisting on complete independence, it does not just now feel the necessity for independence to build its machinery of force because it has nothing to preserve or increase as its share of the international loot. It is quite prepared to leave the external relations and the army to the Imperialist partner, and for the present take the limited economic substance. Thus the bourgeois demand for independence is bound to become one for Dominion Status when it comes to actualities.

89. The nature of workers' and peasants' independence as found in our programmes— can we not postpone the class struggle for a time till we have overthrown Imperialism— there is no room for bourgeois development like that of England or Japan for our bourgeoisie— hence the class struggle is forced to the front.

But such is not the case with the demand of the revolutionary parties of the working class and peasantry. (Exh: P 135.) They have no interest in the financial partnership with the international bourgeoisie, because the one is exploited by the other. There cannot be a partnership between the exploited and the exploiters. The revolutionary struggle of the working class and peasantry necessarily means stopping the loot of the Imperialist bourgeoisie from India, expulsion of its bureaucracy and overthrow of its militarism. The working class has no profits to share by participation in world finance, hence its separation is real and revolutionary. Our demand for independence amounts to negation of all exploitation and therefore does not degenerate into one for Dominion Status. Our struggle therefore necessarily includes a struggle for Soviet Democracy. Soviet Democracy is incompatible with bourgeois democracy. Hence separation is the natural resultant.

The attainment of Dominion Status by the bourgeoisie in the present epoch of the decline of capitalism is an impossibility. Dominion Status means giving to the colonial bourgeoisie a share in the profits and freedom to develop. Can a losing concern allow its trade to go into the hands of a subordinate for the simple demand of it? Dominion Status to the Indian bourgeoisie will lose British Imperialism 1/5th of its national savings and will give birth to a possible competitor, adding to its already existing difficulties. British Imperialism is not in that rich position now when it could allow Canada, Australia, U.S.A. to develop independently and kick at the mother country.

This uncompromising attitude of Britain forces the Indian bourgeoisie to assume revolutionary airs, to threaten mass action and talk of independence in order to increase "its bargaining power." It does not take to revolutionary action even for its class gains, like that of U.S.A. in the 18th century, for two reasons. It is economically weak and is itself closely interlinked with British concerns. Secondly even to obtain Dominion Status, if it is compelled to organise the revolutionary forces, it is afraid to do it because in the present epoch of proletarian revolutions, whenever the bourgeoisie for its class gains puts the workers and peasants on to revolutionary action, it is turned into a class struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and Imperialism together. It happened like that in China, in Java etc. So the Indian bourgeoisie is afraid to go to the masses and enlist their revolutionary support as did the American bourgeoisie against England.

We have already seen that the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie are contradictory to those of Imperialism, that the uncompromising attitude of Imperialism forces the bourgeoisie into opposition, but for fear of the workers' and peasants' revolutionary class struggle and its own economic weakness, it cannot support revolutionary action. Even if the bourgeoisie is not really fighting for independence but is only showing some opposition, still for the sake of united front, why should we not restrain the workers and peasants from pursuing an immediate class struggle? [Exh: P 1373 (19)]. Let us first do away with Imperialism, then in our own home we may fight our own internal feuds, if there are to be any. Even strategically for the Communists it is better to have one enemy at a time. Grow first like Japan, the great Asiatic power. Then if capitalism does fail, if our especial Indian culture does not succeed in evolving a better society, we may think of becoming like Soviet Russia. Why not postpone the class struggle for the time being? Let the Congress and Communists, Mahatmaites and Marxists unite against the satanic Government is the advice of the nationalist petty bourgeoisie to us. And the Public Prosecutor in this case made it something of a grievance that we did not accept this advice.

This call of the bourgeoisie for all-class unity makes a powerful appeal to the masses and some sections of the petty bourgeoisie. The working class and peasantry being still under petty bourgeois illusions listen to this all-class unity appeal very seriously. When the revolutionary Communists have exposed the hollowness of the plea they have been shouted down by the petty bourgeois intellectuals. The bourgeois argument is very simple and therefore

more dangerous, requiring an exposure showing how the world conditions of capitalist economy leave no room for the development of capitalism, for that type of revolutionary growth of the bourgeoisie which built England, Germany, U.S.A. and Japan. The present conditions of world economy inevitably force the class struggle to be conducted jointly with the anti-Imperialist national struggle. The present conditions of world proletarian movement govern the forms of our two-fold struggle. The programme of the Communists in India is evolved out of the compelling forces of world economy and the place of the Indian inside. The programme of the C.P.I. is the only programme that can lead the Indian masses out of the present blind alley of capitalism. The programme of the Indian bourgeoisie has to surrender to ours because it cannot solve the Indian problem at all.

Section 3.— The Economic Basis Of The Agrarian Class Struggle In India : paras 90-100.

90. *The bourgeois programme regarding removal of the poverty of the masses—the main points of the problem—the drain of wealth—high land revenue—debts—absence of rural banking—adverse currency.* (Some of our viewpoint on this in P 135.)

The capitalist economy of India is a part of world economy and is influenced by it. The programme of the Communists receives its shape mainly from the conditions of Indian capitalist economy and is influenced by world conditions to the extent that the operations of capitalism and hence of the class struggle are International (which would further explain the question of International relations of the proletarian parties). There would have been no reason for us to congratulate the Chinese Revolution (Exh: P. 1381) or condemn the Sacco-Venzetti Case (Exh: P 2311) had it not been that the capitalism of both the countries affects our struggle.

We cannot think of India as an isolated chamber. The Indian National Congress and the bourgeoisie are not absolutely blind to this fact. But they are incapable of assessing its full import and hence even from the point of view of the bourgeois struggle commit mistakes. We shall therefore see how our programme supersedes that of the Indian bourgeoisie (which will explain incidentally our resolutions before the A. I. C. C. which have been put into exhibit) and is vindicated by the actual needs of the situation and its development.

The Indian bourgeoisie posing as the leader of the peasantry moans over the appalling problem of their poverty and proposes to fight for them and remove their poverty. The Communist Party also fights for the peasantry in order to free it from poverty. There is not a single writer of the bourgeoisie in India who does not say that that is the most urgent problem of the Indian situation. The agents and intellectual representatives of the British Imperialist Dictatorship also admit it, even though they try to underestimate it a great deal. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report in 1918 said, "It is evident that the curve of wealth descends very steeply and that enormous masses of the population have little to spare for more than the necessaries of life" (page 87). Twelve years later the Simon Report said the same thing: "The ordinary cultivator on his tiny plot is still a man of few resources, with small means for meeting his limited needs" (page 19). So all are very anxious to remove the poverty of the teeming millions. The Dictatorship has no specific programme for them. But the Indian bourgeoisie has one on which it bases all its propaganda, to capture the peasant masses for its own class gain. The premises for the programme of the Indian bourgeoisie which are always put before the peasantry (and against which we put our own) are; (1) the foreigners drain 195 crores of rupees from India, making "us all" poor to that extent; (2) the foreign Government takes a very high land revenue and ruins the peasantry; (3) the land revenue and other burdens of taxation throw the peasantry into debts; (4) Government does not assist rural banking and therefore the peasant cannot get capital to increase the productivity of his land; (5) Government reduces peasant's return of his price of crop by adverse dislocations of currency. This affects not only the peasantry but the whole country. These points you can find in the bourgeois nationalist literature in India. The peculiarity of these points is that they nowhere mention what is the relation of the bourgeoisie and the landlords to the peasants' economy. The whole issue of the peasant poverty is shifted on to the shoulders of the British Dictatorship and the question of classes inside the country is hushed up. However we take the bourgeoisie at its own words and give the intellectual petty bourgeoisie the credit of revolutionary honesty and suppose for a moment that it does succeed with the aid of the peasantry in the anti-Imperialist struggle. To what extent is the problem of peasant poverty solved thereby? The bourgeoisie is everywhere the same in its class role. All the capitalist countries have got "their own rule," that is of their bourgeoisie. Does that "their own rule" solve the problem of peasantry there? It does not. The same indebtedness, the same starvation is found there also.

The drain of 195 crores of rupees is composed of several items and goes out of India in several ways. Will the expulsion of Imperialism alone return these 195 crores to the peasantry, the workers or even the petty bourgeois middle class? The British bourgeoisie draws this wealth by means of trade, interest on loans, pensions of its bureaucracy sent to India, currency manipulations etc. The installation of the Indian bourgeoisie in power will only mean a diversion of trade into the hands of the Indian bourgeoisie. Trade as such, export or import, does not stop. The sale of British goods to the peasantry will be substituted by the sale of goods of the Indian bourgeoisie. Thus the bulk of the 195 crores will be still accumulated and drained. Only the pool will be held by the Indian bourgeoisie instead of the British. Cotton will be bought from the peasants in the same way as it is today. Only the profits of discounting its bills on the foreign export market will be taken by the Indian exchange banks instead of the foreign. The Indian bourgeoisie describes this process as "retention of the wealth inside the country". It may be retained inside the country. There is much food locked inside the earth also. The main question is does it reside inside the vast masses of the peasantry? It does not by any means. The stoppage of the drain reduces the "poverty" of the Indian bourgeoisie only and not of the masses.

The nationalist bourgeoisie bids for the support of the peasantry on the slogan of the reduction of land revenue. The total land revenue demand of the British Dictatorship to finance its machinery of force and its other activities is about 35 crores for the last ten years. (35.63 crores in 1927-28). This is 16 per cent of the total taxation. The sum appears to be staggering but not so the percentage. In fact the total percentage of land revenue to total taxation has been falling for some years, when in those very years the nationalist bourgeoisie was clamouring against excessive land revenue rates. In the recent years the struggle of the Bardoli peasants is the ideal epic of the peasantry by singing which the bourgeoisie wants to hold the leadership of the masses. But the problem of land revenue is not a problem of its ratio to the total taxation of the country. Mahatma Gandhi may demand reduction of the land revenue by half as a sign of Swaraj. But such a reduction not only by half but even by three-fourths is not going to benefit much the vast masses of the peasantry nor is it going to reduce its debt problem. Its excessive rigour is not its absolute amount but its relation to other factors. Land revenue cannot be considered apart from the question of the whole peasant problem. It is indispensably related to (a) the capitalist exchange market and money rent; (b) the fragmentation and low size of holdings; (c) the

rental demands and tenures; (d) indebtedness; (e) the general crisis of capitalism. It is for these reasons that in our programme we do not solely insist on the reduction of land revenue. (Vide the W. P. P. Manifesto on Bardoli). Our demand in relation to the peasantry has to be taken up as a whole. Our programme has been brought several times before the Indian National Congress but it has been all along rejected by it. That our programme is now attacked by the Prosecution in this case and is held before the country as one that will ruin the peasantry rather than improve its condition.

91. *The state of the Punjab peasantry as an example—what does increased productivity lead to?—economic holdings will only displace two million peasants in the Punjab—where to find place for them?*

As an illustration of our programme we may take the state of the Punjab peasantry (our efforts at the Lyallpur Conference). The reason for taking the Punjab as a first illustration is that it is adored as an ideal land of peasant proprietors. It grows high priced crops. It enjoys a good climate and a fertile soil. The land revenue is paid direct to the Government, unlike the U. P. where it is paid to the zamindars. The whole land is watered by rivers and canals. It grows good wheat and cotton and it is praised by both Imperialism and the national bourgeoisie because its people are daring and migrate to other lands, join the army and relieve the pressure of population on land. In such conditions we ought to have found the peasantry free from debts, owning tolerably good holdings without fragmentation and people covered with gold. But actually we find that (1) 83 per cent of the proprietors are in debt. The debt of the tenants is heavier. (2) The total agricultural debt of the province is 135 crores or 33 times the annual land revenue. (Page 56 Report of the Central Banking Inquiry Committee). (3) Annual interest charges amount to over 34 crores or nearly 8 times the total land revenue of the province. When the intellectual representatives of the bourgeoisie discuss the causes and the remedies of indebtedness, they agree almost on all points with the British bourgeoisie and the Government. Both the Indian and British bourgeoisie blame the peasantry for extravagance in marriage and death ceremonies. Both blame them for litigation. Both curse them for not seeing the advantages of cooperatives. Both want to whip them into increased effort and productivity. The peasant's pseudo liberators tell the world that he sits idle for six months. All pray to heaven that he may be

liberated from debt and while praying they carry in their pockets the peasant's mortgage deeds, and almost every street paper contains unstinted abuse of the moneylenders. We view the result of these remedies as follows. You want increased production. Supposing it is obtained, where will you sell it? Our bourgeoisie is sorry for the low productivity per acre in India and wants scientific cultivation to be increased. The yield of wheat per acre in India as compared with the wheat producing countries in the other parts of the world shows the following results:—

MAUNDS PER ACRE.

India.	
U. P. Irrigated	12'2
U. P. Unirrigated	8'2
U. S. A.	10'7
France.	13'0
Canada.	13'2
Germany.	17'5
Great Britain.	22'5

(Figures as given in the paper read by the Director of Agriculture in U. P., Mr. George Clarke, at the Indian Science Congress held at Allahabad in January 1930). The figure of 8'2 is the yield per acre of unirrigated land in the U. P. The irrigated yield is 12'2. In 1927-28, the area under irrigation was 12 per cent of the total crop area (vide "India" 1928 page 111). If we take the above two figures as normal yields over the whole country, the average production comes to 8'68 maunds per cent. Supposing our bourgeoisie and landlords succeed in raising the production—which of course they cannot—to the British point, to 22'5 maunds per acre and also the other countries were to join in the race, we shall get the total world production of 292'2 million tons, while the present approximate world production is 130 million tons (1930). We have seen for the last two years that under the present property relations of capitalist society even these 130 million tons could not find buyers. Millions of bushels are lying in the fields in Canada because the price does not cover even the cost of moving the crops from the field. In Ottawa they burn wheat in the locomotives instead of coal. If capitalist relations are to remain the same how can production be increased to 292 million tons? The whole bourgeois world is issuing mandates to curtail

production and not to increase it. The bourgeoisie argues that if increased production cannot be disposed of do not do it, but that each peasant should increase the productivity per head. In other words it means rationalisation of agriculture by reducing the number of cultivators per acre. What does it mean in the case of the Punjab? There are 29 million acres under cultivation with 4,031,000 cultivators. The average holding is thus 7·2 acres. It requires 15 acres to keep one plough and a pair of bullocks engaged without waste of energy either of the peasant or his instruments. So in order to give minimum living to the four million cultivators either two millions will have to be expelled from the Punjab or the cultivated area will have to be doubled. Under the present capitalist relations neither is possible, because there is no industrialisation to absorb the two millions, nor is there another 29 million acres that can be cultivated. If intense cultivation on the present acreage is to be practised in order to raise productivity—granting that by competition and tariff walls our bourgeoisie will find the markets—the new capital requirements in the form of manure, improved seed and tools will be so huge that no bank in India can undertake the task. For example the present plough of Rs. 7-8-0 to be converted into a better one, say the Meston plough, will cost Rs. 15/-, that is a new total capital of Rs. 16·87 crores for the Punjab alone will be required. In Chhach where they have intense cultivation it requires from Rs. 100 to 270/- per acre for manure. Leaving aside such high specialisation, if Rs. 10/- per acre are allowed ordinarily we shall require 29 crores for manure capital. How can a peasantry with a debt of 135 crores raise 46 crores more, when the whole world bourgeoisie is not releasing its monopoly of wealth and the people have nothing to buy with.

92. Moneylenders—rural banking is moneylending—our fundamental problem—who swallows the surplus ?

The propaganda of the Indian bourgeoisie against moneylenders is inspired from motives of profits rather than of sympathy for the peasantry. Its cure for the moneylenders is rural banking. What is rural banking if not moneylending? You may say the moneylender charges high interest, as much as 150 per cent per year, while the banks charge 12½ per cent. That the moneylender is a ruthless oppressor. Is the banking bourgeoisie less ruthless? The moneylender is his own bailiff while the polished bourgeois bank uses the bailiff of law. There is very little difference between the bank and the moneylender, so far as the peasant is concerned.

The demand of rural banking is the demand of the city bourgeoisie to oust the moneylender and instal itself as the receivers of rent. The demand of rural banking is the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie to control the export of commodities at their source, to establish a monopoly of buying. It is a demand to reduce the price it has to pay for its raw material by operating upon the crops through its loan banks. It is a competition between the rural moneylending bourgeois who pockets a large part of the peasant's surplus and the city bourgeois who wants a share of it. It is only an attempt to transfer the indebtedness of the peasant from one section of the bourgeoisie to another. In their competition, the peasant for a time may gain a small reduction of interest, but when the deal between two bourgeois sections is complete, the peasant will be thrown into the clutches of capitalist farming and the monopoly buyer even worse than today. Rural banking is the forerunner of the Wheat Pools on the Canadian model, that control the fate of the workers' price of bread and when the markets fall, squeeze the farmers out and tell them to stop cultivation, at the point of Martial Law if necessary. (The Central Banking Inquiry Committee has actually suggested the Canadian model for adoption in India, in paragraph 281). Moneylending or banking in agriculture is only a form of investment of capital in agriculture and the expropriation of the peasant surplus value production by the bourgeoisie does not cease, whether it is carried on by a Limited Company of moneylenders, who never see the peasant, or by a single moneylender who always hangs around him. The difference in the tortures inflicted by both is the difference between the death by the butcher's knife whose hand is visibly near and the death by the bullet whose shotsman hides in the polished chambers of a stone building.

The conversion of the indebtedness of the peasantry standing at present at high rates of interest into one held by banks at low rates does not solve the fundamental problem of rural poverty (and therefore does not find mention in our programme). The fundamental problem is who steals the surplus of the peasant labour and how it is done. Only on the solution of this depends the solution of the agrarian problem. The expropriation of the peasant surplus is a problem of class struggle. In the vast rural masses of India a terrific class struggle is raging, the same class struggle which the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and all agrarian revolutions of the world have expressed in direct forms. We, Communists, do not create the class struggle in the peasantry.

It is not imported from Moscow in a suit case nor conjured out of the works of Lenin. The class struggle is there, embedded in the capitalist system under which the peasantry in India is starving. The Punjab is said to be the most prosperous land, "the ideal land of peasant proprietors," and our agrarian programme (which was going to be put forth through the Lyallpur Conference of which I was first elected the President) is one that arises directly from the demands of the peasantry even of this ideal land and is the only solution of the agrarian problem.

93. *Stratification of the peasantry—concentration of land in the hand of the rich owners—where is the lost purchasing power locked?—an example under Batai cultivation in Lyallpur.*

In the Punjab we have come to a stage of very well marked stratification of the peasant proprietors. The concentration of land in the hands of big proprietors is proceeding fast, and the rate of exploitation of the poor sections is so high that the stable class of middle peasantry is being gradually ruined. The percentage of small owners with barely a strip to cultivate can be compared with those who possess more of the land though they are few in number. It will reveal the growth of the parasitic class of land owners developing in a province where land can be purchased and sold more freely than in the neighbouring province.

No. of owners.	Percentage	Acre holding	% of the total-land.
6,25,400	17.9	Less than 1 acre	1
14,28,000	40.4	1 to 5.	11
9,19,000	26.2	5 to 15	26.6
4,34,000	15.5	Above 15.	61.3

The most intense class struggle is visible in these figures. Every peasant proprietor must have at least 15 acres of land to keep him alive the year round in times of normal prices. But 3/5th of them have not got more than 5 acres each, while a tiny section—15.5 per cent has more than enough and owns 61.3 per cent of the land. Do not those 28 lakhs of small proprietors desire to possess that huge tract of 18 million acres held by a few rich proprietors? They do. They hunger for land, free of burden, to cultivate and to live on. Those upper rich are also ready to give land to the hungry peasants

but for a price—a price which “allows” starvation to the toiler in order to create riches for the rentier. Even then not all the parasites will give land. From the group of 1,68,000 owners owning between 25 and 50 acres, they refuse to give 609,000 acres for cultivation. From the group of 121,000 owners of over 50 acres who hold over 74 lakhs of acres they refuse the tenant 52 lakhs for cultivation. Is not then this parasitic class the cause of over-population on fragments of holdings, forcing ten lakhs of cultivators to starve with less than 1 acre per head? The nationalist bourgeois reformer praises the hard-working peasant on the small strip of land. “Eating barley that they may sell their wheat grinding the seeds of their melons to mix with their flour and giving the rind to the cattle that nothing may be wasted, the Mehtons of Hoshiarpur and Jullundur are a remarkable example of what can be achieved even upon the smallest holdings by industry and thrift.” Writes Mr. Darling and the Imperialists and the bourgeoisie applaud him. In Alipur 3 per cent of the owners own half the Tahsil leaving about 2 acres each for the remaining 97 per cent. The class struggle thus rages in all fury compelling the 97 per cent to seize the land of the 3 per cent. It does not require a Communist to tell them much about it.

It is one of the planks in the nationalist creed to idealise the poverty of the poor peasants and hold them back from the “satanic lures of the city.” But as usual nationalism here also becomes a bundle of contradictions. If the peasant has a piece of land which cannot feed him well or keep him engaged, nationalism tells him to have supplementary cotton industry or a second string to his bow. This propaganda only serves to keep a large reserve of landless labour in the rural areas, to cheapen the wage rates for the benefit of the richer landlords. Then comes a second school which wants him to migrate, to be enterprising in order that he may earn wages outside and send his money to the village so that the land revenue may be paid, the moneylender satisfied and the danger of class struggle reduced. But capitalism refuses to absorb the increasing numbers of the pauperised peasantry. Imperialism, landlords and the rich rural bourgeois refuse to let him have better wages in the city, and thus, jammed between the two, the poor peasant oscillates between the town and country ever starving and waiting for a happier day. That day is when he overthrows the rich landlordism, tears up his mortgage deeds and papers and frees himself from the dictatorship. To this end he is driven by Imperialism and capitalism.

They say everything will be well with everyone only if the

purchasing power of the masses were to return to them or to increase. The bourgeois moans over columns of newspapers about the vanished purchasing power, as if he does not know where it has vanished. But Marxism locates the thief that steals it. It is the feudal capitalist and Imperialist system of property relations that exists in India and in the world, that puts the purchasing power in the pockets of the robbers. This robbery is done skilfully under capitalism, because it takes place under the cover of the money form of exchange. But in agriculture under the semicapitalist feudal conditions it is vividly clear where the peasant purchasing power goes. The visible proof of it is found in the *batai* system of land tenure. A study of this system shows that even if he has a very economic holding, the tenant cultivator starves and is worse off than the labourer on the capitalist farm. (In our programme we ask for the abolition of this system). The Economic Board of Inquiry, Punjab, under the patronage of the Government maintains certain farm accounts of various systems of tenure. Most of the farms are situated in the fertile Lyallpur colony area where splitting up of holdings into small pieces is prohibited. It is a district which has the highest average of cultivators holding above 25 acres. From the accounts published by the Board for 1926-27 we may take out four estates (three from Lyallpur and one from Montgomery district) of acres 28,228,796 and 50 on which the crops did not fail and were more or less normal. All these were rented out on the *batai* system. The distribution to tenants was as follows:—

Estate No.

1	of	28	acres	given	to	1	tenant	giving	him	28	acres	for	cultivation
2	of	228	"	"	"	18	"	"	each	12.66	"	"	"
3	of	796	"	"	"	40	"	"	"	20	"	"	"
4	of	50	"	"	"	5	"	"	"	10	"	"	"

Thus every tenant had an economic holding to work upon. There is one peculiarity about no. 3. It is that 500 acres of it were prepared for tractor cultivation and preliminary ploughing was done with a tractor. The minute details about these farms can be found in the publication. The Board refuses to draw any conclusions as it is afraid of landing itself into the class struggle and perhaps becoming an "accused organisation" in the Meerut Case. The results worked out from the accounts show that the actual application of peasant labour produced per acre Rs 50/-, 40/-, 59/- and 38/-

respectively. How was this produce shared under the *batai* system?

		Estates							
		1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%
Net income per acre	Rs.50	100	40	100	59	100	38	100	
Of which the									
Landlords took	„ 33	66	25	62.5	39	66	26	66	
Tenant's share.....	„ 17	34	14	37.5	20	34	12	34	

In every case the landlord has taken nearly double the share of the tenant. But the real import of this can be grasped still further by the total incomes. The total net production was Rs. 59,527. Out of this 4 landlords seized Rs 39,430 and 64 tenants were left with Rs. 20,097 for the whole year's work. The landlord took Rs.9,857 per head and the peasant Rs.314. When 64 peasants were producing values per day they were producing for each of the parasites Rs 27/6/- per day and for themselves only 14 annas a head. Still more you have to consider the fact that the tenant had to find money for expenses of seed, revenue, water charges, etc. for which he may have had to pay interest to the moneylender. The major part of the expenses are shared by the tenant and the percentages of earnings of both on expenses alone, apart from the fact that the tenant has contributed his productive labour will show why money so feverishly rushes for investment in land.

		Expenses per acre by the				Percentage return on expenses of the	
		Landlord		Tenant.		Landlord	Tenant
Rs.	9 1 0	24	11	8		364	68
„	10 2 2	20	13	11		250	71
„	8 4 1	28	0	10		487	71
„	6 12 5	17	8	10		371	87

This shows why every petty bourgeois with a few farthings tries to invest in land and not in industries or banks. The demand for land by the poor peasantry finding no outlet in industries and the high rate of exploitation of the labour of the tenant raises the price of the land continually. The intense exploitation shown above attracts the moneylender to invest his money and the city bourgeois yearns for rural banking in order to have a share in the loot.

The bourgeoisie sheds tears over the vanished purchasing power and says that the masses are poor, and the reason it gives is that we are ground down by Imperialism. But that is only one cause according to us. A simple overthrow of Imperialism will not add to the 14 As. of the cultivator in the above example. Along with it the parasite landlord capitalist must vanish. A change in the social structure in the above example would mean raising of the 14 As. of the toilers purchasing power to Rs. 2-10. The purchasing power will thus return.

94. *How landowners were imported in the colony to form a bulwark for Imperialism—cause of peasant indebtedness—break up of village communes into individual holdings—money rent.*

The fallacy of the statement that prohibiting fragmentation of holdings (about which an attempt was made in Bombay by a Government bill : vide W. P. P. activities) and keeping the new colony areas in big blocks of land will produce a happy class of peasant proprietors, is proved by the fate of the Lyallpur Colony. The Imperialist Dictatorship in India sometimes appears as the champion of the peasantry and claims credit for the irrigation and colonisation of the waste lands in the Punjab. But unfortunately the Dictatorship produces men who reveal its secrets. The nationalist bourgeoisie of the Congress also thanks the Dictatorship for irrigation or colonisation projects and is prepared to acknowledge the irrigation loans of a Dictatorship as a debt that can be justifiably borne by the working-class and peasantry in India. For were they not raised to benefit agriculture? But a member of the Dictatorship himself says the following about the opening of the canal colonies:—

“It was thought that a moderate infusion of the capitalist element would strengthen the colony not only by providing natural leaders for the new society but also bringing in men of superior intelligence and wider outlook than the ordinary peasants.” What happened to these natural leaders of superior intelligence? “They bring their lands much more slowly under cultivation, they quarrel with their sub-tenants. They dispute endlessly amongst themselves.....In the Lyallpur Colony of today few of the larger grantees reside on and some never even visit their estates”. (Darling's “Punjab Peasant”). The real purpose of the Dictatorship was not to bring land into better cultivation. It was to create a class, which, after bribery, would support it against the rising class struggle and the ambition of the city bourgeoisie to get rid of the Dictatorship.

"Where, too, in the Punjab, society is still semi-feudal in character, there were obvious advantages in propitiating the landed gentry with valuable grants of land; and the hope was cherished that "it would do something to restore the influence of a class which has been seriously impaired by the rise to power of a prosperous and educated middle class in the towns." (Ibid page 137). Thus the irrigation schemes and vast debts to foster colonisation were actuated by a desire to stabilise a feudal landlord class as a support of the Dictatorship of Imperialism against the attempts at democratisation by the rising bourgeoisie. So here again as in the sphere of constitutionalisation of the Dictatorship by Mr. Montagu, Imperialism was raising a class to fight another class—a class war of reaction against progressive development. If in the colony areas now we see a class war, it is a correction of the former retrograde process. However the hope of Imperialism is not yet completely smashed. In the struggle of 1930 when the city petty bourgeoisie and the workers and peasants threatened Imperialism, the Punjab landed gentry "propitiated with valuable grants of land" resolved to stand by the Dictatorship and against the Congress and the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Imperialist Dictatorship, threatened with a serious situation by the rapid expropriation of the peasantry, pretended to save the peasants by the Punjab Land Alienation and other acts. But capitalist economy is superior to such aberrations of its own legal structure. The law only changed the label of the peasant exploiters from non-agriculturist to agriculturist money-lenders. The terrific rate of exploitation is creating rapidly a class of rentiers, who call themselves peasants. The area under tenancy is increasing. The ideal small proprietor is now the ideal toiling slave of one million parasites according to 1921 census, who, 10 years ago in 1911 were 626,000.

Our attitude to this question including that of the money-lenders (as expressed in our platform and literature) differs radically from the bourgeois—Congress view, or even the viewpoint of the so-called Punjab Socialist Party. It has been thoroughly demonstrated that the incidents of mortgage debts and peasant indebtedness began after 1860. Mortgages which in the early seventies had averaged only 15,000 a year; 20 years later (1888-93) averaged 20,000 and in 10 years the annual increase in the area under mortgage rose from 1,65,000 acres (1875-78) to 3,85,000 (1884-88): Sir James Lyall, the then Lieutenant Governor wrote, "Under the influence of indebtedness and our present law and Civil Code Procedure, transfers of land were proceeding in all

districts in an increasing ratio and in many with dangerous rapidity". The number of bankers and moneylenders including their dependents increased from 52,263 in 1868 to 1,93,890 in 1911. These facts are known to every bourgeois economist in India but being bourgeois they cannot understand its significance. The official spokesmen of Imperialism who have humanitarian feelings consider that the peasant was a stupid fellow who was either extravagant or indolent and therefore got into the hands of the moneylenders. Some of them say that the peace and security of British rule have enhanced his credit and prosperity. Those who are prosperous borrow because they have credit. The poor borrow because they are poor. The profound conclusion of such writers is that the reason why the two men became blind was because they lost their eyes! One lost it because he had an eye to lose and the other because he had already lost it. Our petty bourgeoisie content themselves by simply pointing out to the British rule.

The real cause is to be sought in the advent of the Dictatorship no doubt. But the real nature of it lies not in the fact that it is foreign, British or white but because it is a capitalist Dictatorship. Secondly, even if the British Dictatorship had not come, the Indian bourgeoisie would have been forced to do exactly what the British bourgeoisie did.

We have seen what the Czarist Minister Stolypin did after the Revolution of 1905 in Russia. He permitted the peasants in agricultural communes to separate themselves with their share of land, with the right to sell or purchase. The result was the growth of a rural bourgeoisie that became the supporter of Czarism and a pauperised peasantry that went as workers to the towns. Was there any question of foreign rule there? None. Every capitalist economy has done it in every country. The British Dictatorship did it here also. Mr. Thornburn, who has studied the Punjab peasant economy well, noticed this feature but failed to understand its proper significance and after mentioning it degenerated into a sermoniser over extravagance, credit etc. "In 1849-50 we converted collective into individual ownership of land plus the right to alienate it at pleasure. By so doing we made an unconditional gift of a valuable estate to every peasant proprietor in the Punjab and raised his credit from the former limit of the surplus of an occasional good crop to the market value of the proprietary right conferred. In one day the old order passed away and gave place to a new one, which imposed upon the yet unsophisticated Punjabi a responsibility to which he was unequal.

To his delight and surprise he found that his former petty borrowing powers were now practically unlimited, his *bania* being ready to accommodate him to any extent." Divested of the sophisticated nonsense about responsibility, surprise, etc, what does the above proposition mean? It means that at first the collective agriculture was broken into one of individual private property holders. A process of class differentiation was started. But it is impossible to accentuate it without money economy, money rents. The fixity and security of British taxation is often compared in glowing terms to the ruthless complete expropriation by the former Sikh rulers. But this fixity brings the peasants into the clutches of the capitalist market because the revenue and rental charge has been made a fixed charge in money on the peasants' production. Without the money rent, the right of alienation would not have led to rapid expropriation of the peasantry. Indebtedness, increasing mortgages and pauperisation of the poor peasants were born out of the introduction of capitalist economy into agriculture, which happened under the British rule, but there is nothing "British" about it. The British Dictatorship did in the Punjab in 1849-50, what the Czar did in 1861 partially and in 1905 more thoroughly. The Prosecution, who charge us with copying Russian methods for the solution of the peasant problem, would do well to note that they have been allies of the Russian hangman Stolypin long before we thought of becoming their executors to save the peasantry.

95. *Effect of money economy as we read it—crops brought under the rule of the capitalist exchange market—the demand for reduction of land revenue and its meaning.*

What did the introduction of capitalist economy mean? It meant the break up of the stagnant economy of the feudal day; it had progressive element inside it. Germs for such an introduction had ripened within the economy of the commune villages. A growth of a rich peasantry as against the poorer one had been slowly developing, though by periodical redistributions, the peaks used to be lopped off. The British rule simply broke up the shell of what had already ripened. The rich peasant was allowed to separate from the commune and its obligations, which many a time meant the payment of the share of taxes of the poorer one by the rich member. The opportunity to separate was "a delight and surprise" to the richer strata and not to the poorer. The separation and allotment of landholdings took place according as they existed at the particular period, and even the poorer sections liked to hold land separately and break off hoping to see better days. With the break up of the communal agriculture, the men with little

reserve borrowed to invest capital in instruments, cattle etc. and the competitive struggle began. This by itself would have not meant much but for the introduction of money rent. The obligation to procure ready money to pay rent to the Government is a compulsion to bring crops on the exchange market. Submission of crops to the exchange market means enticement of village economy into the fluctuations and expropriations of the capitalist market and the consequent expropriation of the poor peasants who are unsophisticated so far in the knowledge of capitalist finance. The result is that in order to provide for cash money, the banker, moneylender is sought after, who between him and the market wipes off the whole of the peasant's surplus, compels him to sell out and become worker in the towns or a field worker. Concentration of land, and growth of landed proprietors begin.

This is an inevitable process under Capitalism and not a specific feature of the British Dictatorship. Every Capitalism has to find a market for its goods in the peasantry. Ten richer peasants are better buyers than 50 pauper peasants in a commune (though one big landlord is not a better buyer on the whole than ten richer peasants).

D/- 30. 11. 31.

Hence class differentiation has to be accelerated. Secondly the growth of the richer peasantry means sending out the poorer to the factories. Thirdly it means a better growth of commercial crops for the industries. All this is inevitably necessary for capitalism. It is necessary in order to develop the productive forces in capitalist society up to a stage.

The specific evil of the British Dictatorship is that it broke the old shell but did not provide the new one. On the contrary it reimposed a bit of the old broken piece on the new forces. It did not allow the Indian industries to develop to absorb the ruined peasant or the artisan. While breaking the Commune and introducing money economy it imposed the feudal landlords who held up capitalist competition in agriculture and thereby prevented the growth of the bourgeoisie. The specific destructive feature of British Imperialism lies in this. It generated all the human ranks for the growth of industry and capitalism, but suppressed the material forces for it.

The petty bourgeois parties in India, not understanding the economy of capitalism, adopt a reactionary Utopian outlook towards this question. Their analysis of causes being wrong, their remedies

are wrong. They think the peasant goes into debt over his marriages and pleasures. So they organise social reform circles and harangue about thrift, self-control and all the ancient fables about it. Not knowing the compulsion of capitalist economy they preach fantastic schemes of self-sufficing village units. In normal times they preach increased productivity. When confronted with a glutted market, they tumble into schemes of curtailment of production. They are sorry for the loss of purchasing power of the peasant and when shown vividly how it is pocketed by the parasitic landlord and rich peasant moneylender, they remember the rights of private property in land and the "due returns" of capitalism. For even a slightly more purchasing power, the poor peasant must be allowed to retain a portion of his produce on which alone he can become a customer for goods. To allow him to retain it means extinction of rent, i.e. landlordism, extinction of his debts and interest thereon. It leads to a revolutionary class struggle which may ultimately engulf the bourgeoisie also. So they abandon the class struggle against landlordism and moneylenders and ultimately end in vapoury schemes of village reconstruction and demand for reduction of land revenue only. How do we view the struggle for the reduction of land revenue? Reduction of land revenue by half is said to be one of the ingredients of Purna Swaraj. Landlords, rich peasants, poor peasants, big industrialists and small bourgeoisie all demand it. The Communists also demand it. In each case the demand has a different class significance. In each period of agricultural development it carries a different economic significance. What does our demand mean in relation to that of others?

96. *The land revenue in India—its two systems—what does our support to the demand for reduction of land revenue mean?*

The land revenue in India is a part of the surplus values produced by the peasant toiler and seized by the Imperialist Dictatorship for its maintenance. The operations undertaken to carry out the seizure assume many varied forms, whose sum total comprises all the systems of land tenure and land revenue codes. The dictatorship in some historical stage of the needs of its consolidation and development required allies. So it allowed a class of powerful brigands, who were for the time in possession of land and were pocketing the whole of the surplus values of the peasant to retain a certain percentage for themselves in return for their uninterrupted support to the dictatorship against all attempts to overthrow or nullify it. Such agreements were principally of two types. One in which the dictatorship in a period when it had not yet the

highly developed machine of bureaucracy or the complete bourgeois class sense, scenting the undeveloped productive forces, agreed only to take a fixed sum for all time to come and left the possessing brigands to do with the peasantry as they liked. That became the Permanent Settlement Zamindari. Another type was that in which the dictatorship and the possessing brigands agreed upon a certain proportion to be shared by each from the receipts of the seizure of values produced by the peasant. The dictatorship reserved to itself the right of varying the amount of such total seizure but the shares of allocation of it between itself and its supporting class remained more or less fixed. That became the Temporary Zamindari system. Under the first type falls 18 per cent of the total area and under the second 30 per cent. There is a third type of seizure and it is called the ryotwari. In this the principle at the beginning was that the dictatorship would seize directly from the cultivator a part of his produce through its paid servants and would admit of no intermediary. These classifications are conventional, and in the present stage of the development of the productive forces, of the class struggle and the national struggle they have lost their original content and form, as regards the relationship between the Imperialist State and the cultivator. Our bourgeois professors stick to these classifications because in the first place they are continued into the text-books of the educational system; secondly because it provides a good attractive ideological form for the class struggle between bourgeois economy and feudal relations which hinder its development. At the time that these classifications came into existence, these forms of seizure had real meaning. The British Dictatorship did not employ its bureaucracy to regulate the amount or forms of seizure of the peasant produce by those whom it recognises as Zamindars. It was only concerned with what it received. In the permanently settled tenures it had no reason to inquire at all what happened to the actual toiler. In the temporarily settled, it only exercised a little supervision to see that it received a proper share. In the ryotwari it had to deal with separate, small or comparatively big holding peasants who were directly brought into contact with the bureaucracy of the dictatorship, in matters of the seizure of their produce. But as time passed, by, this had to change. The Zamindars, backed by the dictatorship and its machinery of force, seized all they could from the cultivators, leaving them very little for their own feeding. The result was revolts, fall in production, and consequently an adverse effect on the British bourgeois profits. The dictatorship had to intervene and guarantee the cultivator a greater part of the produce for his needs so that he may produce more. In many cases the

Zamindars squandered everything and the dictatorship undertook to manage their possessions by Courts of Wards. In the case of temporarily settled Zamindari, as it prevails in Agra and Oudh, where the dictatorship takes 45 per cent and the Zamindar 55 per cent of the total seizure of peasant produce, it was impossible to ascertain the 45 per cent without knowing the full hundred per cent. Thus today under all the three systems of land revenue the dictatorship directly assists the seizure of the peasant produce. For example under the Zamindari, if the Zamindar's men fail to secure rents from the cultivator, the dictatorship at once appears on the scene with its courts issuing decrees, attachments, warrants etc. and its Police force executing them. Under the ryotwari, if the sub-tenant holding the land from the actual tenant (or *khatedar*), who has rented it from Government, fails and refuses, the same process is carried out. It is also not true to say that under ryotwari there is no intermediary between the dictatorship and the cultivator. Where, and as happens in most cases, the cultivator rents land from the original *khatedars*, he is liable to the man from whom he rents the land. The only difference is that under Zamindari of the type in U. P. and Bengal the cultivator in every case has to deal with the Zamindar and the Government. While in ryotwari there is a percentage of cultivators who are not yet ruined and made sub-tenants. They can deal directly with the Government. In Zamindari in every case the dictatorship has to share the loot with its ally, while in ryotwari it is not universal. But since in ryotwari also the extremely small holdings and the pauperisation of peasantry leads the peasants to become sub-tenants and to concentration of land in the hands of rich farmers, moneylenders or bankers, we get everywhere in India a system which is more or less a Zamindari system. The three systems may be said to have resolved into two—permanently settled or temporarily settled Zamindaris. The classification made by Government from the point of view of sharers in the expropriation of the cultivator thus becomes faulty. The Punjab is put under temporary Zamindari. But there are small cultivators as are found in the ryotwari directly paying rent to the State, while in ryotwari there are millions of acres sublet by the owners thus making the system what is generally understood as Zamindari. In fact if we take the loose sense of the term Zamindari—that is a system of cultivation in which the cultivator carries on cultivation with his own instruments, and is compelled to pay rent to one or more super-tenants or owners, who share it with the State—then probably 80 per cent of the cultivators live under Zamindari, under the direct subjection of landlords, *khatedars*, *khots* etc. Thus we can say that 8 out of every 10

cultivators are directly expropriated by a social parasitic class, apart from the fact that the State and the whole capitalist system rest over their head.

Viewed in this manner the struggle for reduction of land revenue is purely a reformist struggle, which ultimately promises no emancipation for the peasantry. When any one, whether under ryotwari or zamindari, asks for a remission of revenue or rent, what does he ask for? That the dictatorship should reduce its share of the seizure of the peasant's produce. Since most of the cultivators' rental goes through an intermediary the benefit of the reduction of the revenue does not reach him for a long time while enhancement affects him at once. Secondly the expropriation of his surplus through rent does not vanish at all. The enhancement of land revenue becomes a serious danger only in cases where by deliberate policy the small cultivators' minimum subsistence also is cut into by settlement officers proposing fanciful rates by looking to the high prices of certain products, as happened in Bardoli. The struggle against enhanced land revenue when carried on by a small peasant is a struggle for guarding his minimum subsistence. The same struggle carried on by wealthy estate owners becomes a struggle for maintenance of their profits from rent. When we support such a general struggle, we in fact support the former, not the latter. Moreover we never support the struggle against land revenue as such. But it is always allied with other fundamental demands (vide the W. P. P. Manifesto on Bardoli in 1928). To take a concrete example from the Bardoli struggle, which we supported whole-heartedly and about which evidence has been led in this case. There the Bombay Government increased the land revenue demand by 22 per cent on the previous settlement and the people refused to pay it. This refusal had a different meaning for different classes. For example take three cases out of the several mentioned by the Government Inquiry Committee (page 19) whose report was accepted and approved by the Congress. A piece of (page 19) land (1) 9 acres & 21 gunthas assessed at Rs. 45-7 was rented to the cultivator at Rs. 217-8-0 (2) 10 acres and 38 gunthas assessed at Rs. 33-14 was rented to the cultivator at Rs. 248. The enhancement of 22 per cent means increase in the assessment by Rs. 10/-. But now the peasant would not have to surrender only Rs 10/- more of his produce. The rentier landholder will not give up the ratio of his rent to that of the assessment so he will insist on taking Rs. 266-8, an enhancement of Rs. 49. In the second case while the share of the dictatorship will increase by Rs. 7-8 the monopolist holder of the land will claim Rs. 54-8 more. So who will fight in

the struggle against revenue enhancement more determinedly—the monopolist who lets out the land or the tenant cultivator? Of course the latter. When the big landholders were compromising in the Councils over the question, it was the cultivators and tenants who starved themselves, suffered losses, disease and death at the hands of Police violence. All the landholders encouraged them from a distance and sent them a few pies for relief because the success in the struggle meant a successful continuance of the expropriation of Rs. 217 and 248 by the rentier landlord in the above instances. The one struggles for “existence”, for the protection of his starvation wages, the other applauds him for his own “parasitic existence.” When we advocate a platform of peasant struggle, we fight against the expropriation not only by the dictatorship but also by the monopolist rentier.

97. *The class struggle inside the anti-Imperialist struggle in Bardoli—the Dublas and Dharalas—what it means in U. P. and Bengal?—Rents and the feudal class—Indian bourgeois interest opposed to feudalism.*

In that mighty struggle of Bardoli, there was also another chapter which was hidden from the eyes of the masses. There are thousands of landless workers who are literally slaves of the peasant families, not only rich but sometimes of the ordinary type also. They are called Dublas. The Dubla is a slave who can be sold from one master to another. He has no separate independent existence, he is not a human being. He is entered in the cost of production along with manure and bullocks. In the accounts of the farmer, depreciation is charged on him as they charge it on the plough or a tool. The Congress advocates before the Government Inquiry Committee, vehemently pressed for determining the cost and depreciation of a Dubla. The Committee tried it and said, “It is a difficult matter to reduce that uncertain quantity, the Dubla, to rupees and annas.” In the evidence laid before the Committee by the Congress, rich farmers would come one after another and declare that their agriculture was in loss because “the Dubla had disappeared.” The Dubla, like the bullock, when under oppression, desires for freedom and simply runs away. When he does this, he is hunted out from village to village and all the farmers join in the chase and even the Imperialist machine aids in it. In order to take away from this hunt the obliquity that is attached to the idea of “slave hunting” in the modern bourgeois times, and in order to fool the world, every master puts a certain cash debt on the Dubla’s head, labels him as an indebted person

flying from his creditors, and thus satisfies bourgeois conscience and culture, which gets eloquently indignant over slavery (have they not been taught to hate slavery in the textbook "Uncle Tom's cabin" !); but aids in a hunt for the Dubla because his slavery is clothed in bourgeois terms of cash obligations. What interest has the Dubla to fight against the enhancement of land revenue? Nothing at all. With reduced profits his fodder is reduced, but out of increased profits he will not get a single blade more. Yet in the whole campaign of the Bardoli struggle no one except us spoke for the liberation of the Dubla slaves. Yet the Indian bourgeoisie is not ashamed to clap its delegates when they thunder against slavery in the League of Nations. It is quite possible that individual farmers may be very kind to their Dublas, may even treat them as members of their own family. But such kindness cannot take the place of emancipation. Thus within the anti-Imperialist struggle for reduction of land revenue, there is a class struggle for the liberation of the Dublas. There is also a class struggle of the Kaliparaj villages against their landlords. When we support the Bardoli struggle we not only support the one against the enhanced land revenue but also the class struggle. The poor peasant of Bardoli who has a small holding and in some places also owns a Dubla toils as heavily as his Dubla on his field. He is incited against us by the bourgeois rich farmer who tells him that we do not support his struggle against high land revenue but want to incite a fight between him and his Dubla. This is a piece of misrepresentation. We certainly do not tolerate the expropriation of the peasant's produce not only by the Dictatorship but by others also. At the same time we point out that the robbery of the small peasant by his rich lessee from whom he rents land is just as much to be overthrown as the exploitation of the labour of the Dubla by the peasant owners small or big. Unless the toiling peasant recognises that this is so, he will not succeed against the Dictatorship. Unless the claims of the landless workers and even of the so-called criminal tribes like the Dharalas are recognised, so long as they do not get the promise of land and freedom, they will not aid the small and middle peasants in their struggle against their expropriation by Imperialism.

The struggle against land revenue, i.e. the share of the Dictatorship in the peasants' surplus become a genuinely anti-Imperialist struggle, in the case of the actual tenant or owner cultivators. But that same struggle when carried on under the feudal zamindaris like those of U.P. and other places, by the very nature of the system under which the Imperialist Dictatorship

and its allied class expropriate, the peasantry assumes a double role. It seeks to overthrow both landlordism and Imperialism, because there the one is inseparable from the other. The estates of Agra and Oudh are vast plantations cultivated by peasants in small plots, working under semi-slavery conditions. Slavery is a thousand times better than the life of the U.P. peasant, because a slave has at least to be fed by his master till he has sold him. But here you are free peasants and nothing is yours. The whole province of Oudh is a vast colony of "free slaves" who are killed, beaten, dishonoured by the handful of owners of the 260 estates. The Imperialist Dictatorship supports this class of brigands, now called "Barons of Oudh," because, as the Simon Commission observes, "the most powerful of the taluqdars own hundreds of villages and enjoy very large incomes. Their wealth, their social status and the control they exercise over their tenants, give these 'Barons of Oudh' a position of very great influence in their areas." (Page 64). Their wealth arises from the robbery of the peasants, their social status from the class rule of capitalism and feudalism and their control from the bayonets of the Dictatorship. A purely reformist struggle against land revenue in this area at once develops into a class struggle. Because here the Dictatorship is directly the force that guarantees the feudal rights of the zamindars and is a cosharer with them. It guarantees to the feudal landlords the strength of its machinery of force, with whose aid the barons expropriate the peasantry of all its produce. This brings us to one characteristic of the Zamindari System as it prevails in the U.P. and Bengal, and the other general type which we have already defined. The tenant in the Ryotwari areas of Bombay or the petty zamindari areas of the Punjab leases land from a bigger landholder who receives a certain amount of rent, a fixed part of which he delivers to the State as land revenue. Here the tenant enters into a more or less bourgeois type of transaction unencumbered by any other personal obligation of custom or usage. But in the zamindari areas under feudal conditions a tenant is burdened with feudal obligations which though nominally declared illegal, continue to exist (Vide Sir Malcolm Hailey's speech in the U.P. Council). The cultivator is directly ruled by the zamindar, to whose servants and agents he has to pay for easy terms of tenure, big *nazaranas*, birthday gifts and free service whenever required. Until 1921 the peasantry was being wholly expropriated by the feudal barons. After the risings of 1921 the Dictatorship, awakened to the danger of revolutionary extermination of the zamindars by the ruined peasants, curbed the feudal brigands and granted some fixity of tenure to the peasants. But it proved absolutely futile in

the real working, as the Governor of U.P. himself admits. The feudal landlords being not in a position to buy off the whole bureaucracy were in a position to nullify the Oudh Rent Act and such other enactments. Neither was the Dictatorship in a position to displease this powerful class, which is a great counter-revolutionary bulwark against the masses. So in this part the Dictatorship of the modern bourgeoisie which historically overthrew feudalism in its own country is the direct supporter of it. The result is that the peasant in this area has to meet the demand of rent as much as in the other areas, but in addition, is forced to put his labour power and implements at the disposal of the zamindar for which he gets no return. His expropriation is therefore more distressing. Not being given the help of even that semblance of law which the Dictatorship is forced to lay down for its own unlawful existence, the peasant under these feudal zamindars is deprived of his produce, his clothes, his cottage, his wife, his children, is robbed, beaten and killed at the sweet will of the zamindar. In the permanently settled tracts the expropriation of the peasantry by land revenue demand is negligible. When we compare the shares of the Imperialist State under the three prominent parts, we find the incidence of land revenue realisation per cultivated acre to be :—

Under Ryotwari	Rs. 2-10-4	(on 63.9 million acres)		
„ Zamindari Temporary	„ 1-15-4	„ 64.9	„	„
„ „ Permanent	„ 0-15-4	„ 48.6	„	„

(The total million acres compared form 64 % of the cultivated area)

(Worked out from “Statistical Abstract of Government of India,” 1930 edition, page 358-59).

On the face of it this looks as if, in the system where the Dictatorship expropriates the peasant directly, the peasant is heavily oppressed, while under the Zamindari expropriation per acre is so small. But the fact is quite the reverse. If the highest rate of average exploitation by the Government is taken to be at Rs 2-10-4 per acre the difference between Rs. 1-15-4 and 2-10-4 and that between 0-15-4 and 2-10-4 per acre of cultivated area is the bribe which the Dictatorship pays to the feudal landlord, the big zamindars, for their support to its adulterated maintenance against all revolutionary attempts and against “further attempts at democratisation.” The extent of the bribe to this parasitic class can be gauged from the fact that while in Bengal the Dictatorship

receives Rs. 3 crores from the peasants' produce the zemindars are left with 10 crores. In U.P. the British Dictatorship receives Rs. 694 lacs from a total known expropriation of Rs. 2135 lacs, leaving 1441 lacs to the parasitic class. This is on the acknowledged realisation. But in addition to this the wealth-producing labour power of the peasants exploited by feudal usage is not calculated. "The actual fixture of rentals as between the landlord and the tenant has been a matter of bargaining in which the Government has taken no direct part" said Sir Malcolm Hailey to the Legislative Council on 20th July 1931. The Dictatorship need not take a direct part but every rupee enhanced by it in the land revenue adds Rs. 2/- to the feudal land-holder's pocket. Thus the Dictatorship bribes and carries with it a big feudal train to assist its work. It may not directly assist in the fixture of rentals but it lends its bayonets when the peasantry wants to reduce them. The expropriation of the peasantry by a class that has no function to discharge in social production creates a quadrangular struggle in Indian political and economic field. We may take the annual expropriation of the peasantry by 12½ million rent receivers at about 180 crores. It represents an accumulation in the hands of the feudal class of 57 per cent of the total paid-up capital of all the joint stock companies in India, which was about 267 crores in 1927-28 according to Government statistics. It means that a few million land owners receive in 18 months more than the total joint stock capital of British India. The Indian bourgeoisie discharges a social function in production and distribution and is economically and politically an active class as yet, except in cases where it has become absolutely monopolistic and divorced from the social function as is the case in Bombay textiles, Tata Iron etc. The Indian bourgeoisie finds it difficult to assemble the liquid resources for investment in the face of the fierce Imperialist opposition and competition; while a sum which would represent 67 per cent return on their capital is annually swallowed by a feudal class and is not made available as a fund for the averaging of capitalist profits. The second loss to the Indian bourgeoisie is that a peasantry, whose whole production is expropriated by feudal rights carrying no progressive economic function, is a poor buyer of industrial goods. Thus the Indian bourgeoisie, and, for that matter, even the British bourgeoisie find their economic class interest in conflict with feudal landlordism. The class conscious economy of the national bourgeoisie put the issue quite plainly, though ultimately they do not fail to point out alternatives in order to avoid a class struggle. Speaking about agriculturist's incomes, which are not taxed, Professors Shah and Khambattah

say. "It is presumed that the land revenue these people pay is the counter-part in the direct taxation of the income taxes that the industrial and commercial classes have to pay. It may be so in the temporarily settled Ryotwari provinces, where in fact the individual incomes are so exceedingly small that no human or civilised system of taxation can possibly tax them. But in the case of the zamindari, land holders and especially those whose land revenue has been settled once for all several generations since, the situation is wholly different. The income in this case is almost wholly unearned: it is utterly independent of the personal interest or exertions of the owner & finally it is steadily growing independently of any activity of the owner. Thanks to the Permanent Settlement the owners are themselves exempted from any corresponding increase in the demand from them for the purposes of the State; and though there is in most provinces enjoying such settlement some sort of landlord and tenant legislation framed with a view to safeguard the rights of the tenants under these landlords, the latter have a thousand and one means of defrauding the peasants of their rights and privileges" (Wealth and Taxable Capacity of India, page 300.) The main point of the bourgeois complaint is not so much against receiving rent as against its not being taxed like their incomes. The Indian bourgeoisie which still takes some personal part in industrial activity, unlike the monopolist coupon cutters of the Imperialist countries, grumples against the landlords "coupon-cuttings without any activity. Like a brilliant modern child it points out to Imperialism, that its most ancient brother is going tax free while it is being taxed simply because it is brilliant enough to increase the producing forces and thereby its own incomes in a concentrated, intensive and palpable form. It does not advocate the abolition of landlordism but asks for taxation and the Imperialist Dictatorship, faced with deficits, is inclined to agree with it !

The Imperialist Dictatorship representing the interests of the British bourgeoisie sees that this feudal class is unnecessary and parasitic, that it does not discharge any necessary social function. Therefore it allows a certain criticism of feudalism by the intelligentsia of the bourgeoisie. Even the Anglo-Indian papers take part in it and a most responsible member of the Dictatorship, Sir Basil Blackett observed in a lecture before the Royal Society of Arts in London: "True economic progress in India will not be fully realisable till India sloughs off its "mediaeval abstractions." Sir Basil wants to hide his true class outlook behind a very clumsy phrase "mediaeval abstractions." What does he mean? The characteristic of the mediaeval age is feudal economy and its

"abstraction" is the ideological and social super-structure that arises from that economy.

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Bourgeois economy having grown within the feudal structure, "the abstraction," the feudal rights of *nasrana*, serf labour, the existence of big landholders and their influence in politics become a hindrance. They require to be overthrown. The conflict being in the ideological field. But that conflict generates revolutionary forces and as Sir Basil Blackett himself observes, "more than once since the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms (which it may be remembered gave a share of the partnership to the bourgeoisie as shown before) as for example during the controversy over the Reserve Bank Bill, the Central and Provincial legislatures have borne witness to the possibilities of severe friction between urban and rural interests; and the inevitable predominance of the urban intellectual among the politically minded Indians gives constant preoccupation to the Government and especially to the district officer." ("Leader," February 2, 1930). The 'mediaeval setting' is the political bulwark of Imperialism and is not economically a direct competitor to the British bourgeois interest as the Indian bourgeoisie is. The Indian bourgeoisie cannot progress without the overthrow of feudal aristocracy. British goods can find no market without releasing from the feudal blood-sucker a few drops at least for the peasant, of course in the end to be yielded to the Imperialist bourgeoisie. Hence, the Simon Commission suggest reconsideration of the permanent settlement, and imposing a tax on the zamindari incomes. The bourgeois interests support Tenancy Bills but all of them refuse to pursue the opposition to the end, because the end means rousing the peasantry against landlordism, against the moneylenders. Once the revolutionary tide is on who can say in the present epoch where it will stop? It boils and grows over into a revolution against the whole bourgeois order.

The feudal class recognises this class cleavage. It is not we alone that speak it out. Economic social reality is a thing that makes the most rabid anti-Communists provide the base for the argument of the Communists. Marxism is born out of class reality and that reality, in a time of sharpening class struggle, begins to recognise our premises but refuses our solution. The consciousness of parasitism of the fact that it has ceased to be in any way a socially necessary class even to the smallest extent, in the present stage of the world productive forces, has dawned upon a section of the intellectual representatives of decayed feudalism, in the brains

of a feudal lord, who is trying ideologically to grow into a modern bourgeois. And nothing can give more pleasure than to quote in support from the speech of Rai Rajeshwar Bali at the Zamindar Conference held in Rai Bareilly (19-7-31). He said, "We must all remember that no class or community can survive for long which ceases to be of value to society. This is particularly true at the present moment when the world forces are acting against the retention of institutions connected with capitalism of any kind. Therefore we must actively and incessantly demonstrate our value." (The Leader, July 25, 1931) Rai Rajeshwar Bali confounded his feudal class with the modern bourgeoisie. Still he is to be congratulated on his decision "to demonstrate the value" of feudalism to Indian society. He proceeded to outline the basis of this demonstration and most actively insisted on three very profound proposals. The landlords instead of becoming dancing monuments in the Butler Palace after the notorious leadership of Sir Harcourt Butler and the late Raja of Mahmudabad, in the realm of demonstrating their "unlimited values" in the "mediaeval romantic setting" of society life should follow "Mahatmaji's cult of simple life and Swadeshi." Absentee landlordism should be converted into presentee landlordism and the rural areas should be reconstructed. What is the net result of this demonstration of value of landlordism? If all the landholders spend a hundred thousand rupees on Khadi instead of ten lakhs on silk the 14½ crores of rent they take from the peasantry cannot be reduced by a single pie. Their savings of nine lakhs are not returned to their tenants. An absentee tyrant does not become less demonic by his presence, rather he adds to it. Reconstructing rural area has only one meaning, to strike at the root of expropriation of the peasantry by rents. This is impossible for landlordism because it means the abolition of landlordism and construction not of the rural area but of its own coffin. The ultimate result of all this advice is a reconstruction of the fallen tombs of dead *pirs* and temples of nondescript Mahants, while the bones of the peasant sink into the grounds of his mud hut under the blows of the Attachment Officer. Landlordism has no value in the development of the productive forces. It only hinders them by exacting a tribute by reason of its old production relations. Its only value lies in its abolition from social life and survival in the museum of Indian revolution.

98. *Pandit Jawahar Lal's opinion—his welcome to land-owners—even if feudalism is substituted by capitalism expropriation of the peasantry through the capitalist market remains.*

"We have seen so far the fundamental basis of the production

relations of the peasant toiler, that prevail over 3/4th of the cultivated area of India. It is that the peasant in order to exert his energies in extracting useful and necessary things from nature must first agree, has to agree, to surrendering half the fruits of his toil as rent to a class which holds the monopoly of the soil. The moneylenders oppression is in a great measure due to this feudal expropriation. The dearth of capital for the bourgeoisie arises from this sterilisation of its supply at its very source. Commodity movements are crippled due to this feudal loot; and bourgeois industry groans under the heavy burden placed on its shoulders by the tribute to the landlord, which its raw material carries on its head. Imperialism threatened with a competitive native bourgeoisie and a revolutionary proletariat and peasantry refuses to displace its feudal allies and the Indian bourgeoisie, unable to fight, releases a few intellectuals to shout for nationalisation of land. Now it is a well known fact that Communist advocate nationalisation of land and the distribution of it to the landless and small peasants. Vide programme (Exh. P 99). This is interpreted by some as "the extension of the Ryotwari System" to the whole of India. For example, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who is supposed to be a Socialist, is against the feudal land tenure. Speaking at the Lahore Congress (December 1929) he said (in his Presidential address), "We have among us many big landowners and we welcome them. But they must realise that the ownership of large estates by individuals which is the outcome of a state resembling the old feudalism of Europe, is a rapidly disappearing phenomenon all over the world. Even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism the large estates are being split up and given to the peasantry who work on them. In India also we have large areas where the system of peasant proprietorship prevails and we shall have to extend this all over the country." The Pandit has committed many fallacies here. Large estates owned by individuals do not necessarily resemble feudalism. In the U.S.A. large estates are owned by capitalists who cultivate them by employing hired land workers and with machines. In no way does this resemble feudalism. The characteristic of feudalism is not the largeness of an estate. Even an estate of 100 acres may be feudal. The difference is that under feudalism the cultivator may own his instruments of production. When he produces crops he is left with the minimum of the produce for his living and the whole surplus value or rent is appropriated by the landlord. The cultivator also lives under certain feudal obligations of giving free labour and gifts to the landlord which is not prevalent under capitalist agriculture where the peasant does not own even the instruments, is a hired land worker and has no personal obligations of the feudal type.

He is free to sell his labour power any where. In countries where thorough bourgeois revolutions took place, it is true that the feudal estates were split up and distributed. For a time the peasants thrived, but out of them grew rich middle and poor peasants. Land again became concentrated in the hands of agrarian capital and the peasantry was reduced to land workers. The extension of ryotwari may be said to be the middle stage in the above European process, but as we have seen, it does not prevent the growth of rent exploiters. The Pandit did not care to know why even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism feudal agriculture is breaking down. Simply because its break up helps the growth of capitalism. The Pandit may welcome the big feudal land owners who on his own proposition are not required by ryotwari nor even by capitalism. So the welcome can be only from their own class fellows. The Pandit when he welcomes them thus becomes a feudal chieftain? He may say he wants them to break up their estates and welcomes them for that. A class cannot consent to break up its own bones. Either they must break the peasantry or the peasantry will break them. If the Pandit welcomes them on which side then does he stand?

However, though not in deed yet in theory, the bourgeois intellectuals recognise the necessity of the breakup of feudal estates and handing them over to the peasantry. But what does the bourgeoisie itself propose to do with the peasantry, supposing the latter gets all those estates, is freed from the feudal burden, and allowed to cultivate its own plot of land and help the building up of capitalism? In the modern epoch, the whole of Indian agricultural production, whether on ryotwari or zamindari estates, is ruled by the capitalists' exchange market through its prices. The value of wheat, cotton, rice etc. even in the remotest corners of India is subject to the changes in the markets as far away as New York. Whatever is left to the peasant, after his big leeches—the moneylender and the landlord or lessee—are satisfied, is attacked and expropriated by the capitalist market. The process of exchange between the peasant and the capitalist trader is always an unequal exchange.

This is not only the Communist viewpoint. The Banking Inquiry Committee appointed by the Government of India in its report says the same thing. "The Bombay Committee point out that some of the practices in un-organised markets, such as fixation of prices secretly and reduction of prices on the ground of alleged inferior quality, act to the detriment of the agriculturist....." In paragraph 261 of their report they (the U. P. Committee, refer to the practice in a novel form of the well known evils of cornering

and dumping; they say that "there is some evidence to show that exporting firms are occasionally guilty of dumping agricultural produce to facilitate purchase at lower prices...!..... More than one Provincial Committees have adverted to the fact that the agricultural produce is forced on the market at certain periods in such a way that the farmers fail to obtain the best prices". (Pages 210, 211). This holds good not only in a backward peasantry but even in such countries as Canada, U. S. A., Germany, England etc. The inequality arises from the nature of the methods of production. Production of industrial goods, whether of consumption or of capital goods, is standardised, concentrated and centralised in huge international combines with a price policy that extends over continents and which is not subject to any fluctuations. The trader possesses an advantage of training, organising, literacy, the support of banks etc. in his negotiations with the peasant. For example, if the exchange value of one seer of wheat represents, in a given period, a yard of cloth, in the actual process of exchange the peasant is bound to be mulcted of at least half a foot of cloth. In addition to this there comes to the help of the capitalist market, the highly deceptive medium of exchange, which is money. Money hides the real value relations. A token coin worth four annas serves to exchange commodities worth four times its real value. The currency system of every country is controlled by the bourgeoisie of that country and it is used by them as a whole for cheating the vast mass of peasantry in its own and other countries, and secondly by the various sections of the bourgeoisie against one another. The individual isolated peasant is no match for modern capitalism in the exchange process, and even when the productive forces cheapen consumption goods, the fullest advantage of it never comes to him.

Another handicap which the small peasant suffers against capitalism is the one which in industry is the difference between small scale and large scale production. The per acre production of a small peasant is far less than that of a capitalist farm and therefore its cost of production is higher. In industry, the result of this would be that the plant with bad and limited technique must invest more capital and work like that of the big plant or it goes into losses. In this process a levelling of technique takes place. Capitalist competition levels capitalist profits which constantly try to find their average. This does not take place in agriculture, because there technique cannot be introduced as easily. A small holding cannot be made big easily. In industry one plant by reason of a secret process may get differential profits for a time. But such secrets do not remain so very long. In

agriculture the land is limited. Therefore it exacts a monopoly price for the owner unless it is nationalised and made exchangeable like other commodities. The owner claims absolute rent, whether you get profit or living thereby or not, he does not care. Since it is limited you cannot defy him (by threatening to cultivate air or some such thing). The only alternative is to overthrow his monopoly ownership. Secondly its limitedness and the need of all available food stuffs for the world population, keep the small peasant going because the price of land produce due to the above two factors is determined not by the cost of production on the best land (as in industry) but on the worst land. But this does not mean that the small peasant rules the prices. There are times of crisis when capitalism leaves nothing to the vast mass of people to buy with and a fall in world prices occurs by what is called over-production. The small peasant then cannot get even half his cost of production with the result that he sells below it and makes up the balance by starvation. The slow starvation and expropriation through which he passes in normal times becomes accentuated in crisis.

The bankruptcy of the nationalist bourgeoisie in finding a way out for the peasant from his expropriation by the capitalist market is best illustrated in times of crisis, which refutes the allegation that the application of Marxism to Indian conditions would be a hot-house growth or unwarranted. The periodical recurring crises of capitalism lay bare all its contradictions, which are then understood in their true perspective. The utter bankruptcy of the Congress bourgeois politicians and economists in solving the peasant problem by merely harping on reduction of rent and revenue is repeated over the whole of India from their own mouths, and our programme arises directly on the ruins of their programmes.

99. *Some utterances on the complete ruin of the peasantry and its inability to pay rent due to fall in prices—examples from U. P., Bengal, the Punjab and Karnatic.*

The present crisis of world capitalism of which India is a part and contributory factor is expressed in the agrarian area in the fall of prices. The fall is not a cause of the crisis, as the bourgeoisie wants the people to believe, but only a symptom. It is itself a result which in its turn produces its own cycle of results which is very beautifully expressed by Marx in his manifesto (P. 21). Still let us confine ourselves only to the prices' problem, the unsaleability of

goods on the capitalist market and the consequent question of the peasant's obligations as to rent and revenue, which are fixed charges in money. The Honorary Secretary of the U. P. Zemindars' Association, Mr. Hari Raj Saroop, who is not expected to exaggerate the losses of the peasantry for fear of injuring the interests of his class, compares the cost of production and the proceeds realised from the produce per acre of wheat and sugarcane in Muzaffarnagar district, which had the honour to send its District Magistrate to conduct the inquiry into this case. He says, "The average produce of sugarcane in irrigated tracts in normal years is 15 maunds per acre which will at the most fetch Rs. 75. The tenant's minimum expenses in producing an acre of sugarcane will be somewhat as follows:—

	Rs.	as.	p.
Bent and Revenue	20	0	0
Manure	10	0	0
Ploughing, Harrowing, Weeding and Binding	25	0	0
Irrigation with labour for watering	12	0	0
Seed	15	0	0
Cutting and Collecting	7	8	0
Making Gur, with cartage to Market	22	8	0
	<hr/>		
Total	112	0	0

So the tenant gets in sugarcane in spite of all his labours about 35 per cent less than what he actually spends. The case of wheat is still worse because the tenant produces on an average of 12 maunds of wheat worth Rs. 30 and spends about Rs. 62/- thus getting a return of less than half". From this account what would be the obvious conclusion so far as payment of rent and revenue is concerned? If the peasant refuses to pay the whole of the rent, revenue and water charges, Rs. 32/-, still his fixed cash liability on expenses remains at Rs 80/-, a deficit of Rs 5/- per acre on sugarcane. On an acre of wheat the loss being more than 50 per cent, if the peasant refuses the whole rental and water charge he will have a deficit of Rs 15/- per acre. In such circumstances a demand to reduce the rent and revenue by half does not mean a demand to save the peasant from distress but to save Imperialism and landlordism, who are not entitled even to a pice of rent, granting for a moment that they are sold in normal circumstances.

Two Congress leaders of Rai Bareli, Messrs. Sitla Sahai and Mata Pershad Misra in a statement on behalf of the Congress say "putting the rabi and kharif both together we find that even in cases of gram and dhan which fetch good price, the tenant cannot pay his rent and live; if he has sown barley or peas or jowar or wheat he has to borrow if he wants to pay." (Leader May 5, 1931). Such a statement means that the British Dictatorship and feudal landlordism must renounce all their demands on the peasantry, because if the peasant has to live he is not in a position to surrender any part of his produce in order to maintain the Dictatorship and the feudal class. The excellent gentlemen who made the statement realised this implication and three lines below they suddenly found that the peasant can pay 50 per cent, "if Government themselves make any inquiry they will also come to the same conclusion as we have, viz. that it is economically impossible for the kisans to pay more than 50 per cent". Just three lines above they say, "if the kisan has to live he cannot pay." That is their first conclusion. Then they forget their own conclusion and say that Government will arrive after inquiry at the same conclusion. And what is that same? That the kisan cannot pay more than 50 per cent. Where from has sprung this sudden accretion of money to 50 per cent ability to pay rent. Obviously from the fear that non-payment means dissolution of all the existing production relations, of class rule and the Dictatorship. In his manifesto to the U. P. peasants and zamindars, Mahatma Gandhi asked the peasants to pay 50 per cent or 75 per cent of their usual rent. While explaining this he said "Indeed an inquiry made in over 300 villages in the east of the province shows that the price of the produce at the present rate does not even cover the rents payable." This makes no allowance for the cost of production. When the kisan can pay nothing, not even for his food, he is asked to pay for the maintenance of Imperialism and the feudal landholders. In the same article where he said the above, he says, "Congressmen on their part will see to it that kisans will scrupulously fulfil their obligations to the zamindars." (Young India, May 1931). The expropriation of the peasant by capitalism is very well described by the Indian Chamber of Commerce on the question of relief to Bengal peasants, in their letter to the Government of India. "The consumers and shippers who keep the statistics of the world's demand and supply at their finger ends will only be too ready to secure supplies at as low a price as possible. With his appalling poverty, illiteracy, and submissiveness the Indian agriculturist is seriously handicapped for the purposes of bargaining and he always finds himself at a serious disadvantage, in his dealings with those who want the products of his labour." (Times of India 30/7/31). Please remember that

this is not written in any Communist manifesto but by the Indian Merchants Chamber. A committee of 20 zamindars of the Kisan Sabha of Shaikhpora in Punjab in their report of inquiry said, "The Committee has most carefully studied the condition of present rabi harvest; no acre produces more than 8 maunds of grain. This grain fetches in the market about Rs. 8/- and the revenue and water rates in this district range between Rs. 12/- and 14/- per acre. Not only is there a deficit of Rs. 4/- to 6/- but absolutely nothing is left to the peasant to enable him to maintain his family. It should be remembered that he has also left nothing to meet his expenses in connection with the next sowing for the kharif crop". The conclusion from the finding can only be one that if the peasant has to live he cannot pay for the maintenance of the Dictatorship or the rentier parasite. He must dissolve the class rule over him. But the Committee does not say that. It says "the Government should therefore either take 1/10 of the amount of produce in kind or charge 1/3 of the present revenue assessment charges." That is Government should add to the starvation and indebtedness of the peasant. The Dictatorship is obliged for such kindly advice and acts upon it, with the result that according to the Land Revenue Administration Report of the Punjab for the year ended in September 1930, the forces of the Dictatorship were let loose with greater vigour and the number of processes issued against the lambardars and owners rose to 19,409 being an increase of nearly 30 per cent over 1929. At the Annual (General Meeting) of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce the Chairman said (April 15, 1931), "The cost of production per acre is very much higher than the price it yields and the payment of land revenue by the zamindar (in the Punjab sense) has become almost an impossibility, so much so that most of the zamindars have had to part with the ornaments of their women-folk and in some cases undergo worse indignities for the purpose of paying land revenue." The learned loyal gentlemen ended by asking Government to set up sales organisations as a remedy. From Gujrat, where the peasantry is said to have won victories in their struggle against the ruin and starvation under the leadership of the Congress bourgeoisie, we get the same picture. An examination of 750 family budgets was made in the Matar Taluqa by Mr. Kumar Appa of the Gujrat National University and member of the Congress Experts' Committee on the question of adjustment of debts. The report says, "Before providing for the depreciation, land revenue, and unpaid interest, actual receipts in cash and in kind excluding all extraordinary expenses and capital

items, the analysis shows the following:—

Deficits of Rs.	Families.
1 to 100	139
101 to 300	334
301 to 500	145
501 to 1000	74
over 1000	9
others	49
	750

Mr. S. D. Kalelkar writing on this says, " Only 25 per cent of the peasants are feeding on their crop. The people will have nothing to eat even if they are to pay only half of the revenue". And yet all the holy gentlemen of the Sabarmati Ashram were telling the peasants to borrow money and pay their tribute to Imperialism. Finally for those who would throw the blame of extravagance, inefficiency or dishonesty on the peasantry, here are four figures of the cost of cultivation and price of yield on a Government farm in the Dharwar district.

	Per Acre.					
	Expenditure.			Yield.		
	Rs.	as.	p.	Rs.	as.	p.
Juwar	20	12	2	34	0	0
Cotton	17	9	0	18	0	0
Peas	29	3	0	37	0	0
Wheat	7	12	0	10	0	0

On an average of the four acres there is a surplus of Rs. 5/- per acre. Why? Because it is a Government farm. It has the best instruments, best bullocks, expert advice, and best manure. It is free from the demands of village workers like the sweepers, smiths, potters etc whose rights are traditionally fixed. It is free from the moneylenders. It can sell in the best market, and so on and so forth. If all these burdens are put over the above accounts the normal surplus would soon become a deficit. The 'Karmavir,' which on the basis of the above facts wants to advocate the cause

of the peasantry, is not however willing to tell the peasants to feed themselves first. It proposes to starve the peasants and pay 1/3 to the State and demands for the peasant "the right to become insolvent like the moneylenders," (quoted by "the Kesari," Poona City, 21-2-32). This champion of the peasantry fails to know that the right of the bourgeoisie to become insolvent is a mutual arrangement of the robber class to accommodate each other's failures and start again their career. Can the robber allow his victim when he is paying him a visit to declare that he is insolvent and therefore would like to be excused. That would mean suicide for the bourgeoisie. Moreover the workers and peasants as a class are creators of wealth. They are out to seize what is forcibly taken away from them. To tell them to fight for a right of insolvency is to show one's own insolvency of ideas.

100. *The bourgeois intellectual will object to deduce from this that the bourgeoisie through its prices machinery expropriates the peasant.*

You may point to the fact that the crash of prices affects both agrarian and industrial prices. The answer to this is furnished by the Indian Chamber of Commerce. The fall in prices of agrarian products is greater than in the manufactures. "It is I suppose the usual order of things in a depression of this kind that the price of raw products falls more sharply than that of manufactured goods", said Lord Irwin in his address to the Associated Chambers of Commerce in December 1930. The same thing was said by Lala Shri Ram in his presidential address to the Federation of Indian Chambers in March 1931. So, in the falling prices the centralised monopolistic organisation of the bourgeoisie reaps a differential gain as between the exchange of agricultural and manufactured goods. It may be said that this happens in very abnormal times and deductions and programmes of a party cannot be made from such data. But the same thing appears even if we take the reverse case, that of rising prices. The index numbers of wholesale prices in India, before and after the war began, show the speed with which agrarian prices are outstripped.

Index number of Wholesale Prices—India.
1873 = 100.

Year.	Exported Articles.	Imported Articles.
1913	154	117
1916	163	236
1918	192	289

This shows that whether in rise or in fall the capitalist exchange market gains in relative speed either way. This relative difference is reduced in such countries as America, Canada and Germany, where agrarian goods at their point of wholesale disposal are under the control of combines or banks. There both the agents of exchange, being highly organised wings of capitalist finance, cut down each other's differential gains. But this does not happen in countries like India where the sale of agrarian goods from the big internal or external markets is very much scattered. That is why in Canada and U. S. A., the agrarian bourgeoisie could hold the wheat from the market for a year or two by assembling it under the credit banks. Such an action was impossible for the Indian or Chinese bourgeoisie and so it clamoured at the doors of the British Dictatorship for financial help in imitating the American Farm Board but it was naturally refused such help. In the first place because the Imperialist Dictatorship is not interested in protecting the Indian bourgeoisie against the British. Secondly because it was too insolvent to do this huge operation. However, whether this is done or not, the real cultivator gains nothing. If you say that the fall in prices is abnormal and hence the cultivator is hit and want to infer that in rising prices he is well off, it is a wrong conclusion. The Indian bourgeoisie in its fight against the 18d. ratio said that the fall in prices hit the cultivator. It was right; but when it said that the rise in prices that would follow on the 16d. exchange would benefit the cultivator, it was exaggerating the situation. The rise in prices fetched by his products never reaches the cultivator actually. The fall is passed on to him but not the rise. Similarly the rise in prices of manufactured goods is rapidly passed on to him, but not the fall. Exactly the reverse process takes place with regard to the workers. The war boom in agriculture did not benefit the poor and the middle peasantry but only the rich peasants and landlords. The Indian bourgeoisie tells the peasantry in Zamindari areas that the extension of Ryotwari will make it a master of its produce and hence a gainer by good price movements. What do we find in Bardoli? The contradictions of the bourgeoisie when collected from two places and put together, give good matter for laughter. Mr. Mahadev Desai says this about "the Abnormal rise in price of food grains and of cotton." "Evidence was led everywhere to show that the cotton prices far from benefitting agriculturists had ruined them especially the tenants" and the officers (of the Government Inquiry Committee) accepting it observe, "that the cotton boom was by no means an unmixed blessing from the ryot's point of view; indeed on a consideration of all these circumstances it may be

regarded as less a blessing than a 'curse.' Where did the blessing of high prices vanish? It was pocketed by the holders of land who increased the rent charged to their sub-tenants and thus expropriated the cultivator of his gains. But this robbery is very clear in Zemindari areas. In the falling prices the cultivator has to meet his fixed rents in money; but in rising prices the gains are very rapidly robbed by the landlord. The following table will show that feudal landlordism is worse than the Imperialist Dictatorship. The Congress Report on the U.P. agrarian distress gives the following: "If we compare the prices of the food grains and the rent and revenue demand of 1898-99 with those of 1914-15 and 1930-31 we get the following numbers:—

Index Numbers.

Year.	Price.	Revenue.	Rent.
1898-99	100	100	100
1914-15	117	105	131
1930-31	80	113	160

"The figures show that while compared to those in 1898-99 prices have gone down by 20 per cent, the revenue has increased by 13 per cent and rents by 60 per cent."

D/- 2. 12. 31.

That is the only conclusion of the learned committee. But there is another which we cannot fail to draw, that the rise in prices was snatched away from the peasant by rent and revenue. While prices increased by 17 per cent, rents increased by 31 per cent. A second conclusion is that between two exploiters the one belonging to the home is more ruthless than the foreign. The Zamindar who is asked to become a Janaka or Omar Khalif and whom the Congress report calls "brother," while he has setting fire to villages and dishonouring peasant women (as in Pipri in U. P.), that class of robbers is shown by the table to be five times greater parasitic than the dictatorship. The question of the advantage from prices is a question of class and not a general question, as it is made out. The general conclusion applicable even in a land like the Punjab can be stated in the words of Mr. Darling supported by Dr. Mann that "the large land owners have profited a lot by the rise in prices..... the small owners have suffered." ("The Punjab Peasant" pp. 149, 244). Thus whether in ryotwari or zamindari, whether in times of high prices or low prices, the poor peasant cultivator

enriches the capitalist class, landlords and generally the whole parasitic structure. Even if he is freed from landlordism, even if the feudal estates are broken up by the poor peasantry will not prosper unless the capitalist social relations are overthrown and the workers and poor peasants directly govern production and distribution. The Socialist society, the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and peasantry alone can achieve the task of destroying the phenomena of poverty in plenty. The programme of the nationalist bourgeoisie, whether inside or outside the Congress, does not aim at the destruction of rent but only its limitation; and even this limitation is not governed by the needs of the peasantry but by the needs of the bourgeois State if it is theirs or the Imperialist Dictatorship, if it makes a Pact with them. Without the abolition of rent the growth of parasitism, whether in zamindari or ryotwari, cannot be abolished. The programme of the bourgeoisie does not fight for abolition of feudal landlordism. Therefore it cannot develop the productive forces of the country even on capitalist lines. The bourgeoisie does not advocate cancellation of peasant debts but their transference to bourgeois agrarian banks, controlled from the industrial banking centres, or merely their "scrutiny." But the bourgeoisie has no resources for such a huge conversion of nine hundred crores of debts at not less than 25 per cent interest into one of 5 or 40 per cent, nor has it the strength to meet the opposition of the holders of this debt. The bourgeoisie cannot help the peasantry to receive even the exchange market price of its produce, nor is it in a position to stop the expropriation of the peasant by the prices operations, because capitalism itself is unable to control the anarchy of its social order. Therefore, the whole of the radical Congress programme resolves into one of reduction of land revenue. But the fixed money terms of land revenue, even if they are reduced to suit the fallen prices, do not rule out the seizure of surplus values from the peasant; and before the reformist measure comes into operation a complete ruin and loot of the peasantry are carried out so that even the reform does not help. Thus the economic programme of reconstruction formulated by capitalism breaks against the rocks of class contradictions of Indian society. What then remains is only our programme. The feudal landlords and the moneylenders have necessarily to be deprived of their so-called dues, debts have to be repudiated, rent abolished and land handed over to the peasantry if society in India is to live and progress. The big bourgeoisie with its strangle-hold on production and distribution, demanding its tribute from the workers, has to be removed. The carrying out of this social reconstruction is impossible without political power. Hence a struggle for independence becomes a necessity.

The mutual contradictions of the three parasitic groups in India, the Indian bourgeoisie, feudalism and British Imperialism, which have been shown so far, prove clearly that India is not in any way an exceptional country from the other countries in the world, in the matter of its economic, social and political growth. It is within the grip of capitalist development, it is subject to all the laws of capitalist economy. It has given birth to all the modern classes that are usually found in any European capitalist country with exactly the same class characteristics. Not only has it got classes, economically and politically well marked from each other, but it has got a fierce class war also. Class war exists where classes exist. In former India there were different classes, hence a different type of class war. Today the classes have changed, under bourgeois economy, their content and form. But the one essential content—that of exploitation of surplus values by the exploiters from the exploited, remains. Since the form and content of classes have changed, the form and content of the class war have changed. It also shows that those who say that we can and should postpone the class war among us till we have settled with our “national enemy” have failed to understand the warring trends in our economy. The facts given so far indicate clearly how one class is putting down the other and living on its back. Does that process stop because we are engaged in the glorious struggle based on love and peace? It does not. Hence the proletariat and peasantry also cannot stop the class war. It inevitably arises from the economy of our day. That is the reason why the slogan of “Down with Imperialism” has to be simultaneously joined with that of “Down with Capitalism”. The national struggle is a part of the class struggle. In the present epoch of proletarian revolutions and in the Indian conditions where the bourgeoisie refuses to fight and where feudalism is all along against the national struggle, the class struggle is bound to become acute side by side with the national struggle also.

SECTION 4. The condition of the Petty bourgeoisie and working class—the inevitability of the revolutionary class struggle:
paras 101—105

101. The position of the petty bourgeoisie—incapable of revolutionary struggle—not being a class it uses caste—bankruptcy of their programme with regard to the masses gives way to our programme.

It has been stated so far that the conclusions of Marxism

and Leninism with regard to the peasantry arise directly from real life in India as much correctly as they arise from that of other countries. It has also been shown that the material basis of the revolutionary struggle of the peasantry exists on the Indian soil and not in the chambers of the Comintern headquarters as is alleged. The same thing applies to the material basis of the national and class struggle as it affects the petty bourgeois and the industrial workers amongst whom we have also worked.

The petty bourgeois wage-earners, "salaried employees" as they call themselves, occupy an important position in production and distribution, in the management of capitalist society. In India the British Dictatorship is one of their biggest employers. They manage the vast operations of the industrial plants in their separate minor and major functions. The office machinery of capitalism is worked by them. Capitalism uses them as teachers, priests, journalists, writers and poets to spread bourgeois culture and make sure that the masses become ideologically the supporters of its system even though they economically are exploited by it. The big mass of this intellectual proletariat is poverty-stricken and overworked. All their life they cherish the dreams of rising to the respectable heights of their bourgeois masters. Many of them desire to become 'independent' by starting small shops and trades and kicking indignantly at their office tables. But soon they are ruined by the mighty competition of Big Finance and return to their old post of slavery. Possessing literacy and culturally bourgeois they despise the workers and peasants. When hard pressed by capitalism they flirt with the revolutionary movement of the masses. When promised a prospect of good salaries and ambitious rise they turn counter-revolutionaries and become the slave drivers of the bourgeoisie against the workers and peasants.

The largest part of this petty bourgeoisie does not get more than Rs 2/- a day. Being unable to convert their women and young children into workers like those of the proletariat and peasantry, their income of one earning member of the family becomes divided amongst several claimants. The family of the petty bourgeois in India is exceptionally large owing to the fact that he still holds to the prejudices of the pre-bourgeois culture and is thereby unable to divide the family. Holding fast to the reactionary prejudices of the old Hindu system, the Hindu petty bourgeoisie which by far forms the majority in India, has to maintain in the single family unit a large number of widows, which too ordinarily would have been distributed over a section of earn-

ing members. Thus even where they can get better wages, they can never raise their standard of living.

A highly industrialised society requires a great deal of accounting to be done. The needs of modern production and distribution have to carry out the inventory of the world in all matters. Without the highly organised system of accounting modern large scale production and international exchange of goods would not be possible. This gives birth to a vast number of petty bourgeois intellectuals to run the machinery of bourgeois society. India being not highly industrialised it does not generate such a big class as other countries. But the supply of this class of salaried workers is far in excess of the demand. Thinking that industrialisation will feed them they support all schemes of national industries and march with the bourgeoisie against the workers, when the latter strike for better standard of living, because they are taught that high wages and low hours for workers mean less profits, less industrialisation and therefore less employment for them. They look to the five thousand lucrative posts of the British bureaucracy and want Indianisation so that their problem may be solved. Growing sentimental they suffer heroic death in the name of nationalism, many a time without exactly knowing what they are doing it for. But not possessing the creative power of labour, not possessing the confidence of the proletariat that wields the "key positions" of social life they keep on yearning for some miracle that may change society on to a better track and Imperialism to a better heart.

Though they consider themselves as belonging to a superior class, yet capitalism uses them as no better than the working class or even worse. The working class is a producer of wealth and hence a superior class power. Its strike stops creation of wealth and hence it is much dreaded. Have you ever seen the petty bourgeoisie striking and making the whole capitalist imperialist machine tremble for life? On the contrary whenever capitalism has been threatened with dethronement the petty bourgeois intellectuals have as a class always run to its help. In England, shoals of them rushed out of the Universities to become blacklegs in the General Strike of 1926. They suffer from unemployment like the workers. New inventions of machines for accounting, telegraphing and telephoning displace them in an ever increasing degree from employment. Concentration and centralisation of capital, amalgamation of several houses and plants into big combines throw hundreds of them on the street. In an enquiry in Bombay more than half of them were found in debt. While reading their

morning patriotic paper over the tea cup they dream of their "motherland" being thoroughly "Indianised", which in plain language means they think of their own prospects wherein, instead of the European boss, they shall be commanding others. The patriotic Indian bourgeoisie having been compelled to pay high rates for imported technicians at first ran up a huge propaganda for technical and scientific education for the young and promising sons of India. But when the young sons were found to be too many they were offered half the foreigner's salary and most of them returning from foreign countries with expectations of a glorious future in the motherland found that the motherly bourgeoisie, that advised them to be technicians and scientists, had no industries to employ them.

Or wherever they had, they were so bound up with foreign capital that even an Indian bourgeois like Sir Purshotamdas was found rowing in the same boat with his European colleagues in defence of the Imperial Bank of India in the shareholders' meeting on the question of the employment of European staff, when Mr. A. D. Shroff, President of the Bombay stock exchange, questioned "why for the last six or seven years representatives of the same four English firms in Bombay should have occupied seats on the directorate." (Times of India, 26-8-31). After fifteen years of the most intense awakening of all classes, the "intellectual proletariat" in India is not yet convinced that after all capitalism, whether British or Indian, is not capable of solving their problems. They have not grasped that for all practical purposes foreign Imperialism and Indian capitalism treat them alike. In relation to them they are an exploited class just as the working class and peasantry are.

What does the most patriotic bourgeoisie offer them under their Swaraj or Ram Raj? The top heavy bureaucracy of the Dictatorship will be replaced by the cheaper one. But the removal of the highly paid bureaucracy is not automatically of any gain to the lower paid workers. There is no doubt that under Imperialism they are always victims of retrenchment and wage cuts. But they have not fared better under the industries of the patriots. During the present crisis there is not a single industry that has not retrenched its clerks or reduced their wages. There is not a single patriot who has not called upon the Government to carry out retrenchment. All those pseudo champions of Democracy in the Assembly have appreciated the example of the king and asked for equal sacrifices from all. A Nawab offers his one month's salary as a "sacrifice" before Imperialism, while pocketting a 60 per cent enhanced rent

from his tenant when prices have fallen by 50 per cent, and demands an "equal sacrifice" from his poor clerk who gets Rs 50/- a month. Equal sacrifice on unequal incomes means more starvation to the poor clerks and no loss to the parasites. In times of crisis both Imperialism and Capitalism argue that the purchasing power has been reduced so they must retrench their employees and cut wages. That adds to the unemployed number and leads to still more reduced purchasing power. Capitalism thus moves in a vicious circle. They kick them out of the offices and factories first and then come solemnly before the people with schemes of road development or ditch filling, on which the bourgeoisie pompously announces that out of the *millions* of the unemployed who were once working for *years* in factories and offices, so many *hundreds* will be "fully employed" for so many *months*. What ambitious schemes for overcoming the death of Capitalism? It is still a solace that they have not shown the humour of employing the unemployed on digging their graves in advance or carrying out research work into the tombs of their forefathers.

The Indian bourgeoisie has nothing to offer to the vast mass of the intellectual proletariat. Whether under Imperialism or under Purna Swaraj his fate is to toil, to be unemployed in crisis and low paid in normal times—the same blind forces of capitalist parasitism are ruling them here in India just as they do in England. England is free, England is rich, England has adult suffrage and democracy and so on. Yet when the finances of its bourgeois State collapse, the axe of the Economy Committee under that ideal Purna Swaraj before whom the Pundits and Maulanas are humbly rubbing their foreheads "for a guidance from His Majesty's advisors", fell first on the unemployed (65.5 million pounds) and next in the list were the teachers (13.85 million pounds), that very section of the intellectual proletariat which spends every minute of its life in strengthening the bourgeois system by culturally enslaving the children and youths to it. In short the petty bourgeois intellectual class has no future under capitalism, whether in India or elsewhere. Their only hope lies in alliance with the workers and the peasants. The source of the fulfilment of their ultimate ambitions at present lies in the development of Capitalism. When capitalism itself is declining, when the source is being dried up, how can they expect to flourish?

In the struggle for existence when pressed to the wall by the Imperialist Dictatorship and Capitalism, the petty bourgeois intellectuals grow desperate and a revolutionary fermentation begins

in them. Imperialism and its State being their largest employer, the intellectual proletariat finds itself automatically ranged even in a small struggle for wages against the State. For them the defeat of their employer means a defeat of the Imperialist State, that is overthrow of Imperialism. The class struggle thus very easily and obviously becomes a political struggle.

But in this they find themselves incapable of any revolutionary action without the alliance of a class. The intellectual proletariat is no class, it is an amorphous growth. If it decides to withhold its labour, it is easily replaceable. It is incapable of a solid group action, as the working class is. Because it has no solidarity in the very basis of its economic position between the two classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Its conditions of employment are not an interdependent absolutely necessary process of cooperative functioning of labour as in a factory. The result is that when the pay of the Accounts Department in a Government office at Delhi was cut, the intellectual proletariat there continued to work but humbly petitioned to Government and refused to draw the reduced salaries for three months. In contrast to this may be witnessed the effect of the action of the workers in the Government workshops threatening to withhold their labour in case their wages were reduced or men retrenched. On one side there is submission and weakness arising from the weakness of their very social function. On the other there is the revolutionary confidence of the creators of wealth and pillars of social economy. But the petty bourgeoisie must find some weapon to defend its interests. Failing to defend itself against the capitalist machinery it tries to fall back upon its extra economic attributes. Not being a class it uses its caste, community or province. It tries to preserve its economic standards by uniting on false basis. Brahmin and Non-Brahmin, Muslim and Hindu, Madrasi and Maratha, Gujrati and Deccani are the various brigades of the economic struggle of the petty bourgeois clerkdom. A fierce wage competition rages amongst them and the weaker groups form caste or communal alliances. The intellectual proletariat is one of the strongest forces behind communalism and the best proof of this is their claim of percentages in the services being reserved for each community or caste. There is perhaps not a single Legislative Council in India in which one or the other patriotic members has not asked the Dictatorship about the percentage strength of each community or caste in the Services, and this claim is in some cases being pushed to the industrial and trade offices also. The reservation of percentages is a stupid reformist tactic which weakens the petty bourgeoisie in the struggle for higher standards of living. Because for the petty bourgeoisie it

results in a mere reshuffling and redistribution of the more or less fixed numbers of the salaried posts amongst their various communal groups. Reshuffling does not increase the gains of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole. A school teachers' group of 100 consisting of 60 Muslims and 40 Hindus earning Rs 100/- a day does not add a single pie to its total earnings as such by reshuffling them into 40 Muslims, 40 Hindus and 20 Sikhs. It only serves to sidetrack the teachers' struggle for higher wages and more employment. Instead of fighting capitalist system the displaced groups begin to fight the employed on the ground of communalism. However this artificial basis of struggle collapses under the press of capitalist onslaught. Capitalism breaks down all caste and communal barriers. You may say that it also sets them up very tenaciously as we find it in India. But the apparent contradiction belongs to two spheres: In the process of exploitation Capitalism recognises no caste, community, race, religion or sex. They always conform to the demands of capitalist services. Each must be in his own place running the capitalist machine according to discipline. When it comes to appropriation of the wealth produced, within the capitalist class as a whole, its internal contradictions, its competing sections then begin to search all kinds of weapons to guard their individual share of the exploited wealth. The question of communalism, of minorities is one of these weapons. The petty bourgeoisie trying to imitate its masters or falling a victim to the false propaganda forsakes its real task until a common capitalist attempt of retrenchment, extra work, cutting salaries reminds it of its class position and draws it out of narrow circles. The salaried employees union, clerks' union are such organisations trying to unite not on caste or communal basis but in craft or trade units. Even then not being in control of the key positions of the economic and social structure and its maintenance, their opposition even if it becomes revolutionary does not fructify unless allied with that of the workers and peasants.

102. *The class of small traders and artisans—their programme of charkha revival—why we have distasteful it ?*

There is another section of the petty bourgeoisie. It is formed of the artisans and petty traders in the villages and small towns. The artisans are ruined by the cheap factory goods invading the villages and are thrown out of their employment. The dwarfed growth of the industries in towns is unable to absorb them as wage earners. The small traders are also gradually displaced by the organised agencies of large export and import houses, who maintain millions of employees moving from place to place to make purchases of the raw products for export or internal industries. Any reference

will show that the number of the artisan workers is falling and the share of the petty traders in the total trade volume is decreasing, (Exh. 290), even though, in India, we have not yet evolved the complex and widely distributed machinery of stores as in America and the artisan class still exists on a large scale. But capitalism is attacking them steadily.

This section forms a big revolutionary force against Imperialism and capitalism. To it imported goods represent Imperialism and the industries of the towns springing within the country represent Indian capitalism. Both oppose its economic interests and make the ruined artisans and petty traders anti-imperialist and even sometimes anti-capitalist. Though they are thus objectively forced into the ranks of Imperialism, their subjective orientation is reactionary and utopian. Because their anti-capitalist ambitions do not look forward but backward. Their so-called socialism is not based on the utilisation of the vast production capacity of modern technique. They see in it the cause of their ruin. Hence they want to return to their own self-sufficing village economy, hand manufactures and small trade. This return to the pre-bourgeois period means a return to the stagnation of feudalism, hence it is reactionary. Such a reversion is impossible. The whole world process of social evolution shows that bourgeois economy subverts feudalism and wherever feudal or primitive economy has been replaced by the capitalist, a return to the previous mode has become impossible. Therefore the cry of "back to the golden age" is of utopian outlook. In Russia also the populists had tried to go back but failed. The section of the Indian petty bourgeoisie which objectively is revolutionary, in its ideals represents a reactionary utopian tendency. (The problem is treated in Exs. P 296 & P 297). The reactionary utopian programme of this section came to the forefront during the days of Non-Cooperation Movement in 1921. The whole of the economic programme of this school was summed up by the *charkha* and *khaddar*. The most revolutionary battalions roused for the battle of freedom, were marshalled under the reactionary outlook of the *charkha*. Vast amount of energy and money was spent on it and a perverted form of logic, facts and economics was carefully sown among the millions of workers and peasants. There is perhaps not a single industrial syndicate in the world that has spent so much men and money in advertising its wares.

It need not be told that those who are not specifically reactionary in psychology, those who follow the process of social growth in a normal manner, are opposed to the *charkha*. No one can ever doubt that Communists are opposed to it at all times and on all

grounds. Yet we find that the thing has seized the minds of thousands of people. In the early days of the charkha movement, its supporters still seriously put forward arguments to prove its economic value and also the possibility and necessity of reconstructing our society on the charkha basis. But that phase passed away when the revolutionary tide ebbed.

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One at least of all the extant notions has been given up—that khaddar can compete with mill products. (The refutation of this notion has been at times made by us through the *Kranti*). One or two significant facts about the anti-social character of the *charkha* in relation to the development of the modern productive forces may be noted. Mr. Mahadeo Desai says, "Working at the rate of three to four spare hours a day it is easy to produce three pounds of 25 S. counts of yarn a month," and he puts the value of this at Rs. 3/- (Young India, 16th July 1931, page 188). Three to four hours is a very loose figure for basing calculations upon. Still it may be taken at three hours for all the 30 days in the month. That gives three pounds production of 25s for 90 hours per spindle per head; that is 5.33 ounces for a ten hour working day. This looks an exaggerated figure. The results of a competition communicated to Mahatma Gandhi and published by him (Young India, September 3, 1931, page 246) show that out of four competitors the first spun in 24 hours' continued spinning 9360 yards of 16.6 counts. That would give us a weight of 10.74 ounces for 24 hours. I will add 15 per cent more efficiency on ten hours' spinning and we get 5.14 ounces of sixteens for a ten hour day. On a ring spindle in a mill, you get more than 7 ounces. Output on lower counts must be larger in weight than on higher. So either the first figure is exaggerated or the second is a very low record. Even if the exaggerated result is taken as true we get the following output and wages on a charkha and a ring spindle for ten hour working.

	1	2	3	4		
		Output per spindle for 10 hrs. on 25s. ounces	Output per spinner for 10 hrs. on 25s. ounces.	Rs.	As.	Ps.
On Charkha		5.33	5.33	0	5	4
On one side of ring frame i. e. 180 spindles.		4.90	408.00	1	1	7

(Note:—The result in column 2 on ring frame is arrived at by multiplying 4.90 by 180 spindles per spinner and then distributing it per head at the rate of 24 men per 1000 spindles)

The spinning wages per pound of yarn on charkha at the above rate come to 192 pies and on the ring frame to 8.3 pies. I have taken the ring frame costs on the Bombay basis. An article in the evidence before the Fawcett Committee in Bombay (Vide Exh. D 523, page 223) gives the spinning wages cost of one pound of yarn of 24½ counts at Ahmedabad at .98 pence, that is 10.45 pies, For simpler understanding, the ratios can be put down thus.

Output per head	Wages per head	Spinning wages Cost per lb of yarn
On Charkha 1	1	20
Ring Frame 76	3	1

This table sums up the intensely wasteful nature of charkha production, The productivity per worker on a ring frame is 76 times that of the khaddarite. His wages are three times more but wages cost only 128th. There is not the slightest chance by any means whatever for the charkha product to stand against the mill product, Whether in productivity or the total volume of earnings the charkha is reactionary and wasteful. When human energy and brain have developed productive forces to such an extent that one spinner today is 76 times more productive than the mediaeval one it is sheer waste of precious human lifetime to return to the Charkha society.

The same story is revealed in handloom weaving and the same lesson is drawn. The weaving wages per sq. yard in the Gandhi Ashram at Meerut are quoted at 15 pies while in the mill they are 3 to 4 pies only. Though the rate appears to be so tempting in the former, the actual earnings of the Ashram weavers are Rs 15/- per month on all designs while in the Bombay mills they are Rs. 48/-.

There is one section of the advocates of the charkha who do not want to destroy the development of machine production. They themselves are industrialists and financiers but they support the movement because they say it supplements the low incomes of the peasantry and offers it employment in "idle days." In this garb the charkha appears as a method of increasing earnings. We look at this question both from the point of view of the ultimate and immediate results, to evaluate which the very premises, from which the good results are claimed by the charkha-ites have to be examined. In the first place does the peasant have "idle days"? If he has, has he only this work to do or something else, apart from cultivation? If he has any other work, is it preferable for him to take to

the charkha as his supplementary industry? If he takes, does he really get the relief himself or somebody else? An examination of the working days spent on cultivation on his allotment and the days during which outside employment is sought, by a number of tenants on certain farms in the Punjab about which accounts are published by the Board of Economic Inquiry, would show that where the allotted area is sufficiently big labour from outside has to be engaged to cope with the work. In such cases and where cultivation yields a living wage there is no incentive for taking to a meagrely paying supplementary work. From this point of view charkha can serve as a source of necessary supplementary income for the holders of uneconomic plots and landless workers only. For this section of the peasantry the number of idle days is not so many as is stated by some. An attempt to work out some scientific data to determine the number of actual idle days has been made by Mr. Harihar Dayal in the book "Fields and Farmers in Oudh" (pages 240 and 242.) He considers the normal working day to be of 9 hours and sets up a table of 357 days in the year and the total number of hours of work put in by a landless worker which comes to 1572 hours. Then he makes the statement that for about six months in the year he has practically no work to do in agriculture. The Royal Commission on agriculture says, "It may be assumed as a generalisation that by far the greater number of cultivators have at least from two to four months' absolute leisure in the year." The Central Banking Inquiry Committee agrees with this view (page 240 and so does the bourgeoisie. In the evidence before the Commission, however, the working day was suggested to be of more than ten hours. In making these computations, nothing has been said about the necessary number of holidays which a peasant must have as an ordinary human worker. The whole year is not a working year at all. There are ordinary social holidays and festivals. Then you must be allowed rest days every week or a fortnight. Provision must be made for what we call absenteeism in industry, due to sickness and other causes. These three factors alone absorb at least 2 1/2 months in the year. (Ten per cent in absenteeism - days 35, plus 26 rest days fortnightly, plus 10 social religious holidays and festivals = 71 days). It may be that for certain sections of the peasants the work is very little, but then that is a case of unemployment and not one of an employed peasant standing in need of supplementary income and passing "idle days." However supposing that the peasant has such days on such a large scale the cottage industries or the charkha do not supplement his income. In the first place the cottage industries have no chance to survive against machine goods. Secondly their productivity and hence income are very low, absolutely disproportionate to the labour

spent. Thirdly whatever is so earned does not supplement the peasant's bread at all. We know that generally the whole of the poor and middle peasantry as also the landless workers are in debt. 70 to 80 per cent of the whole peasantry is in debt. They cannot meet their debts and other charges every year and the burden piles up. For example the Punjab Provincial Banking Inquiry Report shows that the debts of the peasants rose from 90 crores in 1921 to 135 crores in 1929. (Page 56, Central Report.) If a most intensive campaign of supplementing the incomes had produced say ten crores in this period the result would have been that the debts would have mounted up to 125 crores instead of 135. To the vast indebted peasantry the supplementary income from charkha or from any other source means only less percentage of arrears in the payment of interest and rent. If he earns more he does not add to his bread and butter but to the accounts of his creditor. Our final objection is that to lead the peasant into the channel of finding his salvation by more work on a supplementary industry is to hide from him the fact that the real cause of his poverty is the robbery of his labour and not the want of labour or the means. The bourgeoisie is keen on the propaganda of supplementary cottage work because that reduces the incentive of the peasant to class struggle and keeps him off from attacking the whole system as such. Thus from immediate as well as ultimate results the programme of charkha reformism is a programme of reaction and of sabotaging the real struggle of the peasantry for a better life.

Amongst the petty bourgeoisie can also be put the large groups of students who in all the bourgeois revolutions have carried the banner of idealism and who have contributed undaunted heroes to many a battle. But this section in spite of its heroism has no specific class theory or aims or objects. Their ideal is an independent bourgeois republic, but they differ from the Indian bourgeoisie in their programme of action. By their heroism they help the bourgeoisie but being continually pressed by impoverishment into line with the proletariat, many of them succeed in breaking away from their class moorings, accept the Socialist Communist ideals and render valuable services to the working class and peasant.

103. The material conditions of the working class which force it into class struggle, economic and political.

The working class in India is comparatively of a small size being only 3 millions. The largest section is employed in the textiles and railways, which account for half the industrial factory

workers. Cotton and jute together employed 7 lakhs and the railways 776,042 in 1929. The Prosecution in this case points to the fact that we pushed up our trade union activity amongst the workers on the railways, textiles and docks especially. They read into it a sinister motive. But the real reason of the biggest and efficient trade unions being formed first in these branches is the fact that capitalism and therefore the working class in almost all countries began their development with these industries—transport and textiles. If an acute and more or less well-organised trade union class struggle is to be found in this section of the working class it is but a natural corollary to the way in which capital develops. Absence of statistics is one of the features of the British Administration in India. Hence it is difficult to determine the exact size of the working class. It is claimed to consist of 50 million persons, if we include agricultural plantation and domestic workers (Exh: P 2580). This would in fact include anyone who sells his labour power for wages and produces surplus values for the capitalist class. But if we restrict ourselves to the remarks of Lenin and define the conception "worker" (Exh: P 2491, page 377 dated 12.4.29) in such a manner that only those come under it who in reality as a result of their position in life had to acquire a proletarian psychology, which however is impossible for one who has not worked for many years in the factory, without any ulterior aims, merely on the basis of the general economic and social conditions of the person in question, the number of such workers in India will not be more than 2 millions.

Indian economists and social reformers have studied the peasant question to some extent, but they have shut out the problems of the working-class from their literature because the peasant liberated by the bourgeoisie helps its growth, but the worker is directly the antithesis of the bourgeoisie. The colonial bourgeoisie becomes a dangerous competitor to the Imperialist by reason of the long hours of work and low wages of the colonial worker who is still only a pauperised peasant thrown out of the village. Therefore the intellectuals of the Imperialist bourgeoisie as also their trade unions have studied and exposed the conditions of the Indian working-class. (For example the report of Purcell and Hallsworth and such other works). The Prosecution in this case say that we foment strikes, no matter whether the workers have or have not any grievances. But these reports will show that the Indian worker has to work in such inhuman conditions that for all time there is a permanent fund of grievances justifying a strike. The material conditions of the working-class, on the admission of responsible

Commissions, are forcing them into class struggle. While in capitalist Europe they secured the 8 hour day years ago and in Soviet Russia they are working even a 7 hour day, in India they have to work for 10 hours and in the native states it extends to 14 hours also. Their right to form a trade union was recognised only five years back. It was only 8 years ago that it was discovered that the limbs and life of a worker have value and that he should be compensated for their loss, if they are lost in creating wealth for the bourgeoisie. Still he has not the right of a full meal, as he has no right to a Minimum Living Wage. He has no right to fall sick and become old and if he does, he must starve and die. In India there is no insurance for him. The Prosecution have painted us as men who foment grievances where there are none. The Indian bourgeoisie says it is overflowing with great love for the brother Indian worker. It is only the foreign oppression that causes all the difficulty. It is a well known fact that in cotton industries and in other small factories, it is the brotherly Indian bourgeoisie that is dominant. British capital operates on a large scale in jute, tea, and mining. But the Royal Commission on Labour has the same sorry tale to tell about the working conditions in industries whether owned by the patriotic bourgeois or the wicked foreigner. The Prosecution have ad nauseum repeated that Communists destroy family life, the sweet pleasures of a home, smiling with children. But the Whitley Commission seems to betray them. Speaking about wool cleaning in the Punjab wherein women and children are employed, they say, "the initial process consists of tearing or beating with the hands and with iron rods lumps of dry mud, coagulated blood and other extraneous matter from the unsorted wool. This is a foul process and as no system of grids to remove the accumulated dust is provided, the air, the person and the ground quickly become covered with dirt and wool fluff. Very young children sleep along side their mothers on piles of wool, their faces and clothes covered with a fine layer of this germ-laden dust." Speaking about Shellac Factories in Bihar and Orissa and C. P. they quote the report of the Director of Public Health. "Washing pits, reservoirs and drains are not properly cleaned at regular intervals. The same water is used for washing over and over again for a week or more and is allowed to stagnate for a period before it is drained off. Due to putrefaction of all the animal refuse from the sticklac along with myriads of crushed insects in this water, the stinking effluvia from the washing basins and drains are disgusting. But the persons employed on washing have to stand knee-deep in this water in the pits and carry on work for hours together." Children of 12 and 10 are

employed in the melting room where even adult workers get exhausted due to excessive heat. In the 'Bidi' factories in the Madras Presidency (those self same 'bidis' which the petriotic bourgeois tells us to smoke in place of the foreign cigarettes), corporal punishments and other disciplinary measures of a reprehensible kind are sometimes resorted to in the case of the smaller children. Workers as young as 5 years of age may be found in some of these places working without adequate meal intervals or weekly rest days and often for 10 or 12 hours daily for sums as low as 2 annas in the case of those of tenderest years. (Pages 95-96)

In the Amritsar Carpet factories, "that national indigenous industry," the labour of young children is contracted out for years for a loan of money, that is in plain words children are sold to the money-lending manufactures for a loan to the needy parents. In the mines 90 per cent of the workers are life-long victims of the hook-worm, and the percentage of infection of hook-worm is a reliable guide to the degree of sanitary control. (Page 115). In the Khewra Sait Mines owned by the Government of India, "We were struck by the poor health of the miners and their families. Anaemia is prevalent and it appears from a report made by Colonel Gill, Director of Public Health in the Punjab in 1922, that neither hook-worm nor malaria is responsible. Colonel Gill also pointed out defects in diet and complete absence of sanitary arrangements." This was in 1922. Eight years later, when the Government of India were telling this Court that the wicked Communists foment strikes even if there are no grievances, the Royal Commission notes the tremendous progress of the Government of India thus: "At the time of our visit conditions seemed to be much as his report (Colonel Gill's report of 1922) presented them and we have been unable to find that any action had been taken" (Page 109). If the Government is making lakhs of rupees over the mines and the workers suffer from anaemia, are the Communists wrong when they call the Government the "blood-suckers' Dictatorship," in this case, not metaphorically, but literally? Evidence has been led regarding an oil strike in Bombay in the Government Oil Company. While denouncing the strike, they took to themselves the credit of safeguarding the interests of workers. The Royal Commission speaking about the Burma Oil Company (whose workers were involved in the Bombay strike) say: "Of the 17,000 workers employed by this company on the actual oil fields, about 12 per cent are subject to the Factories Act, but the bulk of their workers and of those employed by other companies are subject to no statutory control in the matter of hours and health and to few statutory regulations in respect of safety..... In Burma, there is an

Oil Fields Act which is directed to the 'preservation of the oil sands.....but is not designed for the protection of labour" (page 112). Let not the Prosecution mistake the sarcasm of His Majesty's Commissioners for that of a Communist manifesto.

The Imperialist capitalist order in India, in the present epoch of the decline of world capitalism, cannot dupe the people into believing that it can give good wages; employ increasing numbers, and provide better life for them. Hence both the Indian bourgeoisie and Imperialism admit that standards of living, wages, hours etc. have to be worsened. But they hold forth the hope that once the critical period is over the workers can agitate and demand better standards. The struggle of the world's working class shown so far does not justify such a hope. The class conscious proletarian vanguard of the industrial countries is definitely convinced that a socialist society alone is their salvation, though sections of the proletariat may differ as to the method of bringing it about. But in India even the ideal of a socialist society is being attacked. The Indian bourgeoisie and the Government want the working-class here to strictly limit itself to seeking reforms within the capitalist structure and not to seek to replace it by a socialist structure. They do not want the working-class to raise the question of political power, and some of the accused in this case, who call themselves workers agree with the bourgeoisie and the Government that the workers should not care to see whether Macdonald, Baldwin or Gandhi rules over them. The workers are told that they should mainly concern themselves with their bread, with their wages and working conditions. Even if you start from this premise and Communism also starts exactly from a similar premise (that is the problem of maintenance and development of society by extraction of useful things from nature with the aid of improved technology and the proper distribution of these things to the members of the society)—the question of political power of class rule is forced on the workers in the struggle for bread and better life. For example in the matter of legislation affecting them, the working-class is at once confronted with the problem of class rule. Factory legislation in India began in 1881, but every law so far passed has had to be forced from the unwilling hands of the Imperialist State and the Indian bourgeoisie. Though some amount of legislation does exist, it does not mean that it is obeyed and given effect to by the employers. Vast areas and big companies employing large masses of workers are exempted from the application of the laws and the fact is mentioned by the Royal Commission in several places. If the working class wants to improve its condition without seizing political power but by legislation it has to express its grievances by strikes,

without which the bourgeoisie and Government refuse even to consider their complaints. But strikes are controlled, attacked, suppressed and broken by the violence of the State, its police and military. That again forces on the workers' attention the question of political power. In fact wages, hours, the very existence of the worker is closely bound up with politics—because it is the State that fortifies the social relations in which he is to remain a worker and produce wealth for the bourgeoisie. How the Indian workers are inevitably moved towards this question of class power by the experience of their daily struggle will be illustrated when I will deal with my Trade Union work in Bombay and other places.

It has been shown so far that contrary to the statements of our prosecutors and critics there exist in Indian society classes, class contradictions and class conflicts, and that all these are embedded in the economy of our society and fortified by the political power. That we do not arbitrarily divide society because Marx or Lenin said so. Even if you scrap out all that has been said or written by Marx, Lenin or the Comintern, the Indian bourgeoisie have to get rid of Imperialism and the workers and peasants have to abolish feudalism and capitalism. The constitutional struggle avails no class except the big bourgeoisie. So the national and class struggle gather strength on a mass scale throughout the country.

104. Inciting class war—models of class war and other questions.

Granting that such conditions do exist, is it necessary and good to aggravate the situation by inciting class war instead of trying to heal the cracks by class peace? Historical experience shows that by class war alone, by its dialectical development does society progress. If the worn out class, that is the worn out economy and all its superstructure, are not removed, the society will be stifled. Class war is a necessity for the rebirth in a healthier form.

Is it necessary that the forms of our class struggle should be modelled after that of the Russian or western experiences? Our warring classes have the same content and form, have the same actions and reactions as the classes in other countries. Our capitalists and workers have the same form, the same social actions and reactions as those of other countries. The only difference would lie in the degrees of development.

Therefore the general form or method of our class struggle will be the same as in other countries. England has not to fight for national Independence but we have to. Therefore our class struggle will have to take account of this fact. France has no feudal class, but we have, just as Russia had. So our class struggle will be composed of a national movement for Independence in which we have to join hands with the revolutionary sections of the petty bourgeoisie, though they hold the ideals of capitalism, against Imperialism. Our revolution will not be at once socialist revolution as it will be in Germany or in England. Hence our forms of struggle will be modelled after the experience of all the countries and not particularly this one or that. But the Russian experience is especially emphasised, because it is there that the struggle has reached a more or less successful stage in the rebuilding of a new and better society.

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Is it necessary that the Indian workers must build up a Communist Party? In the first place in the modern epoch where the class differentiation of society has taken a very clear form, every class has a party of its own. The big bourgeoisie in India has the Liberal Federation. The petty bourgeoisie of traders, artisans and rich peasants are organised in the Congress, which stands avowedly for class peace and the retention of the existing property relations. All these class parties and organisations further their own class interest, but the working class has no party of its own. If the workers must contend a class struggle, they must have their own class party. A class party of the workers with a revolutionary programme against capitalism and Imperialism can only be a Communist Party.

Is it absolutely necessary that all the Communist parties of the world should unite internationally and that such a union in the present period is represented by the Third Communist International? The modern bourgeoisie has broken down national boundaries and built up a world economy and world society, separate parts of which cannot function, without affecting the other parts. International actions in all phases of life are now so common that the question would appear superfluous. The bourgeoisie of the world unites internationally whenever any section of it is challenged by the working class, which also then has to cooperate on an international scale to guard its interests. Hence the Communist parties of the world unite internationally. Such a union has been formed three times since 1864, each time conforming to and produced by the needs of the times.

105. "Outside connection" the unnecessary part of the indictment.

I have stated so far in brief outlines some of the principles of Marxism-Leninism which I am convinced will save society from destruction and will carry it on to a better stage. Leninism alone can give freedom to India, can give freedom to the masses. The late Mr. Langford James while explaining his case said, "By their creed, by their convictions, by their constitution itself they are inexorably bound to work intensively and unceasingly for the overthrow of the British monarchy in England, in India and in the dominions". In another place referring to our advocacy of the Soviet system he says, "if you find these people saying that, and if you find them working to do that, then indeed it is not possible in the nature of things that they should do anything else than plotting, planning and conspiring to smash His Majesty's Government to pieces" The first extract states what I am bound to do "intensively and unceasingly" and the second asserts that I did what I was bound to do, i. e. "plotting, and planning and conspiring." It is then claimed that I am guilty of the charge and should be convicted. Thus the offence is clearly stated to consist of two parts, one the holding of Communist principles and second acting up to those principles.

There seems to be some difference of opinion between our prosecutors and the Court as to what exactly is the most important thing in the second part of the alleged offence. A considerable indication of the opinion of this Court is available in its bail order of 7th May 1931. Referring to the point as to what constitutes "the seriousness of the conspiracy, the order observes," what the summary (i. e. the Committal Order), however, does bring out is what is one of the most important points in the Prosecution case, namely the allegation that the conspiracy with which the accused or the applicants are charged is not one which is limited to India, and therefore of a much more serious nature." And later on "it is from this outside connection that the seriousness of the case to a considerable extent arises". (Pages 11 and 12.) The questions framed by the Court also begin with "what may be described as foreign correspondence." In contrast to this I may quote

Mr. Langford James. After explaining to the Court all that he could or understood about Leninism and the Comintern, he told what was necessary to convict us of the offence under this section. "It is quite unnecessary to show that they were in fact members of a Communist Party definitely formed and affiliated to the Third International. I think you will come to the conclusion that they were such a party and if not actually affiliated they were about to affiliate to the Third International. But I repeat that it is quite an unnecessary part of the indictment." And in the same paragraph for the third time he said, "I do not want to be understood to say that I cannot link up these people with the Third International. I think and in fact I am quite sure that I can, but the point is that it is not really necessary, strictly necessary to do so." Thus according to the original brain that "could link up these people with the Third International" and conceived the conspiracy of this Conspiracy Case, "the outside connection" is not really necessary. It is quite an unnecessary part of the indictment, while for this Court it gives seriousness to that case to a considerable extent. It has been our experience that the opinion of the Prosecution holds good in this Court and I believe that Mr. James knew the mind of his Imperialism better. Imperialism is not concerned whether we had or had not foreign connection or affiliation with the C.I. It wants to suppress the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry in India and the holding of principles of Communism. They do not want anyone to subscribe to any revolutionary system of thought. So it can be stated that the questions and answers about foreign correspondence, the Communist Party etc. are 'really unnecessary,' 'quite an unnecessary part of the indictment' and hence of the defence also. According to Mr. James "incomparably the most important of our activities, that which was taking the most of our time and attention, were the strikes which raged in Calcutta and Bombay." So I will now turn to this incomparably the most important of our activities and if by that time the Court still would disagree with Mr. James and think that outside connection and explanation about it are "really necessary" I will try to reply.

Q. The following is (E. and O.E.) the rest of the evidence against you grouped under its main heads:—

I.W.P.P. of Bombay:— P1373(6),2137 P,230,1015,1358,2311, 1685
1375 Kranti of 3.9.27; 835,1348(41),993,1353,1343,1348(16)(18)(19)
(15)(24) (14) (7), 1373 (.1), 1348(2), 1624,1373(13),984,981,1492,930
Kranti of 30.6.28,986 Kranti of 5.7.28,23.8.28 and 30.8.28,930 Kranti
of 12.7.28 and 2 8.28,1602,1344,1365,P.W.'s 244 and 245,P 2242,
P1690, 1261,1207 (4), (3), 1170, and 431 Krantikari of 28.1.29,1211,
1002D,1207(5);,Kranti 9.8.28,23.8.28,20.8.28,2.9.28,20.9.28, 27.9.28,
5.10.28,13.1 29,3.3.29 and 17.3.29 (to be found in differnt Kranti
exhibits numbers.) P 987,988,1205,990,983.

II. W.P.P. of Bengal etc. :— Bengal: P 52,526(41), 1615 and 1855.

U.P.:— P. 1619, 1621P,311 and
433,526 (6).

Punjab:—P.526 (24), 1408,1409, 1393,1608,2051C,1626,
1641 and P.W.179.

III. A. I. W. P. P:—P. 1373 (2), 1613, 2024C, 1348 (22),
1373 (3), 1323, 1617, 1373 (5), 1654P, 1611 P,1797P, 1348(35),468(2),
978, 977 and 669.

IV. A. I. T. U. C.: P. W. 119, P10, 1965, 1966, 1967,
2138P, 2141C, 1878C, 1863P, 545(1), 1614, 1848C, 479, 526(34),
545(3), 545(8), 999, 1206(1), and P. W. 123.

V. T. U.s. and strikes:—P819, 1625, P. W.s. 273, 276, 278
and 245, P958, 944, 966, 967,929,985,959, 949,787, 786, 790, 792,954,
1628P, 395(2), (1), 396, 955(1), 964, and 986 Kranti of 12-8-28.

VI. Connections and Miscellaneous:—P. Ws. 244 and 218,
P1972, 1973, 1966, 2067(1), P1637, 995, 996, 1639, 2022C, 957, 146,
525(1), 645, 980, 991, 997, 1000, 1001, 1220, 1003, 1299, 1819, 1822,
1885, 2213, 1207(2) (6), 1208 (2), 1796 (e), 2512, 975 and 1175.

Have you anything to say in explanation of this evidence?

PART III.

WHAT I HAVE DONE.

SECTION I. Development of Textile Capital and Strikes upto April 1928. paras 106—109.

106. The growth of the Bombay textile bourgeoisie—its profits which were the bases of the Bombay strikes.

The General Strike of 1928 in the textile mills of Bombay would have happened all the same even if the accused in this case who are charged with responsibility for that strike had not taken part in the events of that strike. It would have been as much prolonged and as much stubbornly fought, and it shows a complete lack of understanding of the forces that had brought about and kept on the strike, when it is said that the prolonged nature and stubbornness of the fight were exclusively or in a large measure due to the Workers' and Peasants' Party and the Communists who devoted their energies to it. The strike was an inevitable outcome of the objective conditions existing in the industry at the time and the series of historical developments that had taken place in previous years in the textile industry of Bombay in particular and generally of the whole world. My part in that struggle was to put whatever energy and capacities I had at the disposal of the working-class and on the basis of the fighting capacity of that class to lead it on to victory.

The growth of the textile industry in Bombay and India illustrates one of the internal class contradictions of capitalism. It is a well known fact that before the advent of the British in India the cloth requirements of the people were met by indigenous production, which was carried on in scattered village units. That scattered and slow method of production was interrupted by the British conquest of India. The foreign merchant possessing political power used it to forcibly destroy the weavers' guilds wherever it could. The place of Indian goods was being given to the products of Lancashire mills, though it is a fact that this forcible destruction in some places of Indian textile manufactures was one of the methods employed to kill Indian trade, it is insufficient, as has been already shown, to explain the complete capture of the vast village markets by foreign textile goods. The main cause was the cheapness and superiority of machine-made textiles over handicraft products and the advantages of a vast coordinated organisation of the new bourgeoisie. The work of destruction first begun by force

was completed by the superiority of machine manufacture. The Indian textile market was completely captured and fed by the British textile manufactures. Once having captured it, it was in the nature of things for Lancashire to hold on to the market and not allow it to be recaptured by any other agency. But the internal class contradiction of capitalism itself created the competing agency. If it was British capital in textiles that destroyed our textile manufactures in order to live on profits from exports of India, it was again British capitalism in heavy industries, in machine manufacture, that supplied the machinery to build up the textile industry in India and thus to destroy exports of British textiles.

Before 1870 Capitalism in England was consolidating itself and exporting mainly consumption goods to foreign countries. But side by side with this, one branch of capitalism was developing machine manufacture. After the necessities of the expanding home industries were met where was the surplus of products in machine-building plants to go? After supplying power looms and spindles to the continent, the balance had naturally to be exported to some other countries. After 1870, capitalism in England and the continent had to change its character. Instead of exporting ready-made consumption goods it began to export the very machinery that made these goods. The birth of syndicates and combines, the hunt for colonies, the export of iron and steel material began in this period. The quest for profits is the only motive for capitalist production. So while the Lancashire textile owner was interested in the export of ready-made cloth from his mills and opposed to the growth of mills in other countries, his neighbour who manufactured looms and spindles must also dispose of his goods. Since his brother capitalist had enough of them he had to export those spindles and looms to those markets where his brother capitalist was selling ready-made cloth. It was Lancashire which exported cloth to India, it was Birmingham which exported textile machinery. On a certain amount of capital being available for investment, the Indian capitalist started his own mills and British and Indian cloth began to contest for the market. The first mill in India was built with British machinery in 1851.

It is not that the Birmingham manufacturer of machinery was a less patriotic Englishman than the Lancashire fellow. It is not that he did not see that the machinery he was exporting would ultimately compete with the other patriotic Englishman next door in Lancashire. He saw it, but it was the law of capitalism that was governing him, the law of profits, not the law of patriotism.

If he did not export machinery, he would have to close down and go to the wall, or find market for his looms even if that market were ultimately to fight his another patriotic brother. He chose the latter as every bourgeois would do and does. Here was the biggest class contradiction running to the help of India and in fact of every dependent colony. Both sections of British capitalism were united in holding India as a market. But the interests of the two sections in relation to each other were in the last instance contradictory to each other. But as they did not conflict immediately both pursued their own course without friction. The result was: starting in 1851 the textile mills had risen to 51 in 1877 with over 12 lacs of spindles and 10,000 looms.

For a time this was allowed to go on imperceptibly. The slave capitalism of India began to build up the textile industry of its own. In England the bourgeoisie in political power had changed its colour. The relatively peacefully inclined sections of the British bourgeoisie who were fed on the exports of consumption goods were ousted from power which was hence forth seized by heavy industry, which stood for colonies, militarism and wars for the parcelling out of the world. The interests of textile capital of the Liberal bourgeoisie, not being dominant, the rise of textile industry in India was not much troubled till 1896. In the meanwhile the 12 lacs of spindles had grown up to 38 lacs and the 10,000 looms to 35,000.

The Indian mills that were being built were mostly producing yarn that was consumed by the Indian handloom weavers and exported to China and the East coast of Africa where the Indian merchants were migrating. Though it is a fact that the internal class contradictions of capitalism allowed the Indian capitalist to buy machinery from British firms, yet the British bourgeoisie did not intend to allow the Indian bourgeoisie to completely oust the British textiles from the Indian markets. So long as they were merely producing yarn on a small scale it did not much matter, but when the looms began to be installed it was serious business. A continually growing 200 per cent increase in spindles and looms within 20 years, in a subject colonial country was threatening. The appeals of textile capital to the ruling heavy industry interests, the appeals of the Liberal Bourgeoisie to the conservative Ironclads were successful. Once again national capitalism for a time bridged over its internal conflict and an excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on Indian manufactures was levied in 1896.

The Imperialist bourgeoisie preaches to the school boys

that politics should not be used for the purposes of commercial gains. The excise duty is the standing answer exposing the lie of that lesson. The political power, the State, exists to fortify the economical gains of that bourgeoisie which controls that State. The repeal of the excise duty became henceforth a standing demand of the Indian bourgeoisie and was made by it a part of the struggle for national freedom.

In spite of this the industry prospered. It was mainly due to the long hours of work and the low wages paid to the Indian workers by the Indian bourgeoisie. The English spinner, working 10 hours a day in a good cold climate was getting 25 shillings or Rs 13/- a week while the Indian worker working 14 hours a day got 4 shillings or Rs. 2/- a week in 1890.

The Swadeshi agitation of 1905, the first organised outburst of the rising bourgeois nationalism in India gave an impetus to the industry. The jump was remarkable not so much on the side of spinning as weaving. The spindle strength of 51 lacs and 50,000 looms in 1905 rose to 62 lacs spindles and 82,000 looms, an increase of 20 and 40 per cent respectively, by 1910. In spite of the excise duty for which the Indian bourgeoisie paid Rs. 3,31,00,000 from 1896 to 1910, the industry was prospering and its huge profits were drawing more and more capital into it. On the eve of the Imperialist war, the spindles and looms had risen to 68 lacs and 108,000, representing an increase of 10 and 30 per cent respectively. (1915). The effect on production was also surprising. While in 1900 imports of foreign cloth were 2191 million yards, the Indian output was 102 milyds only. According to bourgeois nationalism, if the ratio of foreign imports to Swadeshi cloth is to determine our love of the country, the Indian people were so ungrateful to the Indian bourgeoisie, and so much attached to saving money by the purchase of low priced foreign goods that the Indian tincture of patriotism was only 4 per cent strong. But the Indian bourgeoisie was sparing no pains to raise that strength. By 1914 the Indian production against imports of 3197 milyds was 1164 milyds. In the total demand the Indian strength had arisen to 27 per cent.

When thus bourgeois patriotism was on the rise, and the textile industry making millions and attracting more and more capital to it, the working-class was ruthlessly exploited and over-worked. There is not much data available on the conditions of the work and wages before the war period. The period before the war was one of wholesale expropriation of the workers. There was no limit to hours of work, no weekly holiday, no effective Factory Act.

When the Government, of course in the interests of the British bourgeoisie, proposed a Factory Act in 1881, it was opposed. The Acts of 1881 and 1891 remained dead letters. The peasantry in the villages was terrorised by the Government forces and the zemindars, its economic power sapped by the confiscatory rents, famines and taxation. Impoverished, a section of it went to the towns, to the textile mills and railways. There it carried with it the terror stricken mind of its village and the despair born of defeat. It had no strength to fight for human conditions of work and treatment. But, as the Communists say, capitalism is its own grave digger. It creates its own contradiction. If with the rise of the industry, textile capitalism was becoming stronger so was the working-class. The outbreak of the Imperialist war gave an impetus to the seeds of class consciousness of the working-class to blossom forth. The key to the 1928 struggle of the working-class of Bombay and other places lies in the war period developments of the bourgeoisie and the working-class.

D/- 5. 12. 31.

The outbreak of the war gave the Indian bourgeoisie a free field to develop to the extent it could. But the weakness of the bourgeoisie prevented it from taking advantage of the opportunity, and on account of the absence of any industrial country other than England capable of supplying machinery to the Indian bourgeoisie, the expansion could not take place. It could only exploit the existing plants. In the textiles no increase in the installation of new plants took place, but export from England having fallen the Indian production increased. Foreign cloth imports into India came down from 3197 milyds in 1913 to 1081 in 1919, and the Indian production with practically the same spindle strength rose from 1164 milyds to 1640 in 1919. Our mill share had gone up from 27 per cent to 40 per cent of the total mill supply.

The Indian bourgeoisie during Imperialist war refused to strike politically, but followed very quickly the slogan of "Rob while others war." Reliable data is again lacking regarding the profits made by the textile magnates in the war period. But not even the bourgeois historians now dare to contradict the assertion that profits were fabulous. Though the rate of dividends declared can give a certain idea of the profits, it is not adequate. The capitalist methods of accounting and presenting of balance-sheet have a hundred and one ways of concealing the real magnitude of the surplus robbed from the workers. Excessive depreciation, reserve

funds of several kinds, converting reserves into bonus shares are some of the methods by which the working class, peasantry and the small section of the petty bourgeoisie who are allowed to hold a few shares by the monopolists are given a false idea about the surplus value extracted from the workers. The visible profits according to the balance sheets of the Bombay companies were :—

1917.....	302 lacs.	1920.....	1010 lacs
1918.....	228 „	1921.....	846 „
1919.....	615 „	1922.....	387 „

According to Mr. J. A. Wadia visible profits were 52 crores net between 1914 and 1920. The reserves of the industry in Bombay mounted up from 2.36 crores in 1917 to 12.44 crores in 1921 and the block valuation from 17.98 crores to 42.94 crores in 1922. This is the picture of the Bombay magnates. Those in other industries fared even better. The jute industry paid in dividends 400 per cent and over annually. When the Indian bourgeoisie was thus making huge profits, just as their brothers in England and Germany were making millions from the war boom while their workers and peasants were cutting each other's throats for the interest of their "fatherland" i.e. their bourgeoisie, the industrial worker in the towns could not get a rise in wages even though prices were rising. The peasant in the villages was being oppressed by the war loan and the taxes, even when famine was at the door and influenza was carrying away 6 million people in 1917-18.

107. No rise in wages though prices and profits rose and real wages fell—the resulting strikes and increase of wages.

It is said that the strike should be the last weapon of the working class. We are told that capitalism, when prospering, is ever willing to pay higher wages and so when it is in depression the working class should suffer wage-cuts for the sake of the industry. This is a lie circulated by the bourgeoisie. Capitalism has never yielded a single pie or a right to the workers until it was fought for. The capitalists are never willing to give an increase and are ever ready to rob the workers. This trait of capitalism, common all the world over, was responsible for everything that happened in 1928. The bitterness of 1928, the hatred of capitalism was not new; it was there already. It never was expressed in any literature, because the Bombay working class till that time had not found spokesmen who could speak out its thoughts, its own needs

and ambitions. Communists express and emphasise, while others try to gloss over and hide the existing class struggle and class relations. Capitalism, the owner of the means of production, ever wants to increase the surplus value produced by the working class. It is waging every minute a continuous class war on the worker. The worker in order to live, to survive, has to resist, which he does very slowly and many a time reluctantly. The war had increased the prices of commodities and the price level in India with 1914 at 100 was soaring up thus:—

LEVEL OF PRICES. 1914=100

1915.....110	1919...195
1916.....130	1920...200
1917.....145	
1918.....175	1921...180

Were not the mill-owners aware of this? Certainly they were. The most sensitive organisation of the stock exchange was every day showing a rise in the commodities market, whose reflection it is. Did the mill-owners come forth offering a rise of wages to the workers? Did they not see that the real wages of the workers would depreciate severely when the prices were soaring? The mill-owners saw it and waited to see if the workers would take sound steps to express their grievances. From 1914 to 1916 for three years the workers somehow pulled on. Indebtedness increased but when the tide could not be stemmed, strikes began with the modest demand of 10 per cent. increase in wages. The strikes broke out one by one in individual mills and it was the first attempt to strike for wages. The wave spread to all workshops and factories in Bombay in 1917 and the increases were given. It may be pointed out that the increase was not given so that the workers might live happily but that they may not stop production which the owners could not afford in times of high profits. With the price level at 145 the 10 per cent could not satisfy anybody; and when the price level went up to 175 in 1918 the workers had to strike again and got only 15 per cent increase i.e. 1/5th of the rise in prices. The mill-owners went on resisting the demands and January 1919 saw again a complete General Strike in the textile mills in Bombay lasting for 15 days. It secured an increase of 20 per cent. The third and last of the successful General Strikes to secure a rise in wages took place in 1920.

The changes in wages and price level in Bombay in this period are given below:—

Increases in textile wages and price levels in Bombay.

	1914	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921
Price levels.	100	145	175	195	200	200
Wages.	100	110	115	135	{ 155 Time 175 Piece	{ 170 Time 180 Piece
Textile General Strikes.		Series of Strikes	General	General	General	General
Lasting No. of days			11	15	30	

This will show that the wages of the workers never caught up the rising prices or the cost of living index as compiled by the Government agency. The treatment which capitalism meted out to the workers in Bombay during this period was sufficient to plant in them a lasting hatred of capitalism. Taking advantage of the monopoly over the grain market the prices were pushed up so high that the grain merchants and ultimately the Imperialist Government machinery had to step in and establish control prices in order to prevent food riots. The land owners continued to raise the rents until the petty bourgeois middle class, which today is so patriotically supporting the big bourgeoisie in its protective tariff and boycott campaigns, had to clamour for some control over the rapacious bourgeoisie by means of a Rent Act. During this period of 1914-22 when the Bombay textile profiteers made 52 crores of visible profits, the workers had to make five strikes to secure an increase in wages which never pulled them up to the level of the rising cost of living. What must have the workers done to fill up the deficiency each year, each month. Either they must have starved themselves more than what they were already doing before 1914, or gone into debts. The deficit between cost of living and wages (granting for a moment that both coincided in 1914 at 100 which is not a fact) in the case of Bombay weavers alone comes to ten crores of rupees between 1914 to 1920 according to my calculation which I had submitted to the Fawcett Inquiry Committee. (D 523). This was a clean gift to capitalism by the weavers from their own necessary minimum, apart from the ordinary surplus values produced by them as on the pre-war level. In face of such a robbery of the working class, who has the impudence to say that the class war is artificially created by the Communists or that we preach class hatred whereas without us the working

class would simply overflow with love for the vampire capitalism. It must require an amazing ignorance or slavishness for a man to preach to the workers in Bombay to love the bourgeoisie or assist it. The workers can never forget the miseries heaped upon them in the war days and continued even today. While the textile magnates were rearing up palaces for themselves, 60 per cent of the population in Bombay was confined within a filthy area of 1/5th of the whole city. In small one-room tenements the workers' families were closed as in the box and compelled to live like beasts. In the report of the lady doctor appointed by the Government of Bombay to investigate conditions of women industrial workers in Bombay in 1922 we find the following appalling state of housing:—

“In the outside *chawls* I have several times verified the overcrowding of rooms. In one, on the second floor of a chawl, measuring some 15 by 12 feet I found six families living. Six separate ovens on the floor proved this statement. On enquiry I ascertained that the actual number of adults and children living in this room was 30.... When I questioned the District nurse who accompanied me as to how they would arrange for privacy in this room, I was shown a small place some 3 feet by 4 feet which was usually screened off for the purpose. The atmosphere at night of that room filled with smoke from six ovens and other impurities might handicap any woman or infant both before and after delivery. This was one of many such rooms I saw.” (D 548, page 28). In such one room tenements 97 per cent of the workers have to live and as a result 600 children out of 1000 births die off—that is the family life permitted to the worker by capitalism.

It was during these four years 1917-21, that the working class in Bombay as also in other places learnt that its life is influenced by international factors, that somewhere on this globe when the people at the instigation of Imperialists fought wars they influenced its living in Bombay, threw it into debts and forced it into strikes. The Imperialist war taught the working class and peasantry in India that the splendid isolation of feudal India is broken up, that its economy is now influenced by international factors. The reluctance of the bourgeoisie to increase wages voluntarily and the readiness with which they gave increases in order to guard their profits, when strikes were forced on them, made the working class conscious of its power, and taught the workers that strike is not the *last* weapon, but the only effective weapon in their hands to save themselves from starvation. The lesson of active class war was learnt, though in very indistinct

lines and through elemental outburst of demands, during this period. We simply summarised this experience of the workers and held it before them in a clearly formulated manner.

The bitterness of class war increased after 1921. With the termination of the Imperialist war the available stocks of goods, so long held back, were thrown on the export market by Europe in order to meet the immediate demands of the war burdens. The sterling exchange having deteriorated and relatively the rupee having risen imports into India became easier. To this were added the feverish schemes of the bourgeoisie for expansion, as it was boom period. The mill-owning rings inflated the capital by recapitalising some plants at high prices by the simple method of book entries and change of the names of the companies. A large part of the sudden jump of textile capital from 9.40 crores in 1919 to 16.98 crores in 1920 is due to this trickery of finance. This was later on used to spread exaggerated ideas about the losses of the industry and was one of the causes of the prolongation of the General Strike of 1928. (D 401).

108. The depression in industry and attack on wages—the strikes of 1924 and 1925.

However here again as in 1907 nationalism came to the help. A severe boycott campaign checked recovery of Lancashire imports though only for a time. Indian production kept on rising and the mill-owners did not create much trouble in the matter of wages. From 1920 to 1923 there was no serious stoppage of work in Bombay. Foreign imports of 1510 milyds in 1920-21 as against the Indian production of 1581 milyds fell to 1090 milyds (a drop of 33 per cent) as against a rise of Indian production to 1734 milyds. What advantage did the Indian bourgeoisie take of this? It engaged itself in stock exchange speculation and when prices fell unloaded stocks on the gullible petty bourgeois investors. With the gradual fall in prices, with the exchange troubles created by a foreign Government which was out to restore the credit of the British exchange, and the inexperience and grab of the speculators in the industry, the visible profits came down from 10.10 crores in 1920 to 8.46 in 1921 and 3.87 crores in 1922. As is always the case under capitalism the first made to suffer from this were the workers. The mill-owners stopped their bonuses that was being paid to them since 1919. When the workers were informed by a sudden notice that they would not get bonus payments, there was a general strike of the mills beginning on 17th January 1924.

The strike lasted for two months. There was uptill now no organisation of the workers to lead the strike. The spontaneous lead of the conscious elements of the workers and their unconscious and unorganised solidarity was able to keep up the strike. The bonus question was not a small question. The real loss to the workers from the loss of bonus is not grasped because the loss is not so evident as it is in wage cuts. But the stoppage of bonus was virtually a wage cut. The annual bonus, according to the Bombay Labour Office had added 8.3 per cent to the earnings of the workers in 1921 and therefore its stoppage meant an as much wage cut. (D 548).

The mill-owners took the attitude that the bonus was merely a present from them to the workers who had no "customary, legal or equitable claim" on it. The workers took the stand that the plea of the mill-owners that their profits were in danger was false and their balance-sheets faked. Moreover the mill-owners had never given a wage increase commensurate with the increase of the cost of living and the two ends had never met. After over a month's struggle the workers refused to give in. Attempts were made to get the strike called off on the promise of an arbitration committee to decide the dispute, but the workers refused. It is said that the Communists in 1928 preached to the workers an uncompromising attitude on the question of arbitration and by refusing to accept arbitration or reference of the whole dispute to an Inquiry Committee including the terms of settlement, prolonged the strike and used it for their revolutionary conspiracy purposes. But then what about 1924? There at that time there was no communist in the strike. Still the workers refused arbitration and also refused to call off the strike on the simple condition of referring the dispute to Inquiry Committee. The mill-owners even resorted to starve out the workers by holding back the payment of due wages. But the workers did not break down. On February 19, 1924, the Government of Bombay appointed an Inquiry Committee presided over by a High Court Judge. While the Committee was sitting, the workers held a meeting where the workers and police clashed and a firing took place on March 7. In it 5 were killed, 4 wounded and 13 arrested. On the same day the Governor of Bombay realising the situation, asked the mill-owners to pay off the workers wages which had been held back. The Inquiry Committee declared its verdict on March 11, and rejected the workers' claim. The strike collapsed through exhaustion and the work was resumed by 25th March 1924 after a struggle of 7½ million working days. The fight was lost. If the average annual

wages is taken 'at 6 crores, the mill-owners had saved nearly 50 lakhs a year by the abolition of bonus.'

At the same time the workers in Bombay learnt some lessons from the actual struggle they had to wage. In this class struggle, the workers were starved, fire opened on them, their wages withheld; and finally had come a Committee which claimed to be impartial, which claimed that it had no class affiliation. That Committee in the face of the visible profits of the industry, the swelling block accounts had declared that the workers need not get bonus. It was the biggest service that Imperialism did to the workers in Bombay. It had associated a high functionary of bourgeois justice with an acute manifestation of class struggle and through this functionary declared half a crore of the workers' earnings forfeited thus showing bourgeois justice to be against the workers. It was but natural that the workers in Bombay should lose faith in Inquiry or Arbitration Committees in the High Courts of Imperialism. The workers learnt in 1924 from real objective conditions that he who is not with them is against them. In the class struggle there are no neutrals. So when we in 1928 expressed our disbelief in Arbitration or Inquiry Committees and rejected proposals of submitting the fate of the strike to another class court of Imperialism and the bourgeoisie, we were simply repeating their own lesson which the workers had learnt in 1924. Not only that. We being young and ignorant of all the happenings of 1924, were in fact warned by the older workers against such committees and we ourselves were given lessons in the past struggle by the class conscious and older workers. The most class conscious and experienced workers are generally better teachers of the class struggle than many a petty bourgeois intellectual bookworm.

The second lesson they had learnt was that in times of huge profits the workers were not the first but the last to get even a meagre increase, and that in times of even a small fall in profits they were not the last but the first to be hit. As the industrial crises of the bourgeoisie continually recur and have become chronic after the war, the workers have always to wage an offensive or defensive struggle to snatch better conditions and prevent the worsening of the existing conditions. Thus at all times they have to engage themselves in a continuous class struggle and in this class struggle the Imperialist State will always side with the bourgeoisie as against the workers.

After having inflicted a loss of 50 lakhs a year on the workers the mill-owners got emboldened and made another attack on the

workers' wages in 1925 September, by announcing a wage cut of $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent that is a cut of 70 to 80 lakhs a year in the earnings of the textile workers in Bombay. The strike began on 15th September 1925 and extended to all the mills, lasting till December, a fight of 11 million working days— $3\frac{1}{4}$ million more than the previous one. This strike and the next one of 1928 illustrated the cowardly nature and the inability of the Indian bourgeoisie to fight its own battle, the battle of freedom to develop the productive forces of the country, which would yield them their profits. The mill-owners in Bombay made the abolition of the Excise Duty on cotton goods an issue in the strike. The strike in fact was not a strike but a lockout asking the workers to take $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent less wages or in the alternative asking the Government to abolish the Excise Duty. It was actually a monstrous demonstration organised by the bourgeoisie against the Excise Duty and a demonstration based on the starvation and killing of the workers. The bourgeoisie dared not rouse the workers directly for political struggle against the Dictatorship, which was hampering the development of industries in India by the excise duties, mischief in exchange and such other means. Not daring to lead a revolutionary struggle for national freedom which would create conditions for the development of industries, not daring to even mildly fight for vital reforms for its own class, the bourgeoisie pushed the textile workers to the front, and forced a strike on them and put up the banner on which was inscribed their demand that "Government should abolish the Excise Duty or we shall starve the workers by lockout until they choose to starve voluntarily by $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent". As Bombay produces half the total mill production of cotton goods in India, a strike in Bombay and the issues involved in it reach everybody in almost every big town in India. A long stoppage of Bombay mills disturbs the equilibrium of the economy of the whole of India. Therefore it was the Bombay bourgeoisie which chose to bring the Excise Duty question to the fore by this vile form of demonstration. The bourgeoisie was using the workers to bring pressure on the Government machinery, to get relief for its own class of about two crores a year by the abolition of the Duty, a task which it had failed to accomplish in the toy legislatures in which it had sat from year to year with a show of ridiculous opposition and speeches.

The Imperialist Government granted the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie and abolished the Duty, and the Cotton Duties Act was repealed in April 1926.

The abolition of the duty was not done by the Government in order to save the millworkers from wage cuts. Neither was it an

indication that the British bourgeoisie and the Indian Government had disagreed. It was also not an indication that Government favoured the industrialisation of India and an accelerated growth of the Indian bourgeoisie. The interests of Indian capitalism are directly opposed to those of the British bourgeoisie and the abolition of the Excise Duty does not vitiate this proposition. It is a fact that conditions in England were not favourable for such a step on the part of the Government of India which exists first and foremost to protect the interests of the British bourgeoisie. The Liberal Industrial Inquiry Report says on this period, "From the middle of 1924 to the middle of 1925 in fact we actually lost ground due to a number of causes, including a general cessation in international trade, the cessation of the special stimulus to British industry, of the Ruhr occupation, and the prospects and effects of the British return to gold in April 1925. In June 1925 the numbers of unemployed were some 250,000 more than in the year previously." (page 270). Yet within this general picture of British decline the textile industry was relatively in a better position. The unemployment of textile workers which was 120,000 in 1923 was only 60,000 in July 1925 out of 576,000, the total number of textile workers in England. While the percentage of registered unemployed in mining and metal was 20 per cent it was 8 per cent in textiles. It is a fact that India being the largest of Britain's cotton markets, a big setback here would hit the British bourgeoisie, though not seriously yet substantially. But it must also be seen that just after the abolition of the Excise Duty, the imports from United Kingdom into India were rising from 955 milyds in 1922 to 1319 and 1614 milyds in 1923 and 1924 and were becoming steadier. These fluctuations are not much expressed in the total exports of British textiles to all countries including India, which were steady from 1922 to 1925 round about 4150 to 4450 milyds. Though this was an absolute decline over the pre-war figure of 7000 milyds yet the industry had hopes of recovery and was not so much organised as in others, like the coal, iron, engineering etc. which formed the largest part of the total exports. Since the heavy export industries with their protectionist policy for themselves ruled the day a concession to India's textiles was not going to create insuperable obstruction.

There was also another consideration and that was far more influential than the position of Lancashire as such in determining the fate of the concessions. It was the necessity of keeping Indian bourgeois and petty bourgeois sections engaged with few concessions here and there. With a crisis in unemployment rising in England, a very complicated situation on the continent and rising discontent in China it was paying to keep the Indian bourgeoisie just relieved

for a while. With the Non-Cooperation Movement crushed, the bourgeoisie at the earliest available moment was running to the councils. The abolition of Excise Duty, the passing of the Steel Protection Act and such other things were the best toys with which to tempt the people to cling to the road of Swaraj through the Councils till other matters could be settled. Thus the abolition of the duty was in no way a policy to industrialise India.

The Government by abolishing the duty benefited the textile capitalists of the whole of India by about two crores a year and Bombay city by 96 lakhs. When the concession was made they cancelled the notices of wage cut, called off the lockout and the workers resumed work in a mood of victory, in December 1925. The strike had lasted for nearly three months. The textile capitalists of Bombay in two years had made a saving in cost of production of 50 lakhs a year by cancellation of bonus payments in 1924 and 96 lakhs a year by remission of the Excise Duty in 1925. They had asked for a wage cut of $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent yielding them only 70 lakhs a year, while actually they got 96 lakhs equivalent to a wage cut of 16 per cent. For all this the workers had been starved for three months losing $1\frac{1}{2}$ crores in wages, several killed and wounded in firing and there was an increase in their indebtedness. The Indian bourgeoisie had fought its anti-Imperialist battle against the Excise Duty on the corpses of the Bombay workers and having won, it was out again within a year, with its hired bayonets turned towards the workers, for forcing another wage cut on them.

109. The Japanese competition and Tariff Board—rationalisation and attack on wages—partial strikes and their failure.

The Imperialist war had destroyed once for all the equilibrium of capitalist economy, and the violent oscillations felt all the world over were not showing signs of returning to normalcy, though the violence of this oscillation had mitigated since 1923, the year of the defeat of the German proletariat and the beginning of the period of partial stabilisation. The imperialists of Europe started schemes of reconstruction and stabilisation; international loans, guarantees and building up of new combines were renewed with vigour. As usual the first onslaught of these movements was felt by the workers. British capitalist economy undertook super-human efforts to rationalise production and effect wage cuts. The working class resisted, the general strike of 1926 followed and was smashed. With a strong Conservative Government, a defeated working-class and corrupt labour aristocracy, a drive to

assemble the Empire's resources to suppress the colonial discontent and to arrest the decline of British capitalism was begun. The result was that the Chinese Revolution was suppressed with the help of the counter-revolutionary Chinese bourgeoisie. In India the exchange ratio was turned in favour of the British export trade, the suggestion of the Indian bourgeoisie to give it more political reforms was rejected and an all-Imperialist, all-British Simon Commission was announced.

Just as the Indian bourgeoisie had taken advantage of the war, so had other countries. In the textile trade Japan and China had advanced very rapidly. Whereas the all-Asiatic spindle strength in 1913 was 9,384,000, it rose to 17,827,000 in 1927—a rise of 90 per cent—while the British increase was only 3 per cent.

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Out of these 17 millions Japan claimed 6 million spindles. During and after the war, the Japanese had not in any way penetrated the Indian market. But long ago she had shown signs of competing in goods like long cloth and shirting with the Indian mills. Proposals of an alliance between Lancashire and Bombay were discussed and almost agreed upon through the diplomatic services of one of the richest Bombay mill-owners, Sir Ness Wadia. By that arrangement Lancashire was not to compete in lower counts with Bombay while Bombay would not move up to higher counts, and both were to keep out Japan. But the arrangement for higher political reasons did not find support with the Government of India who refused a protective duty against Japan. But the competition of Japanese textiles began to increase and their imports into India from 155 milyards in 1924-25 began to mount up to 217, 214 and 323 milyds. in 1925, 1926 and 1927 respectively. In the total imports of over 2,000 milyds. this amount was negligible. But the fact that the bulk of the imports competed directly in price with some of the varieties produced by the largest mills in Bombay gave strength to the cry of Japanese competition.

The Bombay bourgeoisie soon after the 1925 strike asked the Government of India for a protective duty. The Government refused. They next asked for the appointment of a Tariff Board to enquire into the state of the industry and its claims for protection. The Government of India agreed to this and the Tariff Board started its enquiry into the industry.

The demand for the Board had come from the Bombay mill-owners. The mills in other centres were not interested in it.

Having once asked for the Board the mill-owners could not but appear before it with some materials. These materials were mainly directed to showing the so-called high wages the owners were paying in Bombay. But the main ground on which the Bombay magnates had asked for protection and enquiry was the Japanese competition. As regards the mill-owners' attempts to substantiate their claim on this ground, the Tariff Board observed, "The attitude adopted by the Bombay Mill-owners' Association in this regard calls for some comment. We consider that we were entitled to expect from that body, which had applied for protection against unfair competition from Japan, full information as to the nature and extent of that competition.... It was also, we consider, reasonably to be expected that some information as to the markets in India into which the Japanese goods have penetrated would be placed before us. Little or no information was forthcoming from the Bombay Mill-owners' Association upon any of these heads." (Quotation in Exh: D 401, page 17). Another ground that the Bombay magnates advanced was the severity of the competition from the upcountry mills due to low wages prevailing there. On this point also the Board observed, "All that can be said is, therefore, that the cost of production statements show that production both in yarn and cloth in Ahmedabad and in efficient up-country mills is as high as it is in Bombay." When the Board asked them to submit cost of production accounts 21 mills out of 275 supplied them. Acting on such information the Tariff Board made its recommendations, on the basis of which, the mill-owners in Bombay started their attack on workers' wages and standards in 1927 and 1928.

The workers in Bombay also submitted representations to the Board on their conditions of life and work, on the horrible practices of unlimited fines, assaults, forfeitures of wages etc. The result was that the Board asked the mill-owners to take more work from the workers for the same wages and this recommendation to increase exploitation they christened with that deceptive phrase, "increasing efficiency."

The news of the recommendations was not understood in all its aspects by the Bombay workers, until the mill-owners launched a direct attack and held the Tariff Board report in their front as their passport to the support of "public opinion". Where the workers worked 180 spindles on Rs. 26/- a month they were asked to look after 360 on Rs. 39/-. Half the increase of wage for double the increase in work. The Tariff Board found that there was a marked disparity between spinners' and weavers' wages and thought

that the disparity ought to be removed. The mill-owners in order to remove the disparity instead of raising the spinning wages, proposed to bring the weavers' down. Schemes of wholesale rationalisation, not by means of improved technique or amalgamation of scattered plants or capital but by the simple and inexpensive method of doubling the work of all spinners and weavers, were planned out and the strongest of the financial syndicates took upon themselves the task of launching out the first attack and breaking the workers' resistance which was rightly expected to be most determined. Once again the workers found a committee of so-called impartial judges—the Tariff Board—supporting the ruin of workers' peace and his life in the interest of the bourgeoisie. There are no neutrals, the workers learnt, and no impartial third parties in the class struggle. He who is not for us is against us, was the lesson repeated.

The work of breaking the workers' resistance and introducing new methods was begun by E. D. Sassoon and Company, Limited, which is one of the biggest combines in the textile industry of the whole of India. With the financial backing of a banking house organised on an international scale, immense credit, age—old experience associated with the name of the Sassoons and an efficient technical staff that high finance can command this company was the only one in Bombay to dare such an experiment. They began the introduction of the new Sweating System in August 1927 in two of their mills. Immediately there was a strike which lasted for a whole month and ended in the beginning of September. The workers resumed work on the understanding that the adoption of the three loom system would be optional. On resumption one by one all who did not accept the system were dismissed. Without any strong organisation of their own the workers were out to fight a big octopus.

For two months there was no flagrant attack, but the beginning of year 1928 saw a concerted attack in 9 mills, 8 of the Sassoons and one of Sir Ness Wadia. The Spring Mills introduced double frame working and piece rates in spinning. The Sassoon Mills introduced double frame working only. The strike affected over 16,000 workers. The Sassoons strike broke down by February 25th and the Spring Mills ended in compromise on 16th January. One by one the strongest of the owners began their attacks, the three principal parties being the Sassoons, Wadias and Fazalbhoyas. These three amongst themselves combined the largest part of the spindles and capital in Bombay, employing about 52,000 workers. These three houses are the dictators of Bombay

textiles and consequently of Bombay finance. Between August 1927 and April 1928 there were as many as 24 strikes. In this the Apollo workers faced two strikes (1st August—2nd September 1927 and 2nd January—25th February 1928), the Spring Mills twice (2nd January—16th January 1928 and 31st January—6th February 1928), the Textile Mills three times (21st February—25th February and 17th March—3rd April and 7th April—24th April 1928), the Rachel Sassoon twice (2nd January—25th February and 3rd—4th March 1928). Out of them 21 disputes were lost, one was compromised and two merged into the general strike. Out of these 24 disputes 12 arose out of the measures adopted by the Sassoons, 5 by Sir Ness Wadia, the textile magnate with very big reserves and unique in some of his working methods. Two arose from the Fazalbhoy and the rest from individual owners. If along with this it is remembered that the general strike began with the whole Fazalbhoy group closing down on 16th April, the trend of the mill-owners' attack, the chief sources of it and the huge combines that stood behind it, become clearly visible.

The mill-owners had seen the resistance of the workers in 1924 and 1925. Though beaten they had held out for nearly two months in one case and three months in another. Even though without any solid organisation they had combined when attacked. So the mill-owners were unwilling to face a general strike every year and especially when the trade prospects of 1927 were better than in previous years. They therefore adopted the tactic of breaking the workers' resistance by groups, and as shown above the first battle was given by the strongest syndicates and was won by them. 40,000 workers' standard of work and living were made worse. Thus by five instalments and within one year i.e. by the end of 1928, the mill-owners would have introduced the new swearing System in almost all the mills, increased the hours of work in several departments and reduced the rates of wages of weavers, wherever the three-loom system could not have been introduced. By the end of 1928 30,000 workers, if the above policy had been allowed to continue, would have been absolutely thrown out of work, the working time of over 20,000 would have been raised by 18 per cent and the same number would have lost 21 per cent in earnings by the forced increase in hours of work without a corresponding increase in the rates of wages. This new attack was unprecedented in the history of the Bombay working class or the working class of Europe and America, which also was being beaten down in wages but not on such a monster scale. In the isolated battles the workers had lost completely. The strikes had lasted for nearly 1½ million working days, (the Bombay Labour

office has not given any exact data on this) and the workers had lost over 20 lakhs in wages by the stoppage, apart from the permanent loss resulting from the defeat. If it had been spread over the whole industry the stoppage represented 11 days' general strike. Such four instalments covering the whole industry would have meant a stoppage equivalent to two months at the most, if we take into consideration the fact that the single stoppage of the Sassoon group of 24,000 workers lasted for one month and 24 days. The advantage of the new tactic lay in this fact. It was a system of "guerrilla lock-out". The general introduction of the new systems, increase of hours and a wage-cut would have generated such a tremendous opposition that the resulting strike according to previous experiences would have gone on for more than three months at least. By the tactic of isolated attacks, the mill-owners rightly calculated on easy victories and a saving in the prolonged stoppage of work of 2 to 1½ months. The plans of the bourgeoisie were well laid and based on shrewd business calculations.

SECTION 2. The General Textile Strike in Bombay, April to October 1928: paras 110—127.

110. *The failure of partial strikes necessitated a general strike—direct causes of the 1928 strike.*

Having broken the resistance of 1/5th of the workers the mill-owners proceeded to launch their second attack on the workers of the big Fazalbhoy group which is comprised of 11 mills employing 21,000 workers. One of their mills, the Kastoorchand Mill was already on strike since the 3rd April for reduction in rates of blanket weaving. On 16th April, 1928 7 more mills of this group struck work (P. W. 245-Hassan Ali) along with three other mills in the immediate vicinity of this group. The closing down of this group, the firing on the workers and the death of one of them, Parashram Jadhav on 23rd April brought about the general strike, the conditions for which had been ripening since January.

The method of attack followed by the Fazalbhoy group was different from that of the Sassoons and Wadias. Though the Fazalbhoy group were a big syndicate they had not such strong financial reserves as the Sassoons and Wadias. Therefore that group could not afford to meet the workers with a direct attack on clear-cut issues. They followed a method of subterfuge. They transferred a large number of their looms to weave finer varieties of cloth, mostly new patterns of *dhotis* and bordered grey goods with

an introduction of artificial silk yarns. While they raised the counts of yarn woven, they did not raise the rate of wages per pound with the effect that as the output in finer counts weighed less and the rate per pound remained the same, the workers received less earnings. They transformed their Pearl Mill all on finer counts and artificial silk. They also introduced the high draft system in spinning. But the machinery set up was of such a type that the Management agreed to alter it in December 1928, i. e. after the general strike. Having put up on higher counts, the doffing was low in spinning and the Management started reducing men in the spinning on this account. But their book—calculations about the percentage fall in doffing and the consequent reductions in number of assistants to the spinner (that is doffer boys etc.) were vitiated by one factor which they had not taken into consideration, and that factor was bad mixings in cotton. The accumulated result of all this was reduction of the employed workers, increase of work for those employed, in the spinning and fall of earnings of the weavers. This development ultimately affected every worker in the textile process and bred serious discontent. That the mills were put up on finers is evident from the returns of spinning counts. Counts 11 to 22s had come down from 153 million pounds in 1926-27 to 131 in 1927-28. Counts 21 to 30s and had risen from 104 million pounds to 107. But the jump is more noteworthy in 31 to 40s. From 9.2 million it rose to 12.3 million pounds, a rise of more than 33 per cent. In above 40s from 4.3 million pounds to 5, an increase of 16 per cent.

It is not so much the actual increase that matters as the trend of production and the inevitable suffering of the workers arising from it. It was this that brought out the Fazalbhoy group. It was this that caught hold of the imagination and feelings of the workers. They had seen 40,000 of their comrades beaten down alone in an isolated single-handed fight. They now saw that it was not a question of one or two mills but of the whole industry heaping more burdens on their head. The 40,000 already defeated in the previous three months were convinced of this by their personal experience. But they alone were not powerful enough, in the absence of organisation, to convince the whole textile working-class of the oncoming waves. It was necessary for another big mass of workers to learn from experience of the danger threatening all of them. Such a big mass was only to be found in the Fazalbhoy group. I say even this that had the mill-owners not attacked the workers either in the Petit Mills or other individual mills, it is doubtful whether the general strike would have come about in April. The fact that the next group of workers to be

affected by unemployment and fall in wages were those from the Fazel group at once turned the scale in favour of the strike. Because these combined with the 40,000 already embittered formed a strong bloc of 60,000 men, coming from mills situated in the most densely populated part of the textile city and with the largest and widest system of contact for the propagation and exchange of thoughts, feelings and experience. Any general mass discontent or even a strong grievance only among the weavers of the Sassoons Fazals and Wadias, can at any moment form a solid basis for a general strike. Such a situation had not matured in January, but it had matured in April. Therefore in spite of appeals, a general strike did not come about in January but was an accomplished fact after seven days of the pay day in April. The historical development of the industry, the personal experience of rank and file workers and the conviction born of that experience that nothing but a general strike could stay the threatening wage cuts, unemployment, and worsened conditions brought about the general strike in April 1928.

The Prosecution allegation in the matter of this general strike is that in fact the strike was engineered and brought about by us; that the workers had no grievances that we formulated grievances and demands long after the strike had taken place, and this we did because we want the general strikes as rehearsals for the final act of insurrection—we do not care whether the workers have or have not anything to gain immediately from the strikes. They brought the Superintendent of the Office of the Mill-owners' Association (P. W. 234) with a document purporting to be a letter from the Joint Mill Strike Committee to the Mill-owners' Association putting before them the demands of the workers. The argument behind the presentation of this witness and that document was to show that the letter of demands was dated 3rd May and the strike had taken place 10 days earlier, the grievances formulated in that letter were purely an afterthought of those leaders who had brought about the strike for the purposes of a "rehearsal" for advancing Communist influence amongst the workers. But after the witness had been called the Prosecution changed their line and decided not to put in that letter, which was then brought on record as a defence document (Ex. D3). One would fail to see the reason of bringing this witness before the Court if the above points were not remembered. Because once the Prosecution had given up the idea of putting in that document as their exhibit to support their argument of "a general strike without grievances", and their attempt to prove the 1928 strike as a bad deed of the Communists, the need for this witness vanishes altogether. But in order to justify their wast

of money and to remove the absurdity of the whole show they put him in the box to testify to the well known historical fact that there was a general strike of textile mills in Bombay in the year 1928 and that he, the Office Superintendent of the Mill-owners' Association, actually remembered that historical fact. But the memory of that excellent office Superintendent was not sure when that historical fact, which according to the Prosecution was a rehearsal for insurrection came to an end. He "thought" that it ended on 4th October 1928.

The same line is followed by the Prosecution in their examination of two other witnesses who were personally cognisant of those 24 disputes that took place prior to the general strike and other facts leading to it (P.W. 244 R. S. Patwardhan and P.W. 245, Hassanally). Not one question that would have suggested the existence of grievances and strikes prior to and leading to the general strike was put to them by the Prosecution. Their trend of questions is to show that suddenly in April, 1928, Bombay found itself in the grip of a general textile strike and that some of the accused here were the cause of it. It was the Defence that showed by cross-examination of these witnesses the existence of long-drawn-out disputes arising from the introduction of new rational systems of work and other grievances, that the general strike had not come up suddenly as if raised from hell by the evil spirits of Communism. It is to refute the allegations of the Prosecution that I have stated so far the development that inevitably and historically led to the general strike in April 1928. This can also be shown by reference to Fawcett Committee's Report which says, "On the 3rd May 1928 the Joint Strike Committee published a list of terms to be conceded by the mill-owners, which has now come to be known as the "17 demands" and which formed one of the items submitted to us for consideration. But we may state here *that many of these demands were not put forward for the first time when they were so formulated.* During the few months immediately preceding the general strike there were several strikes in individual mills and in groups of mills in connection with one or more of the grievances submitted in the 17 demands for removal." (page 4). The report then gives a list of the sixteen strikes which occurred between August 1927 and May 1928, to which I have referred above. This list has also been confirmed by P. W. 244. After a mention of the fact that in all instances prior to April 1928 the strikes ended in favour of the employers, except in one case, the Committee summarises the main grievances of the workers prior to the general strike: -

"(1) Direct cut in wages (2) Reduction in monthly earnings owing to the following indirect causes: (a) Introduction of new varieties of cloth at rates which did not bring the level of wages to those earned on the production of the old sorts; (b) reduction of piece rates to meet unanticipated high production by individual operatives; (c) adjustment in rates to bring them in line with the rates prevailing in other mills; (d) no adjustment made to increase rates in cases where mills went on finer counts; (e) the introduction of artificial silk and inferior raw material; (f) gradual withdrawal of bonuses such as good attendance and efficiency bonus, and free railway passes to workers etc; (g) introduction of a method of paying wages on the weight of the cloth after it had undergone a subsequent process instead of the actual weight produced on the loom; (3) The introduction of new methods of work involving a reduction in the number of operatives employed, notably in the Sassoon group (that that is three looms and double frame working) and the fear of spreading of this system to other mills in the city. (4) The increase in the hours of mechanics in some mills from 8½ hours to 10 hours per day, and the declaration of a general intention to level up the hours of work for all mill operatives in all mills to 10 hours per day."

"In addition to the above there were several minor grievances in connection with the infliction of fines, dismissals, the practice of handing over spoilt cloth to the weavers in lieu of wages. It would, we think, serve no useful purpose to go at length into the exact causes of the general strike or to attempt to apportion blame for it on either side. There were no doubt various contributory causes, but in our opinion it can be safely said that the chief reason for its commencement and continuation for a period of nearly six months was the fear of unemployment created by the new methods of work introduced by Messrs. E. D. Sassoon and Co. in their mills." (pp 6 and 7). As regards the strenuous propaganda carried on by certain leaders in favour of a general strike and the suggestion that it was due to them that the strike came about, the Committee observed that "had there been no grievances it would have been impossible for a handful of men to keep so many workers on strike for a period amounting very nearly to six months" (Page 2) this knocks out the allegations that we were the sole or chief cause of general strike, that the workers themselves had no grievances and that we brought about the strike—grievances or no grievances—to further the aims of the conspiracy. The general strike of 1928 just as any other previous strike was an outcome of the objective conditions of world capitalism in general and of Bombay's textile industry in particular.

By this it is not meant to suggest that individuals and groups of individuals played no part in this event. To rule out altogether the role of the individuals and groups would mean becoming adherents of predestination, fatalism and such other similar creeds which are totally incompatible with the scientific altitude of historical materialism. Ability, experience, daring intellect and such other qualities of the leadership do affect the course of events to a certain extent. But while Marxism does recognise their place it does not subscribe to the proposition of bourgeois individualism and hero worship, that an individual man can make and unmake history in spite of or against the course of historical development. With these limitations I do say that I along with others did play a certain part in the making of and guiding the general strike. I shall deal briefly with that part now.

III. The attitude of the B. T. L. Union and Mr. N. M. Joshi—the G. K. Mahamandal's changing attitude—general strike complete.

I took no part in the strikes that took place before 1928 January. It was only in January that I went to the mill area along with Mr. Bakhale, with whom I was a Joint Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress. Mr. Bakhale negotiated the Spring Mill strike and I was present on one or two occasions at these interviews with the Management. That strike was partially successful. But we could do nothing in the Sassoon Mill strike. There was no room there for compromise and negotiations. I found that due to my ignorance at that time of the intricacies of the industry, the burdens on the working-class and such other things that a unionist ought to know, I could be of no use to the strike. So I ceased to take an active part in the strike and retired to acquaint myself thoroughly with all facts of the situation. Moreover I found hesitation amongst the other leaders as to the course to be recommended to the workers. There was one trend that argued that without a general strike these grievances would not be solved; there was another trend which argued that as the grievances were not felt by a sufficiently wide mass, the general strike would not come about and succeed. The Bombay Textile Labour Union issued a statement on 8/1/28 in the name of Mr. N.M. Joshi disapproving of the idea of general strike. That statement was not wholly against the general strike as such. Mr. Joshi had seen and taken part in two big general strikes and even as a moderate Trade Unionist he could not be expected to oppose the general strike on principle. What he did was to oppose it on the ground of possibility, feasibility and possible success. Being out of touch with the rank and file of the fighting

workers and not believing as we do in the immense power of the proletariat, he doubted their capacity, solidarity and intelligence. All these doubts are typically put in one sentence of his statement. He says "As regards the present strike I feel sure that there is a possibility of its spreading, although I may not wish it, if no satisfactory solution is found out almost immediately. And I do feel that a general strike under the existing conditions may fail. There is a very large number of workers who are not yet affected by the new system and they may not come out: and even supposing they come out they may not hold out long enough to make the general strike a success. I would not therefore risk a general strike if I feel that it would fail." (Ex. D 567 and D 390 A. I. T. U. C. Bulletin April 1928 page 111).

That settled the attitude of the Bombay Textile Labour Union and the large section of workers in a group of mills which were under its influence.

But the largest section of the workers in the most crowded part of the mill area were under the influence of the G. K. Mahamandal. The Sassoon Mill Strike was led by the G.K.M. The G.K.M. reflected the opinion of the most advanced group of workers in the mills. Though not possessing an upto-date well-kept organisation the Mahamandal, with a membership varying between four and six thousands, had a sufficiently wide organisation and contact. The Mahamandal did not take up the idea of the general strike in January. And when a statement in the press in the name of the Workers' and Peasants' Party was issued in January 1928 stating that the mill owners wanted to crush the workers section by section in order to avoid a determined resistance as was given in 1924 and 1925, and that only a general strike could stop the rationalisation and wage cut drive, the Mahamandal did not take up that statement seriously (P 928, P 1015 and D 519). This was quite in keeping with the workers' mood at that time. The Sassoon Strike had not broken down, the attack in the mills was not yet very evident. The plans of the mill-owners were not yet thoroughly known; therefore it was that the G. K. M. in its leaflet said "Men in those factories in which no change has taken place should continue their work and help the men in the E. D. Sassoon Company by taking them as substitutes by turns and by collecting contributions". Strikers were asked not to go and demonstrate near the other mills which were working. (D 439 (33)).

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Till the Sassoon group strike was on and others had not

taken place this mentality prevailed. With the B.T.L. Union and the Mahamandal both against the general strike, it was impossible for any group of persons to bring about a general strike, because the two organisations put together and agreed on a point meant the opinion of the textile workers. In a handbill (issued between 13th and 24th February 1928) the Mahamandal wrote "Men in those mills in which no sort of change has been effected should strengthen themselves by continuing their work" and asked the workers to taboo the proposal of a general strike coming from "nondescript upstarts" unless it came from the Mahamandal which "if it is thought proper to declare a general strike will give a public notice to all to that effect." (Exh: D 439 (30)).

The tactic of localised strikes failed, the Sassoon workers were beaten and the mill-owners commenced the second instalment of their attack just as was predicted by those "nondescript upstarts." The effect of this was at once reflected in the Mahamandal. The workers began to consider seriously whether it was possible to stem the advancing attacks by isolated strikes. The Mahamandal in a handbill says (about 26th March 1928): "As the strike in the Sassoon group was broken other owners have begun to foist upon the workers the system of three looms and two frames. So also attempts to cut down wages are being made by resorting to various stratagems..... We workers cannot be able to cope up with this unless in the end we all become one and tenaciously declare a general strike." (Exh: P 1464 which is same as D 439 (31)). The words "in the end" and "future general strike" still express hesitation to recommend unequivocally the general strike as the only weapon, because the workers themselves were hesitating and not a very large section of them was yet convinced that they were being attacked as the result of a general plan of the textile bourgeoisie. They still thought that all the wage-cuts and new systems of work were the freaks of individual owners and therefore the strikes would be localised to those individual mills. On 1st April 1928 the Mahamandal issued a statement asking the workers of the Textile Mill to resume work and removing some of the misunderstandings prevalent in the workers about spinners' wages. (Exh: D 497). The workers resumed work on 3rd April (vide Fawcett Report and P.W. 244) but came out again on 7th April as they were asked to clean machinery every day which was not the former practice, and to drop tickets. The Simplex Mill strike could not be negotiated and the Kastoorchand Mill came out on 3rd April, the same day on which the Textile Mill resumed work. The Simplex Mill was in the Jacob Circle area, a mill doing very skilled silk work in weaving, the Kastoorchand Mill was at

Dadar and the Textile Mill at Parbhadevi, three situated at long distances from each other, which meant a great difficulty in organisation and control of the strike by the financially poor Mahamandal. This guerrilla tactic of the mill-owners, the fruitlessness of the isolated struggles for the last six months naturally had their effect on the G.K.M. Hesitation and vacillation gave way. The three strikes shook the Mahamandal's ideology and they had to accept the viewpoint held by the W.P.P. as early as January 1928. On 9th April 1928, the G.K.M. issued a handbill saying, "You are aware that this danger and the wicked attack of the owners on wages cannot be averted without a general strike." (P 1465—P.W. 245). It also said, "In every mill the owners with the intention of devising means for reducing the worker's wages by 25 per cent are resorting to one or other of devices....."

"All this scheming of the owners is going on in order to take revenge upon us workers who gave a fight in the year 1925, got our 25 per cent and became successful..... If you want to maintain your wages, there is only one remedy for it, our unity is that remedy. The men in the mills of Bombay must declare a general strike....." (Exh: D 439 (29)). In the meanwhile rumblings of reduced earnings and dismissed men began to grow louder from the Fazalbhoy group. The Mahamandal decided unequivocally on preparing for a general strike on 13th April 1928. (Minute Book of the G.K.M. Exh: D 420, page 12). But in the absence of a wide organisation, funds and other requisites the resolution remained as a prophetic reading of the workers' mood or feeling of their pulse. Nothing beyond a meeting here and there of the two mills already on strike was done or could be done. The spontaneous strike of the workers on 16th April in ten mills confirmed the idea of the Mahamandal that the workers were now veering round to the idea of the general strike as a remedy to stop the mill-owners' attack. The leadership became confident and on 17th April the G.K.M. came out with a definite appeal this time to make the general strike complete and resist the attack of capitalism. (Exh: D 439 (28)).

112. *B.T.L. Union joins the strike—was the G.K.M. controlled by the W.P.P.?—how it was pushed into the general strike by the rank and file.*

On 18th April at Nagu Sayaji Wadi meeting a strike committee of 85 members was elected at the instance of the G.K.M. So long the Bombay Textile Labour Union after its statement of 10th January showing a defeatist attitude about the idea of the

general strike had followed the policy of "tail-endism." But when the workers struck on 16th April it moved forward to take charge of affairs and again guide them into a channel of affairs and again guide them into a channel of submission and to stop the spreading of the strike. On 18th April they also called a meeting to elect a strike Committee at Delisle Road. But before they could collect even a handful of listeners the Mahamandal had finished its meeting at Nagu Sayaji Wadi. The same audience went to the Delisle Road to frustrate the attempt of the B. T. L. Union to side-track the workers into a defeatist policy. At Delisle Road we secured a complete victory, and Mr. Ginwalla of the B. T. L. Union plainly saw the following that our lead had secured and agreed to our Strike Committee with some additions of his followers.

The conclusion from this is; the world conditions of capitalism affected the Bombay Textile bourgeoisie, as a part of world capitalism. In order to secure its profits it attacked workers' standards. The workers first resisted by groups as they were attacked by groups. But when they saw through the general plan of attack, they became convinced that a general strike alone and not a resistance by groups would help them. The conditions for a general strike and this conviction became ripe in April. The proposal of a general strike though made in January was not taken up then by the workers' organisations. The G. K. Mahamandal's gradual developments towards the acceptance of the necessity of a general strike grew in proportion as the intensity of the mill-owners' attack increased. The various handbills and decisions of the G. K. M. only reflected the growing inclination of the workers towards the general strike and the conviction that it was necessary to save them from wage-cuts and unemployment. From a complete repudiation of the idea and of those who advanced it, the Mahamandal advanced towards accepting it in a hesitating manner and ultimately, was forced by events to agree to it, to work for it and lead it. The very fact that the B. T. L. Union which with 10,000 members at first opposed the strike, and then had to fall in line on 18th April, shows that in this strike the rank and file was forcing the lead on the organisations and not that the leadership was consciously and effectively guiding the rank and file which in fact ought to be the case, because it is the function of leadership to anticipate the enemies attack and meet it in advance rather than follow like tail-ends.

The fact that the G. K. M. had one member of the W. P. P.

as its adviser for a long time, that the W. P. P. since January 1928 had given the slogan of a general strike does not affect the above view. The G. K. M. had never accepted the objects or the policy of the W. P. P. nor even that of the party member, whose help the Mandal took from time to time. The history of the Mandal's connection with the party member itself illustrates the reactions of the G. K. M. to the outside situation. The Secretary of the Mandal and the President, as also the Managing Committee, did not accept our party member's advice, and even when on personal and other issues a split was threatened between the two sections of the Mandal, one led by Mr. Mayekar and another by Mr. Alwe, both were agreed upon not accepting the general strike slogan. The W.P.P. on the advice of the Party member on the G.K.M. had denounced the Secretary (Exh: P 1016) but the Mandal as such was far from endorsing it. In its meeting of 4th February 1928 it blamed our Party member for the denunciation (D 420, page 7), but the failure of the Sassoon group strike of 25th February changed this attitude and in its meeting of 28th February the Mandal disapproved of the policy and conduct of its Secretary, whom it had wanted to defend as against our Party member in its meeting of 4th February. A few more strikes strengthened this attitude, as found in its meeting of 20th March, 1928, and the Managing Committee came out with a handbill completely vindicating our Party member's policy and conduct. (Exh: 1462). The split came to a head on 27th March and the Secretary was dismissed and asked to hand over charge which he refused to do. This was announced to the workers about 30th March (Exh: P 1463) by the President of the G. K. M. The anti-general-strike section weakened; the pro-general-strike section under the pressure of mass opinion became dominant. When the general strike did come, many members of the Workers' and Peasants' Party were found associating with the Mahamandal. But the Mandal as such had never adopted consciously or unconsciously the general platform of the W. P. P. It was still shy of what the bourgeoisie calls the "outsiders". It was still frightened of the bold lead of the W. P. P. members given to the workers in their public meetings, the uncompromising class ideology held up before them and accepted by them. The Mahamandal Executive had lagged behind and it dissociated itself from the W.P.P. members' speeches; though it could not dare to make this resolution public as the rank and file approved of our policy (Exh: D 420, page 15 dated 2nd May 1928). This was the effect probably of the nervous reaction of the Executive to the monster May Day demonstration on 1st May 1928, unheard of amongst the textile workers on such a large scale before. Though the moderate B. T. L. Unión, the Seamen's

Union and some others had participated officially in the May Day, the Mahamandal was not officially a party to it. None of its Executive members was there. On 30th April it had appointed Messrs. Jhalwala, Nimbkar and myself as advisers, but on 2nd May it repudiated responsibility for our speeches amongst the workers. (D 420). This shows that we had not captured the G. K. M. and that the G. K. M was not a section of the W. P. P. nor was it under the influence of the W. P. P. This naturally reverses the process which is alleged against us with regard to strikes—that we form fractions, capture unions, foment grievances and then bring about a general strike, as a prelude to the insurrection. Here the process started with small strikes and then the general strike. We expressed our opinion as to how to fight the enemies attack and analyse the situation. Our predictions came true and our advice was accepted by the workers. Still we had not captured the organisation of the workers nor had built one of our own. The strike was not our creation, but we were the creation of the strike. An organisation had not brought about the General Strike of 1928, but the strike had brought forth an organisation. The causal process of the 1928 strike was exactly the reverse of that of the 1929 strike, and it was quite natural in view of the state of the class-consciousness and organisation of the workers at the beginning of 1928.

And as for the last link in the allegation, that is the question of insurrection, it has not come at all nor was there even a talk about it. The function of leadership is to anticipate the movements of the enemy's forces. We did anticipate to a large extent. The function of leadership is to discuss and find out the methods to meet successfully the attack. We found that the general strike alone at that time could stop the mill owners' attack. The function of leadership is to organise and lead the battle of the masses. We could not do that before the masses themselves were convinced and took to the general strike. In this we were not open to the charge of "khvostism" because we were inexperienced, without any roots amongst the workers, without any organisation and other requisites necessary for an organisational leadership. Therefore we could only give an ideological lead and wait for its acceptance by the workers themselves.

The bourgeoisie, the Government and those parties who were against us advanced one more argument to prove that we were the sole or the major cause of the general strike. The very fact, they say, that it was necessary to give a slogan of general strike and that it was given by the W. P. P. as far back as January 1928

and throughout February and March, was sufficient to show that unlike the previous general strikes this strike was not spontaneous. The answer to this is very simple. I have already shown the reasons of the previous general strikes in the Bombay textile industry. The first series were due to the rising prices and the refusal of the mill-owners to increase wages. The workers fought four such general strikes and won. The next series were due to the concerted and unanimous attack of the mill-owners on the wages of the workers. In those two strikes, the mill-owners as a whole announced the stoppage of bonus and wage cuts. The nature of the attack was quite plain to the workers and was common to all. Therefore it was not necessary at all to call for a general strike. They were in fact half general strikes and half lockouts. Such was not the case in 1928. The mill-owners would not adopt wage cuts and rational systems throughout the whole of the industry in an open manner and by a decision of the owners as a whole and made known to the workers. The wage cuts were introduced by several underhand methods and group by group of mills. Therefore it was necessary for some one who had the perspective of the whole industry to study the trend of the attack, its reasons and modus operandi and apprise all the workers of it. In the absence of an all-embracing Trade Union organisation this task had to be done by the W. P. P. The isolated attacks of the owners were part of a general attack. Therefore the isolated strikes had to be substituted by a general strike. By the very nature of the attack, the general strike as affecting certain groups of mills had to be anticipatory. Therefore a slogan had to be given in advance. Though the slogan was given it could do nothing as is shown before until a large section of the workers by their own experience found themselves victims of wage cuts and rationalisation.

113. *Did we prolong the strike—negotiations and classes—how the bourgeoisie uses the different general strikes—strikes becoming longer and fought harder since 1917—compromise with the B. T. L. Union and formation of the Joint Strike Committee.*

I will now take up the question did we prolong the strike, did we try that the strike should not be negotiated and called off so that discontent should spread more, the stronghold of textile capitalism be dislocated and the workers grow revolutionary, without caring whether their immediate demands were satisfied or not, whether they starved or not ?

As soon as a big strike takes place, the petty bourgeois humanitarians get busy and begin a hypocritical wailing about the suffering and starvation of the poor workers and their innocent children. So long as the workers are producing wealth for the bourgeoisie these humanitarian gangs never feel for the poor workers and their innocent children who may be dying slowly by hunger on starvation wages. But they come out of their holes when the strike is over. Because then they feel not that the workers are starving but that the fountain of their masters' wealth, their wealth, has stopped flowing. Then another set of the so-called third party men get busy trying to negotiate between the owners and the strikers. They call themselves neutrals but are not really so, because there are no neutrals in the class struggle. These third party men, by their ideology if not their actual economic interests, are affiliated with the bourgeoisie. Their efforts at negotiations are efforts to convince the workers about the necessity of a wage cut, and shrewd business agents as they are, they do not fail to bring forward the argument of patriotism, the necessity of helping the Indian industry, by which is really meant the Indian bourgeoisie as against the foreign competition, that is the foreign bourgeoisie. These humanitarians are the most dangerous enemies of the working-class, more than the capitalists themselves. The latter stand naked as class enemies before the workers and therefore cannot by themselves create hesitation or corruption in the working-class so easily. But these humanitarians and neutrals come as friends of the working-class and as in India even today the majority of the working-class leaders are invariably from the middle class, they easily get access to the matters under dispute. They are too easily accepted as negotiators. But where the Trade Unions are strong, the leadership firm and the class consciousness of the workers quite alive and clear, no harm comes from these negotiators. In fact they are then skilfully used for the smaller matters of the strike, without in any way being allowed to work for the interest of the bourgeoisie.

The slogan of the Bombay bourgeoisie in the 1925 strike was the abolition of the Excise Duty. The slogan in 1928 was the change of the exchange ratio. The Indian bourgeoisie in its constitutional fight had lost the battle of the exchange ratio in the Legislative Assembly. While the question was being fought most constitutionally, the Hon'ble Finance Member Sir Basil Blackett, accused the Indian bourgeoisie of trying to depreciate the workers' wage by advocating a low exchange ratio of 16d. He said, "The inevitable result of a reduction of the exchange to 16d. would be a series of strikes all over the country.....". (Page 1750 Legislative Assembly

Proceedings, dated 7/3/1927). Sir Basil adopted the attitude of a patron of the working-class and for *their* interest wanted an 18d. ratio. But the Indian bourgeoisie, the employers of the working class also said the same thing. "If we still decide upon 18d. we shall be giving a mandate to the parties concerned to reduce wages and salaries..... If there is any effort on the part of the parties concerned to oppose the reduction of wages and salaries which must follow the 18d. rate it will mean serious struggles between capital and labour. And in this connection we may point out the fate of the highly organised and politically supported labour in England in the coal industry", said Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas in reply to Government (Legislative Assembly Proceedings dated 7/3/1927 page 1803). And Sir Victor Sassoon at that time agreed with him. (Ibid page 1785). The Government carried its point and therefore the Indian bourgeoisie had to show that the natural result of Government policy would be as predicted by it, that is a series of strikes in every industry. Both the Imperialists and the bourgeoisie used the interest of the working class as an argument to support their own class interests which amongst themselves were contradictory. But when the strikes did occur both the Imperialists and the bourgeoisie united in crushing them. Because Imperialism harmed the Indian bourgeois interest, the Indian bourgeoisie did not go to the working-class and peasantry, to organise them politically against Imperialism as a bourgeoisie which is really revolutionary would have done.

So when the textile strike began the bourgeoisie and its papers first opened a campaign against the 18d ratio. This lasted throughout the January and February strikes. But the problem of the ratio was not so easy as the problem of the Excise Duty. The problem of the ratio affected the whole of the Imperialist economy. The problem of the Excise Duty was a small one, limited to a fraction of the textile industry. A general strike in Bombay and determined agitation helped by some other factors could solve the latter, but such forces were quite powerless against the ratio question. The Indian bourgeoisie knew this very well and therefore it concentrated more on crushing the strike than on the new ratio. Moreover the bourgeoisie also knew that even if the ratio were to be changed, the strikes would not be prevented for the simple fact that world economy was approaching another intense crisis which later on broke out in October 1929. The solution of the ratio question is not and was not a panacea for the deadlock in Indian capitalism.

It is a fact that the 1928 strike was the longest of all the textile strikes. But the reason for it is not to be sought in the leadership of the strike. The Prosecution says that it is the boast of the accused that they prolonged the strike. Well, if such a boast is there it is not of our personal powers or plans but it is a boast of the proletarian heroism and sacrifice that stood for six months the attacks of Government and the Indian bourgeoisie. Such a fight was not unexpected. If you examine by means of a graph the periods of duration of the strike since 1917 you will find that the strikes were all along becoming longer and being fought harder. In times of super-profits the bourgeoisie being unwilling to lose profits by stoppage of work yields to the workers' demands without much resistance. Therefore the strikes in the boom period of 1917-1921 were over in a few weeks. But those after 1921, began to be resisted stubbornly by the mill-owners and the period of duration began to rise steadily until it became longest in 1928. In that year the world trade depression had become more acute and was rising, while the workers in Bombay since the 1925 strike had got some respite due to the fall in the prices of agricultural commodities and the consequent level of real wages going just above the previous starvation level which increased their capacity of resistance. To these factors was added the determined resistance of the big financial house of Sassoons on the side of the bourgeoisie and the determined resistance of the new leadership on the side of the workers. All these factors combined to make the struggle a prolonged one. But the main factor was the unwillingness of the mill-owners to negotiate the settlement with the workers and their leaders.

I shall now state what we did to negotiate the settlement and not to prolong it a day more than was necessary in the circumstances and how we explored all avenues of settlement except the criminal one of surrendering willingly the workers' cause.

It has been already stated that the general strike action began on the 16th April 1928. The workers on strike organised processions and meetings. On 18th a Strike Committee was formed. On the next day the Bombay Textile Labour Union which had kept aloof from the strike appointed its own Strike Committee and refused to accept our Committee. But the Strike Committee of the B. T. L. Union was merely a watching committee. The membership of the B. T. L. U. mainly came from the Mohammedan weavers in the Madanpura area, the Kurla Mills and a few workers from other mills. The skilled weavers of the B. T. L. U. had not been yet hit by wage cuts and so there was no driving force

for the strike from that section. The B. T. L. U. was the last union in the world to preach militant solidarity to the workers and ask them to strike. It did not fight strikes but negotiated them with "goodwill," which invariably turned out to be good for the bourgeoisie and ill for the workers. Still the B. T. L. U. was financially strong, with a reserve of more than Rs 10000/-, and was in a position to command some more funds if necessary from the welfare organisations with which it had connections. The G.K.M. and the militant Strike Committee of the strikers had not more than Rs 100/- and their organisers could scarcely pay their conveyance for organisation of the workers.

From 16th onwards the mills began to stop one by one. On 23rd April the Police opened fire on a mass of the workers in the Sewri area. One of the workers by name Parasram Jadhav died of gunshot wounds on the spot. Contrary to the expectations of the police the firing did not break the strike but strengthened it. It aroused the solidarity of the workers. It made them indignant. The firing showed them that the police, the Government and the mill-owners who had sought the help of the police were one and that the workers must stand as one against them. The conservative anti-strike B. T. L. U. even was overruled by the strike feeling and all the mills closed down by 26th April 1928 (P. W. 245).

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During this time serious negotiations were going on between the B.T.L. Union and us on the question of forming a Joint Strike Committee and presenting a united front to the mill-owners. B. T. L. Union was opposed to calling a general strike, but once the strike was an accomplished fact and even its own sections were involved in it, its main grounds for keeping aloof from us vanished. Though we possessed the leadership of the strikers, we had no finances to guide and keep such a huge organisation going. We also wanted unity with the 30,000 workers who were more or less under the influence of the B. T. L. Union. Unity at that time with those confirmed Genevites and class collaborators would have strengthened the strike. Unity with them at that time meant a unity of one section of workers with another section and not merely a unity between leaders. A large section of workers by their own experience had yet to be convinced that our policy was the only right policy. Unity with the B.T.L. Union at that time gave us the opportunity to demonstrate the correctness of our policy and secure large contacts and financial strength, without in any way making us lose our direction of affairs and the right to criticise if

necessary our allies. Therefore steps were taken to form a Joint Strike Committee which ultimately was done on 2nd May. The Joint Strike Committee consisted of 30 members, 15 from the B.T.L. Union, Mr. Joshi's section, and 15 from our section which had advocated the militant policy and was in the thick of the fight. It appointed two Joint-Secretaries and two Joint-Treasurers and in order to avoid a possible cause of friction it never appointed a permanent President of the Joint Strike Committee as such. Those of the members of that Joint Strike Committee who are now prisoners in this case are all from that section which advocated and fought for the general strike till the workers' demands were granted. (An attempt has been made by some accused who now find it profitable to differ from us to divide these members in a peculiar manner between three unions. I shall deal with it separately).

114. P. W. Hassan Ali's mistakes—the Governor's visit, 27th April—the mill-owners' communiques in May,—our reply—Sir Cowasji Jehangir's visit—mill-owners refuse negotiations, 15th May.

The first thing that the Joint Strike Committee did was to send to the Mill-owners' Association a formal draft of the demands of the strikers which it did on 3rd May 1928 (P. W. 234, Exh: D3). It has already been shown that these demands were known to the mill-owners before the general strike informally because all of them at one time or another had been issues in the several individual strikes that took place prior to the general strike. I have already dealt with this aspect.

P. W. 245 Sh. Hassan Ali was in charge of the Labour Branch of the C. I. D. in Bombay from 1st March to 30th June 1928. This witness gave his evidence from his notes which he says had been made at the time he was on duty from day to day. But mostly his reports were based on newspaper reports and cuttings. He has made mistakes about certain dates, which serve to show the unreliability of these records. The B. T. L. Strike Committee was not formed on 18th April as he says but on 19th as the Fawcett Committee has noted in its report. (Page 3).

The Joint Strike Committee was not formed on 27th or 28th April but on 2nd May (Ibid page 3).

On 27th April the Governor of Bombay, Sir Leslie Wilson, showed tremendous "self-sacrifice and interest in the welfare of his subjects" by coming to Bombay from his summer resort at

Mahabaleshwar. His coming to Bombay was nothing but one of those meaningless gestures of high Government officials, which are intended to make the people believe in their "personal goodness", while in actuality they are intended to bring about no results in favour of the people. His Excellency came to find out avenues of settlement. He interviewed the mill-owners at the Government Secretariat, the leaders of the Bombay Textile Labour Union and insignificant section of the G. K. M. which had split off under the leadership of Mr. Mayekar from the major body. On the day His Excellency arrived, our section sent a letter to him saying that no settlement arrived at without us would be acceptable to the strikers, as the largest section of them did not recognise the other unions. This was, as can be seen from the dates, done before the Joint Strike Committee Compromise was arrived at. His Excellency came and went and the strike continued as before. Though the Joint Strike Committee sent a letter of demands to the mill-owners and expressed willingness to negotiate on the basis of the draft, the mill-owners showed no desire to open negotiations. They began by opening a campaign of vilification and threats and spoke the language of war lords. They did not send any reply to the Joint Strike Committee and refused to recognise it. In reply to its letter of demands they sent directly to the Press a communique embodying their answers to the workers strike. They published their communiqes in the press on May 3rd, 10th, 12th and 17th. The Joint Strike Committee replied to these statements in the press on May 11th and 21st. All these except the owners' statement of 3rd May were reprinted in a leaflet by the Committee (it is D 401). In the first place they categorically refused to accept any of the essential demands of the workers on the question of wage-cut, rationalisation, increased hours of work, fines, retrenchment, forfeiture of wages, ill-treatment and oppression of workers and victimisation. In the second place they used the most insolent language towards the workers and their leaders. We have been blamed for using the language of "insolence" and hatred towards capitalists. It is perfectly justified. Those who abuse the workers every minute in the factory or the field cannot expect to be praised and addressed in a polite manner. In the third place the mill-owners showed an uncompromising determination to fight to the finish with their backs to the wall, as one of them put it. In their statement of May 10th they said, "What the Committee of the Association desire to make quite plain is that they are determined to carry out whatever reforms they believe to be absolutely necessary for the existence of the textile industry in Bombay irrespective of strikes" (D 401, page 9). On May 17th, they announced that they considered all the 150,000

workers of the industry as dismissed from work and that they would be re-engaged only if they unequivocally agreed to the terms formulated by the mill-owners. These terms were increased hours of work without increased pay, new standard rates of wages, retrenchment in all departments to the extent of 10 per cent and new system of disciplinary rules, fines etc. These were considered absolutely essential for the existence of the textile industry in Bombay and on 18th May 1928 the mill-owners were determined to carry them out. But this determination was broken on the rocks of proletarian determination against which it clashed. It is now December 1931 and yet the industry exists without these absolute essentials which the workers are not going to allow in spite of determined onslaughts.

While referring in the press to the Joint Strike Committee's letter of demands, the mill-owners described the Committee as "certain people" who are outsiders to the industry but have entered Labour ranks to create trouble. (D 401, page 22). Now the composition of the Joint Strike Committee is on record. It represented all the three Textile Unions in the industry. Among those "outsiders" sat Mr. N. M. Joshi, the member of the Royal Commission on Labour; there were members of Legislative Councils and Solicitors like Messrs. Asavale and Ginwalla. Now from our point of view it is not a very happy thing for the workers to have Solicitors and M. L. C.s dominating their class action. But these gentlemen were on the Committee on behalf of the B. T. L. Union and I am pointing out their names in order to show that the mill-owners were opposed to negotiating not only with the Communists and Left Trade Unionists but with "respectable genuine Trade Unionists" also. They bluffed the Governor and the public by saying that they would negotiate only with registered trade unions and as two of the unions in the Joint Strike Committee were not registered they could not negotiate with it. They were out to enhance the prestige of the Trade Union Law by compelling us to register. But that this was a bluff can be seen from the fact that though the B. T. L. Union of Mr. N. M. Joshi was registered the mill-owners had not recognised it and resented its "interference" in any dispute. The mill-owners were out to fight, not only Communists, but all Trade Unionists; they were out to enforce wage-cuts and rationalisation, and the result was prolongation of the dispute, as they hoped to win by starving out the workers.

On 15th May the General Member of the Government of Bombay, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, (Junior), came to Bombay to bring about a settlement. He interviewed the mill-owners and the Joint

Strike Committee. The fact that there were Communists on the Strike Committee and that it was composed of unregistered trade unions did not prevent the Government's representative from negotiating for a settlement with us. But the morals of these owners of a national and *Swadeshi* industry were opposed to Communists more than those of the Imperialist Government. The Agent of the G. I. P. Railway, a Government concern had no scruples in talking to Bradley as a representative of the railwaymen. But the Swadeshi mill-owners refused to speak with us, in spite of the fact that many of us had fought in the ranks of the Congress in the days of 1920-22. The General Member's visit proved fruitless, "as the mill-owners could not agree to enter into any discussions with the Communist members of the Committee and the Strike Committee were equally adamant in adhering to the view that if a Round Table Conference were to be held at all, the Committee as a whole would nominate the members to it, and that they would not be dictated to in the matter by the owners. (Fawcett Report, page 7). The All-India Trade Union Congress Bulletin of which Messrs. N.M. Joshi, F. J. Ginwalla and R. R. Bakhale (editor) formed the Managing Committee and with which the Communists had no connection, wrote in its May number, "It has been plain from the tactic adopted by the mill-owners that they want the strike to be prolonged so that the workers can be starved into unconditional surrender". "The uncompromising and threatening attitude on the part of the mill-owners naturally led to a corresponding determination on the parts of the workers to continue the fight to a finish." (Exh. D 390, page 170).

115. *Mill-owner's plan of rationalisation in January—the Governor's speech and Mr. Joshi's reply—picketing troubles—the conflict of two duties of an Honorary Magistrate and strike leader.*

It has been already stated that the mill-owners wanted the workers to come back according to the owners' new scheme of standardisation and retrenchment. It has also been stated on the mill-owners' behalf that before the general strike they had no intention of and they did not resort to cutting the wages of workers or increasing their hours of work. But when the strike was forced on them, the mill-owners then formulated their terms. If there had been no strike they would not have on their own account, disturbed the peace of the industry. But this contention has been proved to be false from the minute books of the Association which

were placed before the Fawcett Inquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay.

Therein it was found that the Association had appointed a Committee on standardisation on 6th January 1928. Thus the standard scheme, and the wage cuts and retrenchment embodied in it which were the cause of the general strike and its subsequent prolongation were contemplated in a definite outline in January, three months before the strike. The first report of this Sub-Committee came before the mill-owners on 3rd May and criticisms were invited from the mills on 24th May 1928. Yet the mill-owners wanted the workers' consent to an almost non-existent scheme on 10th May. The spinning scheme was discussed and many mill-owners opposed it on 5th June and yet they wanted the workers to agree to it on 10th May. The scheme was again altered on 7th June 1928 and adopted on 9th. The whole scheme including weaving was adopted by the Association on 23rd June. The proceedings also reveal that the mill-owners had decided to embody in the scheme a wage cut of at least $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the basis being that the average wage of the weaver shall not be more than Rs 42/-, whereas according to the Labour Office figures of Government it was Rs 48/- in 1926. But when the workers denounced the scheme as one of wage cuts pure and simple, under the guise of standardising wages from mill to mill the mill-owners denied that it contained a wage cut, until the admission was forced by facts and figures later on. Thus the position till the end of May was that the mill-owners themselves were not ready with any satisfactory reply to the workers' demands. Their scheme of wages on which they wanted the workers to resume work did not get ready till the end of June and even when ready they did not know what the exact effects of it would be. They also refused to negotiate with the Joint Strike Committee though the General Member of the Government of Bombay had seen nothing wrong in negotiating with us.

It was the mill-owners thus who wanted the strike to prolong. It was not we who prolonged it.

In spite of this the Governor of Bombay from his privileged position delivered a speech at the Mahabuleshwar Club in which he attacked the militant leaders of the workers. It has been a hobby with the Governors and Governor-General to attack us in their dinner speeches and Lord Irwin went so far as to do it even when we were arrested and awaiting our trial. Sir Leslie Wilson in his speech said, "I cannot help saying that the responsibility for the mill strike and sufferings of the mill-hands rests entirely on the

shoulders of those who made the workers leave their work whether they wished it or not-without giving the mill-owners an opportunity of even considering what the grievances of the men were." His Excellency also advised the workers very generously to follow rather the lead of men like Messrs. N.M. Joshi and Ginwalla (D 518, Times of India). But unfortunately for his Excellency the very men on whom he asked the workers to rely betrayed him. Mr. N.M. Joshi wrote to the press contradicting the above statement of Sir Leslie Wilson and regretted that his Excellency should have made such a statement. (Times of India, 26/5/28, D 518). Referring to this chapter in the history of negotiations the Government of India have accepted in toto the version as given by the mill-owners. In their Annual Report to Parliament, India 1928-29, the Government of India have made a false statement with regard to the Strike Committee and its attitude towards negotiations. They say "But during the first two weeks in May, though the mill-owners were willing to open negotiations with the officials of the Bombay Textile Labour Union (a registered body) they refused to have anything to do with the Joint Strike Committee as it was then constituted. The Joint Strike Committee on the other hand refused to allow the officials of the B.T.L. Union to carry on negotiations over their head." (page 10). It is absolutely false to say that the mill-owners were willing to negotiate even with the B.T.L. Union though it was registered. It is best to quote the President of that Union himself on this matter. Mr. N.M. Joshi says in a signed statement to the press "If the intention of the Bombay Mill-owners' Association was to say that they would deal with the B.T.L. Union, they should have said that clearly instead of bringing in the consideration of registration. If their original object was to negotiate with the B.T.L. Union it has not only been frustrated but they have put that Union on the same level with a union which may have only a dozen members. Even His Excellency the Governor has been led into the same error on account of incompetent advice." (Bombay Chronicle 7/6/28, Ex. D 518). As regards the second statement in the above quoted Government Report the question of not allowing the B.T.L. Union to negotiate separately did not arise at all because after the union of all the three organisations into the Joint Strike Committee, the mill-owners never approached the B.T.L. or any other union singly for negotiations. The compiler of this report has been so accurate that while the August Conference was held under the presidentship of Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, he names Sir Cowasji Jehangir, who at that time was not a member of the Bombay Government at all.

The nationalist press and the Anglo-Indian newspapers which ordinarily fly at each other's throats on bourgeois patriotic issues joined hands against the workers in the campaign of vilification. There was not a single paper in Bombay that did not blame us and call upon the workers not to be "misled" by us. Every Congress and non-Congress paper mourned for the loss to the mill-owners and asked the starving workers to save the "national" industry. They spread false reports of our speeches and stories about flizng out of the strike while the workers in fact were becoming more and more determined.

The Bombay bourgeoisie thus enlisted the services of the Governor, the General Member and the press to further its cause and break the strike. Having set up such influential propaganda machinery against us, they proceeded to use force and in this unusual they sought the aid of the police batons of Imperialism. The Commissioner of Police was requested to supply a special police force for the "protection of the mills." At every mill-gate a party of 5 to 10 policemen was stationed so that the blacklegs might muster courage to go in. When the workers posted their pickets, they were stopped from picketing though there was no law or ordinance prohibiting picketing at the time. A crisis arose on this question and we decided to vindicate our right of picketing by violating the orders of police officers not to picket (5-5-28). But before taking that step the Joint Strike Committee decided on 7th May 1928 to send Messrs. N. M. Joshi and Asavale, curiously enough both of them Justices of Peace in the city of Bombay to the Commissioner of Police to talk over the matter. The Commissioner was convinced that prohibition of picketing was illegal and unwise and allowed it. Thus no necessity arose to test the right by disobeying the police orders. But after having allowed the pickets the police started trouble by harassing and arresting them for alleged disorderly behaviour, trespass, annoyance, and obstruction of traffic and such other sections of the law. By this method our best workers and organisers were sent to jail or fined one by one. One such arrest created a very funny but very significant situation for a bourgeois member of the Strike Committee from the B.T.L. Union, Mr. Asavale, who was a member of the Legislative Council and a rich contractor was a member of the Strike Committee also on behalf of the B.T.L. Union. But he was also an Honorary Magistrate of Imperialism commissioned to administer His Majesty's law in spare time for no wages. It was a hard task for this man to reconcile his duty to His Majesty's law with his duty towards the workers, when one morning a strike picket was brought before him.

to be tried for disorderly behaviour. The picket straightway began to fraternise with the Magistrate, smiled with him familiarly and asked him to release him. The simple defence of the picket was that the Honorary Magistrate should recollect his experience as a strike leader, how the workers are harassed and then judge why he was being brought there by the police. The poor strike leader and Magistrate was in a fix. Ultimately his sense of loyalty and fear of being criticised as being partial to the strikers led him to decide against the picket whom he fined Re 1/- (Ex. D 518 Times of India 26. 5. 28). It is said that next day, he himself paid that rupee to the picket. The contradictions of the servant of Imperialist law and a humanitarian Trade Unionist lead to such results. He could pay Re 1/- because it was only one man but had there been such thousand cases, the result would have been that the strike leader would have been overpowered by his duties as a Magistrate and he would have become the open saboteur of the strike. The workers understood this and therefore rightly demanded from their leaders unequivocal devotion to their class interest and complete severance of connections with the bourgeoisie and the Imperialists.

The police, the press and all other forces of the Imperialist State and the national bourgeoisie were hurled against the workers in their purely economic fight against wage-outs and loss of employment. Yet the Imperialists and the bourgeoisie tell the workers not "to dabble" with the question of political power which fights them on all fronts at all times. We are asked not to mix economic with political questions. That is throwing dust in the eyes of the workers. Every big economic struggle is ultimately a political struggle and the workers even for a few rights and economic gains are compelled to fight political battles along with the every-day economic struggle.

116) The Russian textile workers' help—the nationalist attack on this help—Municipal Corporation refuses relief—the exodus of 80,000 workers:

We had also to meet another attack, this time from the petty bourgeois nationalist public and some pseudo Trade Unionists. It was on the question of the money for relief received from the Russian Textile Trade Unions. According to the Prosecution evidence, on 28th April 1928 dollars 7690 were sent by the Deutsche Bank Berlin acting on behalf of M. Vernoff to the Bombay Branch of the National City Bank of New York to be paid to Mr. S. H. Jhabwala, Vice President, Bombay Textile Labour

Union. (Exh. P 1542, P.W. 231). This telegram was received by the Bombay Branch on 30th April. In the usual course the bank makes an enquiry about the person and his credentials to receive the money. The prosecution witness stated that he did not know who made the enquiry in this case. However on the same date the City Bank wired back that as Mr Jhabwala was not a Vice President of the B. T. L Union fresh instructions were required. (Exh. 1543). It is to be noted that the Bank did not say that they could not trace Mr. Jhabwala. It did not consult Mr. Jhabwala and there is reason to believe that it did not consult the B. T. L. Union, because Mr. Jhabwala was a Vice President of the B.T.L. Union when this telegram was received. Then why was such an obviously false telegram sent? The explanation is that probably the the Government was afraid to give the money in the hands of a person who at that time was working on the lines a militant Left Wing Trade Unionist and was still a member of the W. P. P. Allowing such a large sum to go to the strikers through a W. P. P. man meant helping the W. P. P., the Communists and trade Union radicals to consolidate their influence. The Joint Strike Committee with its " safety values " of moderates had not yet come into existence. The police and Government were yet undecided on their attitude. They wanted to take a chance with Vernoff and the Russian Trade Unions, whom they expected to withdraw the remittance after hearing that Mr. Jhabwala was not the Vice President of the B.T.L. Union. But Vernoff and the Russian Trade Unions valued the interest of the workers more than the name. They wanted to give relief to the workers no matter through whom it reached, if in the first instance it could not reach through a person who was nearer to the workers. On 7th May the Bank was instructed to pay the sum to Mr. N. M. Joshi, President of the B. T. L. Union and Government was confronted with the problem of the Soviet Trade Unions sending money to a "yellow man" for the relief of the workers. Meanwhile the Joint Strike Committee had come into existence. The two wings had united and Government played the tactic of making the Moderate group the financial arbiter of the strike by handing over the money on condition that it shall not be given into the hands of the W.P.P. men. On 9th May 1928 Mr. N. M. Joshi received Rs. 20,916-12-9 (P 1546) and it was given by instalments to the Joint Strike Committee for purchasing corn for relief of the workers. Every pie of the sum was spent on relief.

The next day the whole nationalist and Imperialist press splashed full-page headlines like "Red Money for Bombay Strike"

and "Bolshevik gold for Bombay Strikers". The bourgeoisie abused the Government for having allowed the money to pass on and the patriots fell foul of Mr. Joshi. Mrs. Besant from Madras denounced him and asked the excellent question "will the bond of sympathy thus established in a period of privation be allowed to weaken?" The answer to this will be given by the heroic working-class of India when the Imperialists of the world will raise their armed hand against the workers' republic. Mr. C. F. Andrews gave an interview in Colombo in which he said that "he had no objection to receiving such money in times of distress, but to receive money from the Third International for strike purposes was quite a different proposition. The Third International openly advocated violence and class war and was opposed to constitutional Trade Unionism which it tried to wreck. Therefore he could not conscientiously welcome money from that quarter." (Colombo 30/5/28 Ex. D 518). This most truthful and Christian gentleman, the follower and prosperous biographer of another most truthful and Christlike gentleman, Mahatma Gandhi, started by telling the lie that the money was sent by the Third International. Secondly this man, who had dabbled with the most stubbornly fought Kharagpur Strike in 1927 and knew that that strike had also received help from the Soviet Trade Unions now finds that times of distress and times of strike are not the same things, as if the workers on strike are less starved than those in famine! He made this distinction probably because he remembered that the Gujrat Flood Relief Committee had taken the help received from the Communist Party of Great Britain. (P 1381). So to condemn receiving help from Communist sources at all times would have carried its own exposure. Thirdly this gentleman, who abhorred class war, was himself paid by the Imperial Citizenship Association of Bombay, an organisation of the Indian bourgeois interests in Africa, to carry on incessant propaganda on their behalf to support the class war between the white settlers and the Indian merchants and workers in Africa. Paid by the mill-owners of Bombay he was willing to wage the class war of the Indian merchants against the Negroes and the white settlers, there in Africa, but in India he attributed the flaring up of class war to the Third International and abhorred it!

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When Mrs. Besant had spoken against the money, her spiritual son Mr. Shiva Rao from Madras naturally followed suit. Still it must be said to the credit of Mr. N. M. Joshi, that he did not waver in his attitude towards this money. He gave an interview to the press that he was not opposed to receiving and using

money from whatever source it came for the relief of the strikers. He stood for the right of the workers to receive help from the international proletariat and asked the bourgeoisie whether it was not trading with Russia and receiving profits of red roubles. This interview silenced the storm for a time. It showed how the petty bourgeois intellectuals and saints, apparently not belonging to the big bourgeoisie, all the same engaged in its class service and sabotaged the struggle of the workers and even aided the Imperialist Government in cutting off the help coming to them from the international working class.

Another disillusionment came from the Bombay Municipal Corporation. This body is dominated by the mill-owners, the merchants and the petty bourgeois voters paying rent of Rs. 10 and over. A resolution was brought before them that Rs. 100,000 be sanctioned for opening some relief work for the strikers. The resolution was lost. The workers were a bit surprised. In 1925 this Corporation had sanctioned a like sum, but in 1928 this was refused. Because in 1925 the Bombay bourgeoisie was using the strike to get the excise duty removed and had strong hopes of success; in 1928 it had no such hopes, and wanted the strike to be smashed outright. In 1925 the workers were not led in a manner that acted on clear class lines. At that time there was not much harm in giving relief. The workers who had come to look upon the Corporation as a body not entirely opposed to them as a class, speedily revised their viewpoint. They knew from this single act that the Corporation belonged to none but the bourgeoisie.

Thus by their own experience the workers saw that those middle-class layers who posed as pro-Labour and repudiated all suggestions that they too were a part of the bourgeoisie, were really chips from the same bourgeois block and in times of an acute class-struggle never forgot their parentage. The Imperialist State, the big bourgeoisie, the Police, the Municipal Corporation, the nationalist and Imperialist press and petty bourgeois saints and breeders of World Teachers, all of them ranged themselves against the Bombay workers for the simple reason that they had refused to produce surplus value for the bourgeoisie. They saw the Marxian truth, "the emancipation of the working class shall be its own task."

Accordingly the workers stiffened their attitude. They received their outstanding wages and such of them as had homes or relations in the country left Bombay before the end of May. The Joint Strike Committee obtained concessions from the Cooperative Steam Navigation Company to the extent of 25 per cent of the fares

to the coast-line places. But no concession could be obtained from the railways. It was estimated that about 80,000 workers had left Bombay. Others were either completely proletarianised or had no means to go to their homes, which were far out on the railway lines.

117. Making way for negotiations—registration of the Girni Kamgar Union.

However, we did not neglect to take steps to make the way of compromise easier. The mill-owners were not willing to negotiate with unregistered trade unions. They had given out this as an excuse for not negotiating with us. Because they expected that as some of us were Communists we would refuse to do anything that the mill-owners would want us to do and refuse to get our union registered under the law of the Government. But the mill-owners had misjudged in this respect. We were quite willing to have our union registered if that alone stood in the way of settlement. We were perfectly sure that the registration of our union would not remove the difficulties at all. So when this excuse was very much relied upon as the real difficulty in the way, during our talks with the General Member of the Government of Bombay, we immediately proceeded to get the Girni Kamgar Mahamandal registered. The name of the G. K. M. since the split between the Secretary and the President was used, by both the factions. When we went to the Registrar's office to get it registered we found that the former Secretary had already registered the name for his faction (24th May) and the Registrar could not reregister it in our name. (P.W. 245). This was a difficulty of first rate importance and caused a serious crisis amongst the group of those organisers who were so long working under the banner of the Mahamandal. They had cherished the Mahamandal since 1923. It had grown in the General Strike of 1924. It had fought through the 1925 strike and now they were asked to surrender and bury that name in the midst of the third General Strike, simply because some dirty law had registered that name for a handful of persons opposed to the general strike while the real flower of the G. K. M. was in the full swing of the strike. A mere trick of law and of the Registrar, they said, was not going to deprive them of those traditions and the credit of the work of the last five years. If they were out to fight the powerful bourgeoisie they could as well neglect this trick of the law and go without it and stick to the Mahamandal as their own and nobody else's. It was the simple logic of the worker, who was not willing to surrender the name and register under another, simply to please the mill-owners and open a way for negotiations. For two days the

fight went on. We suggested that a new union be formed and registered. If we were the real workers of the Mahamandal it mattered very little who carried away the name, so long as the true traditions and the workers remained with us. We would remain the same powerful body if we worked vigorously and would create the same respect, credit and leadership for the new union. When ultimately the leading workers were won over to the idea of taking up a new name another difficulty arose over the question of admission of "non-workers" in the union. The Mahamandal had special provision in its constitution that no non-worker shall be admitted into the union and the leading workers were brought up in that idea. The reason why the Mahamandal had made such a rule is shown in a handbill issued by it. (P. 1462). It was a reaction to the tricks practised upon the workers by the petty bourgeois persons that had entered trade unionism to make a career. It was a repetition in a sense of the famous reaction of the French proletariat to the betrayal practised upon it by the Second International Socialist leadership, when Clemenceau took ministership under the bourgeois Government. The French proletariat as a result of that betrayal began to hate politics and the Communists had to fight out this wrong tendency. Similar was the case with the Mandal. They distrusted all petty bourgeois trade unionists and distrusted us also for a time, even though they had made us their advisers. Now when they had been persuaded to form a new union they wanted to repeat the example of the Mandal and exclude us from it. We had to fight this tendency also, because it is historically necessary for the working class to use the services of the revolutionary petty bourgeois who make common cause with the proletariat and work for the working class on the basis of the programme of proletarian class power. Such a petty bourgeois intellectual unites in him all the advantages of the bourgeoisie, of which the working class is deprived, with the revolutionary class theory of the proletariat. And as such the distrust entertained by the workers against the petty bourgeoisie as a class, though quite healthy and necessary in its class-struggle, must not be applied to each and every individual of that class without any reference to the character and ideology of the individual concerned. That would hamper the development of the party of the proletariat. Apart from these general considerations the immediate consideration was that unless we were officially in the new union we would not be in a position to control the strike and the negotiations as we would have no effective voice in the official deliberations of the union. The position was explained to the workers, and the opposition which was limited only to a small group of the

G. K. M. Managing Committee was overcome mainly because they knew that if they rejected us the rank and file stood with us to whom we could appeal over their heads. The Bombay Girni Kamgar Union was formed in a workers' meeting at Nagu Sayaji Wadi on 22nd May 1928 and was registered the next day with a membership of 174 and a cash balance of Rs. 43-8-0. (Exh: P. 956 Minute Book of the G. K. U.). About the same time Mr. Jhabwala got the Mill Workers' Union registered, while the B. T. L. Union was already a registered body. Thus the Joint Strike Committee now consisted of three registered unions. The fourth one, the Mahamandal, was opposed to the general strike and had split away from the main body of the workers and was not therefore admitted to the Joint Strike Committee. The new G. K. U. office-bearers were—President—A. A. Alwe, Vice Presidents—Bradley, Nimbkar, Jhabwala and Tamhanekar, General Secretary—myself (S. A. Dange), Joint Secretaries—Satam, Tawde and K. N. Joglekar, Joint-Treasurers—B. T. Alwe and S. V. Ghate. Later on Jhabwala resigned and G. R. Kasle was elected in his place (25-10-28) and Mirajkar was elected Joint Secretary vice Satam resigned (25-10-28) (Exh: P. 958). The G. K. M. has contributed 9 of its 19 office-bearers to this case.

118. Pandit Malaviya's visit and our "sins"—Khilafat Committee's communal help rejected—The Police arrest me and Nimbkar—mill-owners open talks in June.

About 25th of May, I was surprised one day to receive a verbal call from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to see him in connection with the strike. I think he also called one or two other members of the Strike Committee. About this visit one incident happened which illustrates our ideas of forming alliances in the matter of the class-struggle. When I was informed of Pandit's desire I asked if besides my self and other members, Mr. Joshi also was informed, because it was generally understood in the Strike Committee that if any negotiations were to be carried on, representatives of both the wings of the Committee should be present. I was told that Pandit Malaviya would not like to have Mr. Joshi in the Conference chiefly for the reason that he was a Moderate in politics. (think of Pandit Malaviya saying that!) and did not cooperate with the Swarajists and other nationalists in the Assembly. This had reference to the voting on the 18 pence controversy and the protectionist measures brought before the Assembly. I told the intermediary that no negotiations or any important step in that behalf could be taken without the presence of the representative of the B. T. L. Union. Moreover, if in bourgeois

politics Mr. Joshi did not side with the bourgeois Swarajist Reformists on a particular issue, specifically limited to their class, there was no reason why we should not cooperate with him on the Trade Union front for the time that he was standing by the class struggle that was being waged in the general strike. Of course as Communist we would do away with both bourgeois and Trade Unionist Reformists, but in the given situation and when it came to a choice between the two, we preferred to cooperate with Mr. Joshi, the Trade Union Reformist, who first opposed the general strike but stood by it when once it was on, than with the bourgeois Reformists, with their phrase-mongering about the welfare of the masses. I should however make it clear that I am referring here to Mr. N. M. Joshi of 1928. When Pandit Malaviya was informed of this he sent for Mr. Joshi also. A small conference was held in Mr. Birla's house at Sandhurst Road, Bombay, where Mrs. Naidu and a few Congressmen were also present, and the workers' side was explained to them. We told them how wages were being cut and hours of work increased and rationalisation introduced. We told them that though we were willing to negotiate the strike, the mill-owners were insolently refusing. Panditji promised to place our case before some of the mill-owners and probably did so. To our surprise when he met us next day he started quite a new song. He gave a long lecture on the losses of the industry and asked us how much reduction in wages we were prepared to accept. This was an astonishing proposition. We refused pointblank to talk about any wage-cut at all. Then from wage-cuts the Pandit jumped to the relief of the strikers. He said that it was necessary to arrange some help for them. We of course agreed. Then with a pious expression he told us that it was sinful to accept Russian money for that purpose. He entered into the history of the Russian Revolution, the massacre of the landlords and princes, the confiscation of their property and so on. Now we had no time to teach Panditji the history of the Russian revolution. But we respectfully pointed out to him that on the point of accepting "sinful money" Panditji was a greater sinner than ourselves. The most pious Hindu University was built on the donations of princes, the list of whose hideous sins was famous throughout the world. If the holy Shankracharya for heavy fees could perform the conversion and marriage ceremony of a dethroned prince, who dared a murder for a concubine, if "Mr. A" could spend millions of the peasants' taxes for a scandal in London and if the donations of such men could not be sinful for the Pandit why should the money sent by the revolutionary Proletariat of Russia to feed the starving workers in India be considered sinful? If

they had massacred princes and confiscated their property, it was the will of the whole working class and peasantry, it was the revolutionary action of the whole people against the exploiting handful and as such historically justified for their social progress. The tidal laws of revolutions are more profound and greater than those of the knee-deep pools of Benares. We did not see why we should reject their help on the grounds shown by the Pandit. Such a reply naturally exasperated Pandit Malaviya and we did not hear about him again in the strike.

While on the one side we had to firmly justify the taking of help from one quarter, we were called upon on principle to reject help from another quarter. The Khilafat Committee of Bombay sent to the Joint Strike Committee a letter saying that they had collected Rs. 27/- which they wanted to give for relief of the Mohammedan workers and wanted the Committee to appoint three Muslim mill-strikers to distribute relief in the Muslim quarters. This was an insidious attempt to import Hindu-Muslim distinctions amongst the workers and we had to be particularly careful about it. It was communal reservation in another form and acceptance of such a proviso in the relief distribution would have meant a recognition of communal and such other claims in the Trade Unions. We had no objection to take money from the Khilafat Committee but we objected to its being reserved for Mohammedan workers. It must be remembered that the joint Strike Committee was composed of workers of all castes and religions, of Hindu and Muslim workers. They unanimously rejected the condition and refused the money, if it was to be accompanied by that condition. (20-5-28); and the Khilafat Committee was informed accordingly. The class solidarity of the workers proved greater than the considerations of communal gain.

After the failure of the police to break the strike by firing, just when it had started, their attention was turned towards the pickets. Because the imprisonment, fines and beating of pickets did have not any effect, so they turned their attention to those whom they considered as particularly useful to the workers at that moment. On 31st May two blacklegs were caught by the workers while going into the mills at 4 in the morning. They were taken to the Naga Sayaji Wadi for being put before the meeting as specimens of blacklegs. It appears that in the interval between the meeting and their "arrest" their faces were besmeared with black soot and when I went to the meeting early that day I found them sitting in the meeting. They were brought before me by some workers and I was asked to deal with them. I explained to them

what blacklegging meant and how it was a treachery to thousands of workers. Then they were told to go away. It appears that the police who were all along watching this, followed them and persuaded them to register a complaint of intimidation, assault and wrongful confinement which they did. The next day, in the morning on 1st June 1928, at the Joint Strike Committee meeting in the Damodar Thackersey Hall I was arrested on the basis of that complaint and taken to the police lockup. An identification parade was held but the two complainants did not identify me as the man against whom they had the complaint. I was released on bail and the police proceeded with their investigation. After a few days they arrested two workers on the same charge and put us all three for trial. In the meanwhile the two complainant workers had compounded the cases and withdrawn the complaint. Thus the efforts of the police failed.

The second attempt was made on Nimbkar. A meeting of the members of the B. B. C. I. Ry. Union was being held, in the same D. T. Hall where C. I. D. reporters claimed entry by right, which was resisted by the workers assembled and the reporters were asked to leave the meeting. As they refused to leave, the meeting was dissolved (4-7-28). As a result of this Nimbkar was arrested on 6th July for "an assault on a public servant" and prosecuted. Unfortunately for the police on the evidence given the Magistrate held the offence to be merely technical and he was fined Rs 50/-. Thus again the game of sabotaging the strike failed (3-7-28) (Exh. P. 1744).

In the matter of negotiations, after the registration of our Union and Malaviya's abortive talks, thousands of workers left Bombay and the strike stiffened more. The mill-owners first refused to speak with us on the ground that we had not a registered union. Now when the Unions were registered they objected to the Union's forming a Joint Strike Committee. It was such a foolish attitude that Mr. N. M. Joshi wrote to the press on 7th June 1928 saying "It is my duty to point out to the public in Bombay, how the Bombay Mill-owners' Association once having either foolishly or out of a spirit of mischief, adopted a wrong attitude are obstinately sticking to it, thus prolonging the dispute which is doing good neither to them, nor even to the mill workers." After pointing out how the mill-owners avoided negotiations with the B.T.L. Union which was registered long before the strike and how in order to remove the minor difficulties the Strike Committee had its constituent unions registered, Mr. Joshi asked the mill-owners if

they meant business or humbug. In fact there was no need for the question. The mill-owners were clearly humbugging because they had no basis of negotiations, no standard scheme with them, which they were asking the workers to adopt, even before it was ready and they had no agreement amongst themselves, as it was quite evident from their minutes of meetings in June already referred to.

As all attempts to break the strike by force failed and the standard scheme was got ready in some form, the Association asked the Joint Strike Committee Unions to meet them in a conference. The Committee elected a Negotiations Committee of six which met the Millowners' Committee on 9th June. The strike had started on April 16th and was complete on 26th. Thus the mill-owners had taken more than 12 months to open preliminary talks with the workers' Trade Unions. Can such a state of affairs be found in any ordinary bourgeois democratic country? It is this trait of Capitalism and Imperialism that makes even the trade union struggle of colonial workers most bitter and prolonged. When we met the Mill-owners' Committee, we found them full of anger and insolence. They were under the impression of meeting those types of men they had seen in the previous general strikes, who believed more in the parliamentary language, its meaningless polish and a policy of not "exasperating" the mill-owners. Moreover the mill-owners had still hopes of breaking the strike by force and starvation. On the first day there was mutual recrimination, charges and counter charges. Then we were given copies of their scheme of standardised wages. The mill-owners gave us to understand that by their scheme of wages in spinning they had made no saving to the industry, on the contrary they had given increases in wages. Their weaving scheme was not ready which they gave later on. With regard to weaving also they emphatically denied that there was any wage cut on the whole. They maintained that a few rates had been brought down because they were high, but as a whole the scheme represented no wage cut. The mill-owners wanted to fool us into believing this because they knew that there was no textile expert amongst us who would analyse the scheme and expose the wages cut hidden in the complicated technique of that scheme. Amongst the mill-owners themselves the scheme was the product of two or three persons the chief amongst them being Mr. F. Stones of the Sassoon group. Though at the beginning we could not find where and how the wage cut was hidden, yet our class outlook and the understanding of the capitalist system had convinced us that the mill-owners would not undertake such a trouble unless they profited by it. With the statistics that were

available to me I undertook to go through the scheme in detail. We also held conferences with the mill-owners in order to get explanations from them of their own figures. The conferences sat on 9th, 11th, 16th, 19th and 26th June 1928. The mill-owners eluded all attempts to show the exact reduction in the number of workers and the percentage of the wage cut. However we made a statement that more than 10,000 persons would be retrenched under the scheme and weavers' wages would be cut to the extent of 20 per cent. I personally was not definite as to the exact extent of the wage cut. But my investigations showed that it might have been any where between 20 and 30 per cent but certainly not less than 20 per cent. The mill-owners first simply laughed over the statement and they could well afford to do that because they had the pride of having on their side textile experts who had been in the industry for thirty years, while my studies, with the help of the intelligent workers in the Union, had not been more than three months old. But I had this advantage which the mill-owners can never have. I could consult the workers in each and every mill about their actual earnings, output, the nature of production, the state of machinery and the composition of materials. This information could not be available to the mill-owners because of their internal competition. Each mill-owner was the competitor of the other though for the purpose of the strike all were united. And none of them would allow the other to consult his costing sheets and layout on the ground of trade secrets. When the mill-owners were given the challenge to prove that our statement was not correct, they gave up the talk of further negotiations or amending the scheme. The negotiations fell through on 26th June.

When the negotiations fell through the mill-owners issued a communiqué to the press explaining the basis of their standard scheme (1.7.28). They said that it embodied "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work." Now the strikers were not concerned with such vague and propagandist definitions of the standard scheme. They were working on a definite contract of rupees, annas and pies for a certain amount of work under certain definite conditions. We showed that the scheme was effecting a cut of 20 per cent in one case, a retrenchment of over 10,000 men in another case. The mill-owners avoided a clear answer to this. They repudiated the idea of a direct wage cut. They said that the scheme as containing a demand of increased efficiency from the workers was the alternative to a wage cut. Such language was alright for the ignorant to consume, who did not know the technique. Increased work for the same wage is

called efficiency by the capitalists. The workers cannot be "efficient" in that sense. Efficiency also means retrenchment and unemployment of the workers. The workers can not accept "efficiency" of this sort however much that body called "public opinion" which today means bourgeois opinion, may like that word.

119. Relief begun—attempt to open mills under armed protection in August—The Hidayatullah Conference and its failure (15. 8. 28)

The Joint strike Committee had decided to start distribution of relief from June 12th i.e. two months after the commencement of the strike. It had on hand Rs. 32,000/- for that purpose. At first there were ten centres which later on were increased to fourteen. By 9th June Rs 15,000/- had been spent, leaving about two weeks' rations on hand. In the Municipal Corporation another attempt was made to procure relief and a resolution to spend Rs. 1000/- daily for relief of the strikers was brought before it. But as expected, it was shelved to a committee for report. This committee reported against the proposal. Their report was discussed in the Corporation on 9th July and all proposals made there in were thrown out. When the proposals were being discussed a meeting of the strikers was held before the Corporation Hall. The Hall is situated in thoroughly bourgeois quarters which had never seen such a mass of workers nor had the workers ever visited these quarters. There are two Bombays, one of the bourgeoisie and one of the proletariat. We brought our Bombay to have a look at the bourgeois Bombay, built on the profits of the toiling workers. The two Bombays faced each other and between them stood the Imperialist armed police for the help of the bourgeoisie, which was abusing the proletariat from its shelter in the Corporation Hall behind the Imperialist arms. It was a vivid proof of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Bombay bourgeoisie.

We had spent on relief very large sums at the beginning which was unwise. It was due to the fact that we ourselves did not expect that the strike would last so long. When the negotiations broke down, we were hard pressed for relief money, because as many as 30,000 men and women were asking for it. We had therefore to cut down the amount, which was brought down to Rs. 4000/- per week. The centres of distribution were reduced to seven from 11th July 1928. (Kranti 8th July). A vigorous campaign to get help from the Unions in other industries had to be undertaken as a result

of which the G. I. P. Railwaymen's Union gave Rs. 1000/-, the Bombay Port Trust Union Rs 200/-, the G.I.P. Railway Employees' General Union Rs. 200/- and the Bombay Tramwaymen's Union Rs. 50/-. (Kranti 12/7/28). Volunteer bands were sent to go round for collections in the city. The police followed the volunteers and when the shopkeepers and others were inclined to give money they were asked not to give it. The petty shopkeepers were on the whole not enthusiastic at all to pay and when they got the warning of the police, they would certainly not dare to pay. We also held meetings in the petty bourgeois areas to collect money for relief and explain the case of the strikers. It was a time when the petty bourgeoisie in Bombay was roaring loudly in support of the Bardoli Peasants' Satyagraha and the bourgeoisie had opened its purse for the bourgeois leaders of the peasants. But for the workers in Bombay when a meeting was held, the expenses of the Hall came to Rs. 14/- while the collections amounted to Rs. 19/-, the grand sum of petty bourgeois support to the Bombay workers.

D/-12. 12. 31.

Thus June and July saw the failure of negotiations through Government and directly with the mill-owners, failure to enlist the sympathy of the petty bourgeois public and failure to secure help from the capitalist Municipality. This development strengthened the class consciousness of the workers' and taught them again that the emancipation of the working class shall be its own task. The workers carried on their fight with determination and refused to accept wage-cuts and retrenchment.

When the mill-owners saw that of their own accord the workers would not assume work, they planned a big offensive in August, with the help of the police, military and the press. The European Chamber of Commerce, the Share-brokers' Association, the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, all called for vigorous action to end the strike. The vigour was not to be shown in granting the workers' demands but in a big offensive to break the strike. Mr. H. Sawyer, the Deputy Chairman of the mill-owners and a prominent member of the European Chamber and Mr Tairsee, at that time presiding over the Annual Meeting of the Indian Chamber spent much vigour in denouncing the Communists and asked the Government to take strong action. The Indian Nationalist Press in Bombay also agreed. Accordingly the mill-owners published a plan to reopen the mills group by group in seven instalments. Police help was requisitioned on a large scale and the first experiment was fixed for 6th August 1928. (List and dates in D 524). The workers were asked to resume work on the

wages as given in the owners' scheme. The Strike Committee in reply to this drew out a scheme of intense picketing, which was no longer left to the volunteers alone. Each member of the Strike Committee was given personal charge of picketing on a number of mills from the group to be opened on a particular day. The picketing time was changed to 4 in the morning when the Police force was ordered to be at the mill gates. 50 mounted police, 50 armed police and 200 ordinary police were the strength put at the disposal of the owners. With the help of such a force the gates of 11 mills were opened at the usual time and the sirens whistled. But to the discomfiture of the bourgeoisie and the Government, not a single worker turned up. The cavalry paraded through the lanes and by-lanes to restore courage into the "intimidated workers," but the workers smiled at them from their chawls. The Police found them quietly cleaning their teeth, while amusedly studying with black powder in hand the crestfallen cavalry passing up and down. Not only did the workers not go to work but even those blacklegs who had kept going into the mills to do sweeping and a bit of cleaning here and there did not turn up. The attempt stiffened the strike rather than break it. After a trial of 3 days the mill-owners decided to give up the show. The Commissioner of Police expressed his unwillingness to continue the supply of the Police force since there appeared to be no necessity for it. Thus ended the big armed offensive, the attempt of the bourgeoisie to give protection to the textile workers against the "intimidation" of Communists and help them come to work. The working class in Bombay proved the bourgeoisie to be a liar, it proved that not by intimidation but by voluntary decision they had refused to accept the axe on their wages, and that the Communist leaders only carried out their will.

On 8th August a resolution was moved in the Bombay Legislative Council asking the Government to appoint a Conciliation Board for the strike. The Government agreed to call a joint conference of the mill-owners and the Joint Strike Committee to ascertain if they would agree to submit the dispute to a Conciliation Board. Accordingly a conference was convened presided over by the Hon'ble General Member, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah. The Hon'ble Sir Ghulam Hussain was not an impartial President, a role which he wanted to assume before the public. He is a gentleman who has made himself quite "famous" by having bought lands in the Sukkur Barrage area of Sind, when he was the General Member of the Bombay Government and therefore in a position to know which lands would fetch better price by reason of Government operations on the Barrage. He was

openly charged in the Bombay Council with having used his position to buy lands cheaply and in an advantageous area. Such was the gentleman we had now to deal with as President for bringing about "conciliation" between the bourgeoisie and the workers. Once on May 15, a mill-owner, in the garb of a Government Minister, had the audacity to impose himself upon the strike as an impartial conciliator. Now we were offered a feudal landholder who owed his ministership to the mill-owners' and landholders' support. That is how the bourgeoisie assumes a thousand roles, and hides the class nature of its operations by getting them carried out through the so-called third party or impartial agents. The conference was held, and a committee was agreed to, which would consider and report upon the standard scheme and the worker's demands. Suddenly the mill-owners sprang a surprise on us in the midst of the conference by asking us as to when we would call off the strike. Now this question was not expected to crop up, as relying on the experience of 1924, when the calling off of the strike was not a condition precedent to resumption of work, we did not expect the mill-owners or the President who supported the proposal to raise it. However, the raising of that question was not so important as the question of wages that would be paid in the period till the Committee reported. The mill-owners wanted to leave that question also to the Committee which would be appointed. This we rejected. Then they proposed to pay to the weavers the standard scheme wages which was the subject matter of the dispute, with an increase of about 11 per cent on the scheme wages of the weavers in the first month, 5½ per cent in the second and in the third, the workers to work on the scheme as it was. This of course could not be accepted because we had held that the scheme represented 20 to 30 per cent cut in weavers' wages besides the retrenchment in spinning and increased hours of work in other departments. We proposed that in the first place we would not like to call off the strike before the report of the Committee was out. In the alternative if the strike was to be called off, then we could go back to work only on the pre cut wages and conditions of 1925. To this the mill-owners would not agree. The impartial landlord President even threatened us that such a behaviour on our part would bring disaster; he did not say exactly what kind it would be. We said that we must consult the whole Strike Committee on such an important issue. At this statement, a derisive laughter greeted us from the other side. Had we not plenipotentary powers to settle the strike, were we not the virtual dictators? If the strike Committee had not complete faith in us or we had not complete faith in

ourselves, why had we come at all to negotiate with such incomplete powers?—were some of the questions hurled at us. It would have been a deadly thrust at the petty bourgeois vanity in us had we not been fortified by the idea of complete subordination of individuality to the will of the rank and file. We could not go beyond our mandate, and consultation with the rank and file was the safest guide, especially in a situation when two wings of the Trade Union Movement were united in a strange wedlock on such a mighty issue. We refused to be taken in by flattery, derision or threat. Our simple reply was that the plenipotentiaries of the biggest bourgeois States while in the conference chamber carry a megaphone in their sleeves, which continually delivers to them their 'Masters' Voice from the finance syndicates. The bourgeois hiring plenipotentiaries hide the master of the voice from the world in their stiff collars and ample sleeves. But the leadership of the proletariat is never ashamed to openly avow that everything that it does has to be done according to the voice of the rank and file.

The conference was adjourned. We consulted the Strike Committee which expressed itself against the calling off of the strike during the inquiry period unless the wage-cut and 1925 conditions were restored. Next day, 16th August, this was communicated to the conference. The mill-owners then withdrew their consent to an Inquiry or Conciliation Committee. Their game was clear. They wanted to get the strike called off, put the workers on the standard scheme of 20 per cent cut and then throw over the committee into the dustbin. But they failed in this tactic altogether. There was no reason for the mill-owners to reject our proposals except that they still hoped to smash the strike by prolonging it. The Communists did not stand to gain by prolongation. The mill-owners accepted in the October settlement almost in toto what we had proposed at the August Conference. Even if they had accepted our alternative proposal for the committee to work and the strike to continue, the results would have been the same as they were afterwards, except perhaps in the matter of the verdict of the committee. The Fawcett Committee took 29 full day and 18 half day sittings to complete its work, i. e. 38 full working days or about 7 weeks. If it had been appointed at the August Conference, and the strike continued, it would have finished its work in October. By rejecting the proposals also the strike lasted till October. Thus whether on the question of demands or the duration of the strike the mill-owners derived no gain by rejecting the proposals in August.

120. *Mill-Owners' admission about wage cut—the Assembly letter—the Mayor fund.*

Just about the beginning of August we scored another victory over the mill-owners. Since the publication of their scheme and throughout their negotiations with us and public propaganda, the mill-owners had refused to admit that their standard scheme did not only standardise wages for the same class of work as between mill and mill but it also retrenched men, saved a lot on spinning wages (which they claimed to have raised), and effected an absolute cut in the weavers' wages. When they put up the rates of wages on the mill gates in July we explained to the workers that the scheme contained 20 to 30 per cent cut for the weavers. The mill-owners could not hold long to their falsehood in front of our figures and calculations, and more because of the fact that they themselves were ignorant of the actual effect of the scheme. At last in August the Deputy Chairman in exasperation admitted that the scheme did cut $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent wages. The whole fraudulent game of hiding the cut thus began to collapse. Then another mill-owner Mr. Usman, Subhani declared that they did not know what the cut was but he thought it to be between 5 and $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I seized these two pronouncements and wrote to the press exposing the falsehood of the mill-owners' claims. Therein I still stuck to my 20 per cent estimate. Later on when negotiations were resumed with the owners, many of them in their individual capacity confessed to their utter ignorance of the scheme. This was not surprising to us because even the bourgeois Tariff Board in its report had said, "Of the 175 directors of the mills in Bombay there are only 11 who have received practical training." It is quite natural. In modern industrial capitalism, all the work of production and distribution is socialised and carried on by the workers and a hierarchy of salaried officials and experts. The capitalist is in no way connected with these processes. He only cuts coupons and pockets the profits. This illustrates how the whole system can run without the capitalists and is ripe for socialism.

In the further negotiations the mill-owners modified their peremptory orders to the workers to accept the scheme as it was. Mr. S. D. Saklatwala, the Chairman of the Association was more courageous than the Deputy Chairman and said before the Fawcett Committee, "Our original standard scheme was based on a cut of about 11 per cent" (D. 523, page 10) and then added, "I hope to convince you that a cut net of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent but at least of 30 per cent would be fully justifiable in the weaving section." (Ibid). If they considered it fully justifiable can anyone, knowing the bourgeoisie,

believe that they did not incorporate it in the scheme or that they took pity on the workers? Were we then wrong in our estimate of 20 per cent? Still the mill-owners held very fast to one of their lies that they had increased wages in the spinning and that they gained nothing in that department. On this point it took more than a year to force the partial truth out of them. Their Chairman giving evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour on 30th November 1929 admitted that they gained 2 per cent in spinning also. But in this even they introduced some amount of falsehood. Before lunch time Mr. Mody, the Chairman of the Association said before the Commission, "The standard scheme has nothing to do with reduction of workers." After lunch the same day Mr. S. D. Saklatwala, the Chairman of the previous year said, "Under the scheme there would be a reduction of 2,000 doffer boys and the industry would profit to the extent of 2 per cent." In this evidence the question of reduction in other departments is skilfully omitted and naturally of profits from retrenchment. I put the figure at 10,000 which meant a saving of 6 p. c. in the wages bill by retrenchment alone. The refusal of the mill-owners till August to tell openly to the workers that their wages were cut was deliberate dishonesty, to which they could not hold consistently to the end simply because of our vigilance and our intense efforts to know and study the scheme and its technique, in order that we may not reject it on suspicion only but after knowing thoroughly the reduction of wages and men it proposed to carry out. The admission of the mill-owners was forced out of them by our studies and determination, and that made the issue of the strike clearer for all. It was henceforth admitted on all sides a question of wage cuts and retrenchment and no longer of a mere scheme of standardised wages.

Two days after the failure of the negotiations in Bombay, the Government of India released for publication on 18th August the famous "Assembly Letter," now Ex. P377(1) in this case. It caused quite a sensation in the bourgeois and petty bourgeois world and was intended, as subsequent events show, as preliminary to overtures of an alliance with the nationalist bourgeoisie against the workers' movement. But the letter had no effect whatever on the workers. On the very day of its publication we explained to the workers the implications of this tactic of the Government that it was intended to rouse the Indian bourgeois and petty bourgeois against the Communists in particular and against all militant working class movements in general. That the publication was intended to smash the leadership of the strikes, cripple whatever petty bourgeois sympathies there were for the working-class movement, and create

an atmosphere favourable for a strong offensive against the working-class leadership on an All-India scale could be seen from the leading articles of the whole bourgeois press in India, and from the fact that seven days after this, on August 25th, the Gazette of India published the proposed Public Safety Bill moved in the Assembly on 4th September 1928. The leading article in the Evening News of Bombay of 20th August 1928 said, (Ex. D 518) "Comrade Roy's letter, if anything, reveals something more of the secret force behind all the labour troubles. One of the leaders of the millhands and railway workshop employees in Bombay is in correspondence with the League against Imperialism, an organisation brought into being under Moscow auspices and which acts as a sort of post office for the Communist International. Let us admit at once that it is not a crime merely to correspond with Moscow directly or indirectly. It may be that Mr. Jhabwala has simply asked for more financial help to the Bombay strikers or kicking against some of the conditions under which the C.I. would give additional funds." The article further points out that the C.I. is not out for philanthropic help. It wants return for its money in the form of a Red Revolution in India, which is revealed by the Roy letter. "Moscow means business" is the conclusion in the article. Anyone can see from this how exactly the Prosecution is repeating almost word for word what is written in this article of 1928. It would be difficult to say whether it is a part of the leading article of an evening paper in Bombay or the address of the Crown Counsel in this case. Not only that. A statement has been made before the Hon'ble High Court by Mr. Kemp to the effect that the poor and most amicable gentlemen of the C.I.D. were hardworked for full four years in unearthing the correspondence of the prisoners here. Yet here we find an evening daily quoting from the "most secret" correspondence of one of these terrible conspirators, and the astounding and terrible discovery sought to be proved in this case that the League against Imperialism is a subsidiary of the Comintern was known to an evening daily in Bombay and published by it as far back as August 1928. So it would be an interesting question whether the overworked C. I. D. was running this paper or the paper running the C.I.D. and perparing in advance the outlines of the Crown Counsel's Address. But the performance on the Roy Letter was not thought sufficient. The same paper on the same day, and perhaps others of its family also, published a garbled summary of comrade Kusinenn's speech on the question of the agrarian revolution in India and the role of the Communists in it.

This outburst of activity on the part of Government was not going to affect our line of action, because ours was not a conspiratorial activity which demands a change of line according to the fact whether or not the Government has come to know of it. The end of the strike depended solely on the question whether the mill-owners withdrew the cuts and retrenchment, and not on the question whether the so-called plans of the C. I. to be worked through the strike were known to the Government and the bourgeoisie. We were prepared to compromise if the wage cut was withdrawn or to go on as before, if it was not. In such an atmosphere the Mayor of Bombay Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, one of the leading and rich surgeons of Bombay, called a conference of the representatives of the Strike Committee, the mill-owners, merchants, share-brokers and such others, in the Corporation Hall of Bombay. It may be remembered that the Corporation as such had shown itself definitely hostile to the strike. In June it had rejected the proposal of Rs 1,00,000/- for relief to the strikers. On July 9th it had thrown out a proposal of Rs. 1000/- daily relief to the strikers or their children. In such conditions it looked a bit curious that the President of the Corporation should come forth to work for the settlement of the strike. He started unofficially a Relief Fund for the children of the strikers on 12th July, 1928 called the Mayor's Relief Fund for children. The suggestion for it had come during the debate on 9th July, when the grant of relief to the strikers was rejected. The subscribers to his fund were most of them mill-owners and big share-brokers. The total collections of this fund amounted to Rs.48,995-12-0. This sum was collected from only 134 subscribers, giving Rs 365/- per subscriber. But this does not give an adequate idea of the class of the subscribers. Sir Victor Sassoon gave Rs. 10,000/-, Sir Fazalbhoy gave Rs. 5,000/- and Raja Partabgirji of the Prahlad Mills gave Rs 5000/-. Thus three of the textile mill-owners alone gave Rs. 20,000/-. Mr. R. Birla gave Rs. 1500/-. Then ten of them contributed Rs 10,004/- that is Rs. 1000/- and odd each. In this category are found his Excellency the Governor of Bombay, the Mayor himself, Mr. Sasakura of the Toyo Podar Mills, and the Native Share and Stock Brokers Association, the remaining five being of the big ring of share-brokers on the Exchange. The third category paid Rs. 500 and odd, and consisted of 16 subscribers making up Rs. 8000. Thus 30 persons out 134 made up an amount of Rs.40,000 i.e. 4/5th of the fund. If you leave the five millowners standing at one end and also the 20-25 small donors who were either members of the Corporation or middle class humanitarians, the whole phalanx of about 100 donors was composed of the big speculators on the

Stock Exchange, through which they were directly affected by the strike. Thus the Mayor Fund was a combined effort of the big textile masters and stock exchange speculators.

Why had this exploiting gentry suddenly thought of the starving children of the strikers? Because they wanted to capture the strikers' goodwill through their children and thus break their determined hatred of Capitalism. It was a game of humanitarian Mondism operating through the workers' children. But the Bombay bourgeoisie, just as it lacks the highly advanced technique of the British bourgeoisie, which produces Mondism, also lacks its subtle propaganda and corruption methods. The more or less realist industrialist manufacturers among the donors of the fund were overcome by the spirit of the nervous bania stock exchange speculator who reconciles his gambling and his God by humanitarian charity. So when it came to the question as to who should be benefitted by the relief, the industrialist donors did not object to the relief being limited to the strikers' children only. In fact they had paid with that idea. But the speculators objected. They said it would be a direct help to the strikers. Both the sections wanted some gain. The one wanted to prepare a ground for class collaboration. The other wanted a reputation for charity, and all wanted the big middle class petty bourgeois strata to think that after all the bourgeoisie was not so bad, not so cruel as to cut the wages of the workers. Otherwise why should it feel for the children of the strikers and pay Rs. 50,000/- for them? Ultimately the fund had to be named the Mayor Relief Fund "for children" and not "for strikers' children".

The game of the bourgeoisie was seen through at once and I wrote an article in this strain in the Kranti of the 15th July 1928 (Ex P. 1744) headed "The deceptive Vampire of the bourgeoisie." It said "the owners cut down Rs. 50,00,000 from our wages and when the workers go on strike they pay out of this sum Rs. 20,000/ for the children's relief. One belly of the Vampire eats us workers and after having eaten us up, offers consolation to our children that they may not cry. Its one mouth orders wage cuts in order to crush us and another mouth tries to cheat us with sweet talk through our children. One hand of the bourgeoisie throws us out from the houses on the street with our children because of the arrears of rent and another hand pretends to feed our children. All these are the deceptions of the cruel blood-sucking Vampire. If the deceptive temptor gives you good food, eat it; if it gives a palace, take it; but afterwards when it tells

you to resume work on its conditions and be a slave, kick it out and go on with your strike"

The distribution of relief started on 23rd July at seven centres. Here again the bourgeoisie behaved insolently towards the workers. They would not give milk or food intended for the children to their mothers. The reason they gave was that the parents might eat the ration and starve the children. Could any one but a corrupt and callous bourgeois think of such a thing? It is the bourgeoisie and the feudal princes, who have been known to sell, kidnap or murder their sons or daughters on the question of family partnership of the stolen millions. Naturally they cannot see better morality in others. Secondly on the centres of distribution boards were hung saying "For the relief of children of the poor". (Reference Exts. of speeches). That board had a sting of humiliation since all children were to be treated as of beggars. Now though we recognise that beggars and thieves and such other sections are byproducts of poverty and exploitation, yet the working-class resists and must resist being classed with these 'lumpen' sections. The working-class is poor no doubt, but its poverty has nothing in common with the poverty of the beggars or the thieves. Because it is a class that has the consciousness and self-respect of being the producers of social wealth. The workers resented the boards and we apprised the Committee of the Mayor Fund of this fact. They then struck out the words "of the poor" from the headline. The Kranti of the 15th made suggestions to the Mayor about the management of relief but they were not heeded by his Committee. The third form of insolence was the selection of places wherefrom relief was distributed. The centre at Chinchpokli was the plague inoculation centre of the Municipality and the one at Parel was the centre for small-pox vaccination. It was due either to grim and insulting satire or a sheer lack of imagination. The mention of these centres in the announcement was sufficient to scare away any intending receiver of relief from going to those places to receive it. We had to tell the workers, in order to persuade them to send their children to receive relief, that they would be quite immune from the plague of the bourgeoisie, if they went with a strong injection of proletarian class consciousness.

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The effect of all this was that very few families took advantage of the fund, though it is some pleasure to us that the orphans of the street, at least, had some food for a few days.

The fund was closed on the calling off of the strike. Not

a few contractors made money out of it. The Municipal Commissioner had taken charge of the arrangements with his big staff that managed the city of a million souls. Naturally the bureaucratic management cost more than what it cost to the Strike Committee to give relief to 30,000 strikers, with the aid of a few workers who were not "experts in administration." In the whole disposal of the fund the actual relief given was 72 per cent of the collections excluding the balance, or 79 per cent if we include the balance (7 per cent) of the account. This omits the consideration as to what was the quantity of food for equal amounts paid by the Mayor Fund and the Strike Committee. This was an important factor as the arrangements of food of the Mayor Fund were done by contractors while ours were made by direct purchases from the grain market on a large scale and by distribution without the profits of intermediaries. The actual relief delivered to the strikers from our fund constituted 88 per cent of total collections while it was 72 per cent from the Mayor Fund. 21 per cent in the case of the Mayor Fund were administrative expenses of relief alone while in our case the balance of 12 per cent represented all the activities of the Strike Committee. Actual relief administration cost us not more than 3 per cent of our total collections. If we allow ten per cent margin to the contractors, the value of the Mayor's actual relief comes to 65 per cent, with 28 per cent for intermediaries and the administrative bureaucracy. The workers' management thus cost three per cent while the bourgeois management cost 28 per cent of the collections.

121. The Mayor's efforts at negotiations—M. Shaikat Ali comes out to break the strike—alternative proposals—our standard scheme.

It was with such traditions that the Mayor called a conference for settlement of the strike. The conference took up the question of negotiations at the stage where it had been left off at the Hidayatullah Conference of 16th August, i.e. the question on what terms the strike should be called off, if an Enquiry Committee is to function. Some three or four alternative schemes were proposed by us. The Mayor and his supporters accepted some of them. He also brought some alternative schemes (which we were willing to accept), "but none of which were accepted by the Mill-owners' Association," observes the Fawcett Committee on page 8 of its report. So this attempt to end the strike also failed because the mill-owners refused all schemes of settlement. This shows who prolonged the strike and how the mill-owners were trying to smash it by prolongation.

During the negotiations through the President of the Corporation, another party had come on the scene to take active interest in the breaking up of the strike. This was the notorious Maulana Shaukat Ali. I have already referred to the attempt of the Khilafat Committee and the Maulana to bring communalism into the strike by proposing to give money to the Strike Committee, ear-marked for Muslim workers only, and how that offer was rejected by the workers, both Hindu and Muslim. Since that time the Maulana was not heard of. Now suddenly he appeared at the Conference in the Corporation Hall and very soon around him was collected a group of Mohammadan business men, corporators and others. He was particularly pushed forward by Mr. Usman Subhani, the agent of the Prahlad Mills, and the brother of Mr. Usman Subhani, the famous millionaire of the early Congress and Khilafat days. It was soon evident that this group was being pushed forth at the instance of the Fazalbhoj group also. We smelt some sinister game in the appearance of the Maulana. He in fact understood nothing of the dispute or the industry. But like a goonda always on hire he had come and wanted to trade on his one time patriotism and services to the country. He almost assumed the airs of a dictator and threatened that if the strike were not called off he would ask all the Mohammadan workers to break away and resume work. On the failure of the Conference he attempted to carry out this threat. He hired some ten or fifteen unemployed goondas and went to the locality of the Mohammadan workers. He harangued the workers, abused the Strike Committee and told them to go back to work. He also made his goondas preach the futility of strikes. But the trick was soon exposed when the workers began to ask these fellows about their wages, what mill they worked in and what they knew of textile work. The goondas were found to be merely dumies dressed as workers. The Maulana got enraged and had to beat a hasty retreat. The Maulana's defeat was due to the fact that the class solidarity of workers is superior to their communal prejudices. Here was a class war with the bourgeoisie. Amongst the workers on one side were Hindus, Mohammadans, Parsees, etc. Amongst the bourgeoisie, on the other side, there were Hindus, Mohammadans, Parsees and Europeans. Both the sides were fighting each other bitterly, irrespective of their caste or religion. Muslim mill-owners and Hindu mill-owners were united in starving Muslim workers and Hindu workers without any reference to their respective gods or holy books except their holy books of bank accounts. The workers of Bombay had cultivated sufficient consciousness, through the several general strikes that they had fought, and were

not going to be duped by an agent provocateur of British Imperialism. The whole episode was exposed in the Kranti in a workers' letter, Exh: P 1744, dated 20th September 1928; the Maulana afterwards did not come in the workers' area, until his sinister presence was again requisitioned by his masters four months later, in the Communal Riots of February 1929.

During the negotiations at the Corporation, we found that the slogan of demanding wages and rates of 1925 or any other year had its own danger also. So far as fixed wages were concerned, there was not much trouble in finding out what they were, as there were no material changes in the fixed wages directly since 1925. The change in such cases was in the increased work for equivalent wages due to reduction of the numbers of men per thousand spindles. The difficulty lay in the piece work rates. There were hundreds of varieties of cloth and consequently hundreds of piece rates. The mill-owners resisted all attempts at inspection of their books, to verify these rates. The rates were so many that the workers could not be expected to remember all of them correctly. Moreover, if a change of two or three counts, were made in the same variety of cloth it was very difficult to detect the change at once, until it led to a fall in the total wages and had run for some time. Such were some of the difficulties of demanding restoration of conditions and rates, to those found in a particular year. But we had to do it and rely on the vast memory of the hundreds of intelligent workers as there was no other alternative. When the standard scheme was put forth, its one merit was that it left nothing to vagueness and if operated carefully would have given very little chance to the bureaucracy in the mills to cheat the workers by variation of counts or false rates, provided there was a vigilant union to get the scheme correctly applied. But the scheme could not be applied in its present form, since it contained many discrepancies; even the mill-owners did not know its implications, except the two or three framers of it. It contained a big wage-cut on an average and the cut mounted even to 30 per cent on previous rates in some cases. The workers could not be expected to have technicians to understand the scheme and therefore the easiest way found was to reject it altogether. But even, if it were rejected, we had to fall back upon the demand of wages for a particular year, which was definite regarding fixed wages but vague regarding piece rates, especially in the weaving department. We had already in our demands endorsed the principle of standardisation, and we could not reject it if it could be done without any harm to the workers. Once the workers were prejudiced against the very idea of standardisation it would be a difficult thing to standardise wages and conditions at any time.

afterwards, which would not have been in their interest. Therefore we had to find an alternative. And that was to stand by the original demand of 1925 wages and rates or to ask for 30 per cent above the standard scheme. (12 August 1928). The latter was adopted only to bring home to all parties the exact extent of the cut involved and it had the beneficial and tactical effect of forcing the mill-owners to acknowledge for the first time that they had incorporated a cut of wages in the scheme. But this slogan of 30 per cent also was not very definite. Because on the ordinary lower count sorts the cut was not 30 per cent but less. The simple addition of 30 per cent to every rate in the scheme would not have solved matters and this is what the mill-owners demonstrated at the Mayor's Conference. We were naturally asked how we would distribute this 30 per cent. Such a question was purely a tactic, because the mill-owners expected us to plead ignorance of the mechanism of the scheme. We had to take up the challenge and show how the 30 per cent could be distributed. We therefore decided (28th August 1928) to frame a new standard scheme of ours, incorporating in it the wages, conditions and rates that were demanded by the workers. We told the workers about this (see any speech in exhibit about this time) and asked them to come forth with their suggestions. A host of very intelligent workers from the rank and file came with information without which it would have been impossible to frame any scheme. (Some of the strike meetings, reports about which are put into exhibit, were held for this purpose). With their assistance the task was carried out. The challenge of the mill-owners benefited us in more than one way. It called forth several intelligent workers and linked them up actively with the work of the strike. We discovered potential leaders and technicians. The principle of the standard scheme was studied and understood by us and the workers more thoroughly than before. We overcame the danger for the time being of permanently prejudicing the workers against standardisation per se, and most important of all, the wages and conditions demanded were formulated in most definite and unequivocal terms, leaving no room, if agreed upon by the owners, for mischief according to the whims of individual mills and bureaucrats. Henceforth our demand thus was "We too want a standard scheme. We have made one. Give us wages according to it, or alternatively restore the pre-cut wages and conditions."

It is not possible here nor is it necessary to explain the mill-owners' standard scheme which prolonged the strike and the amendments we proposed to it. But I will give a few examples of the rates proposed for weaving varieties by mill-owners and those proposed by us. I will also show the changes proposed in spinning wages. From that, it can be seen that we did not make such demands on the mill-owners as could be called exorbitant or could not be met by them. It will also show that, as in the General Strike of

1924, the impartial Inquiry Committee, this time the Fawcett Committee, in its report: wholly agreed with the mill-owners' proposals. It will also show how our demand of increase in the weavers' rates had to be distributed in a complicated manner in the whole scheme.

SPINNING SECTION.

Department.	Wages as proposed by the mill-owners' scheme in July 1928.	Wages as proposed in the workers' scheme in September.	Wages as proposed by the mill-owners in their amended scheme in October.	Wages as approved by the Fawcett Committee.
1	2	3	4	5
BLOW ROOM				
	Rs. As. Ps.	Rs. As. Ps.	Rs. As. Ps.	Rs. As. Ps.
Nowganies ...	30 9 7	34 0 0	Same as in column 2	Same as in column 4
Lauice Feeders. ...	23 12 9	26 6 0	Do	Do
Pickers and Sweepers. ...	17 0 0	20 7 0	17 8 9	Do
Oilers ...	30 9 7	34 0 0	Same as in column 2	Do
Exhaust. and Breaker. Inter Scutcher. Inter Finisher.	27 3 3	28 8 0	Do	Do
CARD ROOM				
Grinders and Strippers. ...	27 3 3	28 1 0	28 0 9	Do
Fly gatherers ...	25 8 0	25 8 0	Same as in column 2	Do
Lap carriers ...	25 8 0	25 8 0	Do	Do
Can boys ...	22 1 7	25 8 0	22 15 2	Do
Flax Grinders. ...	27 3 3	30 10 0	Same as in column 2	Do
Oilers ...	30 9 7	34 0 0	Do	Do
INTER-AND-ROVING FRAMES				
Drawing Tenters. R. ...	33 4 0	35 0 0	Do	Do
Stubbers ...	38 0 0	38 0 0	Do	Do
Inter Tenters ...	35 0 0	36 0 0	Do	Do
Rovers ...	32 0 0	38 0 0	Do	33 0 0
Doffer boys. ...	20 6 6	23 0 0	Do	Same as in column 4
Bigaries. ...	23 12 10	27 4 0	Do	Do
RING SPINNING				
Siders—Singleside up to 300 spindles. ...	26 5 9	27 4 0	Do	Do
Singleside up to 309/360. ...	27 3 3	28 8 0	Do	Do
Singleside up to 361/420. ...	28 0 9	29 22 0	Do	Do
Doffer boys ...	20 6 6	23 0 0	Do	Do
Tarwalla ...	25 8 0	28 1 0	26 5 9	Do
Oilers and Banders ...	34 0 0	37 7 0	Same as in column 2	Do
Doff carriers ...	23 12 0	30 10 0	Do	Do
Fitters ...	85 0 0	102 0 0	Do	Do
WINDING				
Grey winders ...		24 0 0	19 8 0	Do
Colour winders ...		30 0 0	22 0 0	Do
Warpers ...	52 0 0	60 0 0	52 0 0	52 0 0
Creel boys ...	20 6 6	24 0 0	21 4 0	Same as in column 4

TWO EXAMPLES IN WEAVING.

Sort Plain Khadi width 24 inches.	Allowances as per mill- owner's list.	According to workers' Scheme.	As amended by millowners during negotiations.
1	2	3	4
Length 24 yards ...	Width 20 per cent.	20 per cent	20 per cent
Weight 6 3/4 Lbs. ...	Wet 7 per cent.	12 per cent	9 per cent
Reed 40 ...	Pick Rate 1.33 pies per sq. yard.	1.53	1.36
Pick 40 ...	Result:—16 sq. yards at 1.33 pies per sq. yard plus 27 per cent.	Result:—	Result:—
Warp 14 ...	Whole piece paid at 27 pies.	32.37 pies	28 pies.
Wet 9 ...			
SORT:—PATTI PACHA DOBBY DROTTLE. Width 30 inches.		Increase of column 3 over 4	= 13.4 per cent
Length 7 yards ...	Width 6 per cent.	6 per cent	6 per cent
Weight 1 1/16 Lbs. ...	Dhoti 17 per cent.	27 per cent	17 per cent.
Shafts 8 ...	Dobby 6 per cent.	22 per cent	12 per cent.
Border 1 1/4 ...	Pick Rate 1.13	1.30	1.16
One runner 1 1/2 ...	Result:—5.83 sq. yards at 1.13 pies per sq. yard.		
Reed 40 ...	Whole Piece paid at 8.5 pies	11 pies	9.12
Pick 34 ...			
Warp 24 ...			
Wet 32 ...	Increase of column 3 over 4 =	20 per cent	

However the specific mention about 1925 wages and rates had to be dropped altogether at a later stage. The demand of 1925 wages was formulated when we were not thoroughly aware of the slow change that had come into the character of production in the Bombay textiles. We became aware of the details of this only after the general strike was on. When we began to deal with the details of standardisation we found that there were hundreds of varieties that were not being produced in 1925. So the demand of restoring rates of that year did not cover all grounds. We also found that March 1927 was a period which satisfied our demand. So we adopted that as an alternative to 1925. This period also had one other advantage. The minor objections of the mill-owners, dictated by their pride about granting our demands exactly in the same terms we wanted, were also satisfied by the change we made. Thus our main demand embracing the majority of workers contained three alternatives for compromise: (1) workers' standard scheme of wages or (2) 30 per cent above mill-owners' standard scheme or (3) the wages and conditions of 1927 March. The second most important demand was the discontinuance of the rational scheme introduced in some of the mills and of retrenchment. This was the only outcome of the Mayor's conference.

122. More proposals for compromise—discussions with mill-owners broke down again in Sept. 1928—settlement of October 1928 and the end of the general strike.

When the Conference failed many individual merchants, mill-owners and intermediaries began their own efforts to settle the strike. One such effort was done by Seth Mangaldas, the co-arbitrator of Mahatma Gandhi in Ahmedabad mill disputes. This gentleman called me to his house to have a talk about the strike. Seth Mangaldas expressed great sympathy for the starving workers and with that prelude asked me on what conditions we were prepared to call off the strike. I told him the conditions stated above. To my surprise, Seth Mangaldas expressed himself strongly against the mill-owners' standard scheme and offered me the tempting proposal of making common cause with us to get the scheme scrapped. I asked him how many mills would join hands with him in that proposal. Without promising anything I asked him to ascertain that. He sent for me the next day, and told me that about 20 mills would be willing. In the meantime I had not been idle. I had a suspicion that those who would accept Seth Mangaldas' proposal must be such mills as would be required to pay somewhat higher rates if the standard scheme were applied to them, than they were doing at the time and that some of these mills must be of the worst lot and not belonging to the big syndicate I had an idea which mills were of this type. So next day, when Seth Mangaldas told me of the 20 mills my suspicions were confirmed, though he refused to give directly their names. Then without much beating about the bush I asked him what his next proposal was if the standard scheme was scrapped. Then the gentleman with a smile wailed over the plight of the industry and ultimately said that we should negotiate a direct cut on the existing rates. On this I gave him a direct reply there and then. I told him that his group wanted to make common cause with us against the standard scheme because under that scheme they would have to pay higher rates in some departments. That is, their present wages were lower than those obtaining in the bigger syndicates and even lower than what those syndicates wanted to pay after the cut as presented in the scheme. So it was sheer nonsense to ask us to negotiate a wage cut even on those lower rates, and there the talks ended.

Another proposal came through the Madhavji Dharamsi Mill that a certain group of mills were ready to accept the demands of 1925 wages, if the Joint Strike Committee would agree to call

off the strike for their mills and if it wanted, continue it for other mills. We could not consider such an absurd proposal; because it meant a break up of the solid front and a reversion to the conditions of 16th April, after five months of suffering. However we did not refuse the proposal at once. We told the intermediary that we could not consider such a proposal from a group of mills separately. It should come through the Mill-owners' Association or the group concerned should leave the Mill-owners' Association first. Then we would consider it. The group would not dare to leave the Association as the banking interests, guided by the bigger syndicates, would have at once descended on them and ruined them by a credit boycott, foreclosures and such other methods. The intermediary confessed this as much to us. But since this time, dissensions amongst the mill-owners grew and gradually, except the Sassoons, they were ready to restore the conditions of March 1927. The Sassoons would not agree to give up their rational system. Still they changed on one point. Formerly they would not allow the Association to negotiate except on the standard scheme and their rational system. Now they were prepared to let the standard scheme go and also the cut if the others desired but themselves would not give up their system.

When the mill-owners were threatened with disruption the negotiations were resumed and several sittings between them and the Strike Committee were held. We went through the whole scheme item by item. We got important changes effected in the spinning section in the matter of rates and number of men. But when we came to the weaving section we again struck against rocks. Apart from other sections, the mill-owners insisted on a cut of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on weavers' wages, to which we could not agree. In order to draw out the real intentions of the mill-owners, in one of the sittings we said we would think of a cut of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The mill-owners interpreted this as the beginning of the end of our opposition and after a good deal of thinking they brought down their proposal to 5 per cent but they would not come lower in the hope that we had now begun to break up and would soon accept the whole cut as proposed by them. The next day they went to the press with the announcement that we had agreed to the principle of a wage cut. We replied by repudiating the suggestion and saying that the offer did not stand any longer, and had been made only with a view to effect an immediate compromise.

The month of September was the fifth month of the strike and in our negotiations we kept on saying that we could hold out

another five months. Our relief operations were being replenished from time to time by the working-class of every country and every industry. But as I have already said the staying power of the strikers did not depend on the sum of money available for relief though it helped the poorest sections to a certain extent. To remain unemployed for a period of five months was not an ordinary test for the fighting workers whose average daily wage had not been more than 20 annas. It was still more trying for the workers of the Sassoon and other mills, who had already suffered for more than two months prior to the general strike. Naturally here and there, small groups of people did become anxious for a settlement. The pressure of hunger began to be visible in the small success that a few mills had in recruiting a few hundred workers for cleaning, bundling and godown work. Though a few hundreds in a mass of 1½ lakhs, did not constitute any appreciable strength, yet it could be read as an indication of the general pressure that was slowly accumulating. Naturally the question arose if we should still stick to an uncompromising position and risk a break up and defeat. Such a question has no hard and fast answer. In certain situations a compromise becomes necessary while in others a defeat does more good than a compromise. If we were thinking of compromise we were doing it because at that time it was necessary to save the strike from defeat; a defeat at that stage would have meant the wiping out of the new outlook from the Trade Union field before it had struck roots. It was the first strike that was being carried out consciously on the principle of class struggle and under a revolutionary leadership. If we could secure the demands for the majority of workers but not all the demands of all the workers and if we could not hold out longer it was advantageous to try a compromise, to accept a little retreat in order to advance with double vigour.

The compromise suggested was that the rational system would not be extended to mills where it was not working prior to the general strike. That the conditions of March 1927, that is wage cuts and retrenchment would be restored. The compromise did not benefit the workers in the Sassoon group—the rational system was to remain there as it was, and this was what made the proposed agreement a compromise and not a complete victory. The whole agreement was to be in force till the Inquiry Committee, to be appointed, had reported on the subject matter of the dispute. It was going to be on the whole a victory for us as it restored the wage cuts and retrenchment. A general outline of the compromise was discussed and agreed upon.

On September 4th the Public Safety Bill was moved and it soon became clear that in spite of the Bolshevik bogey raised by Government, the Bill met opposition from sections of the nationalist bourgeoisie. This opposition was not due to any desire on the part of the nationalist bourgeoisie to shield the radical Trade Unionists and revolutionary working-class leaders against whom the measure was intended, but because the bourgeoisie was afraid that the same weapon might be used against its own institutions and movement also.

D/- 15-12-31

There was not one speaker who defended the right of free speech and association for the Communists. They all opposed because Government had not taken them, the Indian bourgeoisie, into confidence. Take us into confidence and then we shall support Imperialism to go at the Communists and help the Government to cut off the support of the international proletariat to the working class of India as they want to do through the Bill. Such was the essence of the whole opposition. The Government would not compromise and the Bill was defeated. While the Bill was being discussed several members in the Assembly pointed to the Bombay Textile strike as the proof of Communist wickedness and the necessity for the Bill. In Bombay the mill-owners' spokesmen demanded the arrest of the Communist leaders of the strike (vide Exh: The Karanti). But none of these things helped them. The winter trade beginning with Diwali was also being lost and some of the weaker mills were going down completely. (Exhibit: The Karanti). So amongst the mill-owners also the desire for a compromise grew stronger at the end of September though the big syndicates were unmoved.

Some of the mill-owners gave a hint to the General Member of the Government of Bombay, Sir Ghulam Hussia Hidayatullah, to call another conference for the settlement of the strike. With the agreement of both the parties, on October 4th, a conference was held, where an agreement was arrived at and the strike was called off from 6th October 1928. The struggle had lasted for 22 1/3rd million working days, three times longer than that of 1924 and twice than that of 1925.

What had we gained on 4th October, which was not being yielded by the mill-owners before, that we consented to call off the strike? Had we suddenly, as is alleged, given up our wickedness and wanton desire to prolong the strike, which was inflicting losses on the capitalists and hardships on the workers or had we

compromised somehow or other to save our faces and get out of a difficult position as the late Mr. James wanted to put it ?

I have already shown that till the August Conference the mill-owners wanted a complete surrender. So there was no question of settlement and compromise. It was a fight to a finish as it looked then. At the August Conference they insisted on resumption of work, before an Inquiry Committee was appointed and without any settlement as to the conditions of work and wages during the period of inquiry. The mill-owners in fact wanted the workers to resume work on their own standard scheme. At the October Conference the dispute was not finally settled. An Inquiry Committee as proposed in the August Conference was proposed again and agreed upon. But the most important point was the conditions of wages and work during the inquiry period. When the terms on this point were being agreed upon everyone had the conviction that whatever the Inquiry Committee may say, these terms would have to continue for a long time to come. Had it not been so, there would not have been that intense opposition from the mill-owners and insistence from our side prior to and at the October Conference on this part of the agreement. In this part lay the essence of the agreement. The mill-owners agreed to restore the wage-cuts and retrenchment, i. e. to give the wages, rates and conditions of work of March 1927 and agreed not to extend their rational system. We, however, did not succeed in overthrowing the rational system from the Sassoon, Finlay and Koh-i-noor Mills but we succeeded in stopping its extension. This was not being agreed to by the mill-owners at the August Conference. But they had to do it in October. So the strike had to go on till October. Every break up of negotiations on our part was due to the determination of the bourgeoisie to smash the strike completely. Every day added to the prolongation of the strike was due to the mill-owners not agreeing to the above terms before October and the workers' determination not to work on reduced wages and worsened conditions. If the strike was unusually prolonged it was due to the determination of the mill-owners to enforce what they called discipline and standardisation, wage-cuts and retrenchment. It was due to the fact that the mill-owners learnt very late that these things could not be enforced on fighting class-conscious workers led by a militant leadership working for the interest of the workers only and not corrupted by class-collaborationist dope, as is found in Ahmedabad. If the strike was prolonged, it was not that prolongation of strikes is a principle with us, but because it was necessary to win the demands. The struggle at that time was a defensive struggle. The mill-owners had attacked us and were determined to hold on till the workers

surrendered. We could certainly not be expected to tell the workers not to hold on. In answer to the attack, it was our duty to tell the workers to defend themselves till the attack was withdrawn; and not only to tell them but also to take steps to make it possible for them to defend. It has been suggested that we told the workers that if they prolonged the strike capitalism would collapse. To expect Communists to make such a statement in its literal sense is absurd. No Communist believes that a simple stoppage of work and prolongation of strike, even on a national scale, can starve out and kill capitalism. Capitalism is based on the violent exploitation of the workers and forcible seizure of the produce of labour power, sanctified in the capitalist system by the so-called laws of free contract and bourgeois property. A system based on force and compulsion refuses to die of anaemia. Strikes, Saytagraha etc. however prolonged, if not followed by a positive form of mass action for the seizure of power, only result in a temporary anaemia of the system. When capitalism sees signs of it, it forcibly drinks the blood of the working class. Knowing this we cannot be expected to say that if strikers only hold on for months and years capitalism will collapse. Capitalism does not die. It is beheaded. So says History.

123. Did we "use" the strike meetings and speeches during the strike—their relation to strike matters and their educative function.

It has been shown so far how the General Strike of 1928 in the Bombay textile industry arose out of long standing grievances and new attacks of the mill-owners on the workers' wages and conditions. It has also been shown how the mill-owners refused to negotiate till they were forced by the resistance of the workers. The strike was what the bourgeoisie calls a genuine trade dispute. Its origin or its duration was not a part of any conspiracy of Communists to bring ruin to the industry or to overthrow the Government. There was no political demand as such in the 17 demands which were the subject matter of the strike. There was no demonstration, no resolution in any of the strikers' meetings as such even of a seditious character, let alone an incitement to insurrection against the State. It was not a strike preparatory to an insurrection, a general rising against the State or intended to develop into a general political strike to overthrow or bring pressure by violence or threat of violence against the State. The draft of the 17 demands, the various stages of negotiations and the final agreement show this quite clearly.

Not being able to prove that this strike was a part of a

conspiracy to overthrow the Government the Prosecution bring forward the speeches delivered during the strike and say that the Communists in the Strike Committee and the Girm Kamgar Union were "using the strike to further the aims of the conspiracy" or in the words of a press note of the Government of Bombay, "endeavouring to use the cloak of trade unionism as a mask for revolution." The late Mr. James, while speaking about our strike activities said that "the main objective" of the Communists in a strike is the education of the workers in mass action and "to provide so to speak a rehearsal for the general strike in the mass revolution." (Pages 94-95 of his Opening Address—foolscap edition). The other objective is to glorify the Communists, before the workers as their real leaders. I fail to see how if the Communists convince the workers that the Communist Party alone works in their interest, it becomes automatically a step in the conspiracy alleged in this case. Every party, including that of the bourgeoisie, is trying to convince the workers that it alone works for their good. If the other parties fail it is not our fault. The other parties fail because they fail the working class in its hour of need. If the parties of the bourgeoisie have freedom to secure the leadership of the working class, why not we, when you talk of equal rights and opportunities? To seek the reasons for a general strike in the desire of the Communists to have a "rehearsal" is a philistine notion born from a stage manager's conception of the working class? It conceives of the working class as consisting of puppets ordered about as the Communists (who are not supposed to belong to the workers) may wish "to further their own masked interest". Such a conception is anything but Communist. The general strike is not brought about for the sake of a rehearsal of mass action though its effect may act like a rehearsal. The working class is not an idle army of mercenaries doing mock battles and rehearsals at command. Strikes and general strikes are brought about, either at the call of an organisation or without it, when the class position of the workers becomes worse and worse, grievances accumulate and the class struggle in an acute form becomes necessary. The resulting discipline, mass formation, etc. follow from the needs of the struggle. They arise as byproducts but the strikes are not called specifically for them. Strikes are called or happen for a definite grievance of the whole class or a section of it.

If only a rehearsal were the reason of the 1928 strike, it was unnecessary. Because the textile workers in Bombay had seven such rehearsals previously. And each of them was getting more and more acute and prolonged, as has already been shown. Except one, (of 1924), all of them were successful completely and

yet Bombay was far from a mass revolution. The way in which the Prosecution speaks of the 1928 strike would lead one to suppose that Bombay should have had at least 9 mass revolutions by this time. Yet we have not seen even the top-mast of the approach of one. The fact is that general strikes alone, even on a national scale, cannot lead to mass revolutions. The mass revolution to start requires an all national crisis affecting both the exploiters and the exploited, a strong Communist party with its roots not only in the workers but in the Army and Navy also. (See the Thesis of the Second Congress or any relevant article of Lenin). With such authoritative expositions it is absurd to charge the Communist who owe allegiance to Leninism of contemplating, in 1928 conditions, the overthrow of Government, by simply setting up or capturing trade unions and leading strikes in textiles or railways or other industries.

It is a fact that we seized the leadership of the Bombay textile workers through the general strike. But it is not a fact that the strike was brought about in order to create an opportunity to seize the leadership. It has been shown how the strike arose out of the attack of the mill-owners and took place only when conditions became ripe for it, though appeals for it may have been issued months in advance. It was not brought about "according to a definite plan" as the Prosecution alleges, by any of the accused.

When it cannot be proved that the Communists wanted to make the strike the beginning for a revolutionary uprising, when it cannot be proved that the strike was brought about to ferment the atmosphere and begin a seizure of factories or begin the overthrow of capitalism, when it cannot be proved that there was a general conspiracy, "a definite plan", to bring about a general strike either in 1928 or in 1929, the Prosecution's last thread, by which they hang their case, is that we used the strikers' meetings to preach the principles of Communism, of Proletarian Revolution, the success of Soviet Russia and the necessity to have a like revolution in India also. During the strike, 170 meetings were held according to the Prosecution. Now this number is arrived at by purely guess work or by taking it for granted that meetings were held only when Police reporters reported that they were held. Some of the Police reporters have deposed that meetings were held almost every day and many a time two or three meetings were held on one day. (P.W. 276). From April 16th to October 4th it is 173 days, which indicates how the Prosecution have arrived at the figure of 170 meetings. This leaves no room for more than one meeting on any of the days. According to me at least 250 meetings were held in this period and

at least 700 speeches delivered. The records here contain only 55 speeches by shorthand reporters (P. W. 276 and 278) knowing Marathi, the language in which the speeches were delivered, and 14 reports are by a man who knew nothing of Marathi and therefore was not in a position to understand what was spoken. He has simply imagined the speeches, which is not a rare thing in journalistic history. (It is P. W. 273—Macwan). One P. W. no. 245 has filed an attendance role of his duties rather than a record of our activities. He has made a table showing the dates, when meetings of strikers were held, the accused who were present and spoke and whether he himself was present at that meeting or not. When he was not present he has filled in the dates and places according to what he was told by his informers. On such material this witness has reported a substance of speeches at two meetings only. He does not file any reports as such of speeches taken on the spot. Thus out of a total of 700 speeches only 71 i. e. 1/10th are brought here in any form. According to one witness, P. W. 278, he reported 88 meetings consisting of more than one speech; from him 35 speeches are on record. So out of 700 speeches one need pay some attention only to 55—those reported by shorthand reporters who knew Marathi. Thus the Court is asked to form an opinion as to the kind of education we were giving to the workers through the meetings from a record of our "educational" activity, of which 92 per cent record is not available or not kept before the Court and only 8 per cent can be given some consideration. Even these 8 per cent of the speeches do not fairly represent the speech-activity in the strike of all those who participated. 23 out of these 55 speeches are put on the name of one person only and thus the largest part of the red pencil of the Prosecution has been spent on 3 per cent of speech-activity during the longest strike in textile history, and with the help of this profuse use of the red pencil, a minute part is so magnified as to over-shadow the remaining 97 per cent of which nothing is kept before the Court in any form deserving consideration. From such a performance a generalisation is made that the strike meetings were used as a cloak to foment violent revolutionary activity. My reply to such an unwarranted formulation on insufficient and distorted data, is that there is no doubt that we held meetings during this strike on such a large scale as had not been done by any one in the previous strikes in Bombay. But to draw the inference about the subject matter of all or most of these meetings, from the large number of speeches of one or two persons only, which, however, in the total number of speeches form a very small fraction, is a faulty and unreliable method. For example if from the lectures delivered by a college staff of professors, only those of

the professor of history and politics and especially only those of his relating to the period of violent revolutions in British history were reported and all the other lectures were suppressed, would it be an accurate inference, to say that the particular college and its staff always lectured on nothing but politics and violent revolutions? But that is exactly what is being done here.

The strike period is the only period when the cultural level of the workers can be raised on a mass scale. The very low wages and high hours of work leave no margin of leisure to the workers to pay attention to their cultural equipment. Neither does the State give any educational facilities and even if it does on a small scale, they are useless unless the wages are raised and hours of work lowered, so that there is less exhaustion and deterioration of the intellectual system of the workers and less incentive to withhold the children from schools and put them on earning some pittance to support themselves and the family. During the strike period a will to acquire some power, to win the strike, agitate and awaken mental powers and ample leisure are elements that urge the workers to acquire knowledge and rise superior to their conditions; though the increased pressure of starvation cripples much of this awakened activity. Therefore it is during the strike period that mass education can be carried on effectively and on a large scale. The mass scale can operate only through meetings and lectures. One lecture on any subject in a strike is more valuable than one month in a night school. So one of our reasons in holding such large number of meetings was to carry on education on a mass scale. Lectures were delivered on the economic construction of present day society, on the history of India and other countries; on class war, dictatorship, the stock exchange, industrial development, agriculture and several other subjects. There is no denying the fact that when Communist spoke on these subjects they did it from the Marxist point of view. Certainly they could not be expected to do it according to the bourgeois text books. The bourgeoisie with its monopoly of education and political power preaches its own class point of view on these subjects, in order that its own class rule should be accepted as the best and eternal; thus culturally and mentally incapacitating the revolutionary class from thinking of working for any better system. The Communists, who have a better social order to introduce, can bring their point of view forward only through meetings, books, and papers and they claim the right to do so. Just as the modern bourgeoisie has the right to explain history as the eternal movement of men to acquire private property, and the good deeds of the propertied men and their agent-heroes, just as the innumerable religious sects have the right to explain it as the eternal oscillation

of the head or the tail of their respective favourite gods and devils so we claim the right to explain it by the materialist method of Marxism as an unceasing class war to be terminated only when the Communist society is established.

It would be, however, a one-sided statement that the lectures were only for this purpose. Meetings were held to make announcements about relief distribution, about the various negotiations for settling the strike, about picketing, about attempts to break the strike, about the standard scheme and so on. The Strike Committee could not spend money on handbills on a large scale and the illiteracy and poverty of the workers prevented the medium of newspapers being utilised to its full effect. That is why we considered meetings most essential for the conduct of the strike. Knowing this full well Imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie now adopt a course of stopping all meetings of workers, as soon as there is a strike, under S. 144 on the pretext that it will cause breach of public peace. The workers are forced to wage a struggle for the right of meetings, which is being denied to them. When we denounce the Imperialist and the Indian bourgeoisie for prohibiting meetings, they say, we use inciting language in our meetings, we go beyond "our limits", therefore Government is forced to prohibit meetings and the Indian bourgeoisie supports them in this. If that is so why do you gag under S. 144 even the pro-Government yellow internationalists, the most respectable moderates, like Messrs. Joshi and Giri? Mr. N. M. Joshi was forbidden to enter the S. I. Railway strike area in 1928 and Mr. Giri was debarred from going to Hyderabad and Mysore in 1928 and 1931. None can accuse these gentlemen, who speak "within limits" and believe more in the efficacy of Sir George Rainy's smiles and the Railway Board than in the proletariat, of ever attempting to break the peace. Yet they are also gagged, why? Because Imperialism does not want to tolerate even the least Trade Union activity and is out to smash all the elementary rights of the workers.

124. Our meetings did not incite violence—fall in the cases of damage to property and crime in the mill area during the strike period—the evidence of speeches and the Riots Inquiry Committee.

Our meetings had the effect of preventing any possible breach of peace rather than causing it. The assembling of thousands of workers in one place morning and evening gave them consciousness of a solid class strength, reduced the

irritation and provocation that arises from the feeling of personal individual weakness and suffering, gave them additional courage and patience and prevented isolated clashes as far as possible. Of course a strike without clashes is impossible. The insolence of the police force, the blacklegs etc. necessarily results in clashes which are inevitable. But on the whole our strike was free from these. This has been recognised even by the officers of Imperialism, and some of them have been puzzled by it. Having been all along fed on the fables created by the Imperialist liars factories, about the atrocities, arson and murder and all sorts of conceivable or inconceivable cruelties which the bourgeoisie could invent and attribute to the workers, these Imperialists expected a riot every day, and a murder every hour during the strike, because they were told that the Communist leaders as such were telling the people to revolt rebel, destroy and burn. But nothing of the kind happened during or after the strike. For certain reasons you find Imperialists and the Indian bourgeoisie disagreeing for once about the Communists and the stories about violence advised or committed by them. You find the Indian bourgeoisie more reactionary and lying than the Imperialists. During the strike and after, the Indian capitalists thundered for our blood. But the Imperialists refused at that time. The reason for refusal is not that Imperialism had grown democratic, honest or truthful. The reason was that all the sections of the Indian bourgeoisie, including the extremists had not yet consented to our beheading as they did later on. However, that apart. Whatever the reasons, when a deputation of the European and Indian Merchants' Chambers waited on the Governor of Bombay and in consistency with their counter-revolutionary and pro-Imperialist role asked that we should be arrested and put in prison or dealt with otherwise for the sake of their profits, because we had created "a state of terror and violence in the mill area," the Governor in reply, agreed to their demand but said, "What has struck me most, so far as I have been able to study the history of the last nine months as a whole is that during that time in spite of the large number of hands involved in the stoppage of work, there has been on the whole so little damage done to person or property." The Governor claimed the credit of this for his police force, which, by the way, had done everything possible to provoke the men. But even then he had to add, "credit is also due to those of their leaders who had advised them in their own interest to refrain from creating disturbances and so losing the sympathy of the public." (Ex. D. 526, Communique dated 21. 12. 28 by the Director of Information, Bombay). The mill owners' deputation said that law and order of the British Government had ceased to exist in the mill area of the

city and a state of violence and terror under the guidance of the Communist leaders, prevailed in a part of the city where lived 5/6th of the whole population. Now it would be a very flattering and pleasing state of things, if the British law and order had really ceased to function. But however pleasing it might be, it was not a fact. Though we had the greatest influence over the workers, yet that part of Bombay had not turned into a Soviet and it is a lie to say that our influence meant violence, terror and crime. If it were as this gang of merchants said then how do you find the Police Report for the year 1928 saying "there has been a reduction of 30 per cent in crimes compared with the crimes of six years ago..... the Delisle Road Police Station, which is in the centre of mill district had a reduction from 514 cases in 1927 to 346 in 1928. This is remarkable in view of the fact that all the mills were on strike for six months in the year." (page 4). It would mean that the greatest influence of Communists in the city leads to reduction in crime and not to its increase, even if crimes were to be interpreted according to the Imperialist Code. In the very heart of the area, where we were said to have almost established our *raj*, the reduction of crimes was 67.3 per cent on the previous year, in which there was no Communist influence. This in fact makes out a case in favour of the workers' law and order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the influence and activities of the Communists rather than against them. The same police report on another page while complaining about our preaching "incessantly against Imperialism and Capitalism" observes "though the strike lasted for such a long period, it was comparatively peaceful." (page 21).

D/- 16.12.31

There is another pronouncement from Government on these speeches. After the Hindu-Muslim Riots in Bombay in February 1929, the Legislative Council on 20th February asked for an Inquiry Committee, which the Government appointed on 22nd April 1929. The Committee actually assembled for taking evidence on 24th June 1929. It signed its report on 22nd August 1929. Evidence regarding our strike speeches commenced in the Lower Court with P. W. 245 (Lower Court no. 147) on 30th August 1929 and regarding those reported by P. W. 278 (L.C. no. 190) on 11th September, by P. W. 276 (L. C. no. 192) on 12th September and P. W. 273 (L.C. no. 269) on 4th October 1929. Thus before these speeches were brought here on record they were produced before the Inquiry Committee which has quoted extracts from them in its report in an appendix. (See report pages 9 and 41). Thus while the Court here

was "judicially" going to enquire into the case, another Government Committee had already considered a part of the evidence to be produced here and given its verdict. With the seal of approval of an Inquiry Committee, Government became confident and brought these speeches before this Court. A comparison between the extracts in that appendix and the evidence here given will show that the Committee has quoted in advance almost verbatim, in a report signed on 27th August, a part of the deposition regarding my speech, of P. W. Hassan Ali given in this Court on 2nd September and also extracts from speeches which here are exhibits P 1699, 1702, 1709, 1711, 1714, 1717, 1718, 1719, 1722, 1724, 1726, 1715 and 1731. With these exhibits before them the Committee took the evidence of the Hon'ble Mr. J.E. B. Hotson, at that time the Home Member of the Government of Bombay and later on the Acting Governor for some time. This is what he said on 16th July 1929 on the matter of these speeches which were put before him and many more:—"The Chairman asked witness what he had to say with regard to the suggestion made by certain witnesses that earlier and stronger action should have been taken by the Government against the Labour agitators who had been making inflammatory speeches.

Mr. Hotson replied that underlying the suggestion was the assumption that there was a direct connection between the Labour disputes and the disturbances. The Government were not quite certain that such a connection could be established.

The Chairman pointed out that a representative of one of the oil companies giving evidence had stated that the Labour leaders preached class hatred which developed into a communal riot.

The Home Member replied that the Government was bound to observe the strictest neutrality between the employers and the workers. Even when violent speeches were made it was not always justifiable to rush into a prosecution. At all events in times of excitement people did use words stronger than what they really meant. For many months at all events whatever inflammatory speeches might have been made they did not result in violence. For a long time during the progress of the strike the Government were justified in holding their hand.

Another thing was, the Home Member continued, that there were "stories" going about the city as to what these Labour leaders were saying at these meetings. The Government used to have reports of all the speeches made at such meetings, and they never came across any inflammatory passages which some witnesses had

attributed to the Labour leaders, and all the enquiries made by Government failed to get corroboration of such speeches. He thought therefore that there was a good deal of exaggeration in the statements made by witnesses regarding the inflammatory speeches. After all the Government had to produce evidence that would stand in a court of law." (Exh D, 386, The Times of India dated 18-7-1929).

When the speeches were before the Government for a long time they thought themselves justified in holding their hand and thought that they were not sufficient to stand in a court of law. The failure of the Public Safety Bill, the failure to smash the strike, the increasing strength of our Union, and the failure of machinations to involve the militant workers in a pogrom changed this opinion. The conscience of Imperialism is elastic enough for that: Perhaps the speeches too had to undergo an operation to suit the new opinion. Till July, till the evidence of the Home Member, everything perhaps was not quite all right with the speeches, "to stand in a court of law." But the verdict of the counter-revolutionaries on the Riot Committee and the illogical and cowardly insistence of the Committee to throw everything on the shoulders of the Communists and to characterise the speeches as inflammatory and inciting every sort of crime emboldened and pleased Government, with the result that here we find them in their present form "fit to stand before a court of law."

From the foregoing I want to make two points: that during the strike and in the speeches there was no incitement to acts of violence, that there were no acts of violence due to our speeches or because of the strike as such. But at the same time I do not assert that we were observing the "principle of non-violence". We could not be guilty on the one hand of asking the much oppressed workers to surrender their heads to the lathi blows of Imperialist violence and on the other of wailing at the feet of the armed Black and Tans: "Oh! the people are non-violent. Beat, if you must, but not unto death." We neither accepted non-violence as a principle, nor incited the people to acts of violence. Our attitude was to carry on the strike peacefully and if the Police and agents of the mill owners tried to terrorise the workers into submission, to resist it with all the might that they could command. Toleration of lathi blows on the heads of women and children may excite romantic tears and admiration from reverent preachers, it may help to move the big pro-Imperialist bourgeoisie to signing a hypocritical protest, as the Bombay bourgeoisie did, with the callous and cowardly slogan "Beat but not unto death." But, though as a result of

such protests Imperialism may substitute canes, covered, if you like with khaddar yarn, in place of the long lathis (as the Commissioner of Police did in Bombay last year) it does not serve to overthrow the Terror, to win freedom.

There is no contradiction or opportunism when on the one hand we asked the strike to be conducted peacefully and on the other hand spoke out one of our principles that no class power is overthrown except by violent revolution. The former was the immediate necessity of the objective situation. The latter is a deduction from historical experience, showing the inevitable way taken by all social revolutions in the past and that will be taken by them in the future also. The advocacy of the Socialist principle that a Socialist society will expropriate the property of the bourgeoisie has nowhere as yet led even the ingenious bourgeois law to charge a Socialist with conspiracy to commit house trespass, robbery etc. It would be equally absurd to charge a Communist with conspiracy to commit acts of violence or to incite acts of violence, because he believes that independence from Imperialism and overthrow of capitalism do not come except through a violent revolution. In this connection may also be pointed out the thesis adopted by the Communist International in the Third World Congress in the year 1921. The thesis had an eye especially on European conditions of that period when the proletariat there was making a straight bid for power and overthrowing the bourgeois States—Republics and Monarchies as well—by an armed revolution. In some cases the workers after seizing power had magnanimously released the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries, who on obtaining freedom dynamited the revolution. In some cases the workers accepted anarchist and social revolutionary tendencies, while in the majority of cases wherever possible the bourgeoisie shot, hanged and tortured the workers. About such conditions the thesis says, (Exh: P 2369) "With regard to the acts of White Terror and the fury of bourgeois justice, the C.P. must warn the workers not to be deceived during a crisis by a hypocritical appeal to their leniency by the enemy, but to demonstrate proletarian morality by acts of proletarian justice, in settling with the oppressors of the workers, and in times when the workers are only preparing themselves, when they have to be mobilised by agitation, by political campaigns and strikes, armed force may be used solely to defend the masses from bourgeois outrage. Individual acts of terrorism may demonstrate the revolutionary rancour of the masses, and however justified they may be as acts of retribution against the lynch law of the bourgeoisie and its social democratic flunkies, such deeds will not raise the workers to a high level of

organisation or make them better prepared to face the struggle. Acts of sabotage are only justified when used for the purpose of hindering the despatch of enemy troops against the workers or for conquering important strategic points from the enemy in direct combat. Personal terrorist acts while they can easily be justified in view of the lynch law of the bourgeoisie, are by no means the correct method for increasing the proletarian organisation and militant preparedness, for they give rise to the illusion in the minds of the working class that the heroic deeds of individuals can take the place of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat." Such was the attitude of the C.I. in the European conditions of 1921. Could it be expected of Communists in India, while conducting a purely economic strike and that too in the conditions of 1928, which were not advanced to even one hundredth of what they were in 1921 Europe, advocate a contrary policy to the above and think or conspire to commit acts of violence as is alleged?

125. My three strike meeting speeches—Exhibits P 1701M3, P 2242 and P 2245.

Out of the total of 71 reports of strike speeches of which 55 are by two shorthand Marathi reporters, 14 are by a newspaper reporter employed by the C.I.D. and not knowing Marathi shorthand reporting, and 2 merely short notes by a Police-station Inspector (P.W. 245), 3 speeches are put in evidence against me individually. (1) P 1701 M. 3 reported by P.W 278, Deobhanker and delivered on 21st July 1928 in the Marwari Vidyalay Hall. (2) P 2242 of 2nd June and (3) P 2245 of 7th June both reported by P. W. 273, Macwan, and delivered in Nagu Sayaji Wadi.

I have not kept any diary of the meetings I attended and the speeches delivered. Therefore I am not in a position to say if I attended and delivered speeches at those places and on those dates which have been deposed to by the witnesses, because there have been cases during the strike under reference where reporters reported in the press that I was present and spoke, while in fact I was not present at all at the meetings. When a glaring instance of this type occurred, reporting an imaginary speech of mine on the Bardoli Satyagraha in a meeting which I had never attended and therefore I had never any occasion to deliver the speech, I sent a contradiction to the press which was published once. (If I am allowed the opportunity I can produce that contradiction as a defence exhibit). But when I found that it was becoming a practice and was part of a game against us, I did not again bother myself with such corrections. Many a time it happened that no reporter

attended a meeting, but saw some one of us at his room or office, inquired where and when the meeting had been held and who attended. He would then go, put a para or two in the mouth of one or two of us, make out several copies and pass it on to a group of reporters for several papers. Then a report would appear with some such introduction. "The Labour leaders, as usual, harangued the strikers today at....." (See a sample in D 543). Though the report was the same one circulated to all, some of the sentences used to get coloured in the editorial offices according to the politics of the paper concerned.

I wonder how with the depositions of the two witnesses concerned with the three speeches of mine, I can be expected to explain. I will take the case of P 1701. According to the witness, P. W 278, it was delivered in English, before an English knowing audience of intellectuals of the Deccani petty bourgeois area of Bombay city, called the Girgaon area, where the Hall is situated. As such I should have been easily making a hundred words a minute. The witness who reported this speech is not an English reporter and he himself says that this was known to the Deputy Commissioner of Police who posted him on duty. He acknowledges that he cannot take verbatim reports in English longhand and he himself did not know English shorthand.

When I suggested to the Court about this witness that I would like to carry out a test of the reporter in English, I was told that the question did not arise, and the conclusion was obvious that the man could not report English speeches. The witness says "I took only what I thought important in the speakers' speech as it is impossible to take verbatim in English longhand. My report is not a full report." In the face of such facts it is needless to comment on the attempt of the Prosecution in re-examination to get the statement from the witness—"whatever I have put down was said, though it is true that I missed a good deal." The witness has missed such a "good deal" that the report looks like that of an incoherent sleepy talk rather than that of a lecture delivered before an intellectual audience. Moreover, the reporter's knowledge of English is so meagre that he is incapable of following any speech in English, even to the smallest extent let alone the important parts. This can be seen from the corrections made by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in the gist reports submitted by the witness and also in the present exhibit. I disclaim any responsibility to explain a report which has "missed a good deal".

Then I come to the next two exhibits. With regard to this the process of reporting is exactly the reverse to that of the above.

The witness here is a Christian by birth, (a point especially brought forth in re-examination by the Prosecution itself), has the Gujarati vernacular as his mother tongue, is a newspaper reporter in English shorthand, while the reports in exhibit are of speeches delivered in Marathi. You can never get such a perfect piece of evidence! I do not mean to suggest that his Christianity would stand in the way of his reporting the speeches of an antireligious Communist or that his mother tongue Gujarati would resent the entrance of Marathi on such a tongue of his as could very generously accommodate an evidence of falsehood and contradictions. Neither do I suggest that English shorthand reporting incapacitated his fingers from reporting in Marathi longhand or shorthand. None of these by themselves are mutually exclusive factors. But then we find all of them in all their worst distortions, that can be found only in a reporter, acting as a C. I. D. informer, as he himself says, while serving as a chief reporter on the most patriotic daily newspaper, the "Bombay Chronicle," whose "sheet-anchor", we are told, is non-violence, and whose chief reporter of the political weather around, helping to steer that sheet-anchor, is an Imperialist police spy. No wonder the "Chronicle" never anchored at a single point of truth regarding the workers' movement in the Bombay island. "Asked whether, whenever he had been employed by the police, it was in his professional capacity as a reporter, the witness said 'in the whole world the press and the police have to cooperate, and they give us news and we give them something in return.'" This "something" in the present instance is his fourteen reports put into exhibit in this case against us and out of these fourteen "somethings" I am asked to explain two. What else can I say than that these reports are merely "somethings in return" for the news and the 300-400 rupees that the police paid him and have no other value? The witness unconsciously and in indignation has spoken the truth. In the whole world the class press and class police of the bourgeoisie have to cooperate and produce "something in return" for each others services, in order that the class enemy of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, may be decimated on the strength of that "something" of a piece of evidence in the courts of that bourgeoisie.

Let us see what processes these two speeches have been subjected to by this reporter. These speeches, delivered in Marathi, he followed in English, mentally translated them on the spot as they were being delivered and took notes of this mental translation in English shorthand. The witness says he knows

simple Marathi but is not a Marathi scholar. Being not given to sticking to one thing either in life or in evidence, he also followed a Marathi speech by mental translation in Gujrati longhand and mixed it with English shorthand. (P. 2237 of Nimbkar, vide his deposition). Thus this prodigy, who has been a journalist and English shorthand reporter for the last 22 years, heard our speeches in Marathi, mentally translated them either in Gujrati or English, took them down in a mixture of Gujrati longhand and English shorthand, and finally gave them a form of "something" which now stands here as Prosecution evidence of what we spoke to the workers. Had it been a case under S. 124 A for seditious speeches, Government would not have dared to bring these against me even before a packed jury, but in a charge of conspiracy not only "something" but anything can become evidence.

The Prosecution finding that the reliability of the witness was very rudely shattered, hit upon a very ingenious device of proving that he knew Marathi and consequently Marathi reporting also. They got from him the following statement "our church services and prayers are conducted in Marathi". Thereby the Prosecution want to challenge the effect of our cross-examination showing that the witness knew nothing of Marathi or Marathi reporting. The logic of the Prosecution unfortunately is undermined by History. The church services and prayers of an Indian Christian may be carried on in Marathi. But the Prosecution failed to ask this most Christian reporter if he himself ever attended his church. I think the Prosecution thought the question superfluous. Because they knew that the necessity to attend his church prayers is very peremptory for a man like this reporter, who, while on leave with full pay from a patriotic daily, was doing the work for the C. I. D. Certainly the need to wash his sins must be very pressing and I am prepared to grant that he regularly attended his prayers. But then history shows that God has never ordained that his devotees must understand the language of the divine utterance. On the contrary, the practice has been that all the transactions between God and his devotees have been carried on in something like a code language. The Parsis do not understand the Pahlavi of their prayers, the majority of Mohammedans do not understand the Arabic of their Quaranic prayers, the Hindus have at least a hundred keys to decode the Vedas; and for the Christians, they have Latin for Roman Catholic services. Contrary to this most conservative march of history is there any reason why our most Christianly conservative reporter of 22 years experience in English reporting should and must understand the Marathi of his prayers? I again

grant that this devout double dealer did understand the language of his church, which church also, I grant for a moment, was, unlike its historical traditions, not practising double dealing between God and his devotees in this case. Because otherwise if the church were affected by its devotees, then it might also begin mentally translating the original Latin prayers in Biblical English shorthand and deliver them in a mixture of Gujrati longhand with an accent or alphabet of Marathi, and especially for the benefit of so versatile a devotee as Mr. Macwan. But I grant that the excellent church did not do this and our Mr. reporter understood the church Marathi. But what about understanding our Marathi, the Marathi of the Bolshevik speakers and also of ordinary men? Unfortunately for the Prosecution their own expert Marathi witness, direct from the Oriental Translators' Office of the Bombay Government Mr. Ezekiel, P. W. 275, says "the Marathi translation of the Bible, Old and New Testament is in what is popularly called missionary Marathi. Marathi used in churches is very different Marathi." Mr. Ezekiel has been put forward as a witness who has translated the Marathi documents and newspapers for the Prosecution and yet he has so carelessly undermined the foundations of the Marathi of a brother witness. Mr. Ezekiel is a Jew and the Prosecution is certainly entitled to argue that Mr. Ezekiel for a time forgot his role of a brother witness and as a Jew took his ancient revenge against the Christian Mr. Macwan. The fact is that both the witnesses are faithful to their sole master, but contradicted each other's interests and opinions simply because their master is a bundle of contradictions.

The Defence did not leave the matter at that. A number of Marathi sentences from the speeches on record were read out to the witness—Macwan. In one case of a simple sentence of six words, he said "I cannot follow the words spoken nor read the Marathi writing" (D 617). Many of the sentences dictated by one of the accused and taken down by this reporter were shown to the Marathi translator Mr. Ezakiel. In one case he said, "it is however not good Marathi. There are also many mistakes in spelling and grammar". Regarding another sentence taken down by him the translator says "similarly (the sentence) is grammatically wrong". "The sentence (follows) sounds to me as if the writer were a Gujrati".

The obvious conclusion is this. When the police found that the Times of India reporter Mr. Sirur who was formerly doing work for them got into trouble with the strikers for false reporting, they searched for some man who would not be suspected of doing

work for them. They got this man, Macwan, and his cloak of a nationalist newspaper reporter served him well for some time. For the sake of the handsome sum of Rs 400/- for sixteen meetings (see his deposition) he bluffed the police that he knew Marathi. He took leave with full pay from his paper, did the work of the police and produced what he calls "something" of reports. And the Prosecution in all seriousness want in their turn to bluff the Court into believing an evidence based on and produced from nothing but bluff.

I disclaim any responsibility for the speeches put in through this witness.

126. *The help of the international proletariat to the strike.*

I will now take the question of the financing of the strike. I have already mentioned the two big sums received from the Trade Unions in Russia for the relief of the strikers. The Imperialist and nationalist bourgeois press made much propaganda against us, feeding the petty bourgeois public on stories of how the Reds killed the bourgeoisie in the revolution and how the money received for the strike still carries the red colour of their blood. Many patriots and reactionary feudal landlords in the Assembly and elsewhere directly incited Government to stop this money from being delivered or to take action against us for receiving it.

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The balance-sheet of income and expenditure of the Joint Strike Committee shows a total income of Rs. 1,11,527-9-11 from 7th May 1928 to 31st January 1929. The income and expenditure after October 4th, when the strike was called off, are merely re-adjustments and minor items. Out of this income Rs. 82,238-5-5 were from foreign contributions, and Rs. 26,388-6-3 from inland contributions. The balance of Rs. 2906-5-3 is something like cross entries, being refunds of tickets and sale of gunny bags bought with corn. This shows in the first place that the largest part of help for the strikers came from the European workers. Leaving aside the refunds etc, money from foreign contributions was 75.7 per cent and from inland 24.3 per cent of all contributions as such. For every rupee received from inside the country Rs. 3/- were received from the European workers.

The money came from different organisations of workers in Europe. Money was sent both by the Yellow and the Red organisations, as the Prosecution would like to classify them. It would appear from the accounts that the Yellows sent Rs. 43,073-0-8 and

the Reds Rs. 39,165-4-9 of the total of Rs. 82,238-5-5. This shows in the second place that the Reds alone were not desirous that the strikers should be helped in their struggle. The Yellows also wanted the strike to succeed, at that time at least. It may be noted that in the total of Rs. 82,238-5-5 mentioned above Rs. 17,660-11-0 were not received during this strike, but were the balance left over from the moneys received during the General Strike of 1925 in which none of the Communists here were participants. It would appear as if the innocent Yellow leaders had kept this balance ready for the coming strike of the "mischievous Reds!"

Now if we take the third test as to who from the Strike Committee, the Reds or the Yellows, received these moneys for the strikers, we find that Rs. 18,095-5-8 only passed through the hands of two of the accused here and Rs. 64,142-15-6 came through Mr. N.M. Joshi and his organisations. That is 78 per cent of the "financing" of the strike came through absolutely "safest for the Empire" hands.

While dealing with these figures it may be remembered that though these sums by themselves look very imposing in the poverty stricken Indian conditions, where Relief and Charity Fund collections do not swell beyond a few thousands, their importance must not be exaggerated. The collections for the Bardoli peasants' fight which was proceeding parallel to the strike did not go beyond Rs. 2,00,000, when the whole of the nationalist bourgeoisie in all the provinces stood behind that movement with its men, money and press. We will be over-estimating the utility of this money if we lose sight of their relation to the wages and living of the workers who were put on relief. The relief operations began from June 12th and lasted for 114 days. The round sum of Rs. 95,000 spent on corn relief gives Rs. 833 per day, where as the wages of the textile workers per day which they had ceased to receive amounted to Rs. 2,00,000. The relief distributed over all the workers comes to 248th part of their wages. These "tons of foreign money" against which the Government and the bourgeoisie shrieked do not give more than one pie to each worker who earned Rs. 1-6 per day on an average. If his family had consumed $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers of flour a day it was being offered now a homoepathic wheat flour pill of near about one fourth a tola per day for the whole family! Even supposing that the whole money was spent on the 30,000 strikers only, who came to receive relief and were the neediest of all the workers, they received only a 38th part or pies 5 per head per day. Such a paltry sum can never explain and take the place of the self-sacrifice of the workers. It is not the tons of foreign money that encouraged the workers to fight vigorously for their demands, though it may be

recognised that the help of the international working class did render partial aid in saving the very needy from complete starvation and death in many a case.

Neither did this money play any part in aiding the organisational work of the strike. The organisational expenses of the Strike Committee were about Rs. 13,000 in round figures. The money collected inside India was double this sum, and even if the transport expenses of the exodus of the strikers from Bombay (Rs. 3,310-2-3) were not considered as a form of relief but as a part of organisational work, the total would still be far less than the inland collections. Without money coming from outside, the inland contributions would have fully covered our organisational expenses which certainly are one of the most important demands on the resources of a strike-leading organisation.

By this analysis about the source of the moneys received and its recipients, I am not trying to take any shelter behind the fact that even the most loyal-to-Imperialism organisation like the International Federation of Trade Unions and its affiliated organisations like the British Trade Union Congress or the International Federation of Textile Workers' Associations sent money to help the strikers, and the largest part of it through such an excellent Socialist and Trade Unionist like the Rt. Hon'ble Tom Shaw who has succeeded in reconciling his Socialism, which in words denounces war, with his War Ministership under Imperialism itself. The analysis shows partly the character of the strike of 1928 and the way it was being looked at by the world trade unions. The class struggle of the Bombay textile workers had not yet assumed a definite uncompromising form of class war fought exclusively under the leadership and influence of the Red Flag and all that it connotes. The workers had not yet ideologically, organisationally and practically taken the definite role of revolutionary trade unionism. The big trade union drive that burst forth after October 1928 was not visible in even the faintest symptoms before or during the strike and the sincere determined trade unionism of the Communists was treated as the exuberance of "rusticated college students" as the Times of India put it. Little had the pro-Imperialist I. F. T. U. dreamt that soon a mighty wave of organisational activity unheard of before would be set in motion by the working class in Bombay, just being awakened into class consciousness. The I.F.T.U. hoped to demolish the new leadership by financially propping up the Geneva heroes and making them appear before the workers as their saviours from hunger. Hence the great activity and sympathy

shown by the I. F. T. U. and I. F. T. W. A. in sending money for the textile workers.

If the desire of the I. F. T. U. had been genuine, if it had only the idea of working for the success of the workers' strike, it would not have refused help to the strike in 1929 or allowed its largest constituent, the British T. U. C., to condemn the textile workers next year. But the I. F. T. U.'s pro-Imperialist game was lost. After the strike of 1928 the Bombay Textile workers organically bound themselves on a large scale to what is signified by the Red Flag and naturally the I. F. T. U., the British T. U. C. and the I. F. T. W. A., which were so generous in the preceding years in their appeals for help to the Bombay workers, became louder in their shrieks of hatred next year. The Socialist Pacifist Tom Shaw, who previously was hurling bank drafts for the strike, was next year a War Minister—mobilising his "men-of-war" against the workers. But unfortunately for these gentlemen, class war does not sail on bank drafts nor does it halt for the armed pacifists who are pacifists in Imperialist wars and armed against class wars.

The complaint of the Indian bourgeoisie against the Imperialist Government for allowing the money to come into India for the help of the strikers was quite justified. The bourgeoisie knew that the I. F. T. U. and the colonial working class cannot pull together for long; that we would soon break up with the Genevite sweet speakers and it also knew that the I. F. T. U. will desert but the workers of the Soviet Union will not. And if the workers of the Soviet Union are allowed to help the colonial workers, where will the bourgeoisie be? Naturally if it had to live and also appear as the nationalist leaders of the working class, it must break the Indian working class away from the U. S. S. R. away from every militant section of the world proletariat. Hence it asked for and got the Public Safety Bill.

At the same time we were also justified in insisting on our right to take the help of the international proletariat. Capitalism had destroyed the national barriers by ramming down the Chinese walls of national isolation by its cheap commodity production, export of goods and capital. Imperialism, its next stage, by its world organisation of exploiting the working class and peasantry, has created a world society. But it has also divided the whole world into two hostile camps, the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat. When the smallest part of this world bourgeoisie by its international contradictions threatens a collapse and thereby a danger to the world bourgeoisie, the most powerful sections

of Imperialism act internationally to prop up the collapsing sector though the prop does not help to save it. For example the shortage of gold of the Bank of England calls in the help of the Federal Reserve Bank of the U. S. A. The bourgeoisie also cooperates internationally to suppress the colonial workers, as in China. As against this the world proletariat is bound to cooperate internationally, and if the working class of India is attacked in its standards of wages, whose help is it to seek but that of the world proletariat and especially of the Soviet Union? All the weak capitalist nations run to the U. S. A., the banker of the world bourgeoisie, for help. All the oppressed workers of the world naturally run for help to the U.S.S.R., the banker of freedom for the world proletariat. Possessing political power, experience, the resources of a vast country, the Soviet Union is the best fitted to help the world proletariat. In our need are we to ask help from the victorious working class of the U. S. S. R. or from the bankers of the U. S. A.? The Central Council of Trade Unions of the U. S. S. R. the Red International of Labour Unions, is for us what the Council of the International Chamber of Commerce is for the world bourgeoisie—with this difference that the latter suffers from cut-throat competition within itself and is the organ of a declining class while the former has no internal contradictions and is the organ of the advancing class. Knowing this the Indian bourgeoisie tries to break the solidarity of the Indian workers with those of other countries and especially with those of the U. S. S. R.; and knowing this we have to stand and work for the maintenance of this solidarity. It can never be destroyed by laws of banishment, prohibition of entry to money and fraternal delegates into India from the workers of other countries, because that solidarity is grounded on the organisation of modern world economy.

127. Inland help to the strike—collections in Bombay, Poona, Ahmedabad etc.—the Congress help.

Our insistence to retain international solidarity will be clearer when some attention is paid to the attitude of the Indian nationalist bourgeoisie towards the relief funds of the strikers. I have already referred to the pious advice of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. C.F. Andrews and Sadhus of their ilk. The nationalist bourgeoisie is not opposed to receiving foreign money from any source as such. It does not want the Indian workers to get help from the international proletariat and especially from that of the Soviet Union. The nationalist bourgeois is jubilant at the prospect of dollars and francs if they come for his toyfight with

Imperialism. When the rouble was crashing in value in 1920, he bought the rouble—the Red rouble—and speculated heavily on it; and one member of their class was ludicrous enough to institute a suit in the court of British Imperialism against the Soviet Union asking for redemption of the paper roubles he held. But the bourgeoisie would not like the workers to receive roubles to relieve them of hunger. Such an attitude would have had some show of justification if the nationalist bourgeoisie had itself rendered help. It not only did not render help but even sabotaged any being given; and the leadership of this sabotage belonged to the big bosses of the National Congress including Mahatma Gandhi.

The Strike Committee organised street collections of relief money from the shopkeepers and the petty bourgeoisie in Bombay and elsewhere and from the workers in Bombay and outside. In every place it was met with opposition from the nationalist bourgeoisie.

The nearest to us were the workers in other industries and unions, whom we approached for help, and some collections on pay-day were made by our volunteers at the gates of factories. We also approached individual Trade Unions in Bombay and some help was obtained from them. But the low wages of the colonial workers prevent them from accumulating big reserves of funds in their Unions, which besides being young are attacked from all sides and not allowed to grow. Therefore the help from these sources was small though not poor. Then we tackled the bourgeois and petty bourgeois sections which were not directly under the influence of the textile capitalists. The Citizens' Relief Committee, working mostly under the direction and influence of Mr. N. M. Joshi and his people of the Servants of India Society, was organised in August 1928 in a meeting at the Servants of India Society. This Committee collected a small amount from the merchants and petty traders. In a young bourgeoisie, as we find in the colonies, a highly sensitive class consciousness of the interest of its class as a whole as against another class has not penetrated to all its various sections, as it has done in the capitalism of the U. S. A. or England. Therefore we meet with such aberrations as a Grain Dealers' Association paying a thousand rupees to the Strike Relief Fund through this Committee. However such aberrations were few. Generally the bourgeois and petty bourgeois were hostile to the relief fund and naturally so. They certainly were not going to aid a class-war against their own class interest. During the next six months, this class outlook grew so strong and organised, that not a single aberration of the kind mentioned above was found

in the attitude of the whole of the Bombay bourgeoisie towards the strike in 1929.

Next we approached the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. This body has of late boasted very much of its interest in the masses and has said that the workers should throng into its ranks and make it their own so that it can wholly look to their welfare. Now the workers have no time to waste in making experiments each year, to measure how far the Congress has moved towards the workers and away from the bourgeoisie. Our experience has confirmed our statement that the workers can never capture this bourgeois stronghold by votes and elections. Can the workers capture the mills and banks of the bourgeoisie by votes? Certainly not. It is something like that with the Congress also. In 1928 we possessed nearly half the votes on the B. P. C. C. and the General Secretary was ours, while most of the Sub-Committees had a majority of our members. In all the meetings, where the interests of the bourgeoisie were not touched, where financial help except for the benefit of the financial ring in control was not asked, the members left the working majority to us and were slack. But when we asked money for the Strike Relief Fund and held meetings for its the game of sabotage was started. They lured away many of the young men that generally supported us and prevented a quorum being formed. (Exhibit reference * of speeches). Ultimately by several manoeuvres we succeeded in holding the meeting. Shamelessly enough some of the members, who were the hirelings of the pro-Shaukat Ali groups, wanted to sanction money with the proviso of communal distribution which we refused. Then they wanted to come themselves with their petty contribution of Rs. 3,000/- and distribute it personally. We were not going to consent to a parallel organisation to function in the strike area and then allow it to become a source of dissensions. In order to hush up our opposition in public and denunciation of their bourgeois character, at last a sum was sanctioned. Then the bureaucracy sabotaged the handing over of the money. The treasurer had no money! The cheques had to be obtained from the Trust Committee, which first must decide for itself, if it had any margin at all to pay for this extra demand, not budgeted for before. Thus things dragged on for days. The B. P. C. C. which had written off thousands of rupees, given out to questionable characters posing as Khadi merchants and producers, had invested large sums of its Swaraj Fund collections in foreign goods stores (for example the Ashoka Swedeshi Stores Ltd.) and Motor Car Companies because the directors of the Fund were the directors of these companies, sabotaged relief being given to the strikers. With the self same coterie still in control of the Congress, we are

told that it has now suddenly become a Congress of workers. Can the Congress dominated by the agents of Fazalbhoy and Birlas ever be a Congress of the wage slaves of Fazalbhoy and Birlas? Impossible.

Were we not aware of the nature of the Congress and of the petty bourgeoisie? Why then did we ask help from them, if we did not expect them to help? Because we wanted them to expose themselves by their own actions before the workers. It is never sufficient that the few conscious workers should know the behaviour and attitude of the nationalist bourgeoisie. The whole working-class must be convinced, by actual experience of their own, about the correctness of our attitude. The sabotaging activities of the bureaucracy of the Congress helped us to secure this experience for the workers.

We also sent delegations to Poona and Ahmedabad to collect money and win support for the strike. In Ahmedabad they met Mahatma Gandhi personally and requested him to render help through his Union. His first and foremost statement was (Reference exhibit speech P 1702) "I am not convinced that the workers are in the right. How can I help them?" That revealed the bourgeois in him. He did not begin by doubting the bourgeoisie. But he started with the assumption that the workers were wrong and that is what the bourgeois does. Our delegation left him to his prayers and his mill-owners and went straight over his head to the workers in Ahmedabad directly. They collected there Rs. 5863-6-3.

So who ultimately came to the rescue of the Bombay workers in their starvation and strike? The Bombay Municipality made fun of their suffering, patriots of the Congress sabotaged our attempt to secure money; the Mahatma presumed the workers to be in the wrong. What did the mill-owners do? They asked the Imperialist armed forces to help them in forcibly opening the mills, got our volunteers arrested and sent to prison, clamoured for our arrest, the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill, joined hands with Imperialism against the workers. Thus the bourgeoisie was pro-Imperialist and its patriotic agents hid their likeness with their creators—the bourgeoisie—under a padding of coarse khaddar. But unfortunately for them Marxism is a powerful enough ray to tear the veil. In 1926 the Gauhati Congress had passed a resolution favouring the workers and peasants. In 1931 we find Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru telling the Bombay workers that the Congress will side with the workers in a dispute between them and the capitalists. But when the class war actually begins, the workers

find these pandits on the other side of the barricade, ready to render the only service they can do, that is to appoint Inquiry Committees to determine whether the patriotic and most swadeshi mill-owner had or had not telephoned for the armed forces to come and beat the women workers assembled before the mill-gates to demand their dues. (Example of a latest case in Bombay). It is only the international working class that sincerely helped the Bombay workers. The Russian, British, German and other workers in the foreign countries, and Indian workers at home together gave 94 per cent of the total relief money for their comrade strikers. It was this solid objective experience that taught the workers the slogan "Workers of the world unite"—it is this that convinced them that along with Imperialism must be abolished the Indian bourgeoisie also and that the fight will be carried on by the workers and peasants organised in their own class organisation and not under the leadership of the "tax-gatherers of Imperialism" like the bosses of the Congress.

SECTION 3. The organisation of the Girni Kamagar

Union and events upto March 1929:

paras : 128—141.

128. *Small revolt against the October agreement—Ex. P966—
the task after the strike—competitors of the G. K. U.—
volunteers and the Union—Ex. P. 967 and P. 929.*

The strike was called off by a monster meeting held in the Nagu Sayaji Wadi on 5th October 1928, where the agreement arrived at on the previous day with the mill-owners was explained. Tremendous enthusiasm prevailed and the agreement was endorsed by the workers. Almost every prominent member of the Joint Strike Committee of both the wings was present and spoke in the meeting. A handbill over the signatures of the Joint Secretaries of the Committee was also issued explaining the terms. It is a fact that the agreement did not remove the rational system—the three loom and two frame system—from the Sassoon, Finlay and Koh-i-Noor Mills. Nearly ten thousand workers who were directly hit by the system remained dissatisfied; and had every reason to revolt against the agreement, which they did. When on Monday morning 6th October, the mills were reopened and the workers in these groups found that they had to work under the old rational system, they considered themselves betrayed. They came out and started a campaign to close down the mills again. Herein was going to be the test of the new leaders of the workers. In former days and even today in many cases where the reformist leadership is predominant,

the rule was that when an unfavourable agreement in any respect was repudiated by the workers, the leaders decamped and refused to face the fury of the dissatisfied workers. We could not afford to do this. We had to stay with the workers, we belonged to them, wholly and solely. Therefore we went straight into the meetings of the dissatisfied workers and explained to them how the system could not be overthrown. The workers had held out for nearly six months, the mill-owners had agreed to the demands of almost all the workers excepting the Sassoon section and in the present conditions it was impossible to continue the struggle any longer on that sole issue. But if they insisted upon continuing the struggle we were bound to carry out their mandate; our signatures over the agreement had no value by themselves. Any agreement entered into in the name of the rank and file must be endorsed by the rank and file. If they refused to endorse it must be scrapped. We had given our definite opinion and lead that work ought to be resumed. But in order to measure the exact extent of the resistance, we issued the handbill—Ex. P. 966. The Prosecution claim that this handbill shows that immediately after we had settled the strike, we wanted to stop the mills from working normally and therefore called upon the workers to start boycott of some of the mills. This handbill was also brought as an exhibit by the mill-owners before the Fawcett Inquiry Committee of 30/10/28 and is printed in their proceedings at page 113. (Ex. D. 523). The mill-owners argued exactly as the Prosecution argue now. And this action proves the identity of thought of the Indian bourgeoisie in Bombay and the Prosecution here, and confirms the statement of Spratt that this case is a strike-breaking Prosecution and nothing else. However this handbill does not lend itself to the interpretation of the Prosecution. It did not call upon the workers to continue the strike, though we would not have hesitated to do so if necessary. The question form of the sentence at the top which they have failed to notice itself shows this. It was a question, as I have said, to measure the extent of the resistance to the agreement in order to aid us in deciding our line of action. The response to this handbill as we expected was negligible. After one or two meetings it became clear that the Sassoon workers also were exhausted and the majority of them were unwilling and unable to continue the struggle at that moment just then. This was quite natural. They had been the first victims of rationalisation and had been fighting for over one year. Within four days the agreement had been accepted on all sides and accepted with through understanding. The greatest factor in bringing about this result was the fact that the workers found that here was a leadership that was not going to desert their struggle, though it might have to face ups and downs in that process.

The resumption of work confronted us with greater tasks and new problems. The experience of the world proletariat had taught us that Capitalism, when forced to make concessions or withdraw its attacks on the wages and hours of workers, tries to nullify them by devious ways, unless the leadership is vigilant and organisation strong. The agreement of 4th October contained three soft spots, where in we were sure the mill-owners would try to drive in spikes to break the gains of the strike. One was the elasticity of the clause of restoring wages and conditions of March 1927, the second was that the question of musters would not be raised.

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The third was the payment of fixed rates of wages for the provisional period of October and November till full work commenced on older rates, after the machinery and equipment had been set in proper order for work. The mill-owners' tactics of depriving the workers of the gains of the strike through these soft spots, two of which were in fact the essential demands at the root of the general strike, could not commence in October. Because the workers who had gone back to their villages did not return till the third week of October. But smaller complaints of victimisation did begin to pour in and we had to set up an organisation to deal with them and therefrom arose the organisational work of the Girni Kamgar Union.

As has been stated, the G.K.U. was founded on 22nd May 1928 during the general strike, under circumstances which have been fully shown elsewhere. During the strike the Union as such did not function, except in so far as it was a participant in the Joint Strike Committee. All meetings, picketing, relief distribution etc., were done in the name of the Strike Committee, though the moderate group of Mr. N. M. Joshi took care to mention, wherever it could, that the foreign remittances for relief were received by the Bombay Textile Labour Union and were contributed by that Union to the Strike Committee. During the strike the G.K.U. income from May to October was Rs 88-12-0. When the strike was over, though the Strike Committee, composed of three unions, continued to exist, the three unions began to separately build up their own organisations. The Bombay Textile Labour Union had a ready-made apparatus, which so far as its office work went, was well organised. That Union had been working since 1926 and its first year of report showed 6,000 membership with Rs 17,000 as collections. The second annual report showed 4,000 members with Rs 12,000 collections. (A.I.T.U. Bulletin, October 1928.) When it started competition with us it had Rs 13,000 to back it up, for centre offices in the mill area and a paid office staff. Our Union had no centre

offices except the Head Office whose rent also was in arrears. We had committed ourselves to pay Rs 2,000 for relief grain as our contribution, when the money for relief distribution in the last week of the strike fell short. So while our debts were over Rs 2,000, we had Rs. 14 to our credit with our treasurer. But we had one thing which our rivals had not got. We had the immense strength of a revolutionary theory and a scientific faith in the creative capacity of the proletariat. On such foundation and Rs. 14 we started to build up the G.K.U., backed up by the additional credit of our work during a victorious strike. In our lectures during the strike, we had already from time to time emphasised the necessity of a strong union embracing the majority of workers with an efficient staff and volunteer corps. Accordingly we issued on 12th October 1928 a handbill (P 967) explaining to the workers how and to whom they should pay subscriptions, the necessity for raising a substantial fund and a cadre of organisers to push up organisational work. This handbill also had been used by the mill-owners against us before the Fawcett Committee and the same is now being brought in this case.

The Prosecution has raised a tremendous structure over this handbill and the scheme of volunteers' and speakers' corps outlined therein. The Committing Magistrate says, "This provision of an army is an unusual feature of Trade Union propaganda but from the point of view of the revolutionary it is an eminently sound proposal." The Magistrate also quotes a handbill (P 929) issued by me on 12th December 1928.

The programme outlined in these two handbills contains nothing very serious to warrant the remarks of the Magistrate or the use of it made by the Prosecution. The Prosecution have raised a structure of a revolutionary conspiracy to overthrow the British Empire. But to unearth a conspiracy extending over several years and not to find an "army to wage war" would make the Government look disgraceful and discomfited. An army or at least plans of raising one is an absolute necessity in such a conspiracy extending over three continents and aimed at the overthrow of the mightiest Empire on earth. Now for four years the secret Police careered over the whole world for documents but they had to find some "army" in India ready to pounce on the King's sovereignty. Otherwise the drama would be without any romance. Having found the roots of the conspiracy at Moscow, the Prosecution should not have been so very anxious to unearth a Red Army in India! They should have contented themselves with the Soviet Red Army and our appreciation of the heroism of

that body. But the subtle legal brains refused to consider the conspiracy quite complete, until some Red Army drilling right down here under the very nose of Imperialism and shaking the beer bottles of the Imperialist bureaucracy by its heavy march were found; and after a tremendous search of six hours of the offices of the Girni Kamgar Union they found these two handbills. Well, if you cannot find the Red Army, the next best is an army of Red handbills. At least the whole Red Army had vanished, perhaps converted into "invisibles" and bottled up in the three mysterious bottles of tincture iodine for First Aid, (another army apparatus I) found with Spratt. The handbills were seized and exhibited, for do they not actually contain the words "Red Army" ?

Anybody who is not previously told that these handbills are issued by some terrible conspirators and are valuable evidence to how that these conspirators were raising a Red Army like the Bolsheviks to overthrow the Empire will not take these leaflets for anything more than what they actually say, i.e. the call for a volunteer corps and a staff of worker-speakers and organisers for the organisation of the Union.

129. The functions of Red Trade Union Volunteers.

The Magistrate thinks that it is an unusual feature for a trade union to have such an army or corps but he thinks it a sound proposal from the point of view of the revolutionary. I do not think that to have a volunteer corps or to call it a Red Army or to dress it in Red clothes is a revolutionary act. It is the function discharged by that body which would make it a revolutionary or otherwise. Almost every institution in India or in the world maintains some sort of volunteer corps. And if a coloured dress or badge and the word 'Army' were sufficient, the most reactionary Salvation Army would have been the most revolutionary body. I do not put the G. K. U. on par with the Salvation Army. What I mean is that mere names and descriptions do not help. It is the actual task carried out that makes one revolutionary or reactionary. The task allotted to the volunteers that were to be raised was definitely laid down in the handbill. A trade union if it is to function properly on a wide area must have a volunteer corps. They are required for picketing, for keeping order at meetings, for acting as couriers from mill to mill in emergency times and to defend the union, its offices and workers from murderous attacks of the Police and its henchmen. The most important of all is the last task. These were purely defensive and trade union tasks and the handbills do not say anything beyond this—only it is said in a forceful manner.

British Imperialism allows only reactionary organisations in India to have even armed volunteer corps. Every European and Anglo-Indian in India is an armed man flourishing his revolver at the poor workers and peasants that he meets with. Hunting and shooting parties of idle Magistrates, Bank Managers and business men trample over fields and forests arms in hand and many a time shoot a peasant in place of a deer and, escape with a fine of a few rupees for a human life. But if the poor peasant were to enter the forest for a piece of fuel wood without a permit, he would straight off be marched to jail. British, American and Australian tourists roam about the country with arms in hand in a disarmed country and shoot rickshaw coolies (as in the famous Simla case) and ekka-drivers (as in the recent Madras case) for demanding larger fare of a few annas. The law of the bourgeoisie and its bourgeois administrators negotiate compensation in money value of the lost life of the poor worker. But when an infuriated peasantry harassed by famine and taxation kills a zamindar, a planter or a Magistrate, the armed forces of Imperialism, aided by its corps, shoot and hang hundreds of the peasants for one life of an exploiter. The working class and the peasantry have no protection of law or of the State, because the State and the law belong to their enemies—the Imperialists and the bourgeoisie. Naturally the working class and peasantry have to organise their own machinery of protection against the armed White Terror. Such a machinery in the circumstances of the Girni Kamgar Union could only take the form of a volunteer corps.

As such the functions of Red volunteers are quite different from those of the bourgeoisie. The volunteers of the reactionary organisations, like that of the Salvation Army, and scouts of the Powell breed, are auxiliary forces of Imperialism against the movement of national freedom, and against the workers and peasants. In times of strikes and acute national struggles, they play the role of the murderers of workers and peasants, as was shown by the role of the Kitchener Corps in the G. I. P. Railway strike, the Territorials, and the Anglo-Indian Rifle Clubs. The functions of the Red Volunteers are also different from those of the congress and such other organisations. The congress volunteers are not given the task of protecting the people. For this the volunteers are not to be blamed. Some of them personally have shown the highest heroism, like any soldier of the Revolution. But the effect of their heroism is not to further the cause of national freedom but make peace with the exploiters; because the Congress bourgeoisie uses their heroism for compromise and

sabotage of the struggle of the youths, workers and peasants. In the innumerable massacres that the Police have carried out of the peasants in U. P., the volunteers of the Congress were sent under command of respectable leaders with an ambulance car and the slogan of peace and surrender, after the Imperialist Police have shot and looted the peasantry.

The functions of the volunteers of the militant trade unions must be quite different from these. In the first place our corps is definitely built on class lines, the men being drawn from the working class in the towns (and the poor peasantry in the villages). Secondly our volunteers are out to carry out the needs of the class war and not of class peace. Thirdly our volunteers are under the control and command of the class leadership of the workers. Necessarily some more features arise from this.

D/- 18/12/31.

The Trade Union volunteers or Red volunteers must not be mixed with elements from the petty bourgeoisie. They must be from the class-conscious ranks. The workers are not afraid of discipline and we do not hesitate to maintain it. The Red volunteers must be equipped with whatever weapons are possible in the present circumstances of the country, and must not hesitate to use them in order to protect workers' demonstrations, meetings, offices of organisations, working class houses, men, women and children. But the use of force if necessary must be done with care and precision. Though we are not pledged to non-violence, we are not out for the use of violence in each and every case. Such use for example was justified when the hireling Pathans of the Oil Companies began to loot shops and workers' quarters in Bombay. Such use was justified when the Pathans attacked the head office of our Union in February 1929. In that period of organisation such use had to be purely of a defensive character. The Red volunteers must become a tower of strength and confidence to the workers. Every Red volunteer must know his locality and must become the organiser of protection for the poor workers, men and women, from the violence of moneylenders and the harassment of the landlords and the police. But it is also necessary to carefully distinguish between the separate clashes which are erratic manifestations of class war, the general line of class war, from the individual quarrels. The working class as a whole is exploited and abused every hour of its life. The bourgeoisie as a class practises violence and terror against the workers at every step. Therefore there exists continuous class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class. In

this struggle, the factory managers and supervisors administer the bourgeois law inside the factory, and ill-treat the workers. When the workers' consciousness is just beginning to rise and organisation is not yet strong, the workers resist such ill-treatment by attacks and physical violence against the factory bosses. However justified such resistance may be because of the oppression, the Red volunteers cannot assist the workers in carrying out such actions on the ground of defending the class. They have to prevent such attempts. But the method of prevention must not be the Gandhian method, which asks the furious peasants, who have carried out such an action to surrender and be killed by the police. Our method is to explain to the workers the futility of such attacks and to explain to them the superiority of class struggle as a whole. Similarly in individual quarrels on personal grounds or minor bickerings unconnected with the general grievances, the Red volunteers must try for restraint and retain peace. In fact there can be no hard and fast rules showing where they should resist with their strength and where they should not, for separate situations. But such a corps is an absolute necessity in a colonial country, overridden with feudal conditions, where most innocent gatherings and demonstrations of workers are attacked by the police and the men of the landlords and the bourgeoisie, moneylenders and factory goondas.

The Red volunteers in villages also have to carry out a similar work. The Congress volunteer under the guidance of bourgeois leadership is made to act as the revenue tax-gatherer of the Government and the zamindars and to squeeze the peasantry in the interest of the zamindars under the false excuse of the truthful observation of an untruthful Pact. The Red volunteer acts exactly contrary to this. He develops the existing class struggle according to the form suitable for his province or place. He does not squeeze the peasants' money to save the zamindar and help class peace. Under the present conditions class peace means peaceful exploitation by Imperialism of the workers and peasants. The bourgeois leadership uses the Congress volunteers to maintain class peace, that is to maintain exploitation. The Red volunteers are directed to overthrow exploitation, which naturally means not class peace but class war.

The Red volunteers cannot take part in the reformist manoeuvres of the Congress bosses, to sidetrack the energies of the militant self-sacrificing volunteers into the work of picketing liquor shops and forgoen cloth. We must fraternise with the Congress volunteers, who are under the influence of the bourgeoisie of the

village rich, since these volunteers are actually poor peasants and land workers. We can join hands with them or draw them on to our side in a work like that of no-rent campaign, resistance to compulsory labour, mass demonstration and defend the peasants' property and household from the exploiters.

The control and command of such work and the volunteer corps must lie with the class organisations concerned. It must be remembered here that I am not speaking of the Communist Party organisations, but of Trade Unions and peasant organisations. The command of all such corps must be proletarian both in the towns and in the countries. If this care is not taken, then the most self-sacrificing and fighting elements from the proletariat and peasantry commanded by the Congress bourgeoisie, the shopkeepers, merchants and fashionable youths, who hanker more after the romance of the "movies" than the grim class struggle, are used by the bourgeoisie to fight in the interests of the bourgeoisie and the zamindars and against the interests of the fighters themselves. For example, Babu Genu who died of satyagrah under a lorry of foreign cloth in Bombay was himself a worker. His heroic death increased the sale of swadeshi cloth, and the Bombay mill-owners did double shift work. But as soon as the Pact was signed and trade slackened a bit, it was the comrades of Babu Genu himself, the textile workers, that were thrown out of employment. The bourgeoisie that negotiated for a democratic constitution on the strength of the millions of Babu Genus in India is not prepared to give, in that constitution or even in the present Municipal Government, a democratic franchise to the Babu Genus because they have no property and do not pay high rents to qualify themselves to vote and sit with the rich bourgeoisie.

It was not an unusual feature to have volunteer corps for Trade Unions in Bombay or any other place at that. The G.K. Mahamandal had its volunteer corps and it did work in the 1925 textile strike. The Bombay Textile Labour Union had one of its own. The Joint Strike Committee had also a corps to do picketing and other work during the strike of 1928. So when the G. K. U. began its work, it was quite natural for it to have volunteers for its work.

But our volunteers were not going to follow the tradition of the previous ones. We wanted them to do proletarian class work, the work of the Trade Unions as such. It means that we did not want them to lend their services to communal meetings or demonstrations, celebrations of the anniversaries of feudal kings of the old times or heroes of this or that religion. We had found that the volunteers of the Union, that had preceded us in the textile

industry, had indulged in this sort of thing, which ought to be foreign to the Trade Unions of the true type. In order to stamp our corps with quite a different tradition, a tradition which is rich with the history of the international proletariat, we used to describe our volunteers as Red Army, Red Corps etc. But because we used these epithets, it would be ridiculous to argue that we were organising a real Red Army. It would be also ridiculous to argue that we were trying to build up a Red Army by merely issuing handbills and cloth belts. We were neither creating a bogus Red Army by painting white shirts in red, "to save in washing," as the militant hero of the Congress bourgeoisie Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has said regarding his "red shirts." (The true Red Shirts should have protested against such an imbecile explanation of their historically heroic uniform). Nor were we creating a real Red Army at that stage. The epithets we used simply to demarcate ourselves from the traditions of the previous corps, which worked on anything but proletarian class lines. However we could not fulfil the programme till the time of our arrest. This is evidenced by my complaint in the handbill of December 1928, P 929. We had not raised more than a hundred men and those too were not all according to our ideas of highest standards. This was due mainly to the fact that the G. K. U. was never given time to carry out this programme by the several strikes that were being forced on the workers between October 1928 and March 1929.

130. Complaints about violation of the agreement by the mill-owners—the 71 individual mill strikes after October—were they incited by us ?

In October the largest number of complaints arose on the question of reengaging those workers who were working in April 1928 when the strike began. Though there was no specific clause about it in the agreement it was understood in the discussions. It was also understood that though in the agreement the daily advances to be paid according to schedule were liable to be adjusted according to piece or fixed rates and work done, the adjustments would not be made and the mill-owners would forego deductions to be made in the cases of overpayment. In the whole of the industry, the wages bill of the workers on attendance roll was more by several thousands, according to the daily rate of advances than it would have been according to the prevailing schedules of wages. The mill-owners intended to deduct the overpayment advances from the next month's wages, which we refused to allow; and they agreed to it. Similarly several mills refused to reengage workers who came back

very late in October or even in November. We had to get their places reserved till the end of October and there also we succeeded. We had to go through more than five thousand complaints in October of this type and got them satisfactorily settled in the majority of cases.

The organisational results from such success were magical. As soon as the two weeks' payment was made workers rushed in thousands to the office of the G. K. U. to pay their subscriptions. We did not expect such a rush. Never in the history of Bombay Unions had anyone met with such a rush and therefore having no previous experience to rely upon we had not kept ready any staff to meet the situation. But immediately after the first two weeks' experience we decided to open six centres (that is sub-offices) of the Union in various localities. Each centre was given in charge of a responsible member of the Union, with paid clerks, organisers etc. (Resolution of the Managing Committee of 16/10/28, Ex.P958). An account was opened in the Imperial Bank of India in the name of the Union and operated upon by any three of the five officers of the Union authorised to do so. Such authority was vested by a resolution of the Managing Committee in the President—A. Alwe, Vice President—R. S. Nimbkar, Joint Treasurers—B.T. Alwe and S. V. Ghate and the General Secretary—myself. (16/10/28). That a vast organisation was springing up was clear from the fact that though the workers had been on strike for six months, yet they recognised the claim of the Union as the first upon their poor earnings of the first two or 3 weeks. All the workers had not yet come back and the mills were not working in full capacity. Still our October collections were Rs 6794/- that is on the basis of 4 annas per member we had over 27,000 members, one-third of the total number of workers that had returned to work.

The workers, contrary to all expectations of the mill-owners, showed quite a new spirit of initiative. They were not going to tolerate any longer the insults from the mill bureaucracy. Bribery, abuses, beating etc. were resented, resisted and even retaliated. This had a very panicky effect on the bureaucracy which lived so long on bribery and extra exploitation, apart from the one carried on by Capitalism in the ordinary process of production.

D/- 19. 12. 31

The bureaucracy tried to resort to its old method of terrorism. The first and easiest method was worked through the clause, "The question of musters shall not arise," in the agreement. We interpreted this clause to mean that the particular

mill may not engage exactly the same worker it had on a particular job. A shifting of labour from mill to mill was allowed, and thus the musters, so far as specific individuals were concerned, may become quite different from what they were in April 1928. The mill owners refused to accept this interpretation. To them it meant a right to retain as many workers on a particular job as they liked. They virtually claimed the right to carry out retrenchment as per their standard scheme, which however was yet a subject matter of dispute according to the agreement. So in many cases where they had four men per frame of spindles they retained only 2. Several mills asked some of their departments to work longer hours which also was a subject matter of dispute. By the agreement all matters of dispute arising from it were to be submitted to the Fawcett Committee. This Committee was appointed by the Government on 13th October 1928 and began its public sittings on 29th October. On 31st October we submitted before them some of the important disputes, as many as 12, and the Committee ruled 10 of them in our favour. But at the same time it called the Director of Information, Mr. Jennings to give his views on the interpretation of the muster clause. After his evidence the Committee upheld the mill-owners' interpretation which became one of the causes of the lightning strikes. Already the workers had made three strikes in different mills and had forced favourable agreements out of the mill-owners. When the mills began work full steam, the century-old class nature of the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie rose up and began to attack in a very cunning manner the wages and rates of the workers. They attacked the fixed wage-earners through the muster clause. The piece workers in weaving were attacked in a more ingenious way. They gave them the old sorts of 1927 with a changed number and fixed a lower rate per pound than what it was in 1927. Or they got out quite a new sort under the old number and paid the same rate, though the changes in the warp, weft, etc. required a higher rate. When the workers questioned, they kept on repeating that everything was what it was in March 1927 according to the agreement. One mill, Shapurji Bharucha, was impudent enough to introduce the rational system in direct breach of the agreement and had to withdraw it when the Fawcett Committee upheld our objection. The workers by such actions on the part of the mill-owners were becoming convinced that the 5½ months of a general strike in the industry and a solemn agreement had not changed the bureaucracy. Naturally the workers were forced into direct action of individual mill strikes, wherever a grievance cropped up. They began to build up their mill committees and departmental leaders in each mill. The highest possible pitch of

vigilance on the rates, the material supplied, the fines, the conduct of officers etc. was instituted. The general result was that bribery, assaults, cheating and such other forms of exploitation began to be reduced. The mill bureaucracy became weakened and in many places its terror completely smashed. The workers regained confidence and organised with greater determination and intelligence. The following table shows how the months of November and December were the hardest fought, though as yet the workers had not taken a full meal of a full month's wages.

Number of strikes:—

Month	Success-ful.	Unsuccess-ful.	Compromised.	Undecided.	Total
October 1928	2	0	1	0	3
November „	11	7	2	0	20
December „	10	12	2	0	24
January 1929	2	5	0	0	7
February „	7	1	0	0	8
March „	0	6	0	3	9
	32	31	5	3	71

* The undecided 3 merged in the General Strike of 1929 April.

Thus out of 71 disputes as many as 44 (62 per cent.) took place in November and December. As regards the results, if the "compromises" are added on to the "successfuls" and those that were left undecided in March till our arrest are omitted from consideration, we find to have won 37 out of 68 strikes, a 54.4 per cent success. I have already referred to a remark of the Fawcett Committee that all the individual mill strikes prior to April 1928 were lost. But when the workers began to organise according to our methods, they not only won the General Strike, stopped rationalisation and wage-cuts, but they also won against the underhand attacks begun soon after the big strike by the bourgeoisie, who thought the workers were too exhausted to resist immediately. In fact we won almost every important strike. Though the percentage of success is actually 54.4 per cent on the total number of disputes, the losses were not so serious as the gains. Many of the

strikes lost were not in fact strikes in the real sense. Some of them were due to misunderstanding. Such strikes were at once called off by us without hesitation and did not last for more than a day or two. The reformists and imperialists charge us with inciting meaningless strikes without any reasons. But such a charge is absolutely unfounded. From October 1928 to March 1929 we had occasions to advise an immediate liquidation of some of the small strikes, when we found that there was no immediate grievance that would not be removed by a simple negotiation. While doing this we have not at all given up our principles or deviated from a correct attitude towards the strikes. While writing about strikes the Third Congress of the C. I. says, "our organisational activity must not lay itself bare to the accusation of stirring and inciting the workers to nonsensical strikes and other inconsiderate actions." (Exh: P 2396). The large majority of these 71 strikes were not nonsensical or inconsiderate, and where there appeared to be the slightest reason to suppose that they were so, they had to be liquidated, though in some instances they inflicted some amount of humiliation on the Union at the hands of the mill-owners. However such occasions are bound to occur during the progress of the rising proletariat that has begun to learn initiative and to create its own militant leadership from its rank and file committees and groups. When such mistakes occurred we did not disown or denounce the men *before the mill-owners*, but fought against their being used by the bosses as levers to demoralise the workers, though *before the workers* themselves we had to expose the mistakes ruthlessly and criticise them. And that is what every trade unionist, I think, must do, if he is to build up an intelligent and disciplined working-class leadership.

131. *The agreements and wage increases secured through the small strikes—the formation of mill committees.*

The agreements arrived at between us and the mill-owners will show that the most hard fought strikes were completely justified. They prove that the mill-owners had introduced lower rates for new varieties of cloth and had embarked on retrenchment. Some of these agreements are on record as defence exhibits, (D 432), while some are to be found in the files of the Union brought here in search. The longest of these strikes was that in the Kohinoor Mills (30th November to 26th December 1928). The agreement arrived at between this mill and ourselves is the longest and most exhaustive one on record. The agreement shows that in December 1928, there existed attempts on the part of the capitalist bureaucracy to receive bribes, to assault the workers and

forfeit wages. On weaving rates some of the typical increases are shown below:—

Mill	Average increases on New Sorts secured by our agreements.	Dates.
1. Manekji Petit	6%	21-11-28
2. Morarjee Gokaldas	8½%	24-11-28
3. New Great Eastern	17½%	26-11-28
4. 9 mills of Currimbhoy Group:	2%	5-12-28
5. Moon Mill	7½%	7-12-28
6. Framji Petit	11%	9-12-28
7. Simplex	17%	-12-28
8. Kohinoor	14½%	26-12-28

Apart from these increases in wage rates there are several agreements restoring retrenchment of workers, cancelling increased hours of working introduced in some of the departments without a corresponding increase in the wages.

In passing we may note here a fact which will show the character of the patriotism of the national industry for which the workers are asked to sacrifice. An examination of the agreements will show the rates paid on *khadi* weaving. For example, our agreements with the New Great Eastern Mill and Framji Petit Mill, show rates to be paid on *khadi* cloth and *khadi dhoties*. In one case, of which the specification was 52" x 24 yards x 14 5/8 pounds, we got the rates raised from three pies per pound to four pies, an increase 33 1/3rd per cent. In another mill the rate was raised from 4 pies to 4½ pies per pound for the specification 44 x 24 x 12. More instances can be found in the agreements in D 432. Now it is well known that Communists are opposed to the *khaddar* movement as a plank in the political platform of the National Emancipation Movement. The grounds for this position have been stated before in para 102. The attitude of the mill-owners and the Indian bourgeoisie is contradictory to ours. The whole of the Indian bourgeoisie including the textile mill-owners applaud Gandhiji for his *khaddar* movement. Because it advertises Swadeshi and consequently the goods of the Indian mills. Hundreds of times complaints have appeared from the sincere but misguided *Khaddarites* that the Indian mills manu-

facture cheap Khaddar and sell it, thus killing the trade of "genuine" khaddar. The Bombay khaddar interests who have invested thousands (not from their pockets but from the loans given for good from the enormous Congress funds), and who are in league with the Indian mill-owners, in reply to these complaints have always charged the Japanese merchants for doing such treacherous business. The Indian mill-owners also solemnly affirm that they never have any intention of making profits from sale of mill khaddar by taking advantage of the Khaddar Movement, and the petty bourgeois leaders of the Congress, tied as they are to the chariot wheel of the bourgeoisie, utter simply dark warnings against the sinful mill-owners who protest innocence and pay a few thousands for intense swadeshi propoganda. When this was going on in 1928, the textile bourgeoisie was cutting down the weaving rates on khadi cloth and dhoties surreptitiously in order to lower costs and sell them at the best khadi rates with a genuine Khaddar Bhandar stamp. The mills mentioned above had cut down rates by 33½, 13½ and 12½ per cent. The bourgeoisie patriotically lied before the public who were its victims and reaped super-profits. At the same time, in spite of the agreement of October, it cut down rates of the workers. Prospering on treachery to the peasantry, treachery to the workers and treachery to its own organisation, Indian Capitalism cannot but become counter-revolutionary and give the country in the hands of Imperialism. When the workers in Bombay fought against this gang, the Congress sided with the bourgeoisie. Though the workers never intended it, the fight for higher rates on all varieties including khadi cloth and dhoties, in fact was indirectly saving the khadi producers, the ideal patriots, from the severe competition and fraud of the mill-owners. Yet the Congress tried to sabotage the workers' struggle.

These 71 strikes were completely initiated and conducted by the workers themselves. During this phase of the struggle, the whole rank and file was drawn into the direct conduct of the strikes for which a new type of a live and flexible organisation was born. It was the Mill Committees and rank and file departmental leaders. The constitution of the G. K. U. (Ex. P 939) which was copied from that of the B.T.L.U. contains a provision for establishing Mill Committees and the rules for their elections, management and fuctions. But neither the B. T. L. U. nor the G.K.U. or any other union had ever brought into being the real rank and file leadership in the form of the Mill Committees. But when the struggle assumed new forms, the Mill Committees began to spring up at the end of

November 1928 and rapidly became very popular and powerful. The Mill Committees were not strictly created by regular elections nor did they function in accordance with the rules of the constitution. The reason was that the rule was originally framed without any experience of rank-and file working. We gave the slogan of forming Mill Committees not from any pre-arranged plan as such. If that had been so it would have been done long before November. We had no experience of these things at all. When the November strikes in individual mills began, we found it impossible to cope with the whole work. So, when we attended the meetings of the workers and used to call out the men who knew the working of the mill, their grievances, the wages etc. in detail and could explain them. When such men came forward we gave them the power to draft their case in full and put it before the management in the name of workers and under the authority of the Union. After one or two such examples it was found that this worked very well, reduced the strain on the small number of officials of the Union and also trained the workers. So, a general slogan to form Mill Committees was issued and very eagerly taken up by all the workers. Within two months we had Mill Committee or a group of intelligent workers in almost every mill. The Mill Committees carried out the following work. They enrolled members and collected subscriptions. They watched the bureaucracy, and prevented it from harrasing the workers by asking for bribes or molesting the women workers, or in any way worsening the conditions of work. They formulated grievances, collected information and directly approached the management and negotiated. When they failed to get a hearing, they either approached the head office for advice or embarked on a strike if it was immediately necessary. They prevented victimisation, dismissals, fines and abuses. The Mill Committees by January 1929 had developed into one of the important controlling factors in the management of the mills, so far as the workers' side was concerned. They called forth the best elements from the rank and file and began to prove superior to the corrupt mill bureaucracy even on questions of technical management.

132. *Mill-owners' move against 'mill-Committees and G. K. U. Collections inside the Mills—The Pearson Court of Inquiry for the 1929 General Strike—my evidence refused.*

This development was strongly resented by the mill-owners and by December they had decided upon a strong hand policy. They issued two circulars, one prohibiting collection of Union

subscriptions on the mill premises and another asking the mill managers not to allow the Union officials to enter the mill buildings beyond the office at the gate in order to see or hear on the spot the grievances of the workers. The second circular was issued in order to prevent the Union officials from acquainting themselves directly with the lay-out of machinery, the rest-house and sanitary arrangements etc. Since long before, the G. K. U. was born, it has been the practice for all Unions to collect subscriptions inside the mills on pay day. When there were no Mill Committees and no intensive participation of the workers in Union work, the usual method of collection was almost semi-official. Each Union had a number of sympathetic jobbers or foremen. The jobbers have powers to engage or dismiss a man. He often acts as a moneylender also. (Vide Whitley Commission Report). So a sympathetic jobber if captured by a Union, was able to bring many "members" and regular subscriptions, for he virtually was the master of the large group of his workers though the system of work was not a contract system. The Unions also were naturally dominated by jobbers. But they being themselves collectors of Union dues, no objection was ever raised by the management to the collection of Union dues inside the mills and moreover such collections also were not very large. The G. K. U. however overthrew the power of the jobbers and head jobbers and brought the rank and filers into activity. Many of the jobbers thus lost the backing of the prestige of the Union, commissions on subscriptions and their illegal earnings. The millowners (in some cases prompted by the jobber) naturally raised the cry of discipline being lost and production suffering on account of subscription collection inside the mill, though this was done only once a month and during pay hours of the mill. We were not going to give up this right, and some of the mills had to strike for this. Till our arrest, we continued to realise dues on pay days inside the mills though the opposition from the mill-owners was growing.

The biggest grievance of the mill-owners was about the Mill Committees which according to them were becoming almost parallel organs of supervision and control. This was expressly voiced by them before the Pearson Court of Inquiry appointed after the general textile strike of 1929. The Court in its report observes: "There is ample evidence to show that in the middle of November the G. K. U. had collected sufficient strength and that the effect of its policy was being keenly felt by the millowners. One of the chief grievances of the mill-owners which is said to have caused most of the strikes that took place from the middle of

November was the working and methods of the Mill Committees formed by the G.K.U. for each mill and the doings of the members of such Mill Committees." (page 13). Further on it observes: "The interference by the members of the Mill Committees with the management was subversive of discipline, and the lightning strikes which were brought about by these members were not such as could be tolerated by the millowners". The Pearson Court sat from 6th July 1929 to 21st July, as constituted under section 4 of the Trade Disputes Act of 1929. It was asked not only to enquire into the general textile strike then going on, but also to report on disputes and agreements which had taken place before the Meerut arrests of 20th March 1929, and with which the new office bearers elected after our arrests were not expected to be fully conversant. All the papers affecting these methods were lying here in Meerut in the charge of the Additional District Magistrate who was enquiring into this case. When I applied for certain papers being sent to assist the Union in its case before the Court of Inquiry the Prosecution informed the Magistrate that they were required by them, though in the end they never put in those papers before this Court as their exhibits. As the Court of Inquiry was going to enquire into agreements arrived at in some cases between myself on behalf of the G. K. U. and the millowners and also those negotiated by the other office bearers, I wrote to the General Member of the Government of Bombay on 7th July 1929 saying "some terms of reference before the Court of Inquiry refer to that period and to mills, the agreements and understandings regarding which were mainly arrived at through me. And if I remember aright I have been accused of not observing them by the President of the Mill-owners' Association. Will you let me know how the Court can enquire into the dispute, when the office bearers of the Union who were present during and parties to agreement in the first stage of the dispute (that is before 1929 April) are not allowed to give their view point and evidence on those matters and especially when such matters are made a part of the terms of reference. Does your Government think that an enquiry conducted without the view point of such principal parties to certain agreements and disputes under enquiry can be considered exhaustive, impartial and fair?" A copy of this letter was sent to the Court also. The General Department of the Bombay Government acknowledged receipt of the letter in its no. 7565-D-P T2 dated 20th July 1929. The question was also raised by the representatives of the Union before the Court. In para 5 of their report the Court observes; "In the course of the enquiry it was suggested to us that Mr. Dange and possibly some others who were standing their trial at Meerut

should be called to give evidence before us on the ground that they being the officials of the G. K. U, prior to their arrest on the 20th March were the proper persons to depose relating to the affairs of that Union prior to that date. Ordinarily speaking that was a suggestion, to which effect might reasonably have been given". The Court however, refused to do what "reasonably" should have been done. The reason they gave was that we would have been cross-examined on matters which were being enquired into in this case and it might have harmed our interests. The Court also says that especially in view of this fact when the Mill-owners' Association wanted to lead evidence to show that the G. K. U. was being used by the Communists as a cover for their activities, it was disallowed by the Court as trespassing on the field of the Meerut case. (para 6).

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Such a solicitude for justice being meted out to us did not however prevent the court from considering and using facts and papers that are evidence in this case—viz. "the Red Army Handbill" Exhibit P. 967, and the Kranti issue in Exh: P. 1744 and agreements and letters in D. 432. This Court of Inquiry sat and inquired under circumstances which expose the reactionary and sabotaging nature of the Trade Disputes Act under which it was formed and the uselessness of such courts in the workers' struggle. The Court refused to do what should have been done "reasonably" as they themselves admit, i. e. they refused to hear the Meerut prisoners on the subject matter of disputes on which they alone were competent to speak. Having disposed of matters under inquiry in the period prior to March 1929, what was done with the matters arising from the strike that was actually on? The Government appointed the Court on 6th July and on 12th July arrested two of the leaders of the G.K.U. who at that time were in a position to conduct the case of the Union before the Court, which held five sittings without their presence as representatives of the Union. Ultimately the Government sentenced them to six weeks' imprisonment on 19th July and the Court used to call them under guard from the prison to conduct the G. K. U. case. With the men connected with events prior to March 1929 in Meerut prison and with men connected with events after March 1929 in the Bombay prison the Court of Inquiry sat and judged the G. K. U. with what they called impartiality and fairness!

133. *Why we formed Mill Committees.*

The Court quoted a statement of mine on the function of

Mill Committees and lightning strikes made before the Fawcett Inquiry Committee. That statement was nothing but a description of the position of Mill Committees as conceived by the constitution of the G. K. U. The Court observed that the constitution of the Union was quite sane and did not confer on the Mill Committees or their members individually power to call a strike. According to the constitution the Committees were "purely advisory" bodies. The Court has accused us of not observing the sane rule. I do not deny that the Mill Committees did exercise powers more than what were conferred on them by the constitution of the Union, and that I did not attempt to bring these Committees strictly within the limits of the rules and their literal interpretation. But this does not mean that I endorsed every action of the Mill Committees. The constitution of the G. K. U. was obviously a copy from that of the B. T. L. U., in which the Mill Committees were given only advisory power. During the working of the Committees I found that that rule was not calculated to develop the initiative of the workers, and their capacities of study, organisation, management etc. For these they must have powers to take certain steps with regard to their demands and grievances in individual mills as apart from the demands common to the whole industry. I also found that they were not required to be able to do this. They took initiative and powers of their own accord and it was against my principles to lesson their initiative by pointing out to the letter of the constitution. They were controlled only so far as to guide their actions in a disciplined channel, conformable with the general interests of all the workers, and to give them a proper perspective in matters which were immediately beyond their comprehension and in which therefore their individual actions were likely to conflict with the general line of the movement. It was therefore quite natural for the Court to find the Mill Committees not strictly in accordance with the constitution. The Court wanted us to make the Committees conform to an obviously faulty constitution. We wanted the constitution to advance according to the situation, when a particular struggle has far outgrown the limits of the constitution and not that the workers should go back within the limits of a faulty one. The bourgeois nature of that Court is seen in another remark it makes. It calls the power conferred in practice upon each officer of the Mill Committee to negotiate with the owners or declare a strike as "an act on the part of the G. K. U. which clearly disclosed a revolutionary tendency". (Page 19 of their report). It is not a fact that each individual member of the Mill Committees had power to or did declare a strike though he had powers to approach the Management on the question of grievances of his department.

However there is no harm in permitting the Mill Committees as a whole to declare strikes under certain circumstances. It is well known that in India the employers make changes in wage rates and conditions of work and dismiss workers without any previous notice to the workers or their organisations. Naturally when the workers are suddenly confronted with changes they also are entitled to suddenly refuse to work. Lightning strikes are direct effects of the highly anarchic conditions in the industry and the refusal of the bourgeoisie to recognise the workers' organisations or consult and inform them of proposed changes, a minimum right of trade unions recognised by the bourgeoisie in all advanced countries. Lightning strikes against such an order of things, against assaults on workers or confiscatory fines and dismissals become absolutely necessary and justified; and every Mill Committee must have powers to directly negotiate and take action on such matters as immediately affect its workers. There is nothing revolutionary in this. And even if it is, it is bound to be acted upon by the workers in every organisation to protect their interests.

Reformist trade unions, afraid of displeasing the bourgeoisie, do not want the Mill Committees or Factory Councils to take initiative in direct action, where necessary, in India. They want to keep these Committees as "purely applicant bodies," standing in all humility before the trade union bureaucracy sitting at the Head Office. The reformists do not want the workers to learn all the ins and outs of the industry and be seriously capable and efficient to take over the control and management of the factories when the necessity will arise. On the contrary, we want the workers to learn the whole mechanism of production and distribution and become capable of exercising workers' control when the factories will be nationalised; and the Mill Committees are schools for such education. They are bodies through which you feel the pulse of the workers. They are advisory in the sense that they advise the Central leadership on the workers' mood, their grievances, the state of organisation and the steps that are to be taken on a scale larger than that of one individual mill or factory. In relation to the organised central leadership of the Union which is and ought to be formed from the essence of the best elements drawn from the Mill Committees, they are "advisory" before an action is determined upon and the "executive" organs when a certain action is to be carried out. In relation to the Management they represent, direct and impose the will of the workers on the Management in order to improve the working conditions or prevent their deterioration in the individual factory concerned.

It was this unprecedented rank-and-file participation in the work of the Union which made the mill-owners feel "the effects of its policy". (The report of the Pearson Court). The mill-owners had thought of breaking down completely the resistance of the workers by attacking them immediately after the big six months' strike. But they had underestimated the capacity of the workers. When they were asked by the Court why they agreed to wage increases, as shown in the agreement made by them with the G.K.U., they replied that it was done in order to purchase peace. If these gentlemen were so anxious for peace why did they resist an agreement which they ultimately made, for six months? Not for peace but because at that time stocks had accumulated and they could afford to close down for a few months which would have served two purposes—one of putting down the workers and another of getting the stocks off their hands. Now they wanted to trade and therefore wanted peace. They wanted peace from the workers in the name of the Agreement, but themselves continued to attack the wages of the workers. Certainly we were not those gentlemen of the Delhi Pact to give them such a kind of peace!

This Court of Inquiry was the first to be appointed under the Trade Disputes Act. The faithfulness it displayed towards its masters, the bourgeoisie and its verdict against the workers, have amply justified our criticism that the Trade Disputes Act is a Strike Breakers' Act and as such must be scrapped. If ever a disillusionment was required by the workers about it, it was provided by the results of this Inquiry Court. There are still many Yellow reformists and even some "radical" leaders who, whenever the workers want to resist the terrorism and retrenchment practised by the employers (whether State or private), always send appeals to the Government to intervene and appoint a Court of Inquiry under the Trade Disputes Act. They do this not so much to stay the workers' sufferings as from their fear of the working-class revolt. The Trade Disputes Act is a Strike Breakers' Act and therefore those who ask Government to use it for preventing or settling a dispute naturally become strike breakers, deserving to be severely dealt with and brought to their senses by the organisations of the workers in which they work, in order to save them from degeneration.

*134. Participation in Fawcett Committee's work—Ex.P96? —
friction with the B. T. L. U. and B. M. W. U.*

Side by side with its organisational work the G. K. U. was conducting the workers' case before the Fawcett Committee appointed according to the October agreement. The mill-owners

several times raised the question of the small sectional strikes before the Committee, which sometimes inquired about the reasons of the strikes and gave its ruling whether they amounted to a breach of the agreement or not. Our attitude to such rulings was that when we found that the matter was not strictly within the terms of the agreement and the Committee being unacquainted with the industry was incapable of really grasping the issues of the disputes, we pressed our claims with the mill-owners in spite of the Committee's views. This was quite necessary and within the terms of the agreement. It has been suggested that as soon as we agreed to call off the strike on certain conditions, we began preparations for another strike and broke the spirit and also the terms of the agreement by such preparations and therefore the 71 lightning strikes took place. (Vide Mr. James' Address). Now there is no doubt about the fact that in the *Kranti* of October 13, 1928 I wrote the article that the strike was *not ended, but suspended*. The handbill of 12th October also said, "in order to pursue the new fight for the demands of all mills to a successful close a preparation for *six months* is necessary. (Ex. P 967). The Pearson Court quotes the words "six months" in italics thereby hinting that the big strike of April 1929 coming as it did exactly six months after this handbill of October 1928, was carried out according to a definitely pre-arranged plan of giving "no peace till Capitalism is overthrown". (Their Report page 10). But all these suggestions and innuendoes are baseless and fail to understand the October agreement as also our subsequent conduct in outlining the programme in the handbill. There was nothing in the October agreement to prevent us from making new demands, which were not subject matter of the inquiry before the Fawcett Committee. For example a strike that occurred in the Dawn Mills had as one of its reasons the non-fulfilment by the management of a promise they had given to the workers that they would put up a decent dining place for the workers. Such a strike was not banned by the October agreement. Then again the agreement was quite, temporary. The mill-owners had agreed to maintain the wages of March 1927 and not to extend rationalisation, *only until* the Committee reported on the matters before them. As soon as the Report was out the mill-owners were free to do what they liked. We thought that the Committee would not take more than six months to finish its work. If the Committee were to uphold the mill-owners' side, as they actually did on important matters, what were we to do? The workers were not going to allow a wage cut or extension of rationalisation. Also we had agreed to the rational system in a few mills only during the truce period and were free

to fight out that system after that. All this could not be done without organisation. The mill-owners were not in need of any programme like that issued by us. They had the police and military as their "volunteers", they had the banks for their "strike fund" and they had the whole bourgeois press for their "lecturers". They had everything ready to smash us, while we had yet to get together the modest forces outlined in our handbill, before the period of agreement expired. The mill-owners had already said before the Committee that they would introduce the standard and rational systems some time in October 1929. (Fawcett Committee Report, page 127). So if there was a plan of another general strike it was conditional upon the nature of the report of the Fawcett Committee and the attitude of the mill-owners. If the prospect of an attack was so clearly outlined before us by the mill-owners themselves were we not entitled to issue the programme as in P 967 ?

The mill-owners understood this very well and they took steps against the G. K. U. They issued orders to stop collection of Union dues inside the mills and to victimise the Mill Committee members. There was also another party which would have liked the G. K. U. to go down. This was the three rival Unions in the industry—(1) the G. K. M., the rump of the old Mahamandal; (2) the B. T. L. U. of Mr. N.M. Joshi and (3) the Bombay Mill-workers' Union of Jhabwala. The tremendous growth of the G. K. U. had pushed all these three Unions into the background. Only the B. T. L. U. tried to hold some ground in the first two months but it failed. Jhabwala's Union was formed of a few hundred mechanics mainly, whose hours of work were being increased and who showed some amount of "craft-separatism". The B. T. L. U. was completely ousted from all areas except Madanpura and Kurla. It clashed with us directly on two occasions and failed. One was on behalf of two jobbers who were dismissed by the management on pressure from the workers. The B. T. L. U. asked the management for their reinstatement but it could not be done as the workers had refused to work under them. The management finding the two Unions making contradictory demands took the dispute before the Fawcett Committee (November 27, 1928). The Committee refused to go into the matter as it had no jurisdiction. The jobbers also approached some of our principal leaders who were their old acquaintances. But that also did not help them as the rank and file were determined not to work under them in any case. The Mill-workers' Union remained a negligible force. After the agreement of October 1928, when it was found that the Sassoon workers resisted the

agreement, the leader of this Union attempted to make out before his membership that he did not advise or agree to such an agreement. This was an attempt not to face issues honestly but to throw the blame on other parties. The agreement contained only one signature that of Mr. N. M. Joshi on behalf of the Joint Strike Committee and every one could play the dirty game of saying that he for one had nothing to do with it. It was in answer to such an attempt that a specific mention of the names of all those who were present at the October conference and had agreed to the truce terms was made in the handbill issued to the Sassoon workers. (Ex. P 966). Another attempt by the same Union to secure a footing was made in December. It was after the attack of certain hirelings on the G. K. U. leaders and the consequent clash with the police on 12th December 1928. The Mill-workers' Union on the same day sent out a letter to several mills telling them that they stood for industrial peace unlike other Unions. (It was a suggestion that they did not approve of such happenings as took place on 12th December 1928). It was an attempt to build up a Union by agreement of industrial peace with the mill-owners. But all such attempts failed.

*135. The attack of 11th and firing of 12th December 1928—
the cause of handbill P 929—the second attack which
went wrong.*

The G. K. M.'s attempts were not those of a Union as such, but of a blacklegging agency of gangsters. The B. T. L. U. and the B. M. W. U. had at least stood with the general strike of 1928 and though reformists they had not yet become regular gangster agencies. It is said the B. T. L. U. degenerated into one in the strike of April 1929). The G. K. M. was nothing but a group of a few men of the under-world led by a gangster, whom we called "dada" in Bombay. This gang now wanted to break the G. K. U. and followed the well known method of gunmen. A false message was received on 11th December noon in our head office by a phone that there was trouble at the Sassoon Spinning and Weaving Mills. This mill is situated in the locality inhabited by this gangster. On receiving the message according to our usual practice, two of our leaders with two others went in a car to the mill. It was found there from the management that there was some very unimportant complaint about a jobber, which we now think was only stage-managed. When our representatives came out and boarded their car, it was attacked by ten or fifteen men. The main attack fell on Mr. Kaslé and another who were

severely injured on the head. Nimbkar also got slight scratches. The assailants decamped. They were led by one K. Borker, who is a notorious gangster in that locality and stood behind the G.K.M. A complaint was lodged at the Police Station. The Police made it a summons case and of course failed to trace the assailants. The workers when they heard the news flocked to the Union Office to find out if all were safe and in the morning they closed down about fifty mills in protest of the attack. About 10,000 of them, it appears went to the gangster's place in rage and razed it down. The gang had already fled. When the demonstration was going through Lalbag, the police tried to snatch the red flag carried by one of them. This led to a clash. The police opened fire and killed four workers and injured 18. The police report says that thirty of their forces were injured, but curiously enough fails to mention altogether the cause of the clash.

Of the four dead, three were textile workers and one was a motor mechanic. The presence of a motor mechanic amongst the dead shows the way of firing by the police force. The procession which came into clash with the police was entirely of mill-workers. There was no chance of any motor mechanic taking part in it, neither was it accompanied by any motor cars. The death of the mechanic can be explained solely by the fact that the police indulged in indiscriminate firing, a larger and more grim feature of which was later on experienced by the people of Sholapur in May 1930. Fire where you like was the rule that guided the police and naturally every passerby and inhabitant of the locality was in danger and one such passerby happened to be the mechanic.

These attacks and armed terrorism against defenceless workers were bound to excite feelings. In the morning of 12th, after dispersing the workers that had gathered in front of my house just near the head office of the Union, I rushed to the press and issued a handbill informing the workers of the safety of the persons who were attacked and requesting them not to close down the mills. But before the handbill could be fully distributed, the firing had taken place. Immediately we had to take steps about the funeral of the four workers. From the mortuary we took the three bodies of the textile workers, (the body of the mechanic having been taken away by his relations and friends) and carried them to the crematorium some miles away. There we got them photographed by a photographer who had his shop near the Union office and who is Prosecution witness no. 189. Armed police

lorries accompanied us all along and prevented any procession or demonstration. They forced on us a hurried cremation, so that a large number of workers may not assemble at the ceremony. The photographs were taken for two reasons. It is now a general practice to take photographs of firing, demonstrations etc. for their news value and as a remembrance. But there was also one more specific reason for us.

There was a negligible element of communalist opposition in the Union, helped and guided by the Non-Brahmin Party, which under the influence of Government working through one of its Ministers, who was himself a party member, was trying to create a schism in the Union on caste issues. The Bombay organisation of this Party had followed the mean tactic of inciting the communal and superstitious prejudices of the Hindu workers by telling them that we had taken no care to arrange for the observance of proper Hindu rites, in the cremation of Parasram Jhadhov who had fallen in the firing on 23rd April 1928. Their paper, the Kaiwari, had especially selected Nimbkar and myself for the attack, as we happened to be born by natural accident of Brahmin parents. In order to guard against such allegations we took the precaution to have the photograph and publish it in the Kranti of 13th January 1929—Exh: P 1744. The photograph is here D 417.

After finishing with the funeral I went to the press again and issued another handbill—Exh: P 929. The Prosecution have exhibited this second handbill, but have not produced the first one of the morning of the same day. Both these handbills were primarily meant to send the workers back to the mills so that the commotion be reduced and therewith the chances of furnishing some excuse to the mill-owners and Government to make a more determined attack on the workers and the G.K.U. But such appeals to the workers were not to be made in a demoralising or frightening tone. No doubt they had to be told that they were powerless at that moment before the organised armed forces. At the same time we could not say that they were absolutely powerless. They were told to avoid a direct clash with the Police forces, not with humanitarian considerations but because in the present state of the workers' organisations the losses would have been far greater than the gains. For example the workers were right when they refused to give up the flag and resisted. They were right when they closed down the mills and rallied behind the G.K.U. That one single move consolidated the rank and file more than anything else could

have done. But it would have been a mistake to continue the strike. All these considerations determined the tone and slogan of the handbill. It was a call for militant organisation as well as an exhortation to resume work. Only on such a basis could peace be restored, side by side with the full use of the tremendous response of the workers for further organisational work of the Union. Hence the handbill P 929 is, as it should have been, in conformity with Trade Union principles.

The Police who were cold and negligent about our complaint against the assaults of 11th December, were however very prompt and enthusiastic about the happenings of the 12th. They wanted to catch some men amongst us on the allegation of having incited the workers to go and destroy the gangsters' den. One by one all the prominent workers of the G.K.U. were summoned to the Police-station and a searching cross-examination was carried out, but it failed to lead to anything.

This attack was an outcome of an organised conspiracy of the blacklegging gang of the G.K.M. whose leading spirit was Borkar, helped by the mill-owners and the Police. The swift advantage which the mill-owners tried to take of this incident lends support to this statement. On the very day the clash took place, the mill-owners held a special meeting at 3 o'clock in the noon, and discussed whether they should declare a lock-out as the workers had closed down the mills without reason of any genuine trade dispute. Some of the more shrewd amongst them saw the danger of a general mass discontent if such steps were taken in the tense atmosphere of the day and the proposal was dropped. They then decided to ask the Government to arrest the leaders of the G.K.U. and declare it an unlawful association. Accordingly a deputation waited on the Governor of Bombay in December 1928. The Governor's reply though not encouraging at the moment assured the mill-owners that it was behind them and would take steps to smash militant Labour. But immediately Government did not accede to the mill-owners' request as it had, not yet tried all its indirect methods of gangster attacks, prompting inter-union rivalry, financing anti-G.K.U. groups, and in the end provoking communal pogroms. In the next three months all these were tried and on their failure, they resorted to the action of 20th March, 1929.

Emboldened by the connivance of the Police towards their murderous attack, another set of hirelings attempted to waylay me in a more daring manner than they had done on 11th December.

They knew that the ruse of a telephone message and luring us in their quarters would not work this time. So this time they planned the action to take place just near our Head Office. In December, another gangster came to the Head Office at about 8 in the morning which was my usual time to come there and start going to the various mills for settlement of complaints etc. I found about 50 men standing in groups at various corners of the street. When I was going near the tram stand just near the office of the Union, a swaggering fellow smelling liquor asked me where Mr. Dange was. This question confirmed my suspicion. In December it was impossible to find any worker in the majority of mills, who did not know most of us. Moreover, I knew the face and name of this gang leader, as I had information collected about almost all important gangsters in the mill area since the last attack. So I pointed him towards the office where I told him he would find the man he wanted. He and four or five of his companions who also being non-workers but disguised as workers did not recognise me, went to the office and created a scene there but failed to get what they wanted. On my return I met a newspaper reporter who used to see us daily for news about strikes and other matters. I told him of the morning "joke." True to his bourgeois salt he perverted what I had told him and flashed the story on the wires. Having had experience of the happening of 12th December I took the precaution to write to the various centres of the Union a letter in my own hand, telling them to inform the workers that any news appearing in the press about any attack on me should not be believed and that I was quite safe. In spite of this the Mill Committees sent messengers to inquire about the truth of the news and the timely steps taken by them prevented a probable closing down of mills and a further clash. These two successive attempts in the same month, the use made of them by the mill-owners and the indirect help of the Police convinced us that serious efforts were being made to terrorise in the first instance the leaders of the G. K. U. or in the alternative to provoke clashes and pogroms. It became therefore more necessary to strengthen the organisation and also be on guard against the incitement of communal warfare, faint signs of which were showing themselves.

136. The consolidation of the G.K.U.—the programme of funds and volunteers as worked out—the G.K.U. finances—Exhibits P 949,959,971 and 982.

The offensive of our opponents had an electric effect on our organisational programme. The workers became convinced

of the necessity of carrying out the programme regarding the membership, funds and volunteers, which was drawn up on the assumption that within six months the Fawcett Committee would finish its work and help the employers with their verdict. During the last strike the Joint Strike Committee had found itself short of funds in spite of the receipt of over Rs. 1,11,000. Moreover we did not expect the cooperation of the reformists in the next strike, if it were forced upon us. Neither did we expect Government to allow the help from the international proletariat to reach us. This was clearly demonstrated in the strike of April 1929 which took place after the publication of the Fawcett Report. However it would be wrong to suppose that we had definitely fixed upon a general textile strike in the immediate future. Even if there had been no Inquiry Committee or no prospect of an immediate conflict, the programme was necessary for the purposes of building up trade unionism. We succeeded only in fulfilling half of the programme in the three full working months of November, December and January. The month of February was darkened by the Hindu-Muslim riots, the effects of which were felt even till the end of March. If we had been left in peace, we would have got every man and woman in the mills inside the Union. But Imperialism did not want to tolerate even simple trade unionism in India, and therefore carried out the Union-smashing raids of 20th March 1929.

The Prosecution have put into exhibits certain papers and books of the G. K. U. concerning the financial side of our Union work, concerning some receipts and disbursement of moneys. Their purpose is not clear in putting in these papers and exhibits. If it is meant to show that I was handling large sums of money as a General Secretary of the Union, the exhibition of these half-complete careless jottings was superfluous. A reference to the resolutions of the Union, the bank account and the five names of the office-bearers, any three of which could jointly operate the account, would have given a more faithful picture. What has been done is to put in a so-called daily cash-book, which is not written by any of the office-bearers of the Union (Exh: P 959) and covers in a very incomplete manner certain days in February, and then even mentions the receipts and disbursement done through the writer alone and not of the whole Union. It is in fact a note of transactions done by the head clerk of the Union and does not in any way reflect the financial condition of the G. K. U. since it scrappily mentions some items for only 32 dates out of a period of 5½ months. It is not a cash-book of the Union at all. The other two exhibits are P 949, a bunch of papers and P 971, a pencil-written notebook, both mentioning certain figures of Union moneys. In the Lower

Court the Prosecution had also put in P 982, a piece of paper with certain figures, probably of rupees mentioned against the names of Bradley, Usmani etc., but it was not put to any handwriting witness to show whose paper it was. The Prosecution however withdrew this exhibit in this Court. As for P 949 one paper marked no. 6 was shown to P. W. 133, Colonel Rahman but was not shown to the Handwriting Expert of the Prosecution, P. W. 277. Out of this bunch of papers P 949, though at the beginning the Prosecution wanted to use only no. 6 they later on seemed to have decided to use the whole lot, as it appears from the selected figures they have printed in detail from pages 21 to 31 of this exhibit. As for P 971, the poor thing has also suffered from negligence which it does not deserve. For if the other two contained figures by a hundred, this exhibit mentions imposing sums running into thousands. But the modest Mr. James did not like to pursue these thousands with the same zeal as he pursued his or those of the Strike Relief Fund coming from outside India. Though the Prosecution has used the commandered services of four handwriting witnesses, they never allowed them to set their profane eyes on this exhibit. When an excellent Lieutenant-Colonel I. M. S. and a hand-writing expert attached to the highest secret service of the Government were not asked to determine the parentage of this exhibit why should a layman like myself interfere in the job ?

There are very powerful reasons for this behaviour on the part of the Prosecution. Having once put the documents in exhibit they withdrew one out of 4 of this kind. And with the remaining three they never dealt properly. They were not referred to in the summing up of the case in the Lower Court either by the Prosecution or the Magistrate. Then why are they there at all? The reason is that the Prosecution have been assailed by their own contradictions. Their two fundamental theories fight against each other. One is the theory of Moscow gold, the interpretation of every act of ours being backed by Moscow gold. And the second is the theory of the use of Trade Unions to further the aims of the conspiracy. On the first theory, they say these accused had no funds to carry on their activities; they appealed to Moscow and worked with Moscow gold. Having said that they laid their hands on the G. K. U, and, probably to their surprise, find that there are thousands of rupees lying in its bank account paid by the textile workers and the thousands of subscription receipts and vouchers stand there in all defiance as a challenge to the ridiculous theory of Moscow financing everything. But then the Prosecution cannot go back on their second theory, and, true to

their Imperialism which is full of contradictions, they stuck to their contradiction, seized a few papers mentioning some small sums against the names of some of the accused as having been paid by the G. K. U. in its routine work they have come forth to say "Here is a Trade Union and there is a band of conspirators and in between we put, your Honour, some papers with sums of 10,20,100. Obviously the most clear conclusion is that the Trade Unions financed the conspiracy or if you like the conspiracy financed the Trade Unions." They have refused to see that if they mention this, then the necessity of Moscow gold is ruled out; and if they retain fully the Moscow gold then the Union gold is ruled out. The two are mutually exclusive for the reason that a "clever conspirator" (so clever that the Prosecution says that it took its clever police three years to unearth us while a Bombay daily was actually using our "most secret" morning letter in its evening edition) who knows that the police are after him would not do the costly experiment of asking for Moscow gold, when he has a Union worth thousands to back him. In order to get out of this muddle, they practised two things. They kept back all papers that would show that the Union was financially very powerful and secondly they put forth some half-complete documents and scratchy notes to show that moneys were being mysteriously handed out, in many a case appearing as large "suspense" items; and what is a suspense item, if not a suspicious conspiratorial item holding the fate of the Empire in painful suspense?

If the Prosecution had taken care to be less slipshod they would have found that while the so-called Cash Book, P 959 would mention one item as suspense, it fails to mention anything between 7th and 15th February 1929. At the same time P 949 on paper no. 27 and 28 summarises a number of vouchers for these dates and over and above leaves a large space after each date in order to mention some more that might come in. D 562 (the letter of the Joint Treasurer of the G.K.U., Mr. B. T. Alwe, dated 16th February 1929) mentions having received Rs. 5,680-12-0 while the so-called Cash Book has no such reference at all. Then there is one more thing about P 949. Paper no. 19 on which according to the Prosecution some figures are written in my hand, shows a total of Rs 10,029-7-6 as moneys said to have been paid in the head office in February 1929 while paper no. 20 gives the total of expenditure of Rs 12,675-9-3. Part of paper no. 19 is in one hand, part in another, while nothing is said as to who wrote no. 20; neither is it alleged that it is mine. If any one tries to build any conclusions from such figures he either does not understand any-

thing of accounts or he is deliberately drawing dishonest conclusions, because none of these papers is in any sense complete or written by persons responsible for the income and expenditure of the Union especially in February 1929. Then again conclusions drawn from these papers will be cut out by Ex. P 971. For example paper no. 19 in P 949 mentions a total of Rs 1700/- from Tardeo for three dates, 14th and 18th Feb; and 5th March but does not mention Rs 400/- found on 4th February in P 971 and P 959. It also mentions a few sums from Naigaon centre but does not mention an item of Rs 3728/- found in P 971 against the same centre. Again paper no. 20 of P 949 shows Rs 1780/- and Rs 1510/- (total Rs 3290/-) as being sent to the bank credit and also tallies with P 971. But the actual Imperial Bank Pass Book of the Union D459 shows under deposit Rs. 4500/- on 15th February besides these two items on 18th and 26th. As regards P 971 by itself, its income side totals Rs. 11623-5-0 while its expenditure column totals Rs. 18402-10-3. It is easy to see how this happened. Two items of Rs. 3510/- and Rs 1000/- appear as safe deposits on 12th February. It appears that due to the communal riots in the city the Imperial Bank at Byculla where the G.K.U. had its account and which lay in the riotous zone could not be approached in those days. Hence these sums were kept with somebody as safe deposits for two or three days and when the bank could be approached, were partly sent to the bank and partly expended on current expenses. Thus they appear twice. So also two sums of Rs. 1000/- and 2000/- are given on 25th and 26th February for bail deposits, the practice being that as soon as arrests of workers were reported, somebody used to be sent to the police stations, with sufficient money to bail out the men and then separate receipts for different cases were made out. Rs 2600 in D 556 of 27th February (and later on realised by the G. K. U. after our arrests) is a consolidated receipt with reference to the above two items, and seems to have been noted in P 971 on 1. 3. 29, the balance being carried into other items of bail. The same thing happened with this entry as with those of safe deposits and hence the double mention in the rough jottings. When these items, which ordinarily should have been repeated on the income side but do not appear to have been done probably in order to keep the net income figures clear of cross-entries are deducted, we get the total expenditure reduced by Rs 7710/- which would then come to Rs. 11292-10-3 against our income of Rs 11623-5-0. This makes P 971 by itself quite intelligible and the transactions of the person who kept it quite clear; but it also is not a completely representative account of the Union as a whole. This will show that P 949, P 959 and P 971

are incomplete notes and can give no idea and yield no complete conclusions about the transactions of the G. K. U. If the Prosecution and those who agree with them wanted to draw any fair conclusions, they should have exhibited and studied the over 2,000 vouchers found in search of the Union - item no. 73 of the search list P 947. They should have exhibited, arranged, and summarised in an intelligent form all the Union papers they seized in the search. Even then also quite a complete picture would not have been possible. Because as the search officer himself admits (M. B. Sait, P. W. 188) "he took only what he thought important and "left the rest behind." Now this "rest left behind" consisted of a number of files, receipts, vouchers, registers etc. Without them a complete picture cannot be presented of the Union membership, of the income and expenditure and of its financial position in detail. None can say now what has happened to this "rest left behind" because the police seized the material by breaking the locks and forcing the doors open, when none of the officers of the Union were present, and after pillaging the whole thing left it in nobody's charge." However any false conclusions that may be drawn from the Prosecution exhibits can be set aright by a reference to the Defence exhibits filed on these matters, as also a thorough digest of the papers found in item no. 73 of the search list P. 947, which has not been exhibited so far. Such a digest will show, (correct within two or three hundreds due to the incompleteness of the papers especially for the month of March 1929) that every pie collected has been spent for the work of the Union alone and will smash thoroughly any statement alleging the appropriation of the Union funds for anything but the interest of the workers. Every rupee paid by the workers is traceable and accounted for in the documents of the Union, though the mill-owners left me no time to pay attention to the office work, its regular organisation, as every hour of every day from October to March, I was continually on the run due to the 71 strikes, the innumerable individual complaints from various mills, the sittings of the Fawcett Inquiry Committee and such other things. Naturally this was bound to dislocate a certain amount of office work but not to such an extent as to leave room for reckless statements. A conference of the bourgeois bodies convened in June 1929 by the Governor of Bombay made allegations of the unlawful use and sources of the funds of the G. K. U. and subsequently the Pearson Court was asked to submit a report on this allegation after examining the papers of the Union. The report was kept confidential but the fact that Government could find nothing to take steps against the Union, as is confessed by it in its note of February 1930, shows how strong and quite regular our position has been throughout. From the materials available and put forth in the exhibits and the searches, the following abstract of the financial positions of the G. K. U. can be made out.

COLLECTIONS OF THE G. K. U. FROM MAY 1928 TO MARCH 1929.

Centre.	October	November	December	January	February	March	TOTAL.	
							(By centres)	(By Months)
Wadi	720 12 0	2441 0 0	2040 0 0	5893 4 0	4305 8 0	2057 8 0	17464 0 0	Oct. 6794 0 0
Naigaon	353 11 0	1139 6 0	2341 15 6	3149 4 0	6457 6 0	2653 12 0	16095 6 6	Nov. 12283 0 0
Lalbag	503 8 0	1595 12 0	3916 5 0	7414 0 0	853 6 0	2769 8 0	17052 7 0	Dec. 15135 4 6
Ferg. Rd.	533 4 0	4427 0 0	1735 11 0	6506 12 0	2155 0 0	1341 15 6	16699 11 0	Jan. 31100 12 0
Di. Rd.	400 4 0	2232 14 0	1434 9 0	2518 8 0	34 0 0	406 5 0	7026 8 0	Feb. 16555 4 6
Tardeo	.....	.....	1625 0 0	3300 0 0	1800 0 0	2340 11 0	9065 11 0	Mar. 12505 15 6
Shivdi	173 0 0	284 4 0	989 4 0	1458 0 0	950 0 0	781 4 0	4635 12 0	
Hd. Office	4109 9 0	162 12 0	1046 8 0	861 0 0	.....	155 0 0	6334 13 0	
	6794 0 0	12283 0 0	15135 4 6	31100 12 0	16555 4 6	12505 15 6	94374 4 6	94374 4 6
					And Collections May to Oct.	88 12 0		88 12 0
						94463 0 6	94463 0 6	

(2532)

•• Total collection of the Union from May 1928 to 19th. March-1929 were:— 94463 0 6

For the purposes of this abstract exhibits P 949, P 959, P 971, and Defence exhibits D 441, D 442, D 443, D 444, D 446, D 447, D 448, D 449, D 450, (head office registers of receipts for moneys credited there by the centres); D 428 (1), (2) and (3) D 459, D 460, D 461, D 462, D 559 and D 562 can be consulted. Collection figures are found in a more or less consolidated manner till January 1929, but those of February are scattered owing to the complete dislocation of office work and regular routine caused by the riots in February. This one factor may leave some room to make some wild statements. But they can be shown to be all baseless. From all the papers referring to this month's collections, noted above, the totals, even after accepting the highest figures, where more than one reference to the same item would require such a decision, cannot be pushed up by any means beyond Rs 16555-4-6. Anybody who would maintain a higher figure can be proved to be in the wrong. Similarly in the case of March, though P 959 would give a total of Rs 12098-2-6, I would be prepared to consider Rs 12505-15-6 more valid according to D 441 to D 450. Then the results are that limiting ourselves strictly to 441 to D 450 for the purposes of October to January we get a total collection of Rs. 65313-0-6, and adding up February and March, a total of Rs 94463-0-6. But if we accept the highest figures in those cases again wherein two or more cross references may vary, the above January end total as per D 452 (1) and (2) will come to Rs 67154-1-3 which together with February (Rs 16555-4-6) and March (Rs 12505-15-6) comes to Rs 96215-5-3. Ultimately basing myself on the present material and accepting the highest figures in cases where variations within a few hundreds—quite natural in view of the incompleteness of the available exhibit material—as correct, I can say that the workers paid Rs 96,000/- in round figures to the G. K. U.

Coming to expenditure a reference to D 452 (2) would show it to be Rs 14124-3-6 up to January end. There is no such consolidated sheet for the months of February and March 1929. A reference to the papers in item 73 of P 947 for February gives a total expense of Rs 5790-4-3. Add to this references in Exh: P 959 and P 971 (of Rs 100 + 95 + 100 = 295) which are not found in item 73 papers, one pronote or rather receipt of Rs 110/- lodged with the Union in April 1929 and an item of Rs. 70/- incurred in D. 562. Then deduct Rs. 400/- in P 959 which would appear once as a suspense item but is returned in expenditure which can be seen from reference to papers in item 73 of P 947. This brings the expenses by vouchers to Rs. 5891-10-9. Then there are deposits of bail money for workers who were arrested in February and March in the New China Mill case and other

In a turnover of nearly a lakh of rupees the discrepancy of less than Rs. 300 is nothing in view of the incompleteness of the material available in the records put before the court and also in search material. Also small mistakes are likely to have occurred in the above by small suspense sums appearing over again as expenses through bills and such others (and hence the excess appears on the side of expenses temporarily). They can, I am sure, correct the above discrepancy. I can state with complete confidence before the workers without any fear of being disproved on any material item that till the day of my arrest the workers had paid into the Girni Kamgar Union in round figures Rs. 96,000 out of which Rs 25,000 were spent on the work of the Union and Rs. 71,000 were left in the form of cash-balances with the Imperial Bank, bail deposits at the various Police stations, and some small sums with the Joint Treasurer, Mr. B. T. Alve. I am quite prepared to prove, explain and argue on the figures I have stated and the conclusions drawn, from the documents available here and even to strengthen and illuminate them, correct to the last pie, if opportunity were given to me to procure the documents left behind after search by the Police officer, and if they are still available. This should be sufficient to explode the wild talk about the G. K. U. money and its "use".

The Girni Kamgar Union really began to function from October, after the calling off of the strike. Since then the membership began to soar up continuously till January, in which month the collection of subscription and Strike Fund was the highest. But it cannot be said from the drop seen in the collections of February and March 1929 that we would not have been able to keep up the high membership which was well over 100,000 in January. The fall in membership in the next two months is not due to the turning away of the workers from the Union as such. February was a month of communal rioting in Bombay, and the pay day of the workers, on which all the collections are made, fell in the middle of the riotous period, and thousands of workers who had not already left Bombay did so on receiving their pay straightway. In February for the same reason the mills did not work to full capacity and therefore our collections in March also were low. Had it not been for the February calamity we would have got every man and woman of the remaining 40,000 in the G. K. U. within the next three months. Every rupee of the ordinary subscription represents four members. We had also a Strike Fund of one rupee per head, payment of which was not compulsory for every member. The special collection of the Strike Fund was less than Rs 10,000 for all the six months together. Deducting this from the total of

Rs. 96 000 we get an *average membership* nearing 58,000 from October to March. The lowest being 28,000 in October 1928 and the highest over 100,000 in January 1929. (The Registrar of Trade Unions in Bombay disbelieved my report when I informed him in December that our membership was near 80,000 and he persisted in announcing it as 54,000 only. Now at least from the above figures he should correct himself). When we were removed from the field, the Bombay Government in its note of 25th February 1930, while reviewing the past, observed, "The Girni Kamgar Union was the first Union to undertake an intensive propaganda and to organise a large body of workers into a trade union, with a regular organisation, collection of subscriptions and accumulation of funds. The other trade unions had only a limited membership although their organisation was on sound enough lines and they were controlled by well-known social workers." It was exactly for this reason that the G. K. U. aroused the ire of the Bombay bourgeoisie and the Government which wrote the above note. They did not want "a large body of workers into a trade union with a regular organisation." They wanted only such unions as had "a limited membership controlled by well known social workers"—well known for their being amenable to bourgeois reasonableness, their intense efforts to avoid strikes and guard the interests of both the bourgeoisie and the workers, which ultimately means predominantly to guard the interests of the bourgeoisie. If the organisers of the G. K. U. would not make way for these well known social workers then Imperialism, assisted by the Indian bourgeoisie, would step in and try to clear the way by locking their opponents in the prisons. Unfortunately, it has not helped the well known sound enough social workers in any way.

137. *The Pearl Mill murder case—(references—Exhibits P. 958, resolutions of the G. K. U. Managing Committee).*

Soon after the attack and firing of December 12th the G.K.U. was faced with the Pearl Mill murder case. This Mill had given much trouble to the workers in several ways. It was running counts 40 yarn on high draft system which very few mills in Bombay did. It had a large number of Jacquard looms, which had not yet appeared in the Bombay industry on a very large scale. It produced many kinds of fancy sorts with high percentage of silk work. The Bombay industry not yet being used to silk chose the wrong type of material which caused very great hardships in the weaving department, resulting in a very heavy fall in the already poor wages of the women workers

in winding. On the ground that they were running 40s in spinning, the mill wanted to reduce half the workers in ring spinning wherein it employed a large number of women workers on wages lower than the average for the male spinners. In Jacquards they were trying new varieties, whose rates they did not want to fix on the former scale on Jacquard weaving, which was comparatively higher than other weaving rates. The whole of the Bombay industry was uncertain about these rates and was clearly experimenting as can be seen from the fact that even in December 1929, six months after the Mill-owners' Association had worked out their scheme of standardised wages and work, the Association said that they were experimenting with Jacquards and therefore could not place any scheme before the Fawcett Committee on that section of weaving. If they were experimenting they were certainly not doing it in a laboratory. They were actually altering wage rates of the existing Jacquard weavers and testing their reaction. They were experimenting in every mill that had Jacquard looms. Naturally experiments of the mill-owners on Jacquard meant experiments on the worker's earnings and his living. In such a condition was the Pearl Mill. The workers in this mill had produced like other mills, their rank and file leaders, who were actively taking part in the organisation of the G. K. U. The worker leaders in the Spinning Section were the first to come in conflict with the mill bosses on the question of the women spinners, who were being played off from day to day without any wages and also on the ground of the defectiveness in the high-draft frames. When the workers told the management to carry out the necessary alterations before they could work on the frames, the management, though they had agreed with me to set the frames aright, resented the workers pointing them out the defects; and the Superintendent of the group of Fazalbhoy Mills wrote to me on 28th November 1928, asking me to stop the Union activities in the mills and to tell the workers "not to dictate their terms of working to the Spinning Master." Then there was trouble in the Jacquards also. The leadership in expressing all these grievances was taken by the workers' group in the mill, led by an intelligent jacquard weaver by name Papa Miyan. Though no Mill Committee as such was elected in the mill, this group did all the work of a Mill Committee and brought upon its head the wrath of the bosses, who selected Papa Miyan as their special victim. They gave him less work on his jacquard loom, did not provide him with beams; they set persons against him, and cut the beam threads in his absence thereby ruining his wages heavily. Still he would not give up leading the workers' grievances before the bosses and before the G. K. U. A jacquard weaver of the type of Papa Miyan usually earns about Rs. 100/- or more per month, if he is supplied regularly

with work. But as a leader of the workers Papa Miyan's earnings fell and that skilled man could not even get Rs. 40/-. He had a wife and young children in his family. His wife was ill while the vengeance and hatred of the bosses towards him would not let him earn a living in spite of his great skill. There were small strikes and trouble. On 20th December he took the grievances of a few workers to the manager, who threatened him with dismissal. The mill went on strike on 22nd December, at the call of the departmental leaders. Papa Miyan had been absent for two days, and somebody gave it out that he had been dismissed. The mill struck work for him. The management maintained that the strike was caused by Papa Miyan, who was not dismissed but had resigned voluntarily his job, as he said he was disgusted with the management. In the course of the inquiry carried out by a Committee of the workers themselves, it transpired that Papa Miyan had used some such words in anger but had no intention of giving up his job. However the workers decided that as there were some grounds to say that Papa Miyan had resigned and had not been dismissed, the management should take him back. The management consented to take him back provided he undertook not to call lightning strikes. The undertaking was given by him and a few of his fellow workers, on the advice of the G. K. U. to do so, and work was resumed on 26th December. On 28th December when the Superintendent of the mills visited, a few complaints were laid before him by Papa Miyan and other workers. The Superintendent, who expected the workers to have become dumb slaves by the undertaking of 26th December, flew into a rage to find them telling him the defects in management and their grievances. He flew at them, kicked and abused them. Fortunately for him the workers held their patience. On the same day in the noon the Assistant Weaving Master in the mill, by name Davar, was killed in the Folding Department near the weaving shed. A police party was called in, which surrounded and took charge of the mill. Just when the police were being posted I arrived at the mill, accompanied by another officer of the G. K. U. The workers were taken out of the mill and one of the management staff pointed out to the police some 20 to 25 persons from amongst them who were put under arrest. I remained there till the workers were allowed to leave the mill except those who were arrested, for whom we then proceeded to make arrangements for bail and defence. As the police had taken special note of my arrival at the mill just after the incident, two or three days after I was summoned to the Delisle Road Police Station and put under a long cross examination for over three hours as to my knowledge of the incident and the accused workers. They had arrested most of the prominent

workers from all departments ; but it was difficult to get evidence of their complicity. While in the police station, Papa Miyan was brought from a cell before me and was asked if he knew me and if I was the man who had told him to kill Davar. It was clear from the face of the man that he was being starved and persecuted for a confession. He of course knew me but denied that he had committed the crime or that I had asked him to do anything. The police examined me very critically as to how I came to the mill just when they were arriving there. They suggested that my arrival pointed to a previous knowledge on my part of the incident or the plan. They then wanted to know how Mill Committees were formed, and who the members were in this Mill's Committee. I explained the constitution of the G. K. U. on the matter. But as the Pearl Mill had had no Mill Committee officially confirmed by the G. K. U. there was no question of any names. As regards my arrival at the mill, it was on account of a previous appointment made by the management of the mill with me for settlement of certain disputes. The police were not satisfied with this. They hunted at the Centre Office at Ferguson Road for any records of the Mill Committee meetings in order to find out if the murder had been discussed and decided upon by the Committee as a whole. But they could get none. When they got an approver from the accused, he told them that he (the approver) had phoned for me at the head office to come to the mill at 12-30 in the noon in view of the kicking incident and the consequent indignation of the workers. But the phone on his own admission was not received by me at all. On reference to the management, the police were told that the mill-management had asked me by a letter to be at their office at 4 p. m. for settlement of disputes and that happened to be the time when police arrived on the scene and saw me there. This disappointed them and they left persecuting the accused for implicating any of the Union officers or myself.

The G. K. U. engaged four counsels for the accused who were twenty in number. One of the counsels was a barrister, belonging to the Parsi community by name Mr. B. J. Wadia (who later on became a justice of the Bombay High Court). The man who was murdered was a Parsi and it may be remembered that the managerial staff of the Bombay mills is mostly composed of Anglo Indians and Parsis. The Parsi bourgeoisie at once approached Mr. Wadia not to take up the case for us as the murdered man was a Parsi. But Mr. Wadia did not withdraw from the case. The defence of the accused was not left to the relatives who had come to Bombay on receiving the news. The G. K. U. by a resolution of the Managing Committee of 16th January 1929 (Ex. P 958) sanctioned money for

this case. Over Rs. 3,000/- were paid to the counsels and Rs. 500/- spent on other allied matters. The case was heard by Mr. Justice Blackwell, who from his summing up to the jury and his general behaviour throughout the case appeared to be a bit vindictive and under the influence of the newspaper propaganda against the Red Flag Union. The jury returned a divided verdict. Justice Blackwell would not have it. He sent back the jury to try and see if they could get a unanimous verdict. The jury went back, tried and saw. It returned with a unanimous verdict. All those that were selected and emphasised upon in the summing up were declared guilty and the rest not guilty. Judgment was delivered at 8 in the night in the Bombay High Court on 18th March, 1929, sentencing two, Papa Miyan and Maruti, to death, five to transportation for life, three to various terms of imprisonment and acquitting ten.

On 19th March in the night when Imperialism was distributing its armed forces in the city of Bombay to prepare for the next morning, I was writing the special issue of the Kranti on the Pearl Mill case, in which I wrote "the court of the British Government has given a decision which will satisfy the friends of Capitalism.... the law throughout the world is the law of the bourgeoisie." Six hours after I wrote this for the unfortunate victims of the Pearl Mill case, I myself was in the grip of that very law. The Kranti with this article appeared on the morning of 20th March 1929, when we were being transformed from denounciators of bourgeois law into the the victims of that law.

The management kept the mill closed for some days after the incident of 29th December. They were delighted to have got rid of the worker leaders of the mill in such a manner. On 5th of January 1929, the workers were paid off their wages and the mill was reopened with completely a new batch of workers and jobbers. A complaint was brought by me before the Fawcett Committee on 21st January for wrongful dismissal and victimisation. The Committee took evidence, but ultimately ruled that the dispute was not covered by the agreement of 4th October, and they were therefore unable to judge it. We deliberated over the problem in the Managing Committee (Ex. P 958 and a reference by Alwe in his statement) and it was decided not to bring out on strike the men of the Fazalbhoy group of mills, of which the Pearl Mill was one, in sympathy with the dismissed men. We had found that, due to a threat of strike in the whole of the group, the management had begun to take many of our workers back and the jobbers also were persuaded by us to engage none but the old workers. A few most marked Mill Committee leaders were however victimised, who could

not get in until the mill was again faced with a strike in February in the Sizing and Drawing Departments. This is sufficient to show the policy of the G. K. U. with regard to the sectional strikes and its attitude towards the help that ought to be rendered to workers in difficulties and the way in which it was utilising the large sums of money collected from its members.

138. *The G. K. U. and the February communal riots—*
Exhs. P. 702., P. 858 and G. K. U. resolutions in
Ex. P. 958.

At the beginning of the year 1928, every strike by the workers was being beaten, for want of organised leadership, though the workers were prepared to resist the onslaughts. There was no strong Trade Union based on the principle of class struggle. At the beginning of the year 1929, the position had completely changed. There was a strong Trade Union, with the strength of all the textile workers solidly behind it, with large funds and a paying membership of over one lakh. The workers had begun creating a strong proletarian cadre functioning through the Mill Committees, which comprised of about 5,000 selected, conscious workers from all the mills. The G. K. U. had repulsed the underhand wage cuts and dismissals carried out by the mill-owners after the general strike in violation of the October agreement. It had completely overcome the rivalry of the other unions. It had withstood numerous attacks on its office-bearers and organisers. Having failed to suppress the workers by these means, some sections of the Indian bourgeoisie and the Imperialists tried the incitement of communal war, and the Hindu-Moslem riots of February 1929, were the outcome. I have referred elsewhere (in para 101) to the Communist viewpoint on the communal question. The Hindu-Moslem problem is not a religious problem nor can its solution be ever found by treating the two categories—Hindus and Moslems—on the basis of religious, communal or caste adherence. It can be solved from the class point of view by the solution of the social problem on the basis of the class struggle. This has been stated quite clearly, as for example in P 702 the Moharram Manifesto of the Bombay W. P. P., and in P 858. The bourgeoisie and Imperialists in India are fully aware of this attitude. Yet they have purposely chosen to attribute the cause of the Bombay riots to the Communists in the Girni Kamgar Union.

Bombay had not seen communal riots since 1896. But after the failure of the Non-cooperation Movement, when the Imperialists seriously began to foment the Hindu Muslim troubles in order to

sidetrack the energies of the proletariat and peasantry into reactionary suicidal struggle, Bombay in spite of its having the most class conscious working class was affected a little: Though there were slight skirmishes, there was nothing like the mad massacres of 1923 in Calcutta. In 1929 however the Imperialists and their agents finding all their attempts frustrated against the workers decided to involve them and consequently the whole city in a furious communal rioting. After the riots were over as usual the bourgeoisie asked for a thorough inquiry into the affair. On 26th February 1929 Mr. K. M. Munshi moved in the Bombay Legislative Council an adjournment of the House to discuss the disturbances. The motion was carried and according to the wishes of the House, the Government appointed on 22nd April 1929, a committee to inquire into the February riots. Before the committee could meet there had occurred the General Strike of the Textile mills on 26th April 1929 and again an attempt was made to drown the strike in a Hindu-Muslim riot, in the first week of May. The inquiry was postponed to 24th June. When the terms of reference were formulated in April, they contained no reference directly to the General Strike of 1928 or the subsequent individual mill strikes as a possible cause of the riots. Government at that time had an idea of relying either on secret instructions to the Committee or the good sense of the bourgeois in them. But the strike of 1929 affected their nerves more than they could restrain. In the second terms of reference the Government definitely mentioned the General Strike of April 1929 as a cause of the riots in May. A loyal Committee of reactionary gentlemen presided over by the Commissioner of Sind was not going to ignore the mandate of its masters.

The Committee issued a questionnaire to the press. I wrote to them for a copy of it, which they sent me in the Jail. The questionnaire contained three questions which affected us and many of the matters involved in this case. Question no. 3 was, "Were the strikes responsible for the riots? If so how far?" Question no. 8 was, "Were the attacks on the Pathans due to the fact that they were used as strike breakers or to economic reasons or to what cause?" Question no. 13 was, "Were the measures taken by the Police to protect the workers in the Oil Installations adequate?" The questionnaire consisted of 26 questions. If you examine their report, you will find that all along Communism and the G. K. U. were on their brains and the major part of the report deals with the above three questions as almost the sole matter of inquiry before them. Instead of dealing with the conduct of the Police and the Government forces, about which also they had included some

questions, they wrote in fact a report on the Communist influence in Bombay and how to "protect" the workers from it. I was personally present during the debate in the Bombay Council on 26th February 1929 and knew what the game was. The questionnaire of the Committee and its composition clearly showed that its report was going to be an interim condemnation of the Communists and incidentally of the Meerut accused who had belonged to the G. K. U. But in order not to allow the attempt to go uncontested as far as possible, I sent a statement on some of the questions to the Committee on 5th June 1929 which the Committee Secretariat received on 7th June. I had not with me any papers relating to the riot days for reference nor was the Police report, which was published later on, available to me. The Riots Inquiry Committee received 125 written replies and examined 80 witnesses orally. During the oral examination of many prominent members of the bourgeoisie, the Committee every time asked pointedly if in the opinion of the witnesses the Communists were at the bottom of the riots. Many of them emphatically denied that the Communists had anything to do with the communal riots. A report of the evidence before the Committee appeared in the papers and from memory I can say that amongst those who refused to put the blame on the Communists were Messrs. K. F. Nariman, Lalji Narainji, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and some others. I have already referred to the evidence of the then Hon'ble Home Member, Sir E. Hotson, in which he said that our speeches during the strikes were not of an inflammatory character as was suggested by the Committee (Para 124). In spite of this when the Committee wrote its report, it kept completely silent about this evidence. It printed in its report extracts from the speeches which are now exhibits in this case. The Committee also kept silent over my statement. It paid no heed to the evidence of the then office bearers of the G. K. U., Messrs. Kandalkar and Joshi, who were invited to give evidence. Without a single reference or discussion of the evidence so tendered the Committee most arbitrarily reported that the G. K. U. was the basic cause of the riots; that the speeches of the Communist leaders bred contempt of law and order; that the leaders not only preached the overthrow of the Government but drilled Red volunteers; that they incited the workers to resist the Pathan black legs in the oil strike, which led to free fights and ultimately to the communal riots. The Committee representing on it the essence of the Imperialist bourgeoisie, assisted by one Hindu and one Mohammedan bourgeois, have poured into their report their intense hatred of Communists and recommend that "Government should take drastic action against the activities of the Communists in Bombay", and secondly "during the

riots immediate steps should be taken to lock up or get rid of hooligans including old offenders..., the hooligan menace being next in seriousness to the Communist menace." They wanted the Communists to be excluded by law from registered trade unions and dealt with severely "under the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure." (Page 28 of their Report). Government was satisfied with this performance. Drastic action was being taken. But the Committee was very illogical in recommending the action against hooligans. If Government were to carry out that part it would have required to lock up hundreds of the Hindu Muslim bourgeois, who form the elite of the "hooligans and old offenders"!

But while spending their wrath against the Communists and the G. K. U., the Committee forgot to twist the facts of the riots sufficiently to suit conclusions. The facts that it quoted in its report and also in that of the Police directly contradict the conclusions drawn therefrom. This was quite natural. The whole of the big bourgeoisie in Bombay and the Government were deeply disappointed to find that the workers in the city refused to be drawn into the riots, that the Communists prevented the workers from being excited into a suicidal fury, and that the Government were not given an opportunity of carrying out a pogrom. This was also the reason of the contradiction between the report submitted by the Government of India to the Assembly and that by the Secretary of State to the Parliament. While one wanted definitely to put the blame on us, the other was not quite so sure. While the gentlemen of the Committee were enthusiastically asking Government to suppress the Communists and the G. K. U., they absolved both the Hindu and Muslim bourgeoisie and the Government from any blame. With regard to the Government they state that it took all possible measures quite in time to suppress the riot. With regard to the Hindu-Muslim bourgeoisie they say that both were quite innocent and recommended that "the Muslims should trust the Hindus and the Hindus should trust the Muslims." They left it implied that both should trust the British. In fact this was not a recommendation to the people but a description of the manner in which the three members of the committee worked. The Muslim bourgeois member trusted the Hindu bourgeois member, who appropriately returned the trust; and both of them trusted the British President and all three in mutual admiration and trust condemned the workers, their class enemy.

My reply to the Committee's absurd statement and attack on us is contained in my statement sent to the Committee and

completely refutes the allegations against us. The communal riots were not caused by us or the Girni Kamgar Union. They were the work of Police aided by the agent-provocateur, M. Shaukat Ali, who, once an anti-Imperialist, is now the active paid agent of Imperialism, planted in the bourgeois national movement to disrupt it by communal dissensions. The riots were not in the beginning communal at all, nor were they due to the oil strike to which every enemy of the workers traces them. A study of the various handbills issued by the G. K. U. (Exh: P951 D and the issue of the Kranti dated 23rd February 1929) would show this and would also show the efforts made by us and the G. K. U. as a whole to stop the riots.

There are three strikes which are alleged to show the existence of the communal conflict against the workers. It is absolutely incorrect to state that there was at any time any kind of a virile communal feeling amongst the workers. Though they nominally classify themselves by religion and caste, the Bombay workers are exceptionally free from the Hindu-Muslim feeling. The working class like that in Bombay with nearly two decades of industrial life had become class-conscious and not caste-conscious. The Bombay workers afford no ground for the mischief of the communal leaders. The three strikes in which attempt was made to import the Hindu-Muslim feeling were those in the New China Mill, the Brandbury Mill and the Burma Oil Company's Installations. The trouble in the New China and the Brandbury Mills was directly due to the management and their attempts to displace the weavers and jobbers of one community by those from another. But the Riots Inquiry Committee, the Police report and the reports and speeches of Government Ministers do not start with these attempts, nor do they mention these strikes in particular. All of them attack the strikes of the workers in the Oil Company's Installations in the city. The oil strike began on 7th December 1928 as a result of the dismissals of a few workers. The company refused to negotiate with the Union of the workers and employed Pathans to break the strike. These blacklegs were paid double the wages ordinarily given to the oil workers, though they were not able to handle the work properly. The Pathans were also employed not so much for work as for attacking the workers. Meetings of workers and the pickets were assaulted. The Pathans looted the shops in the locality and the rooms of workers in the *chawls*. Affidavits regarding these happenings were published and complaints filed with the Police. But the Police had been completely under the influence of the oil company. The oil interests in India and the world are so powerful that they make and

unmake Governments. They are the supreme rulers in the politics of every big State in the world. The constant recurring wars which shake the whole world between the Standard Oil and the Royal Dutch Shell, of which the B.O.C. is a subsidiary company in India, the Teapot Dome scandal in America, and the revelations in the Oil Tariff Board Inquiry of the Government of India clearly show how Oil Imperialism controls the Police, the press and all the State apparatus in its interests. The oil strikers had to fight against the power of such a powerful Imperialist concern with world-wide links.

The Riots Committee says that we of the G. K. U. asked the mill workers to help the oil strikers in their defence against the Pathans and therefore the anti-Pathan attack began. In fact it was not at all required to tell the mill workers to help the oil strikers. In the area of the installations the oil and mill-workers stayed in the same chawls, and when the Pathans entered the chawls both the mill and oil workers were attacked, and therefore both joined hands in defending themselves against the attack. Moreover it is absolutely necessary for every Trade Union and class of workers to help another Trade Union and class of workers in their struggle with the employers. Moreover the clashes between the oil workers and the Pathan blacklegs took place from the beginning of January to the middle of it. The Riots Committee admit that from 18th January to the beginning of February there were no attacks on Pathans. Finding a difficulty to explain this they say that we were engaged in Municipal elections and therefore had no time. They also suggest that we either started or helped to spread the rumour that the Pathans were kidnapping children. Now if we were busy with the elections, it was certainly not in our interest to start such a scare. The police report shows that the scare began as early as 24th January, before the Municipal elections and in a locality with which neither mill-workers nor we had any connections. Even the police report admits that "the police have failed to trace the origin of the rumours and it is unlikely that the origin will ever be traced". But the mediocre brains on the Committee thought that they were more informed than the police, and made false remarks against us.

The police report shows that complaints were being made to the Commissioner since 24th January 1929, that there were rumours of children being kidnapped. These complaints were mostly from the non-mill areas and from bourgeois quarters. "The first known attack occurred on a motor driver in a non-mill area, according to the police report, and the news of the scare appeared

in the press for the first time on 3rd February 1929 with which our paper the Kranti had nothing to do. During the first two days, the attack was not even specifically directed against the Pathans as such. In the attacks, not the mill-workers only, but all classes and communities, Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians were found participating. The police report of 3rd February shows that a Hindu carpenter was killed in the mill area on the suspicion that he was a kidnapper. Iranis, Gurkhas, traders, a Greek engineer and all sorts of persons were attacked on this day. We had no idea that the scare was going to affect the mill-workers to such an extent that they would close down the mills next day, the 4th February: (Monday). But to our surprise we found that mills had begun to close one by one in the morning till by middle of the day almost all mills and even the railway workshops were closed. In spite of this the Police Commissioner said in his evidence that there was no general panic. He says "I spent the whole morning of the 4th in the mill area, and while one must admit the fact that 150,000 millhands and 30,000 railwaymen stopping work indicates a panic in itself, even in these areas there was no panic, as panic is understood amongst the general population, that is to say business was going on as usual, people were going about the streets and shops were open. Panic undoubtedly there was but not a general panic." When the mills closed down we endeavoured to collect the workers altogether and tell them to go back to work. But it had no effect. They all refused and said they must go home to protect their wives and children. On the evening of the 4th, when we called the workers to the K. E. M. Maidan for a meeting as we usually did, we found to our surprise that the whole four storied building overlooking the Maidan was full of Pathan residents. We at once cancelled the meeting (Ex. P 951 D page 21) because we feared that the Pathans might think that the workers had assembled to assault them. But the handbill cancelling the meeting did not reach in time to the workers and when at 3 o'clock the workers began to go to the K. E. M. Madian, the Pathans thought they were approaching their building for an attack and began throwing stones. The workers thought the Pathans were out to smash their meeting. The result was that thousands of workers flocked round our head office which was only 50 paces from the Pathans' building. In order to keep order and prevent any attacks we called in our volunteers to the head office. There were armed police stationed near about. They fraternised with the Pathans and stationed themselves at a distance from the Union office. The Pathans after this fraternisation came out in a body of fifty and rushed towards the head-

office where most of the G.K.U. leaders had assembled to explain to the workers the necessity of resuming work and the falsehood of the rumours. When the Pathans advanced, our volunteers who were not more than thirty or forty met them and repulsed their attack with courage. The Pathans are stronger men at dagger thrust and stone throwing but do not know the lathi work while our volunteers were only lathi players. So before the Pathans could come to grips with them, the long lathis disabled them and they went back into their building. When the police found that their game was foiled, they attacked our volunteers and wounded some of them. The Police Superintendent asked us to disarm the volunteers. This we refused to do. We told him that we had no intention to aggravate matters but unless our office was protected from the attacks we could not disarm or remove the volunteers. He agreed to see that the Pathans did not stir out of their building. Of course we could not trust the promise, but we knew that the nervous shock received by the Pathans was sufficient to keep them quiet. Moreover, in order to avoid a nonsensical fight, we removed our head office to Nagu Sayaji Wadi temporarily and took away our volunteers also. Tuesday, the 5th Feb: saw many complicated developments which are described in detail in the Kranti of February 23rd. In the morning Mr. Alwe tried, with the aid of Mohammedan contractors whom he knew, to disarm the suspicion of the Pathans in the Abu building opposite the head office of the G.K.U. In the attempt he was attacked by a Pathan which fact was mentioned in the report of the Home Member made to the Bombay Legislative Council on 26th February 1929. The news exasperated the workers who went to the head office. The Pathans as on the previous day tried to storm the office but they were repulsed. On Tuesday the dacoit element of the Pathans was busy and began to loot shops in the bourgeois area. A large number of Pathans marched to the office of the Commissioner of Police, attacked the police force there and injured six constables (Police report page 17). This development was absolutely unexpected, and the police took drastic steps. They entered the Masjids in which the Pathans had taken shelter, arrested them and removed them to a well-guarded camp. When the police force was attacked drastic action was taken by the police, but when the Union offices were being raided, the police looked on or harassed our volunteers. The reason for this attack on the Police Commissioner's office and the Police force is not given by anybody, and is altogether suppressed by the Riots Inquiry Committee. But we came to know of it. In the night of Monday a new idea had got hold of the Pathans.

Many of them discussed the reasons for the attack. Those days were the days of the ex-king Amanullah's popularity, of the solidarity that was being brought about between the Afghan and the Indian peoples by means of support to Amanullah and his progressively anti-British outlook. It was galling to the British to see this solidarity. It would mean a death-knell of that constant scare of the Afghan invasion on India and the excuse for which British Imperialism maintains large military forces on the Frontier and exploits the Indian treasury. They had to destroy this solidarity and brotherly feeling. They sowed the seed whereby the general attack on Pathans began. A massacre of that type was just the thing to create permanent ill-feeling between the Pathan workmen and Indian workers. Some of the Pathans who thought on these lines started a campaign amongst their groups of which the result was the attack against the police force on Tuesday.

When on one side developments were taking this turn there appeared on the scene the arch villain of the piece, Mr. Shaukat Ali, accompanied by his brother the late Mr. Mohammad Ali. They had at last got the situation they wanted and the job they were thirsting for. On Tuesday morning they gave an interview to the Times of India. The main part of the interview was a series of excited exclamations, according to the Times report, in which Mr. Mohammad Ali twice asked "what are Nimbkar and Dange doing". The Times says "Mr. Shaukat Ali made a vehement attack on the Labour leaders, his views being endorsed by his brother." The Times of India reporter, as if according to a pre-arranged plan asked, "is it likely that the situation will develop into a Hindu-Moslem conflict, seeing that most of the victims are Moslems"? And Mr. Mohammad Ali replied "of course it will" and Mr. Shaukat Ali interjected "I am going to organise the Mohammedans for purposes of self-defence." Mr. Shaukat Ali also observed that before the kidnapping scare started a group of Mohammedan mills was chosen for assaults on operatives. This interview was published in the Times of India of 6th February, 1929, and is reproduced by the Inquiry Committee in their report. The Committee in its report says "Mr. Mohammed Ali has explained to us that *he especially asked the reporter not to publish the interview.* Moreover Mr. Shaukat Ali later on did his best to help in quelling the disturbances. The declaration of Mr. Shaukat Ali can be described at the worst as indiscreet, which indiscretion must be shared by the Times of India for publishing the *alleged* interview although Mr. Mohammed Ali had asked the reporter not to publish it." I thoroughly agree with the committee that the interview was indiscreet. I also very

much appreciate the foresight of Mr. Mohammad Ali in asking the reporter not to publish what was said and also the anxiety of the Committee to call it an "indiscretion." I am also amused at the crude attempt of the Committee to throw suspicion on the authority of the interview by using the word "alleged" even when the authors themselves admitted it and tried only to explain it away. I agree that it was indiscreet because it revealed the identity of the agents who turned the riots into a Hindu-Moslem fight. Mr. Mohammed Ali asked the reporter not to publish the interview because he was more far seeing and shrewd than his mountebank brother. The Committee felt chagrin because it exposed the hollowness of the Committees conclusions. The Committee admits that the attacks in the north of the island on the 3rd, 4th and 5th February were not communal. It says "On the 5th however it turned into a communal riot and murders were committed in the south of the island. Attacks were made first by the Pathans on the Hindus generally and then by Moslems on Hindus and Hindus on Moslems" (page 5). The attacks on the Pathans had ceased by Tuesday night but thanks to Mr. Shaukat Ali's "self-defence" a general Hindu-Moslem fight began on Tuesday evening. According to the Committee itself "the worst days of the riots were the 8th and 9th February." But, unfortunately for the Communist-phobes of the Committee, the police report says that from 7th February "the mill area was comparatively calm, nearly all the outrages occurring in the area south of Byculla." In fact we had succeeded in persuading the workers to resume work from the morning of the 6th (Ex. P 951D-p. 2, 3 and 4). And as far as the riot was concerned it was over in the north of the city that is the mill area, by Tuesday evening.

The G. K. U. did every thing it could to stop the mad fury that had possessed the people. We issued every day one or two handbills, telling them of the great harm they were doing to their class by such action, and impressing upon them the fact that all Hindu and Moslem workers had common interest and they must stand together as a class; while their enemies were trying to divide them in order to neutralise their class strength and their militant organisation. We were constantly going round the mills, distributing personally these handbills and contradicting the rumours and assuring the workers that the G. K. U. would do everything for the protection of both Hindu and Muslim workers. We distributed at least 200,000 handbills from 4th to 14th February. We did 150 miles of rounds by car each day, covering in the whole period over 1500 miles round the mills in order to stop the riots. These and other measures cost us over Rs. 4,000/- and moreover the G.K.U. suffered a loss in income of nearly Rs 20,000/-, as subscriptions to the full extent could not

be recovered in February and March due to short working during the riot days.

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While the Communists and the G. K. U. were doing this the agent provocateurs like Mr. Shaukat Ali were holding meetings of the Muslims and fomenting the riots. In our anxiety to save the workers from the poison of communal feeling we even went so far as to offer to cooperate with Mr. Shaukat Ali. After seeing his interview in the press on 6th February, some of us went to see him. We explained to him the whole position and offered to issue a declaration jointly with him condemning the riots. That treacherous mountebank at the very outset refused and said, "You have come too late". Yes; too late because he had already released his gangs to start communal fighting, in "self-defence" as he called it. The trend of the casualties, their communal composition and locality, the places of firing resorted to by the Military and Police, the amount and locality of property looted, the composition of the arrested persons all point to the fact that though the workers' area contains 5/6th of the population of the city it was the least affected, that the working class never resorted to incendiarism and looting, that the rioting was never serious in the workers' locality. Appendix B of the Police report shows that the highest number of casualties were on the 7th, 8th and 9th February, when the workshops and mills were working according to that very report. Appendix C shows that out of 149 fatal casualties only 36 (24 per cent) occurred anywhere near or in the workers' locality. Appendix F shows that out of 196 riot cases registered at the 13 Police stations in the city only 45 (23 per cent) were registered at stations in or about the mill area. Appendix G, showing the number of rounds fired; by the military and police, shows that out of 115 rounds fired by the military and 53 by the police, not one had to be fired in the mill area. However the Police carried out certain arrests and these were described as the arrests of mill workers in order to quell the riot. It would not have been surprising even if the majority of the arrested were to be mill-workers as described by the Superintendent of the temporary Jail created at the *Worli chawls*, though the Superintendent in his report admits that he made no inquiries about the occupation of the arrested persons and had no details. Having failed in involving them in the riots and a pogrom, the Government was likely to have harassed the workers by arresting them under the Curfew orders and the general round up of suspected men, and they did so in some places. The action

of combing out "bad localities" taken by the Government in order to restore peace was merely a blind. After Bombay had been given a taste of "Swaraj without the British Imperialist", as the Imperialists like to describe the state of communal conflicts, it was high time to call back the evil spirits that had been released. But to do it suddenly would have revealed the villain of the piece and the well directed organisation behind it. So a smoke screen of a curfew order and combing out of "bad characters" was held before the people. The persons so combed out could not be the real aristocracy of criminals, because that would have struck at the very root of the agent-provocateurs, who directed the huge crime of a communal strife. Therefore the beggars and street-dwellers were picked up, labelled as mill workers, criminals and bad characters and locked inside the prison. Having locked in such a class was not the riot bound to end? And it did end: A perfect enactment of a drama of hoodwinking the people in order to shield the Imperialist agents who were behind the scene.

Last of all I mention appendix D, showing the number of shops looted, property stolen, and their locality. The Police report shows that 61 shops were looted and the owners registered damages to the extent of Rs. 4,62,931-10-8. This is certainly a highly exaggerated claim and is a practice followed by the bourgeoisie in every town wherever riots have taken place. Apart from this, what is noteworthy for us is the fact not one of the shops is shown to have been located anywhere near or inside the mill locality, and all the awards given by the Courts which decided these claims of damages in 1930 were to those in B & C wards which are purely bourgeois wards of the city and miles away from the mill area.

All these data point to only one conclusion—that the mill workers, whether Hindu or Muslim, never took part in the communal riots. The assaults in the mill area were due to the temporary excitement caused by the kidnapping scare, which lasted for a very short time. The workers never looted or burnt any shops, houses etc. and during the worst days of the rioting, they were working in their factories. The temporary communal deviation was checked and corrected by the strong leadership of the G. K. U. and their insistence on the class outlook. And all this was possible because of the inherent superior proletariat morality of the workers. Had not the Communist leadership aided by this proletarian morality been functioning properly, Bombay would have seen unheard of massacres on a monstrous scale. It was the Communists and the G. K. U. who kept five-sixths of the population of the city

in control and prevented them from falling victims to communal pogroms.

Our attitude to the Pathans is quite different from that of the petty bourgeoisie. It is a common idea with the petty bourgeoisie that the Pathan is in all cases nothing but a moneylender and a hireling ruffian, always ready to be employed to commit violence on the nationalist movement, as in the case of the Bardoli movement of 1928. In Bombay city in 1927 and 1928 there was a general hatred of the Pathans for this and also for the dacoities that were taking place on a large scale. Our critics assume that our attitude towards all the Pathans is governed by such common impression. Our critics also take the aid of our programme, in which cancellation of debts is one item. And on this they build the theory that the workers attacked the Pathans in order to make short work of their moneylenders. The Police report does not give any information about the occupation of the Pathans that were killed. But if it had been a general attack on moneylenders, the destruction of property and incendiarism would have occurred in the mill area and on a very large scale. It must be remembered that our programme of cancellation of debts does not lend itself to a vulgar bourgeois interpretation of repudiation by insolvency or by a simple murder of the moneylenders. The cancellation takes place through an act of the revolutionary Government of workers and peasants, and not by the isolated individual destruction of the moneylender's books or person. It is possible that once the anti-Pathan assaults began, due to the kidnapping scare, the prevailing prejudice against the Pathans as moneylenders, dacoits and violent ruffians might have acted as an aggravating factor. But it was not one of the important motives behind the riots.

Our attitude to the Pathans is based on class outlook. Amongst the Pathans also there are worker Pathans. With the worker Pathans we pledge working-class solidarity, a bond of fraternity. For us, therefore, there is no such thing as a general "Anti-Pathan Feeling".

In this connection may also be mentioned a very significant question raised in the Police report. It says, "A question naturally arises therefore why, if the Pathans were suspected of kidnapping, the majority in the South were left unmolested while the minority in the North were subjected to attack." (Note:— The north of Bombay is generally the working-class area). Having formulated the question, the report draws the conclusion that the attack took place not because of any genuine kidnapping scare but because the Communists who were leading the strike in the North

advised the attack as the Pathans were blacklegging in the oil strike. Now if that were a fact, it was sufficient to have attacked the blackleg Pathans only and a general scare in the whole city was not necessary. The real answer to the question lies elsewhere. The Inquiry Committee says, "Although there were nearly two thousand Pathans *working in the docks together with* the Hindu labourers, there was not the slightest fracas between the two." (Page 17). This fact cannot be used to support the answer of the Police to the question raised. This fact very pointedly supports the view of the Communists that class-solidarity is above communal prejudices and is an antidote to them. The Pathans in the north of the city *did not work together with* the other workers. They were not workers at all and therefore had no class solidarity with them. The workers in the North, as a result, could be easily misled into believing any nonsense about the Pathans. In the south of the city, the Pathans and the Hindu workers *worked together* and therefore had a sense of class solidarity. The non-sensical kidnapping scare was believed in the South by the other sections of the population but could not affect the dock workers, who knew what their comrade Pathans were. Class solidarity of the worker Pathans and the worker Hindus was superior to their communal prejudices as the Pathans or the Hindus. We consider the worker Pathans as our comrades and therefore a communal anti-Pathan feeling cannot be entertained by the workers.

The February riot was the last attempt of the Government and a section of the bourgeoisie to drown the militancy of the workers in blood, and plant into the proletarian movement in Bombay the seeds of its destruction, just as it has done in other parts of India. Having failed in that attempt the only thing left for it was to abandon all shams of neutrality, of so-called sympathy with the trade union movement of the workers, and hurl, in all nakedness, its immense State forces against the militant unions, which it did on 20th March, one month after the riots.

(Note: this portion was read out and tendered in original to be copied out in order to save time).

139. *The false statements of Messrs. Alwe, Kaste and Kishori Lal Ghosh regarding myself, the G. K. U. and the Bombay workers with their references to Exs. P 958. P 995 (I), P 966. P 967 etc.*

There are certain exhibits which I have been asked to explain, and about which some of my co-accused have made incorrect

statements. I am referring to the statements of Messrs Alwe, Kasle and Kishori Lal Ghosh. At the outset I have to make it clear that these gentlemen have every right to choose any line of defence they like and any political stand. I am forced to refer to their statements, not because they have ceased to or did not agree with me in all my views regarding the conduct of workers' movement. I even concede to them the right (and they have already exercised it) of criticising our Communist principles; but not of misrepresenting them, which they have done. They have also attributed things to the Managing Committee of the G. K. U., which it never did. If a small misrepresentation or an incorrect statement would have helped these two men to get released I would have kept quiet, leaving to the unerring common sense of the Bombay workers to find the truth about them. But the matter is greater than the release of two individuals. It is a matter that affects all the Bombay textile workers, whom these people have misrepresented before this Court in order to appear as "good boys", and get their release, at the cost of the reputation of 150,000 workers.

I have already stated that after the general strike of 1928 was called off and the old pre-cut wages were secured, the mill-owners, thinking that the workers were exhausted, began to reduce wages and men, mill by mill. This led to 71 separate small and big strikes till April 1929. While explaining to the Court why he had no time to take part in the work of the Workers' and Peasants' Party, though he was its member, Mr. Alwe says, "I had got such a tremendous work of the G. K. U. that I did not get time for meals from 8 A. M. to 11 P.M. My sixteen hours were spent in dealing with the workers' complaints, in carrying on talks with the owners, and in *strikes caused by insignificant and minor things.*" (Page 974 English copy) Since he refers to the work of the G. K. Union, that is in the period after May 1928, the strikes which he mentions must be the 71 strikes after October 1928. Mr. Alwe obviously describes these strikes as "caused by insignificant and minor things." I have already shown that in more than half these strikes, the G. K. Union secured increase of rates and of men. Though it is a fact that some of the strikes were not successful, in none, except perhaps one or two out of 71, was it ever proved that the strikes were "caused by insignificant and minor things" and unnecessarily kept our truthful President hungry for sixteen hours. That these strikes were caused by "insignificant and minor things" and were not at all justified is the conclusion of the Pearson Court of 1929. So, does not Mr. Alwe agree with that Court and therefore become a party to condemning the workers for causing baseless strikes?

In another place he says that he abused the Government because it would not intervene in the strike. It is not my business to see why he abused the Government but then he states the following proposition about the workers, which has a dangerous implied meaning. He says... "Because, when any two parties in furtherance of their particular object come to extremes, intervention is needed and it is the duty of any ruling power to intervene thus and if it does not do that duty, it must be said to have swerved from its duty. And it was just in accordance with what I said that the Government in the end brought about a settlement between the two parties and the strike was ended." (Page 985). This means that Mr. Alwe considers that Government should intervene in strikes if the workers and owners do not compromise. Now that is exactly what Government does when it prohibits workers' meetings, procession, picketing etc. because they show that things have "come to extremes." Similarly the Trade Disputes Act also is passed for that. So Mr. Alwe approves of that Act according to the logical deduction of his proposition. "Not only that. By the Act Government intervenes only when asked to do so. But Mr. Alwe wants that Government must intervene as a duty. Well, Mr. Alwe can hold that view. We do not. But he goes further and says that the General Strike was ended by this method. It means that according to Mr. Alwe, the workers had "come to extremes," and it was the Government who kindly intervened and ended the strike. But Government had intervened three times, on 27th April (the Governor's visit), on 15th May (Sir Cowasji Jehangir's visit) and on 15th August 1928 (Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah's visit). But the strike was not ended. It ended at the fourth intervention. Why? Because the workers by their resistance to wage cuts forced the owners to restore old rates and wages, which they were not in a mood to do on the previous occasions. That is why the strike ended. The Government Member was merely a tool of the owners to save their face. But Mr. Alwe agrees with the Government and says it intervened and saved the workers. We do not agree with this view.

Mr. Alwe in his statement has made eight points against Communists as such and against those Communists who were in the G. K. U. and the strike. Though Mr. Alwe calls himself, with assumed humility, an illiterate and ignorant person, he seems to have sufficient literacy or at least brains to pick up the abuses hurled at us, Communists, by the Prosecution and Mr. Langford James. Because all his eight points are exactly the points stated by them against us. Mr. Alwe says that we always want the workers to go on strike and to starve. We are

opposed to compromise and we do not care what happens to the workers. We are after publicity. We blame the workers when the strikes fail and take credit to ourselves when they succeed. If you carefully read the address of the Prosecution and the Government complaint, it exactly says this and Mr. Alwe thus agrees with them. The Government of Bombay in their press note in February 1930 said that we used the strike for our own purposes and for revolutionary conspiracy. The mill-owners also say the same thing and Mr. Alwe also says the same thing! I have already shown what efforts we made to get the demands of the workers granted and to end the strikes. The October agreement itself was our compromise and nobody else's. After October we brought about 71 agreements, many of which are on record and which removed the workers' grievances. In face of such things, if Mr. Alwe and along with him Mr. Kasle say the above, what is the obvious conclusion? In one place Mr. Alwe says... "They (Communists) were great experts in making false reports." (Page 984). Today, we really find that we did make a "false report" when we told the workers in 1928 that Mr. Alwe and Kasle were good worker leaders, when they were actually splitting up the Union by creating a communal fight. I promise not to make such a "false report" again. But Mr. Alwe in the course of the statement has made some very "truthful reports" about which I should like to say a word as they concern me. Mr. Alwe after saying that we were against compromise while he wanted compromise, quotes Ex. P 958, A.B.C., Minute Book of the G. K. U. and takes credit for stopping the strikes in A—Shapurji Mills, B—Pearl Mills, and C—Jam Mills. If you refer to this Minute Book exhibit you will find that the solution and policy about strike B was suggested by me, about C by Nimbkar and about A no name is given, unless every unnamed credit is claimed by Mr. Alwe or Kasle. Who is expert in false reports?

There are two handbills of the G. K. U. (Ex. P 966 and 967) in which the Union volunteers are called "Red Army." The prosecution have made a very frightening story out of them and both Messrs. Alwe and Kasle have thrown the responsibility of the handbills on me, as I was the General Secretary of the G. K. U. Now, I am quite prepared to take the sole responsibility of the handbills, if necessary and if that can save these gentlemen. But I must show that, if at all, Communists are not the only "experts in making false reports." Speaking about these handbills, Mr. Alwe says... "It was the Secretary of the Union who issued such handbills." (Page 989). Mr. Kasle says the

same thing (page 1013). I will amend that statement and say that not the "Secretary" but the "General Secretary", that is myself, used to issue the handbills. There were two secretaries besides the General Secretary. A President and a Vice President, who claim that they negotiated with mill-owners and worked for 16 hours over 75 Mill Committees ought to know this simple fact. Having put the handbills on me Mr. Alwe says... "But when once or twice I regarded the language used by them as strange it was necessary to bring before the Managing Committee of the Union a resolution to the effect that before issuing any handbill it should receive the sanction of the Managing Committee and it should be discussed on which subject the handbill is to be issued and what language is to be used. P 958 contains the resolution". Mr. Kasle goes further than this and says... "The Managing Committee of the G.K.U. had reprimanded the Secretary for using words like "Red Army". Will this pair of truth experts show where in P 958, the Minute Book, did the Managing Committee ever pass such a resolution? Unfortunately for them, the Managing Committee had complete faith in these "outsiders" (i.e. in us) and only directed that a handbill be issued. Even this it did only once on 16/10/28 just at the beginning and later on trusted its officers to do the right thing in such matters.

I will give one more specimen of the "truthful report" of Mr. Alwe, in contrast to the "untruthful" Communists. Mr. Alwe seems to be very much upset over the fact that he was not made by us a candidate for the Municipal Election on behalf of the W. P. P. though he was its member and though at one time we said that he should be elected to the Municipality. Mr. Alwe charges the W. P. P. with treacherous conduct towards him in this matter. I need not go into the details of that episode but the simple fact that Alwe's name was not on the electoral roll as a rate-payer, and the fact that no man can be a candidate unless his name is there for a specified period before the elections, ought to explain why Mr. Alwe could not be a candidate at all. If we spoke of him as one it must have been when it was not known that his name was not on the roll. Mr. Alwe's remarks against those who superseded him do not affect me personally, because I was not and never thought of becoming a candidate and as such I am not much aware of the details of the whole affair, though as a member of the W. P. P. I would have borne my share of Mr. Alwe's anger, had it been justified. But since Mr. Alwe charges me, as a Communist, with making untruthful reports, I will point out the two different things that Mr. Alwe says about this matter in his statement (leaving the further exposure of this question to those who actually

superseded him in the elections). On page 973, he says "Seven or eight months before the Municipal Election, that is at the time of the strike, these very gentlemen used to say that Alwe must be elected as the representative of the workers". Thus Mr. Alwe on his own admission was aware of the fact that we wanted him to stand for election and that we spoke about it to the workers seven or eight months in advance. Then when he found that he was not made a candidate, he says "When I saw this difference in what they said and what they did, I thought there was some ground for danger". On page 976, Mr. Alwe forgot what he had said above and explaining a reference put to him, about his nomination by the W. P. P. as a candidate for the election he says, "Of course I did not know this. I was not even told (about that). I saw it when the document was cited against me after I was arrested and brought here. Then I was much surprised". So which is true? Whether he heard from us seven or eight months before the election that we wanted him to be elected or that we never told him about that? Which is the fact?—that he "saw the difference" and "ground of danger" long before or that he was surprised to see it after his arrest? Will Mr. Alwe take back the general and sweeping statement that Communists are experts in making false statements? Because if he does not, he runs the risk of being convicted as a "Communist" in this respect at least!

I am forced to deal with Mr. Alwe's statement because, as a co-accused in this case his capacity to do mischief is great. Alwe in his statement all along has said that he is an ignorant worker, whom we "clever outsiders" have cheated. If he means thereby that because he is an ignorant worker, I should excuse him the attack he has made on Communists generally and on me particularly, I disagree. Alwe is not an ignorant worker, but a clever man who had all along the idea of using us for his own ends. And a man who can spin out an intelligent yarn over sixty foolscap printed pages cannot certainly take shelter behind the plea that he is ignorant. However, I must also state here that he is correct when he says that he did not work with us with any ideas of winning political independence for the country or the workers as a class. But in order to prove that, he need not have spun out falsehoods regarding the strikes, the Union and our work amongst the people.

Mr. Alwe has also stated some falsehoods about the G. K. U. help of Rs. 500/- to the Bauria strike. Mr. Kishori Lal Ghosh, another co-accused has also spent a lot of energy in explaining what he considers the mysterious way in which this help was sent and used and the terrible wrong that I did him in not sending the money

to him. I will state only a few points on this question to correct the mistaken view taken by Ghosh and the deliberately wrong statement made by Alwe regarding me.

The strike of 15,000 jute workers at Bauria began in July 1928. The help of the Girni Kamgar Union was given in January 1929. We could not help the strike earlier because we ourselves were going through a strike since April 1928 and our Union had no sufficient funds to spare till December. It was in December, when some of our office-bearers went to the Jharia Session of the Trade Union Congress, that they were informed of the urgency and need of help and it was promised. When they returned, the Managing Committee of the G. K. U. was informed of the state of affairs and it sanctioned Rs. 1,000/- to be paid in two instalments for the Bauria strikers' relief. The resolution was originally moved by Bradley, as can be seen from the Minute Book (P. 958) and not by Alwe. The very keen feeling for the sufferings of the Bauria workers which, according to the imaginative Mr. Ghosh, led Alwe to move for this help seems to have come to him at a very late stage, if at all, according to the Minute Book of the Managing Committee which Mr. Ghosh has not failed to read minutely, as can be seen from his statement (pages 1094-1095). That finally the resolution was moved by Alwe is due to the fact that generally resolutions, on which a great unanimity exists and has to be expressed particularly, are put from the chair without being debated upon. As the General Secretary of the G. K. U. authorised to remit the money I did it. I sent the money to Muzaffar Ahmed. Mr. Alwe in his statement says, "We did not know who conducted the Bauria Mill Strike or who was the President or Secretary of the Union. It was therefore decided at that time that the amount be sent by the Secretary of the G. K. U. to the address of the Secretary of the Bauria Union and that inquiry should be made as to who the Secretary was..... Why this first instalment of Rs. 500/- was sent to the name of Muzaffar Ahmed can be explained only by him who sent it, to his name. Because from what I have heard here R. B. Mitra was the Secretary of the Union and Kishori Lal Ghosh its President; what can the object be then in sending the money to the name of Muzaffar" ? (Page 978). Alwe's reference to the decision, if it is to be taken as found in the Minute Book of the G. K. U. on 16th January 1929, says nothing about the inquiry regarding the Secretary of the Bauria Union or the person to whom the money is to be sent. The resolution in the Minute Book (Ex. P. 958) simply contains the sanction of the help. On the contrary I can say that we did mention the fact that the money would be sent to Muzaffar Ahmed whose name was not unknown to

Alwe. An active President, who says that he supervised the work of all of us and "an ignorant worker" who states that he conducted the work of 75 Mill Committees, and negotiations of 71 strikes and signed all correspondence, (see his statement page 984) must have seen the reference to Muzaffar Ahmed in Ex. P. 954 on date 4/1/29 and his interest in Trade Union matters as also his work amongst the Calcutta workers from the references in Kranti to the Scavengers' strike. Mr. Ghosh suggests that the money was sent to Muzaffar's address in accordance with the decisions of the Party (Page 1095). Now Mr. Ghosh as well as anybody else had the Minute Book of the W. P. P. when he wrote the statement. Will he show any decision therein as regards the G. K. U. help to the Bauria strike? Mr. Ghosh says that the G. K. U. resolution does not suggest that the money be sent to Muzaffar Ahmed. True; but it also does not suggest that it should be sent to Mr. Ghosh. In criticising my conduct in this matter Mr. Ghosh does not forget to bring in constitutional considerations and says that I violated all trade union constitutional practice and was guided by purely Party considerations which, he says, "weigh with Communists so much". (Page 1095). Mr. Ghosh says that I was the Assistant Secretary of the A. I. T. U. C., as also the General Secretary of the G. K. U. and I should have sent the money either through the treasurer of the A. I. T. U. C. or to the Secretary of the Provincial Committee of the T. U. C. that is to himself. If constitutional considerations are to weigh more than Party considerations, why was the circular asking for help to the Bauria strike issued over the name of Mr. R. R. Bakhale, Assistant Secretary of the A. I. T. U. C. and not over my name or jointly with me, though I also was a Joint Asstt. Secretary of the A. I. T. U. C.? Was it not Party consideration that influenced Mr. N. M. Joshi in asking Bakhale and not me to issue that? Then why was not the help directed by the appeal to the Treasurer of the B. T. U. F. or the Treasurer of the Bauria Jute Workers' Union directly? The struggle was being conducted by the Union there and help should have gone to the General Secretary of the Union who was R. R. Mitra. Instead of that why does Mr. Bakhale in his appeal write that he would send the contributions to "Mr. K. Ghosh who is conducting the struggle through the Bengal Provincial Committee?" In fact Mr. Ghosh and Mr. Joshi wanted their Party to keep control. So he once trotted himself out as Secretary of the Bengal Trade Union Federation if you insisted on sending things to a "Secretary" and once as President of the B. J. W. Union, if you insisted on doing things through a "president". While the president of the former

and the secretary of the latter were never mentioned in the correspondence or appeals. So what wrong was there if I sent the money to Muzaffar Ahmed who also, if you so much insist on constitutional grounds, was a vice-president of the B. T. U. F. and whom I knew better than anybody else? On page 1094 of his statement Mr. Ghosh makes a suggestion, which is aimed at me and Bradley, that "the information about the G. K. U. money being sent to Muzaffar Ahmed was given to me not by Bradley or Dange but by Mr Bakhale. I doubt whether I should have heard of the money at all, till perhaps considerably later." Mr. Ghosh is not straight enough to say plainly what he really means to say. If, as he insinuates, I had not wanted him or the public to know that the G. K. U. had sent the sum to Muzaffar, the letter from me to Muzaffar of which Mr. Ghosh quotes only a fraction on page 1095 would have been differently worded or not sent at all. It is expressly stated therein, (P 395(1)) "You will also kindly acknowledge this help in the Calcutta papers, whose copies should be sent for our record". If only Party considerations had weighed with me more than the consideration of the workers' struggle, I should not have written in the same letter the following:— "If there is a Union leading the strike and commanding allegiance, so much the better." The Party that is leading the strike correctly is asked to administer the money only in case there is no such union. Mr. Ghosh is wrong when he says that capital P. of Party in the letter means the W. P. P. If it was so, it was unnecessary to add the qualifying clause to the word Party. What I had in mind was the experience of Bombay. I wanted to avoid the money being used by a union that might manage to take the lead somehow but may not command allegiance of the workers, or a party or group of persons, who might plant themselves on the strikers but may be giving them a wrong lead; and I cannot help it if any of these descriptions applied to Mr. Ghosh and led to the present tragedy! Mr. Ghosh reads a specially communistic meaning in my behaviour. But what has he got to say when I point out to him the fact that Mr. Tom Shaw, when he sent £600/- from the International Textile Workers for the relief of the Bombay strikers, sent them to Mr. N. M. Joshi, not as the General Secretary of the A. I. T. U. C. or as the President of the B. T. L. U. but to him personally with directions to use the money in the manner he would like? Was there anything communistic in him also? The fact is that every person, who knows something of party working in modern life, is guided by party considerations; and I am not at all ashamed of the fact that this consideration did weigh with me when I sent the money; but it was not the sole consideration. However the main point of

Mr. Ghosh's contention is to prove that he had nothing in common with the Communists and the W. P. P. and I readily grant that, hoping it may give peace and safety to his absolutely constitutional, independent and non-party soul.

The third gentleman who has tried to qualify himself for release by abusing the Communists is Mr. Kastle. Mr. Kastle's denunciation is more crude and he has directly told the Government and the Court that we made secret plots. He says "Uptil now I spent the days of my life in solving the question of livelihood...but when these five or six persons from Bombay joined the strike, (there came in) somewhere secret conspiracy I had no connection with such secret plots of these persons" (page 1017). Is this not a pure confession and an attempt to give evidence against us? — that we were making secret plots, but Mr. Kastle had nothing to do with them? Now there was no necessity to tell the Court that we made secret plots. He could have said, if he was honest, that he for himself had nothing to do with our principles or politics, whatever it was. But perhaps Mr. Kastle wants our conviction more than his release?

In one place Mr. Kastle has constructed a more ingenious falsehood than his brother could. He divides the thirty members of the Joint Strike Committee amongst three unions, ten for the B. T. L. U. (Mr. Joshi's section) and fifteen for the G. K. M. (our or his section), and five for the Mill-workers' Union (Jhabwala's section). Mr. Kastle seems to have learnt from some half-baked lawyer that the essence of defence against conspiracy charge lies in breaking all connections and links of agreement with the accused. So, the poor fellow worked hard to show that we five "outsiders" on the Joint Strike Committee were not from that Union to which he belonged. So he says that we five, that is Jhabwala, Dange, Nimbkar, Mirajkar and Bradley, were nominated on behalf of Jhabwala's Union, while the G. K. M. nominated all fifteen workers. Now all this part of Mr. Kastle's statement regarding the Joint Strike Committee is a tissue of palpable lies. In the first place, the B. T. L. U. had not ten but fifteen out of thirty seats on the Joint Strike Committee. The compromise leading to the Joint Strike Committee was based on this very understanding that Mr. Joshi's section will have half the seats on the Committee and our section the remaining half. (Vide the Fawcett Report and the evidence of the P. W. 245, whom Mr. Kastle himself refers to in his statement) Secondly, we were not at any time members of Jhabwala's union. On the contrary we and Jhabwala were on the G. K. M. as can be seen from the statement of Alwe and the Minute Book of the G. K. M. (Exh D. 420). Thirdly the fifteen names of the

representatives of the G. K. M. on the Jt. Strike Committee as given by Kasle are wrong. The fifteen members from our section, at the time of forming the Committee were as follows:—1. S. A. Dange, 2. R. S. Nimbkar, 3. B. F. Bradley, 4. S. S. Mirajkar, 5. S. H. Jhabwala, 6. Baburao, 7. Trimbakrao, 8. A. A. Alwe, 9. Tamhaekar, 10. Kadam, 11. Rednekar, 12. Gadkari, 13. Avsekar, 14. K. Desai, 15. Kasle. From time to time if any member went out of Bombay or was absent he was substituted by others. What Mr. Kasle has done is to omit the first seven names altogether and put seven other names in their places, of those persons who later on were substituted for absentees. Mr. Kasle says he is an ignorant worker, put into trouble by clever outsiders. But ignorant workers do not construct such falsehoods.

Both Alwe and Kasle have declaimed against persons whom they call "outsiders"—that is those organisers of trade unions and participants in the working-class struggle, who are not actually workers. This "outsiders' controversy" is as old as the beginning of the first strike in India. The employers and Government have broken many strikes and unions simply because there were a few educated persons in them, whose services were put at the disposal of the workers. The workers broke down the opposition of the Government and the employers in the matter by insisting on their right to use the services of whomsoever they liked for their interests. When on one side the workers overcame the opposition of Government and capitalists, men like Alwe and Kasle are springing up to erect new barriers in the way of the workers taking the help of educated persons, who have a revolutionary desire and capacity to serve the working class and lead it to victory. I can understand the opposition of Government and capitalists to "outsiders" coming in the workers' movement because the "outsiders" help the workers in getting a broader outlook at the beginning of the movement and with their education, of which the workers are deprived by the Government and the bourgeoisie, they can understand and expose capitalism intellectually in a better manner. But why should Alwe and Kasle take up the position of Government and capitalists and be even more reactionary than they and oppose all "outsiders" as such?

It is a fact that the workers' movement is used by many of the petty-bourgeois educated persons for making a career for themselves. But at the same time have there not been young educated persons, who have suffered for the sake of the workers and peasants, without any other motive except that of emancipating them from Imperialism and capitalism? But Alwe and Kasle object now to

all educated persons coming into the workers' movement and when you consider along with this the fact that they do not want the workers to take to the movement of political independence, their obvious motive becomes clearer. The effect of such a policy can be only to isolate the workers from all movement of emancipation, enlightenment and joining hands with those sections of the middle class youths, who are fighting for national freedom. Thus they indirectly surrender the workers into the hands of Imperialism.

The most powerful reason which has prompted these gentlemen against "educated men" and "outsiders" is not that some of these men have spoiled the workers' movement. The reason seems to be personal. Mr. Alwe scented the "danger from outsiders" (page 973 of his statement) when he found that after seven months of expectation and dreams of becoming a municipal councillor, he could not become one. But like a shrewd man that he is, Alwe is cautious, while Kasle has spoken the truth more plainly. He is against "outsiders" because he thinks that we "outsiders" brought him into the jail. He says, (page 1017), "By coming into the strike of us workers, these persons did, on the contrary, only one thing. The securing of all the demands remained aside but a poor worker like myself had to come to the Meerut Jail and to suffer and groan for two and a half years." That is the real cause of their wrath against us. They want leadership, but they do not want the sufferings that follow it. They want the workers' movement, but they do not want it to take the road of political freedom, for a simple look in that direction has led them to the Meerut Jail. Mr. Kasle says, "I finish my statement with the humble request that none of my co-workers should let themselves be influenced by such persons." But the worker-brothers, who in every strike are victims of firing and death, who in 1907 at the time of the arrest of Lok. Tilak (who was, by-the-bye, a complete "outsider" and "educated person") demonstrated and struck work for political freedom and suffered death by firing, who in 1921 days shook Imperialism, though the movement was led by another "outsider," and who since 1928 have suffered still more sacrifices, know very well whether to trust the revolutionary leaders, no matter whether outsiders or insiders, who work for their class good, or those like these two excellent gentlemen who begin to "groan," complain and betray those with whom they worked as soon as they see the Meerut prison. My friend Kasle, in whose very presence British law convicted the Pearl Mill workers to death in Bombay in 1929, and who has seen how British Courts have convicted thousands of workers and peasants to life transportation, as in the China Mill Case in Bombay and the

Chirner, Sholapur, and Satara Cases in connection with the national movement of political and economic freedom, has developed so much faith in British Law and Justice that when he was asked if he wanted to give any defence witnesses, he trusted that "the Court can decide justice or injustice without the help of witnesses" (Page 1018). And above all, he exhibits this trust when already this Court in its bail order of 7th May 1931 on their application has exhibited its class prejudice against *all workers as such* when it said, "*As both are labourers* the danger of their absconding cannot be neglected" (Page 18 of Order), which means that workers as a class have no credit of social status in the country, which they can offer as security for their bail.

Mr. Kasle is so much in a hurry to get himself dissociated from us that in his attempt he has betrayed his friend Alwe also, who on the last page of his statement has trusted him to do many good things for him (Page 992). His first argument is that all the bad deeds against the Government were done by us and he had no hand in them. Then if the Government blames him for remaining with people like us in the Union he throws the whole blame of bringing us in the Union on Mr. Alwe's shoulder. He says that he personally was opposed to our entering the G.K.M. "But Mr. Alwe brought these persons in....," and a few lines above "If Mr. Alwe had not given an assurance about them they would not have got an entrance at least into our workers' movement". (Page 1016). So, according to Mr. Kasle, if there was a crime in bringing us to the G.K.M. it was done by Alwe. "Hang everyone if you want but not me" is the purport of Mr. Kasle's prayer.

However both Alwe and Kasle have spoken the truth when they say that they had nothing to do with politics, that they held no opinions advocating political freedom for the workers from Imperialism. I can certify the fact that they knew very little of my politics. If not then at least their present statements are sufficient to show that they have no desire for the complete emancipation of the working class from capitalism and Imperialism. Mr. Kasle is also partially right when he says, "Mr. Dange was making a conspiracy against me in order to get me out of the Union." (Page 1014). I say partially because I was not making a conspiracy but openly writing in the *Kranti* against the mischief of Kasle in inciting communal quarrels in the Union on the Brahmin and non-Brahmin question. There was no need for conspiracy because the workers at Shivdi and Morbag were openly denouncing him in a handbill in March 1929.

In summing up my reply to the statements made by both these co-accused of mine against me, I can say with regard to Mr. Alwe that it is ridiculous to charge him with revolutionary conspiracy to establish a workers' Raj, when he himself in his statement says, "...the speeches that were being made to the effect that the workers' Raj must be established were regarded by me only as empty talk." (Pages 985-86.) You cannot take emptiness seriously! As regards Mr. Kastle, he says about himself this, "As I am ill, my head is not steady...." (Page 1016). In fact Mr. Kastle's unsteadiness began long ago and increased rapidly since 20th March 1929. Since his head is not steady the less said of him the better!

D/- 4-1-1932.

* 140. *The Tramwaymen's Union.*

The second union in the list of my "trade union crimes", is the organisation of the Bombay Tramwaymen's Union. (Address of Mr. James). The prosecution alleges that this Union was also organised in accordance with our plan to get a stranglehold on every important industry and as transport is very important, we began to build up a union of tramway workers and to work up the aims of the conspiracy through it. It is a fact that when I was arrested I was the General Secretary of the Tramwaymen's Union as also of the Girni Kamgar Union.

The Bombay Electric Supply and Tramway Company Ltd. (B.E.S.T.) is one of the biggest and most profitable companies in Bombay. The position of this company is more peculiar than that of the railways and stronger also, if you consider it even from the ordinary capitalist point of view. The railway companies that were originally floated to build up railways in India had to import heavy capital into India, and do all the initial work of survey, engineering, cutting of ways through mountains and over rivers etc. The traffic also was not assured to them. The case of the B. E. S. T. is different. The railways built up their traffic; while in Bombay the traffic created the tramways, and the B.E.S.T. now has a stranglehold on the vast mass of the Bombay middle class and workers. The B.E.S.T. got the roads ready from the Municipality of the city. The cotton mills created the city and the city then asked for the tramways. The result is that a few capitalists floated a company; the Municipality gave them the roads, the monopoly of transport and later on the monopoly of electric supply. A group of capitalist began to fatten on the life on the whole city.

The railways when they pass through a new country, bring the markets within reach of the peasant, aid the 'movement' of commodities and discharge a very important function in social economy. The Bombay tramways compared to this stand on a lower level of an organised fulfilment of a social function. Their customers are assured to them. The needs of the city life compel thousands of men to put into their hands an anna each per day. The B. E. S. T. is a monopoly giant fed by the city, living on the license of the citizens' municipality and yet it defies the city, the citizens' Municipality.

The B. E. S. T. makes every year a net profit of nearly fifty lacs. During 1931, the year of severest depression, it declared a dividend of 14% because the B. E. S. T. is a monopoly giant and the citizens, the middle class and workers must use its trams to earn their daily bread.

The B. E. S. T. is a company whose President, at the time when we formed a Union of its workers, was Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, and there is scarcely a rich man in Bombay who has not a scrip of the B. E. S. T. stocks. This patriotic gentry, however, always called managers from America to organise its business, and the principle of Indianisation was reserved in the books of resolutions that came out every year from patriotic bodies. What was the attitude of this Company, owned by Indians, managed by foreigners and licensed and given monopoly by the Municipality of "citizens" towards its workers?

The formation of a Union of the tramway workers was not a new thing that I did. The tramway workers had a Union of theirs in 1922, led by Messrs. Chaman Lal and Pawar. The Union had at that time a larger membership than in 1928. In 1922, the men on the traffic lines, the conductors, ticket collectors etc. were in the Union, while in 1928, the Union was limited only to the workshop men at the Kingsway workshops at Dadar, Bombay. The company had refused to recognise the Union, even when it was under the leadership of Chaman Lal and Pawar, and though it commanded a large membership. When the company refused to recognise the Union and speak with its representatives, Messrs. Chaman Lal and Pawar, the workers struck work on 17th September 1922. The Company sustained some loss as the traffic workers stopped all work on the lines. But the strike was broken with the help of imported labour and police aid. This company of the Indian bourgeoisie was

so much mindful of the welfare of its worker-countrymen and their right to form their own organisations that according to the Labour Gazette of November 1922, "about 1300 members of the Union were dismissed from the Company's service". The Company did not stop at that. It considered all the old workers as dismissed from service and reengaged the new and old workers on a fresh contract of service, which so far as the Company's obligations went, was on a daily basis. All the workers were considered as "daily wage-earners" and musters and records were maintained on this basis. But actually payment of wages was made monthly, the bonus and provident fund calculations were all done on monthly service basis. The new classification was introduced to facilitate immediate dismissal of any worker, without liability to pay him notice period wages. This was the immediate cause of my being called upon to engage in the work of the Tramway Union in 1928.

The strike of 1922 had killed the Union and there was no Union till 1927 April, when a new Union was formed by Jhabwala. In the first month it had, I think, about 50 members and all of them were from the Dadar workshop of the Company. The Union after the first month sank into inactivity. In March 1928, the Company gave notices to 200 workers out of the 800 in the workshop that they would be dismissed as the Company had no work for them. Such a heavy retrenchment in spite of the profits of half a crore, caused grave discontent and the Union sprang into life again. Meetings were held and resolutions passed protesting against the action of the Company and the indifference of the Municipality which gave license to such a Company to exploit the city. But there was no proposal of a strike. Our simple demand at the time was that retrenchment must be stopped. A report of the meetings and resolutions was sent to the Company by the Union but the Company refused to recognise the Union or speak with its representatives. They insisted that the Company would recognise the Union on condition that its constitution was approved by the Board of Directors and that it did not admit as its office-bearers or members any one who was not an employee of the Company. The reply meant a direction to the Union to become a Company Union, acting according to the advice of the Company who did not want the Union to take the help of any independent organisers or advisers in its work. (Ex. P 1744 Kranti, dated 8th July, 1928). The reply to the Company's conditions was that a trade union had every right to engage anybody's services in its work; and it would send a copy of its constitution for information

to the Board but not for its approval or disapproval. After this the Company ceased to correspond with the Union. But the attitude of the workers had the desired effect. We succeeded in putting the whole matter before the President of the Board of Directors, who at that time was Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas. Three amendments were made, as a result by the Company in its retrenchment policy. They reduced the number to be retrenched, which was originally fixed at 200. They had first given 24 hours notice. But now they agreed to pay one month's notice pay to those who were retrenched. The Company usually pays at the end of each year, a bonus to its employees, which the retrenched workers would have received if they had been in service a month or so more. The Company agreed to pay the bonus in advance to the retrenched men. Amongst the retrenched were some of very long standing service who, if they had been in service for a year or so, would have, according to the contract of their service, received a higher gratuity from the Company. This fact also was forced on their consideration. This small success of the Union gave confidence to the men and almost all the men in the workshop became members of the Union. The membership according to the annual report of the Union was 881 during 1928-29.

The management had promised to the deputations that had been sent to them by the workers before this Union was formed that they would revise the rates of pay in the workshop. The basis of this promise was that the nature of work done in the workshops had considerably changed since the rates of wages were fixed. The original rates were based on the railway coach-building workshops, while the work in the tramway workshop was of a superior kind, since the company improved its designs of coach-building and had also introduced a new pattern bus-service. In order to get the promise fulfilled, we formulated a new set of wage-rates and promotions and submitted it to the Company, which as usual refused to discuss it with the Union as such. The proposals were published in the Kranti dated 12th and 19th July 1928 (P1744). In spite of all our efforts, nothing was done by the management in the matter. It still maintains its insolent attitude of not recognising the Union, though lately the Company has been forced by the workers to negotiate with the Union representatives (two of whom were "outsiders") on the question of partial closing of the workshop (Agreement dated 19th October 1931). That is the attitude of the Indian bourgeoisie, an Indian Company, even when the Government of India, the Government of foreign bourgeoisie, has no objection to negotiate with the Railwaymen's Federation and the "outsiders" in it.

The Prosecution have not put into exhibit my activities in connection with the Tramwaymen's Union. The Crown Counsel mentioned it in his address but could find nothing to put before this Court, though as can be seen from the *Kranti* and the A.I.T.U.C. Bulletin (D 890) meetings of tramwayworkers were held, attended and addressed by some of us. What is the reason of the silence of the Prosecution over this branch of my Trade Union work? According to them, we conspire through every available Union, every available meeting of the workers. Why not the Tramway Union then, a key in the life of Bombay? The reason is plain enough. The fact is we "conspire" through no Union. Our attitude and principles are everywhere the same. The Prosecution want to smash the militant trade unions, and such as immediately threaten the profits of the bourgeoisie and the Government on a large scale by means of strikes and refusal to accept wage-reductions. The Tramway Union was not a big Union; it threatened no strike. Our speeches only discussed the question of retrenchment and the problem of recognition of the Union. We were powerless to bring about any strike on the lines. Since the Union was not strong, the "conspiracy" was not deep enough for the Prosecution to seize, search and bring the records of that Union in this case. This would show that it is not revolutionary conspiracy that you are trying but the big and militant trade unions that you are trying to smash. Since the Tramway Union was a small one limited to one workshop only, it escaped the mutilation by searches and arrests and the coils of this case in March 1929, but the workers could not escape an attack on their earnings and as soon as they resisted they were faced with the police force and lathies of the Government and the management in October 1931:

141. The All-India Trade Union Congress—its formation and the attitude of the National Congress towards it.

The working class in its struggle against Capitalism is obliged to unite industrially, nationally and internationally. In their direct struggle with the employers each section of the workers forms trade unions, but just as the employers form national federations of their own to protect their economic class interests, the workers have to unite their unions on an all-national basis. The All-India Trade Union Congress represents the national unity of the trade unions of the Indian workers.

But the present All-India Trade Union Congress did not come into existence for this specific purpose, and it is one of the accusations against us in this case.

that we imported class-struggle, political struggle, a revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle into a Trade Union Congress, which was meant to further the economic interests of the workers by legitimate and peaceful methods. The A.I.T.U.C. was founded in 1920, and its first Congress was held in Bombay in October 1920 under the presidentship of the nationalist bourgeois leader Lala Lajpat Rai, who by his stay in America had come to possess a reputation of being a "socialist," which ultimately turned out to be unfounded. The immediate incentive to the formation of the Congress was not the developing revolutionary struggle in the country, nor was it due to any all-national emergency affecting the trade union struggle of the workers as such. The Imperialist powers deliberating over the Versailles Treaty were threatened with the revolutionary movement of the workers in their countries and in order to coordinate their national-imperialist policy towards the workers on an internationally agreed imperialist basis, they had decided to institute a powerful watchdog institution. The outcome was the Washington Conference and the International Labour Office of Geneva. The Conference had recommended that each nation should send representatives of its trade unions through its Government, and the Government of India, accepting this, announced that they would send Indian representatives on the recommendation of trade unions here. In India there was no body that could make any recommendation on behalf of all trade unions or workers; so a body had to be founded. All the fashionable trade unionists who were tempted by the prospect of free trips and an international status united to form an All-Indian Trade Union Congress. There were also many real trade union workers who seeing the necessity of an All-India unity of trade union, joined hands with the fashionable group, since there was very little of trade union activity to warrant separate organisations or non-cooperation with the pseudo-labour leaders. The All-India Trade Union Congress was founded and its first Congress was held in the most fashionable bourgeois quarters of Bombay. Not the needs of the working-class struggle, but the prizes offered by Imperialism, was the immediate incentive of the A.I.T.U.C.

The main purpose of founding the T.U.C. was served and Government accepted its recommendations of Indian delegates to the International Labour Conference at Geneva. The second Congress was held at Jharia in 1921 under the presidentship of Mr. Baptista, and the third session at Lahore in 1923, where Mr. C.R. Dass presided. This period of 1920-23 was one in which the Indian workers, peasants and middle classes rose in revolt and

offered battle to Imperialism. It was a period when the European proletariat was bidding for class-power. Did all this affect the T.U.C., the so-called organisation of the Indian workers in any way? Not one union did represent the militant workers who presented Bombay in complete darkness to the Prince of Wales when he landed there in 1921. The workers who were spontaneously taking part in the nationalist movement for political freedom were not in the Trade Union Congress at all. And the representatives, who went to Europe came back to India, without understanding a bit of the mighty proletarian movement there.

The founding of the T.U.C. as a separate national organisation of the workers as a class, however, roused the jealousy of some of the bourgeois nationalist leaders, and the danger it presented to their organisation, if the T.U.C. were to become a really active body functioning on class lines, was apparent. Mr. C.R. Dass in his Presidential Address to the Gaya Session (December 1922) of the Indian National Congress advised the nationalists to organise the workers and espouse their cause and he gave this reason for his advice; "If the Congress fails to do its duty, we may expect to find organisations set up in the country, by labourers and peasants detached from you, disassociated from the cause of Swaraj, which will inevitably bring into the arena of the peaceful revolution class struggles and the war of special interests. If the object of the Congress be to avoid this disgraceful issue, let us take labour and peasantry in hand....." When thousands of workers and peasants were falling victims of imperialist firing aided by zamindars and the bourgeoisie, Mr. Dass was calling their struggle "a disgraceful issue," and asking the middle-class petty bourgeois, whom he was addressing, to take labour and peasantry in hand, (let us take *them* in hand). In order to protect the bourgeoisie from being attacked by the class war of the workers, and also in order to forge some weapon exclusively in his hands to aid him in his fight against the orthodox non-cooperators, Mr. Dass tried to infuse political ideals into the Trade Union Congress by presiding successively over its two sessions at Lahore (1923) and Calcutta (1924). But as soon as the political ferment around cooled down and his political programme of Council Entry was secured, he became indifferent. From 1920 to 1924 the Trade Union Congress had as its president the biggest leaders of the nationalist bourgeois movement, which was aimed against British Imperialism. But not one of these presidents had advised the T.U.C. to refuse, to associate with the thoroughly imperialist I.L.O. at Geneva. They were non-cooperating with Imperialism, but they were willing to let the

working-class organisations remain under the Imperialist and capitalist influence of the I.L.O. because both they and the imperialists had the same attitude towards the workers.

The organisation of the Trade Union Congress was not welcomed in any better spirit by the National Congress. As soon as the T. U. C. Session was held at Bombay in *October 1920* the National Congress in *December 1920* at Nagpur, awakened to the necessity of organising the workers and passed the resolution: "This Congress is of opinion that Indian Labour should be organised with a view to improve and promote their well-being and secure to them their just rights and to prevent the exploitation (1) of Indian Labour (2) of Indian resources by foreign agencies" (Volume 1 page 35 of Congress Resolutions published by the A. I. C. C.). The resolution is directed against the exploitation of Indian labour by foreign agencies, but is silent about exploitation by Indian agencies, when at this very time the Bombay Textile workers were striking against their Indian masters for increase in wages to compensate a rise in the cost of living. In the true capitalists language it talked of "their just rights", as if there are "unjust rights" also. With a flourish the A. I. C. C. appointed a sub-committee of eleven to carry out labour organisation work (1st January 1921) (Volume 1 page 59). The eleven ladies and gentlemen did nothing. So the Working Committee at Calcutta on 2nd February 1921 asked Mr. C. R. Dass to give effect to the resolution of Nagpur (Vol. 1 page 86). When four months later, one member of the Committee asked for Rs 1500/- to carry out the work, the Working Committee of the Congress at its Bezwada Meeting shelved the proposal to the Sub-Committee for report (April 1921) (Vol. 1 page 91). However the workers themselves never waited for the patriotic angels to come to them to show them the path of their salvation. They took to their own line of demonstrations and support to the national movement of freedom, in spite of the distrust and the cold attitude towards them manifested by the Congress leaders, who addressed the workers of Bombay as "hooligans", on their demonstrations at the Prince of Wales Landing. For more than a year after this the Congress forgot its resolution on Labour. The political movement was betrayed, the petty bourgeois leadership collapsed. When everything was lost, in its leisure hours, the Congress again turned to Labour, and the Working Committee at Calcutta in *November 1922* gave its 'opinion' that the resolution passed at Nagpur "should be carried out without further delay" (Vol. 1 page 223). Next month at the Gaya Session, *December 1922*, the Congress gave up the former resolution of separately organising the workers and by a new resolution

welcomed the A. I. T. U. C. and appointed a Sub-Committee this time "to assist the Executive Council of the A. I. T. U. C. for the organisation of Indian labour, both agricultural and industrial". The New Committee consisted of six members, of whom one was M. Sringaravelu Chettiar, who later on was one of the accused in Cawnpore Communist Conspiracy Case of 1924. It is noteworthy that none of the old heroic Committee of eleven was found on this Committee (Vol. I page 236).

The nationalist bourgeoisie, as the candidate for the next Government of the country, learns the lessons of Govt: at the hands of Imperialism and practises them on its rival, the workers and peasants. One lesson is to hoodwink the people by commissions and committees and to avoid to do a work by pleading want of funds. The Working Committee remembered that the Gaya Congress in December 1922 had appointed a labour organisation committee, in *February 1923* when it met in Bombay and appointed Dr. Sathaye as convener for it and sanctioned Rs 200/- for initial expenses and asked for "a plan of work, if any", (Vol. I page 254). The Committee seems to have thought or slept furiously over "the plan of work, if any", and the convener submitted proposals in July which were graciously considered by the Working Committee in August 1923. In the true fashion of a body that aspires to take the place of the Government of India it resolved "that Dr. Sathaye be informed that the scheme will be considered in detail after circulation among the members of the Working Committee and that meanwhile Dr. Sathaye be informed that considering its present financial condition, the Working Committee does not hope to be in a position to adopt the scheme this year or to give effect to it. Under these circumstances, Dr. Sathaye is requested to reconsider his application and make fresh proposals, if any." The Committee has no funds; even if it has, it does not hope to give effect to the scheme. It asks for fresh proposals and still says that the scheme will be considered in detail after circulation. Can any Home Member of the Government of India even beat this piece of hypocrisy ?

The matter was again pressed before the A. I. C. C. by Dr. Mukerjee at Coconada on *1st January 1924* (Vol. II page 2) and it was sent up to the Working Committee, who at the Bombay meeting (Vol. II page 12) on *1st. February 1924* postponed the consideration " in view of the present financial condition." All these resolutions were being passed when the " just rights " to live of the workers in Ahmedabad and Bombay were being attacked by a wage cut of 15% in the former and stoppage of bonus in the

latter. In the Bombay strike, when assistance for relief work was asked, the Working Committee in its meeting of *23rd April 1924* (Vol. II page 19) pleaded the same excuse. The Nagpur Congress of 1920 noted the existence of workers in India and the necessity of organising and protecting them; the Gaya Congress, two years later appointed a Committee to cooperate with the Trade Union Congress in their work and then every body decided not to do anything in the matter. The Conada Congress of 1923 and of Belgaum in 1924, refused even the philanthropic reference to the programme of labour organisation. This omission of hypocrisy was corrected at the Cawnpore and Gauhati Congresses in 1925 and 1926 which reinserted the clauses on " the organisation of labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of relations between employers and workmen and between landlords and tenants. " (Vol. III page 25 and Vol. IV page 61).

In this long period of six years there were big strikes in the industrial centres, accompanied by firing by Government forces, called in by the Indian and European employers. But in the Annual Reports of the General Secretary of the Congress, none of them are even mentioned. When such was the attitude of the central organisation, the Provincial Committees followed the same line and every subordinate committee imitated the central in appointing labour sub-committees and ultimately doing nothing or openly siding with the employers against the workers in Bombay. The Congress deliberately and systematically followed the policy of keeping the working class away from political consciousness and organisation, and refused to espouse the economic struggles of the working class whether against Indian or foreign employers.

When the tide of active politics went down, the nationalist bourgeois leaders were not to be found in the ranks of the Trade Union Congress. After the Calcutta Session of 1924, the Presidency of the Congress was conferred on men, who though not workers, were interested in trade unionism. Their ideal, of course, was in no way better than that of the nationalist bourgeoisie. Politically they were even backward and reactionary. But they had one virtue. From whatever motives, they struck to organising trade unions and though they desired to use them for keeping the workers away from class-struggle and within the fold of Geneva Imperialism, the objective effect of their work was a more or less stable growth of trade unions among sections of workers.

SECTION 4. The Trade Union Congress and Miscellaneous—Exhibits and Final Plea. Paras: 142—149

142. *The T. U. C. and its early political ideals—the Second International's efforts to capture the T. U. C. and the Cawnpore Session of 1927—Exts. P 545 (8), P 545 (6) —P. Ws. 111 and 119.*

The existence of the Trade Union Congress as a separate organisation of the working-class was justified and necessary. It was moreover increasingly becoming clear that the workers had to find the expression of their political emancipation not through the National Congress, but through the T. U. C. and a political party of their own.

The Trade Union Congress, even before the advent of the Communists, was expressing itself on political questions, but the political ideals so expressed were not anti-imperialist or anti-capitalist. The lead that the working class was being given can be best found in the Presidential Addresses of the Congresses. After the non-cooperation days when the bourgeoisie embarked on the career of cooperating with the British Dictatorship, the talk of leading the workers in to a fight for Swaraj (Dass' Address of 1922) vanished. The President of the 1925 Bombay Session, Mr. Thengdi in his address said, "The work of the Indian National Congress is mainly political while ours is mainly economic". (Ex. D.145 (18)). And further on, "to get things done through the Government and by law is a sure, though slow, remedy for all your ills." The lead given by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. Bole was thoroughly reactionary. He called the Versailles Treaty "a Magna Charta of the labouring classes all over the world". However the Trade Union Congress had begun developing international contacts; it was affiliated to the Workers' Welfare League in August 1924. It had established an office and started the Trade Union Bulletin in July 1924. For the first time, the Presidential Address of 1925, in spite of its extra-loyal attitude, spoke in terms of class and conceived the workers as an independent social category producing social wealth on which capitalism thrived.

The sixth session of the T. U. C. at Madras on 10th January 1926 was presided over by Mr. V. V. Giri. It was attended by Mr. Graham Pole. The President in his address pointed out that Mahatma Gandhi was against the formation of the Trade Union Congress and four years back Mr. C. F. Andrews, the elected President

of the year, had agreed with him but later on came to recognise that "international coordination on labour problems was necessary." But the idea of coordination of the workers of all countries on a class basis fighting against capitalism was far from their mind. The Congress by its resolutions asked for the formation of a political Party of the workers "on the lines of the Labour Party of England". It also opined that "a measure framed by Indians conferring on India Swaraj or Self Government base on adult suffrage be passed into law, without delay." But like its petty lawyer leadership the Congress while demanding Swaraj was asking for seats on the Legislature in terms of the recommendations of the Muddiman Report !

However, the T. U. C. was not quite that innocent body of workers, whom capitalism would like to confine to purely welfare schemes and wages questions, to the purely economic demands. It was already asking for political freedom, for which the rank and file had fought alongside the nationalist movement in the days of direct action. But the political demands were to be realised through the Imperialist State and were consistent with the existence of foreign dictatorship. It is alleged against us in this case that we worked our revolutionary conspiracy through the T. U. C. in as much as those harmless ideals of the T. U. C. were changed into those asking for a Soviet Republican model and urging the workers to revolutionary action. The evidence here regarding our T. U. C. work begins with the Delhi Session of March 1927. A reference to the report shows that the Congress was attended by Saklatwala and was held at Delhi at his request. The call for general strike found in some of our Trade Union resolutions is said to be a special Communist tactic. But the report submitted then by the General Secretary, Mr. Ginwalla, shows that the Trade Union Congress had actively helped the General Strike in England of May 1926 and had sent Rs. 8306/- to the British T. U. C. for helping the General Strike. Out of the 47 resolutions passed none touched the fundamental aims and objects of the T. U. C. and on the question of international affiliation, the Congress approved the efforts at that time made by the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee for unity between the I. F. T. U. the yellow organisation and the R. I. L. U., supporting affiliation to which is considered to be one of the ingredients of our "crime". Saklatwala came and went. The Delhi Session congratulated him, elected S. V. Ghate as Assistant Secretary and D. R. Thengdi as Administrative Secretary, and thereby shook British Imperialism so violently that all the three incidents have been brought into this case as evidence. But these three incidents did not shake the T. U. C. from its old constitutional politics !

The large mass of evidence brought here regarding the Trade Union Congress relates to the Cawnpore and Jharia Session of 1927 November and 1928 December, and the E. C. Meeting of February 1928 at Delhi. The evidence against me individually relates only to the Cawnpore session and the Delhi Meeting of the E. C. of T. U. C. The reason for concentrating on these particular years and Sessions lies in the fact that with the year 1927 began a period of industrial and political upheaval, which during the next four years continued to gather in volume and intensity. British Imperialism had decided on an iron hand policy and kicked at the Indian bourgeoisie through the Simon Commission. The Labour Party and the Second International gang had also a hand in it. When the offensive on the political front began, the labour imperialists naturally feared that the Indian working class, as in 1921-22, would join with and strengthen the hands of the nationalist bourgeoisie, if it decided to give battle. Therefore the workers' organisations had to be won over to the influence of the policy of Geneva, the British Labour Party, British T.U.C., the I. F. T. U.; the Second International, all of which have one and the same policy towards India—that it must remain a slave of Imperialism. Though the I. F. T. U. was outwardly carrying on talks of unity with the R.I.L.U., it had no intention of bringing it about. Therefore at its Paris Congress it decided to make efforts to secure affiliation of the colonial workers' organisations. A big bunch of labour imperialists, trade unionists and socialists of all kinds suddenly took fancy to study the Indian conditions and came to India. Amongst them were Messrs. Purcell and Hallsworth. The Cawnpore Session of the T. U. C. and the Delhi Meeting of the E. C. of T. U. C. was one continuous attempt of these men to get the A. I. T. U. C. affiliated to the I. F. T. U. and to tone down or sabotage the workers' taking part in the anti-imperialist front that was developing on the Simon Commission Boycott. The Cawnpore Session and the Delhi Meeting, contrary to the allegations of the Prosecution, do not record a single attempt to bid for power by the Communist and Left Wing trade unionists, but was an organised offensive of the Second International, the British labour Imperialists and the I. F. T. U. to prevent the working class in India, not from joining the R. I. L. U. or the Comintern only, but from joining the movement of political emancipation and taking the leadership of the anti-Imperialist front. My article published in the "Herald" of Bombay entitled. "The Conspiracy of imperialism in the All-India Trade Union Congress" (of which Ex. P 545 (8) seems to be a copy), explained this very point of view. But that article did not suggest or propose affiliation to the R.I.L.U. or any other body. At the Cawnpore Session a

number of leaflets, were distributed on this very subject and the Prosecution have exhibited some copies of them which the police got hold of there. (Exs. P 545 (6)). These leaflets also warned the the Congress against the attempts being made by the yellow internationalists, but did not propose any affiliation. They again insisted on the unity between the two Trade Union Internationals, that is reiterated the resolution of the Delhi Congress on the subject. The Congress in spite of the attempts of Purcell reaffirmed its Delhi resolution on the subject of international affiliation, and also decided upon the boycott of the Simon Commission.

Prosecution witnesses no. 111 and 119 have been brought to prove that I was present at the Cawnpore Session. I certainly do not deny the fact that I was there and that I was elected one of the Secretaries for the ensuing year; but I am not in a position to corroborate their other statements as to what I spoke on which resolution. P. W. 119 says that I moved the resolution congratulating the U. S. S. R. on its Tenth Anniversary. There were world wide demonstrations and congratulations from all proletarian quarters on the 10th Anniversary celebration and the Trade Union Congress of the Indian workers certainly could not have kept itself from congratulating the Workers' Republic and neither can a real trade unionist be expected not to move or support such a resolution. I cannot however vouchsafe for the correctness of the P. W.'s report.

Ex. P1878 C dated 5-12-27 is said to be a report sent by me to all those comrades in the "conspiracy" who had agreed upon a revolutionary policy to be followed at Cawnpore in the T. U. C. The body of the report itself does not warrant any such conclusion. It is addressed to the members of the "T U. C. Left", that is those, who did not agree with the policy of the Geneva School and had expressed a desire in the Congress to follow a more radical policy. The report itself says that those who agreed on this point decided to form "a cohesive group and a plan for future work in order to foster *real trade union activity amongst the workers*". To attack the members of this "Left" with the charge of "conspiracy" is to attack the aim of real trade union activity and nothing else.

The nationalist bourgeoisie, unable to agree upon the constitution that it should have, but intent upon hiding its internal contradictions behind the mask of an All-Parties Unity in the face of Imperialist attack, was trying all sorts of antics of "producing a constitution" of free India before it had even fired a single shot for freedom. There was a veritable epidemic of constitutions and endless

waste of paper over the phrases about the advantages of a federal state or a unitary state, about defence and debts and so on. The bourgeoisie is going through these travails for the last four years, and nothing is yet born. They smack their lips over the ingenious copies they make of this or that country's constitution with improvements "to suit the genius of India" and like the idiotic merchant, who copied the ledger of his rich rival and imagined that being in possession of this copy he had also come into possession of the coveted wealth, they begin to assume the airs of "free men" and the manners of "ambassadors". While in fact for their pocket expense of 25 shillings a day at the "ambassadorial" Round Table Conference, they have to run to the steward of the St. James'. This mediocre bourgeoisie wanted to engage the T.U.C. also in this foolery. The T.U.C. leadership, dominated as it was by the kindred spirits of the bourgeoisie, agreed to join in and appointed a sub-Committee to draft a "Labour constitution for the future Government of India". The Committee consisted of Messrs. Chaman Lal (President of the Congress), N. M. Joshi (General Secretary), M. Daud, G. Sethi, K. Ghosh, D. R. Thengdi, Jhabwala, Dange and Spratt. Out of these nine, the last five are accused in this case. Spratt was appointed convener. But the Committee never met nor did it frame any constitution.

143. *The Delhi E. C. T. U. C. Meeting—Jharia Congress—
the T. U. C. must not cooperate with the surrenders of
the I. N. C.*

Though the game of the Second Internationalists was foiled in Cawnpore, they did not give it up. An official invitation was procured in the meanwhile from the I. F. T. U. to the T. U. C. for affiliation to it. A meeting of the Executive Committee was arranged at Delhi in February 1923, and contrary to all constitutional procedure, though the full session of the Congress had not decided on any affiliation, the E. C. was being asked to decide on this vital matter without any consultation with the affiliated unions. The Genevites in power knew full well that they would have a majority at the E. C. meeting. When the meeting was held in one of the Committee Rooms of the Assembly Chamber, Messrs. Purcell and Hallsworth recommended affiliation to the I. F. T. U. A proposal was also brought forward to break off connections with the Workers' Welfare League, which was the representative in England of the T. U. C. since 1924. What does this show? It means that it was the yellow internationalists who were taking the offensive. It was they who were committing the Congress to international affiliation

and that with the I. F. T. U. They were moving for disaffiliation from W. W. L. Our reply to this was naturally to prevent it, since the I. F. T. U. was only an agent of Imperialism inside the working class movement, an agency that was dominated by the British Unions and the politics of the Labour Party. In spite of this there was no proposal at this E. C. meeting from us for affiliation with the R. I. L. U. and as regards the W. W. L. we were merely asking for the status quo. The W. P. P. circular to trade unions issued on this matter (Ex. P545(7)) does not positively demand affiliation but says, "if any affiliation is considered it should be in favour of the R. I. L. U." The result was that there was no affiliation to any international, though the official bureaucracy succeeded in disaffiliating the T. U. C. from the W. W. L. and appointing the British T. U. C. as the agent of the Indian T. U. C.

Thus whether at Delhi, March 1927, at Cawnpore, November 1927, or at Delhi, February 1928, there were no proposals from the Left section of the T. U. C. or the Communist trade unionists fundamentally altering either the aims and objects or the trade union activities undertaken by the Congress. All the proposals were *preventives* keeping the T. U. C. from going under the domination of the International of Labour Imperialists. And though a few officials of the T. U. C. were from the Left Group, the majority control remained in the hands of the Geneva School.

The year 1928 was a year of the offensive of Imperialism against the nationalist bourgeois movement which was gathering volume on the Simon Commission question and also a year of the offensive of the Indian bourgeoisie against the Indian workers. The longest and biggest strikes took place in this year and naturally shook the ideology of the workers. But the Trade Union Congress as such gave little lead, because it was still in that stage in which the National Congress was before the war period. The political atmosphere was in a ferment when the T. U. C. met at Jharia in December 1928 under the Presidentship of M. Daud. As the report shows (D 145 (34)), the Presidential Address (D 305) gave no lead to the workers to meet the situation confronting them and the country as a whole, and the Chairman of the Reception Committee was thankful to the workers and employers for working "in a spirit of amity and good feeling." The President, M. Daud, expressed himself against Complete Independence and wanted Dominion Status with "safe guards for labour". In spite of such a reactionary lead, which relegated the toilers, the majority of the nation, to a secondary place in the affairs of the country and patronised them with "safe guards", the Government attacked the Trade Union

Congress by arresting Johnstone in the midst of the Congress, because he represented the League Against Imperialism, and deported him. This one offensive act of the Imperialist Dictatorship undermined the strength of its support from the Geneva School. The T. U. C. was affiliated for a period of one year to the League Against Imperialism as a protest against Johnstone's arrest. But from this it would be erroneous to conclude that the Left Trade Unionists dominated the Congress. The Jharia Session, as can be seen from the resolutions, represents a peculiar balancing of the Right and Left. There was no change in the fundamental aims and objects of the T. U. C. But the Congress formulated "a basis for the future constitution of India to be placed before the All Parties Convention" that was held at Calcutta on 22nd December 1928. The Congress unequivocally declared for the "(1) Socialist Republican Government of the working classes, (2) Abolition of the Indian States and Socialistic Republican Government in those places, (3) Nationalisation of Industries and Land." This basis was to be presented to the Convention by a Committee, and Mr. R. R. Bakhale, the Deputy Leader of the Right Group. The Congress affiliated to the League Against Imperialism that stands for complete independence for the colonies, but did not refuse to send representatives to Geneva, which is opposed to such independence! The Congress rescinded the resolution of the Delhi E. C. Meeting and withdrew its representation given to the British T. U. C., but did not restore its agency of the Workers' Welfare League. It decided not to have any agent at all. Thus after eight years of existence the Congress had defined the political form of the State it would like to have in India. But it was not adopted as its ideal but as a proposal to be put before the All Parties Convention, a tool invented by the Indian bourgeoisie to sabotage the Simon boycott by the diplomatic back-door.

This delicate balancing of the Right and Left thoroughly went in favour of the Left at Nagpur in 1929. And the gentlemen of the Right instead of taking the defeat in a democratic spirit seceded from the Congress and formed a separate organisation, which was nothing but a well-dressed carcass put in a glass case and labelled "Geneva Dolls on Annual show", roaming in the labour-imperialist markets of Europe at Government expense.

When the Trade Union Congress, in response to the growing political tension around, was thus advancing in its political ideals, the National Congress did not revise its attitude towards the organisation of workers. After Gauhati, took place the Madras and Calcutta Congresses of 1927 and 1928. The A. I. C. C. and All

Parties Convention had asked the T. U. C. to take part in the show of framing the constitution. But there was no attempt made to dig the forgotten resolution of 1924-25 to undertake organisation of workers. Till 1929 even the advanced petty bourgeois section did not approach the T. U. C. until Pt. Jawahar Lal's socialist shadow brought him to the Presidentship, followed by the nationalist fascist shadow of Subash Bose, who, quite in exact imitation of his master, C. R. Dass, came to the T. U. C. only in order to procure some sort of stick to win his losing position in the nationalist Congress circles. Once in a while the Working Committee was asked to help the Golmuri Tin Plate Workers' Strike and it left the matter to its Secretary. The G. I. P. Railway workers struck on 3rd February 1930, just when the National Congress was preparing its ultimatum of non-cooperation with the British Dictatorship after its conciliation offer to the Viceroy before the Lahore Congress, was rejected. But the Working Committee in its meeting in the second week of February, when the Government forces were beating down the workers with armed force, which soon was to be employed against the Congress also, recommended to the workers cooperation with the same Dictatorship and said, "The Committee trusts that a *Conciliation Board* will be appointed," Except for this little piece of remembrance (which was occasioned by the fact that the strike thrust itself upon their attention as the railways affected the movements of their leaders) the Congress remained oblivious of the workers' organisations.

It has always happened in history that when the petty bourgeois is beaten, he runs to the workers for aid. It happened in India after the defeat of 1921-22. It was bound to repeat and did repeat in 1931. The Congress signed the Delhi Pact but was not sure that it would be observed by the Dictatorship. The upper section petty bourgeoisie was becoming lukewarm and the Congress wanted some pawn to move. It also was afraid that the workers and peasants would march over the heads of the Congress and take to direct action to protect their interests. So it again remembered the existence of workers and indulged in the inexpensive pleasure of passing a resolution on Fundamental Rights at Karachi. Das remembered the workers at Gaya after the debacle of Bardoli, Jawahar Lal & Co. remembered the workers at Karachi after the debacle of Delhi. It is always after and never before. Because, if they call in the workers and the poor peasants in the real thick of the fight, they are afraid of the revolutionary national and class struggle that might ensue from their participation. It is done after, because then they are wanted either as a pawn to threaten imperialism with, or to placate and quieten the rising forces into the

ignominious compromises that are made. One leader, while speaking on the resolution of Fundamental Rights in the A. I. C. C., said in plain terms, "if as some of them apprehended, the negotiations with the present British Government failed, the masses would have to come once again to *their* rescue and fight the battle. It was *therefore* necessary that the masses should know exactly what was meant by Swaraj of which the Congress spoke." This is plain enough to show that the workers' unions and organisation, have no reason to be jubilant over the Fundamental Rights Resolution. The Trade Union Congress need not flirt with the National Congress with proposals of conferring this right and that right upon the workers. It is the business of the Trade Union Congress to take the leadership in the workers' struggle and not to beg of the bourgeoisie, however radical it may be, for a place in the constitution. Democracy for the workers is not conferred, it has to be won. The Nationalist bourgeoisie has for the last eleven years systematically ignored, neglected, despised or sabotaged the workers' organisation—the Trade Union Congress. Why should we go and seek cooperation with it and that in its surrenders, when we have the capacity and forces to win freedom ourselves?

The Court has asked me to explain a reference regarding Jharia Congress by P. W. no. 123. I was not present at the Jharia Session of the T. U. C. neither does the Prosecution say that I was. I cannot explain the reference. But it is a fact that I was elected one of the Secretaries of the T. U. C. and was so till my arrest. I was informed of my election by the General Secretary, Mr. N. M. Joshi.

From the evidence presented here about the developments in the Trade Union Congress since 1926, only one conclusion can be drawn, that the political ideals and demands of the working class were becoming clearer and finding their expression in the resolutions of the Congress, and the growth of the influence of Geneva and the second International attended by cooperation with Imperialism and Capitalism was being prevented. The Congress was far from attempts, whether by Left or any other group, at forcing it into revolutionary action to overthrow the Government. The charges in this case cannot be substantiated by the evidence.

144. *The W. P. P. and C. P. I. Exhibits.*

However well-organised and well-directed the Trade Union Congress may be, it cannot take the place of a political party for the working class. All the workers in an industry or a majority of

them can join the trade unions and take part in their work. But every class in the growth of its movement has to produce an advanced section, a rank and file leadership, that has to cultivate a broader outlook, a larger perspective beyond the industrial class struggle in which the unions are generally engaged. This essence of the broad masses has to be organised into a political Party, because ultimately the working class and peasantry have to establish their own class state. The workers in India have to take the leadership in the national struggle and for that they must have an independent political class party of their own. The Workers' and Peasants' Party was organised with this view, and during its two years work, it tried by propaganda only to give the correct class ideology to the workers and clarify their political and economic needs and aims. The W. P. P. did not go beyond this, as can be seen from the evidence tendered here.

I began to take part in the activities of the W. P. P. from March 1928, when the Party threw itself whole-heartedly in the struggle of the Bombay workers against the offensive of capitalism. The Textile Strike of the Bombay workers required a newspaper. Mainly with this view was the Kranti started from 30th June 1928 by the Party, and as a member of the W. P. P. I edited and managed the paper till my arrest. During this period the paper was more than self-supporting and if am allowed to bring evidence, I can show from the accounts that the theory of the Prosecution that the Kranti was financed by grants from outside is completely baseless.

A number of exhibits referring to the W. P. P. Conference in December 1928 in Calcutta have been put to me. P. W. No. 254 R. B. Trivedi who deposes about the Conference proceedings does not mention my presence there and I think the Prosecution also do not maintain that I was at Calcutta. I did not attend the Calcutta Conference and am not in a position to say anything about it.

There are some exhibits put to me and classified as C. P. I. documents. I have already stated my views on the C. P. I. question. Now as for the documents.

Ex. 1207 (1) Printed Report of C. P. I. Conference of 31st May 1927. I was not present at this Conference. I can prove that I was not in Bombay at this time (31st May 1927). Ex. P. 1285: Letter accepting membership of the Presidium of the C. P. I. dated 18th December 1927. This is put in to make the reference in P. 1207 (1) consistent with the Madras Papers that follow this. But the Prosecution in trying to make it consistent forgot to do the essential thing. Somehow they put to me references of a place or proceedings where I was not present. The same

thing, has happened with the Madras Meeting of the E. C. of C. P. I. The Prosecution say that there was such a meeting and that I presided over it. (Exs. P. 1287 (2); (3) etc. etc.). They had sent their clever man P. W. No. 244 Rao S. Patwardhan to see what the "Bombay people" did at Madras. But he nowhere mentions my presence in Madras. The fact is that I had not been to Madras at all. Similar is the case with what are called the Calcutta Meeting references. (Ex. P. 1295). I had not gone to Calcutta and cannot say what happened there. The same can be said about P. 1296 and P. 1297, about Bombay Meetings of 17th and 19th March 1929. I am said to have been Chairman on the 17th but not present on 19th. In the "Madras Papers" care has been taken to put down the initials of the Chairman on the proceedings. But here everything is omitted. And if you read these papers with the previous reference the conclusions will be a bit funny. There is a conference in Bombay in May 1927, one in Madras in December, 1927, a meeting of the E. C. in Calcutta in December 1928—a blank of full one year between. There is a constitution and rules which the Prosecution have not failed to print as many times as possible and still you find, only two months after Calcutta, the Prosecution unearthing a paper which starts over again framing the rules and discussing the organisation of the C. P. I. ! A very crudely arranged business—this evidence collection or creation, whichever you may like to call it.

145. *Exhibit Letters.*

Letters—Group I—From one party to another.

In the exhibits put to me there are a large number of letters, which are not written by me nor sent to me. Many of them are photographs or copies purporting to be taken from the originals. Some of them are deposed by the police witnesses to have been intercepted by them in the post office. These are as follows:—

LETTERS.

Third Party Letters. (that is letters neither addressed to me nor sent by me.) Exhs. P.

76—S. N. Tagore, Berlin, to K. Ghosh.

526 (2)—Bradley to Potter Wilson 14-1-29

526. (6)—P. C. Joshi to Spratt.

526 (24)—Majid to Spratt.

- 835 —Mirajkar to Thengdi 29. 7. 28.
- 840 —Joglekar to Thengdi.
- 983 —Ghose to Bradley (Rejected by Prosecution)
- 1009—Code Letter 4. 9. 27.
- 1140—Muzaffar Ahmad to Joglekar.
- 1141— Muzaffar Ahmad to Joglekar.
- 1323—Muzaffar to Ghate 2. 8. 28.
- 1348 (22)—Muzaffar to Ghate 20. 5. 28
- 1348 (34)—C. P. Dutt to Ghate 28. 6. 28.
- 1348 (35)—Muzaffar to Ghate 30. 11. 28.
- 1373 (5)—Muzaffar to Ghate.
- 1633—V. Chattopadya to Jhabwala 16. 5. 28.
- 1636—P. P. T. U. S. to Jhabwala.
- 1654 P—Muzaffar to Ghate.
- 1848 C— Muzaffar to Ghate.
- 1869 C—Arthur Field to Joglekar 27. 11. 24.
- 1968 —Spratt to Robin 21. 7. 27.
- 2038 P—S. N. Tagore to Muzaffar 21. 11. 28.
- 2051 C—Sohan Singh to Muzaffar.
- 2055 C—Spratt to Muzaffar.
- 2057 —.....to W. P. P. Bengal.
- 2065(1)— Spratt to Muzaffar.
- 2067 P—Spratt to Joglekar.
- 2211 — V. Chattopadhy to Jhabwala.
- 2328 P2—Des to Douglas 14. 6. 27.
- 2408 P—Ghate to Dutt.
- 2409 P—P. C. Joshi to R. P. Dutt. 5. 11. 28.
- 2412 P—B. F. Bradley to Potter Wilson 27. 11. 28.
- 2413 P2- " " " " " "

Total 34.

As these letters were not written by me nor were they within my knowledge, I cannot say anything about them.

Letters, Group II—From some party to me but not allowed to reach me.

Another class of letters is of those that seem to have been addressed to me. The Prosecution say that they were intercepted by the police in the post-office. Some of these were altogether withheld by them. Some were photographed or copied by hand and typewriter. The exhibits here are these "originals," or Copies.

Exh:	P 1602 (P)	from S. V. Ghate	20. 8. 28.
"	P 1605 (C)	from C. P. Dutt	undated.
"	P 1607 (C)	from " "	" "
"	P 1608 (C)	from S. S. Josh	14. 7. 28.
"	P 1609 (O)	from Bob Lovell	2. 8. 28.
"	P 1610 (P)	from Chatto	18. 9. 28.
"	P 1611 (P)	from Muzaffar Ahmad	5. 11. 28.
"	P 1612 (P) *	from " "	1. 3. 29.
"	P 1613 (C)	from " "	16. 1. 28.
"	P 1614 (C)	from " "	11. 2. 28.
"	P 1615 (C)	from " "	2. 3. 28.
"	P 1617 (C)	from " "	7. 8. 28.
"	P 1619 (P)	from P. C. Joshi	" "
"	P 1621 (P)	" " "	6. 3. 28.
"	P 1624 (C)	from Usmani	2. 4. 28.
"	P 1625 (C)	" "	29. 11. 28.
"	P 1626 (C)	from Majid	27. 7. 28.
"	P 1628 (P)	from Ghosh	3. 1. 29.
"	P 1637 (O)	from S. S. Josh	13. 3. 28.

- „ P 1639 (O) „ „ „ 4. 7. 28.
- „ P 1641 (C) „ „ „ 18. 8. 28.
- „ P 1665 (O) „ „ „ 14. 2. 28.
- „ P 1797 (P) from Goswami 17. 11. 28.
- „ P 1807 (1)(O) from Glyn Evans 13. 12. 28.
- „ P 1819 (O) from ? Packet of newspapers.
- „ P 1835 (P) from J ? 26.11
- „ P 1845 (O) from Dutt 29. 3. 28.
- „ P 1863 (P) from Spratt 18. 12. 27.
- „ P 1864 (C) from Spratt.

Letters Group III—Police copies from “my” letters.

In the same category fall the copies which the Police say they took in the Post Office from my letters. There are two such—1878 (C) and 2141 (C).

Group II and III were born, bred and developed between the Post and Police. The Prosecution have two expert witnesses, one from Calcutta and the other photographer from London who are prepared to own any copy or photograph as their own, no matter where they have originated. So the Post, Police and Prosecution are at liberty to do anything with these papers. I have nothing to do with them.

Letters Group IV—From some party to me, found in searches in “originals”

- P 819 from Thengdi (In Thengdis' office)
- P 955 from Muzaffar Ahmad (In G. K. U: office)
- P 957 from Usmani („ „ „)
- P 973 from Alve (In Dange's office)
- P 995 from Usmani (In Dange's office)
- P 996 from ---- (In Dange's office)
- P 1967 from Spratt (In Spratt's office)

The persons from whom they purport to come should be referred to.

Letters Group V—From "me" to some party in "Original"

P 395	(1) (2)	To Muzaffar	
P 396	To	„	Telegram.
P 997		Postal receipts of book parcels.	
P 1299	To	Ghate	8. 4. 28.
P 1965	To	Spratt	5. 7. 27.
P 1966	„	„	8. 7. 27.
P 1972	„	„	20. 5. 27.
P 1973	„	„	24. 6. 27.

As regards this group of letters it may be said by the Prosecution that a man can recognise his own handwriting and say whether he wrote the particular letters or not, (though such a point cannot be urged in the case of very clever forgeries of signatures or identical handwritings of two different persons). But in my reply in relation to such items, I have to point out my previous experience and the way in which the Courts use the law against the accused. In the Cawnpore Case, in which I was an accused, I was asked similar questions about letters sent to me and by me. Not having had any previous experience of bourgeois law, I straightway acknowledged those which I had received or written and denied those that I had not. The Prosecution seized that statement and argued that I had proved the handwriting of those whose letters, I acknowledged to have received and admitted my offence regarding my own letters. And as for those that I had really not received at all, they said that I was not telling the truth. The Court agreed, and said that I told the "truth" where I admitted the letters and told a "falsehood" where I denied them. The Assessors in the case, who were common citizens not knowing this bourgeois law, accepted my plea and declared me not guilty. The Court disagreed with them and brushed their opinion aside and held me guilty. Hence I consider that it is unfair and illogical to ask an accused person to give evidence against himself and eminent jurists agree with this view. When such is the vice in which the liberty and principles of a person and Party are held, it is useless to answer the question.

146. *Refusal of the Court here and at Cawnpore, and the District Magistrate to permit me to obtain information*

*on the "Foreign exhibits" when I was taken as a
Defence witness in the Roy Case.*

There are some documents in this case, which are alleged to have originated from a "Foreign Bureau" on the Continent of Europe, which, the Magistrate says, was acting under instructions of the Comintern. The Bureau had three members of whom M. N. Roy was one, and the Prosecution have put down Roy in their list of "63 co-conspirators." There are also about 40 exhibits which are claimed by the Prosecution to be in the handwriting of Roy. When the Prosecution arranged to bring witnesses from England, some of the accused applied to this Court as well as to Government to summon some of those in the co-conspirators' list and give those who were under bar, a guarantee of safe ingress and egress. The Government refused saying that we could ourselves call anyone we liked but the Government would not grant them immunity from arrest. Now one of the "co-conspirators" in this case, Roy, was found in India, arrested (21. 7. 31) and brought to trial as an accused in the old Cawnpore Conspiracy Case of 1924, in which three of us here were tried. In the Cawnpore Case I was the only one, who made a statement before the Magistrate, in which I stated that I was a Socialist, and as the editor of the "Socialist" (my weekly newspaper 1922-1924), I had to keep correspondence with many persons and amongst them with Roy. The Court used this statement, which, I now know, was not as it should have been in certain parts for a Socialist-Communist, against me and Roy. In order to explain what I meant by this statement, I was particularly required by the defence in the present Roy prosecution, to appear as a witness. I was summoned by the Addl: Sessions Judge Cawnpore through this Court to appear on the 10th December 1931. As soon as I received the summons I put in two applications before this court, one on 7th and another on 8th December. In one application, I requested for permission to see two persons in Cawnpore (Messrs G. G. Jog and H. N. Shastri), whom I wanted to summon as defence witnesses, with reference to Exts: P 1381, P 10, P 243, P 1965, P 1966 etc. A copy of the application was sent to the District Magistrate here. The D. M. asked me to apply to the D.M. at Cawnpore, who was not expected to know whether really there were any such exhibits here or not. So I asked this Court to give me a certificate saying that the two persons could give some relevant evidence, as stated in my petition. The certificate was given. But almost a similar request on the most important exhibits was refused. The second application asked for permission to interview Roy in order to secure information

from him especially with regard to the famous "Assembly Letter" published by Government on the eye of the Public Safety Bill and which is an exhibit here (Exh. P 377 (1)) and which Roy had announced in the press, was a forgery. I requested the court to send in charge of its officer some of the exhibits in this case ascribed to Roy. The Court refused to do it saying that it had no power to send the exhibits or to grant me permission to interview Roy on the matter. My application was referred to the District Magistrate here, who passed an order on the 10th December that he was not prepared to send the exhibits "except on the order of a court."

As regards consultation, the Magistrate said, "I agree with the learned Sessions Judge (i. e. this Court) that this is a matter for the orders by the Sessions Judge of Cawnpore." This Court referred me to the D.M. who referred me to the Judge at Cawnpore. Well, when I was taken there under police guard, I applied to the Judge mentioning there above two references. The most learned Judge referred me to the jail authorities! And the Jail authorities refused saying they had no powers! Thus all judicial learning combined to frustrate my attempts to get correct information on the exhibits in the "foreign section" from available sources. Yet this Court the D. M. here and the Sessions Judge at Cawnpore observed a very obliging brotherhood towards each when the prosecution at Cawnpore wanted certain documents from the records of this Court. This Court and the D. M., both of whom refused me the defence facility, readily sent Exhibits P 2477 and P 2478 in this case with Mr. Gaya Prasad, who is appointed in charge of the exhibits by this Court and who is at the same time prosecution witness number 272. He deposed there (in the Roy case) "The writings encircled in blue pencil in P 2477 and 2478 were written by S. A. Dange, an accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. They were written in my presence. Dange has been previously convicted in 1924. He is the same Dange. These exhibits from part of the Meerut Case and I want to get them back and I leave a copy." In cross-examination he stated, "I had the photographs made at Cawnpore. I was asked to produce them to the C. I. D. photographer, who photographed them." Thus the records in charge of this Court have been travelling from C.I.D. to C.I.D. but when I asked for a few exhibits being taken to Cawnpore, everybody pointed to somebody else and nobody said he had power to permit it.

After returning from Cawnpore, I applied through this Court for a copy of Roy's statement before the Addl. Sessions

Judge Cawnpore, on 12th December 1931, thinking that it might contain a cross-reference to exhibits in this case. The copy was refused by the Judge in his order of date 21. 12. 31 delivered to me by this Court. The order again reveals the profound learning of the learned Judge at Cawnpore, Mr. A. Hamilton, and shows the way his victim will be treated. He says, "The charge in the case before me referred to the years 1921 to 1924 and the applicant was tried and convicted for conspiracy in those years, so only what refers to subsequent years can help him, and nothing was said about subsequent years. I reject the application." The learned Judge is so profoundly immersed in his learning that he forgot that the case before him may refer to the years 1921 to 1924 but only three weeks before he wrote the above order he himself had admitted evidence referring to the year 1930 and supplied by this court from this case. Now I can grant that two learned Judges sitting five hundred miles apart can know what evidence is required to help each other, so that their preys may not escape, but I did not think that Mr. Hamilton at Cawnpore would claim to possess an intensive knowledge of the exhibits in this case, and give his opinion as to what would be useful to me here and whether it must necessarily refer to the "subsequent years", as he says. Because the case here, as in Cawnpore, begins—if it can be said to have a beginning at all—with the Russian Revolution and the Comintern. Here are exhibits exactly referring to the period and incidents that have reference in the Cawnpore Case evidence also. Only to take the instance of evidence individually referring to me, there is the mention of my book, "Gandhi Vs. Lenin", Exh: P 507, here and referred to in the deposition of Col. C. Kaye in the Cawnpore Case and Mr. Hamilton could have seen it at page 25 of the proceedings of the case printed for the High Court. Similarly here are in exhibits the two books of Roy "India in Transition" and "India's Problem and its Solution" Exh No. P 759 and P 296 here and Ex. B and C in the Cawnpore Case. (Page 22 Printed proceedings). Is not the learned Mr. Hamilton a bit too much learned when he tells me what is and is not in this case or the one he is trying? It is no wonder that with such learning he condemned the Kakori accused seven years back and has oppressed and gagged Roy from saying anything in his defence and did not allow me to see him, in spite of the fact that such an interview would not have resulted in another "world wide conspiracy" as I do not agree with Roy in his differences with the Comintern.

147. Exhs: P 507 "Gandhi Vs. Lenin" Four meetings—Exh. P 2512.

Exh: P 507, a book "Gandhi vs. Lenin" has been put to

my account. This book was written by me in March 1921, when in obedience to the call of the Indian National Congress I left my college and joined the students' noncooperation movement. Though I joined non-cooperation, I was not in thorough agreement with the Gandhian programme. In this book I have compared Gandhism and Leninism and have shown preference in favour of latter. In spite of this I have to say that the book is not a Leninist work at all. No marxist literature was available at that time. In the book I have confounded the viewpoint of ordinary economic determinism with the Historical Materialism of Marx, and have in many places even shown leanings towards Idealist philosophy, which has no place in Marxist Materialism. I would not subscribe to that book today and it is of no use now in the service of Communism, though in those days, I think, it was the first of its kind to appear in India, and break through the web of lies that were being circulated about the Russian Revolution and Lenin, by the Imperialist bourgeois press.

Exh: P 1684, put to me, is a report by P. W. 262 of a meeting held on 14th September 1927 to welcome Usmani on his release from Jail. Usmani was my co-accused in the Cawnpore Case. As such and as a man, who had come out of the torture of jail life unbroken in our common principles, I was bound to welcome him. But the report of the speech made by the P. W. is incorrect. The report says that I spoke about refusal of passport to me to go out of India. Nowhere throughout the evidence is it alleged that I ever applied for passport and that it was refused. The report is obviously a fabrication.

P 1685—Report of a meeting by P. W. 262 held to celebrate the Anniversary of the Russian Revolution on 7th November 1927 in Bombay. Those who wish for freedom whether from Imperialism or capitalism are bound to rejoice at the growth of the Soviet Republic and so did we. I cannot say that the report of the speech is correct.

Exh: P 2311—meeting held to protest against the judicial murder of Sacco-Vanzetti by American Imperialism. The oppressed classes in every country must show international solidarity with the victims of capitalist Imperialism. If the Indian workers and peasants want freedom, and help from all the countries in their struggle, they cannot get it by sending appeals to the "World Powers" of Imperialism but by themselves rendering help to the workers and peasants of other countries. In 1927, we simply protested against Sacco-Vanzetti's fate. They were seven years in

prison, undergoing the farce of a trial under American Imperialism. We, who protested against this, shall be soon doing four years under British Imperialism, undergoing a similar farce. The whole world protested for Sacco and Vanzetti and I am glad that we could join our small frail voice in that mighty protest.

The report of my speech is incorrect.

Exh: P 2512. This exhibit has a history and has caused a lot of trouble. It is alleged that this bunch of papers is in my hand, that it was written some-where in January 1930, either in jail or police custody, and that it was found in the personal search of one V. B. Joshi near the docks, in Bombay. It is inferred that it is a repetition of offence on my part and it has been used as a ground for refusal of bail to me.

In reply, I have to repeat what I have said before this Court, when I argued my bail application on April 1931. I said that if I am to lead evidence to show where, how and who composed or produced this exhibit I must be released on bail, since this evidence particularly cannot be led unless I am freed on bail from that jail and police custody, where the exhibit is alleged to have originated. But the Court refused to take note of this and grant the bail. This document has been given unnecessary weight, only to hit at me in any way possible. It looks like a few jottings or notes made by a person, who has watched the movement in the country, has followed the evidence and proceedings of this case, is interested in it and has made some remarks about the whole thing. Even a stray note on any incident in the evidence by your Honour can be procured and put into exhibit as a "document shedding light on the conspiracy," but that would not mean that it corroborates the evidence in any way. This document in no way strengthens or weakens the Prosecution Case than what it already is by the evidence or the statements made or the evidence. To call such scraps of papers, which, from their very form, purport to be stray notes or observations on economics, politics, "the Meerut Case" etc., a corroborative piece of evidence, and to believe it to be so is utterly wrong. For the Prosecution, with 3000 documents and the backing of their own law, to do such a thing is clumsy, unwarranted and unnecessary. And for any other person who has not come to the level of the police prosecution, to believe it or use it against me or anyone else would be called a piece of political knavery or foolery or personal vendetta. That is all. The document is not mine.

Exh: P 1690—Report of the Lenin Day meeting, held in

Bombay on 21st January 1929, P. W. 180 (Mankar). I have already stated that the working class, in order to free themselves from slavery and to evolve a higher culture, must give up attachment to the bourgeois and feudal heroes who in their own time have done some good to the cause of the people, but the perpetuation of whose outlook is now no longer good for them. The workers and peasants must now create new heroes, and a new type of "Days" and demonstrations in their honour. Such an evolution will free them from those degenerating communal clashes and wanton murders in which the people in India are involved by Imperialist agents. One of such Days is the Lenin Day.

The Prosecution as well as the Committing Magistrate have relied very much on my speech at this meeting, and want to illustrate my views on the question of violence and non-violence by reference to this speech. Because, altogether in the whole evidence, they could put seven meetings and speeches against me. Of them, I have shown how three, the strike speeches, are utterly unreliable. Of the remaining four, there is no report of any shorthand reporter with regard to three speeches. They are summary notes of the impressions of a C. I. D. Inspector. The only speech for which the police made arrangements to procure a report from a good shorthand reporter is this Lenin Day speech. Mr. Mankar is a well-known shorthand reporter in Bombay whom the Police engaged this time. Now from the reputation of the witness the police were entitled to believe that they would get a correct report. But they misjudged on the essential point. It is not sufficient to know shorthand reporting and the English language only to be a good reporter. The reporter must be able to follow the subject. I think this is recognised on all hands. Now Mr. Mankar may have been a good reporter for nationalist speeches. But he had no practice with Communist speeches, which are very difficult to follow, especially when you deal with theory, for a reporter who has not had practice with the subject. That one factor rendered Mr. Mankar incapable of following correctly my speech. Hence you will find his report disjointed, sometimes even unintelligible. What a mess a reporter makes when he does not know the subject can be seen from one very clear reply of Mankar in cross-examination. He has ascribed a statement to Nimbkar in his speech at this meeting, which even an ordinary man, let alone a communist, knowing something about Lenin, will never say. He says, "So far as I know, the sentence 'Lenin lived and died for the bourgeoisie and the proletariat' is correctly reported". Who can believe, in face of this, that Mankar's reporting on vital points in the speeches is correct? Later on

Mr. Mankar himself admits, "In case the hall is badly lighted there is some difficulty in taking notes. The position in which the reporters are sitting also affects the efficiency of reporting. The Peoples' Jinnah Hall (i.e. where this meeting took place) is a worthless hall for reporters." Though in P 1630 he has made no note, in P 1691 he says, "I made a note that bad sitting and bad lighting made efficiency and accuracy difficult". I do maintain that the report of my speech on the Lenin Day, P 1630, is very incorrect and materially wrong.

148. One year and 13 days' delaying tactics of the Prosecution—471 useless exhibits—49 unnecessary witnesses—880 pages wastefully printed.

During the course of delivering the statements the prosecution have several times raised the objection that what we said was unnecessary, that it was waste of time, paper and money. In one case they suggested to this Court not to print at all a certain portion of the particular statement which they considered superfluous. That the agents of a Government which cannot balance its budgets and has to issue an ordinance every morning, should be so mindful of expenses is very creditable, but only it should have been done in time and in the proper place. Their objection to and complaint against money being spent on the statements is an attempt to make their side of the case available to the judges in a de luxe edition, while our answers to their de luxe falsehoods they want to suppress in uncouth wormeaten files. The charge of wasting public money on nonsensical printing of records can be proved against the prosecution with reference to a few facts, which can testify to either corruption or mismanagement in their ranks. As soon as evidence began to be put before the Lower Court, we objected to several documents, books etc. going in as they were irrelevant or unnecessary, but exhibited by the prosecution simply to deprive us of valuable books or prolong the proceedings of the case. Our objections were all overruled. What do we now find in the Sessions Court? The prosecution have withdrawn, as a result of some sense dawning on them or rejection by this court, 471 exhibits from the huge rubbish they have put in. In the Lower Court, they poured in trainloads of witnesses 320 in number. The necessity and relevance of all this waste of time and money began to vanish with the change in the outside atmosphere and the prosecution could manage in this court without the service of 49 of these 320. Yet they called our list of 136 witnesses for defence a vexatious list and advised the Magistrate to reject it. Who is then following a vexatious and wasteful

policy, the prosecution who put in 49 unnecessary witnesses or the defence who called for only 136 witnesses for thirty one accused? The Prosecution object because 24 accused have taken 1400 pages for their necessary statements. But how many pages have they wasted in printing unnecessary and useless exhibits? The 471 exhibits which have been withdrawn or rejected cover nearly 570 printed pages. Who is responsible for wasting money over these pages? It may be said that it could not be foreseen that these exhibits were useless or that the counsel in the Lower Court, Mr. James thought them relevant, but the counsel who succeeded him, Mr. Kemp considered them useless. But the story of waste does not end there. The Prosecution have printed many exhibit booklets and papers though several copies of them were available in the searches and it was unnecessary to print them at all. Not only have they printed them but done it more than once. For example exhibit P 523 "Call to Action" and those contained in it have been printed twice, each time 50 foolscap printed pages, while more than one hundred copies of it were seized in the searches and were in the possession of the Prosecution (and some of which from the unexhibited searches were later on returned). The W. P. P. resolutions, constitution, rules etc. also have been printed several times, though a large number of copies of them were available for reference or distribution, as copies of exhibits. It is needless to quote all the numbers of such exhibits. For example see, Exh: P 51 which is same as P 111, P137, P235, P306, Exh: P52 same as P129, 218: Exh: 56 same as P 136, 162, 234, 307. Exh. P138 same as P161, 309, Exh: P217 same as 229,517. Exh: P514 same as 549 (9) of which the prosecution themselves note on the head of 514 that they found 150 copies of it. A whole company of Bengali, Hindi, Urdu translators were engaged to translate vernacular documents, which have been later on withdrawn. Who wasted money and time on these translators? In one place the prosecution have put into exhibit six identical telegram forms, with nothing written on them. They printed the forms six times in the exhibits and ultimately cancelled them. (Exh: P98). Probably because it appeared too ridiculous for an already ridiculous prosecution to print six blank telegram forms to prove a conspiracy, when millions of these forms are turned out every year by the telegraph department and are given free at any post office window! There is still one more method of wasting pages well known in the printing trade. In the case of several exhibits they have printed only one line and left the whole foolscap page blank, which ordinarily prints 46 lines. (For example see Exhs P618, 619, 631, 635, 647 etc. etc.). Is this done by mistake? No. There are 43 cancelled exhibits of which they

have printed only the number and description making 57 lines altogether and they have spent full 40 foolscap pages for these 57 lines which at the most would have taken two pages. This type of waste does not include those exhibits which have been retained on record and are not cancelled. I have roughly calculated the total number of printed pages of such exhibits as have been withdrawn altogether and of those exhibit booklets and pamphlets, hundreds of copies of which are available in the searches and yet they have been printed, not only once or twice but even six times. The number of wasted pages comes to no less than 890, and a more thorough examination for which I have had no time would increase the number to over one thousand at least. Are we responsible for this waste or the Prosecution and the Court, who instructed, supervised and carried out this vast bungle? While on the one hand they have printed blank rejected telegram forms extending over several pages, they and this Court refused to print, when we petitioned for it, the only copy available, in India or England, of the Thesis of the Second World Congress of the Communist International, Exh. P-2395, consisting of only 83 pages. The sense of economy and propriety has dawned suddenly in the case of our statements only and those exhibits, which we need to be printed for defence, when all along the Prosecution have wasted public money over one thousand useless pages, 49 useless witnesses and several other things whose list is not small. That is the sample of Government's economy and fairness and "facilities" for defence.

Another point of attack of the prosecution on our statement is the time taken for their delivery. Opposing our bail applications before the Hon'ble High Court, on 25th May 1931, when the eleventh accused was delivering his statement, Mr. Kemp accused us of wasting time and said, "If they (the accused) behaved reasonably, they cannot take more than two or three months." Now the time taken by the Court for recording our statements does not lie in our hands at all. The arrangements made by this court for the recording of statements are wholly responsible for "the inordinately long time" taken by the statements. The speed of recording is not limited by the speed of our delivery but by the speed of the stenographers, who are employed to do the recording. If our individual speeds were responsible the number of pages done by each of us on a normal working day would have varied greatly. But we find on the contrary that the number of pages per day per accused are more or less uniform. This is due to the fact that we have timed our speed to that of the stenographers. The Prosecution witnesses who have reported our vernacular or English speeches have deposed to the fact that we spoke more

than a hundred words per minute. (P.W. Nos. 180 and 276.) The recording of statements here is being done at the rate of 30 words per minute on an average. I have conclusively shown this in my application filed in this Court on 5th June 1931 as soon as I knew of the baseless allegation made by Mr. Kemp before the High Court. By my comments on the speed of the stenographers, I do not want to be an instrument of blaming them. They are delivering the goods for what they are paid. But I cannot help using the fact for defending my position, if you assail me. If the Court had engaged men with higher practice and speed, with better pay, we would have finished the statements in one third the time that has been taken. Today, 4th January, 1932 is the 189th working day, (since 18th March 1931) of our statement. If the Court or the Government were so very anxious to speed up matters, I would have been finishing my portion on 24th June 1931. A single factor of the speed of recording is responsible for this delay of more than seven long months. What will probably have taken one full year would have been done in four months, if those who are responsible for this arrangement had themselves been "reasonable" or had not conspired to deliberately cause delay, prolong our imprisonment, and then turn round and accuse us of having wasted time. With facts and figures, I assert, Sir, that it is the Government, the Prosecution and the Court, who are responsible for wasting nearly thirteen months of our life in a prison, while bourgeois law hypocritically holds us "innocent till proven guilty," in the following manner:—

- (1) Remand period between arrest on 20th March 1929 and commencement of Magisterial Inquiry on 12th June 1929..... Two months and 23 days.
- (2) Period between Magistrate's semi-Judgment Order on 11th January 1930 and commencement of Sessions Trial on 31st January.....20 days.
- (3) Loss of time in statements due to the slow speed of recording by the Court through its stenographers or by its own hand.....Seven months.
- (4) Loss of time in Lower Court over 49 witnesses found unnecessary in the Sessions; on an average
..... Two months.

Total one year and 13 days

This is exclusive of the holidays, which will total more than five months during the three years of our under-trial period.

With such crying facts the Government impudently states in the House of Commons that we have followed delaying tactics and this court also threatened to note several times, the minutes and seconds taken by some accused to put a question to a witness, simply because, not knowing bourgeois law, he took time to frame it in a suitable manner to satisfy legal technicality. This is only one of the samples of justice meted out to us.

Your Honour has several times in your orders noted that you are trying to keep on strictly judicial grounds and to give judicial and impartial opinion. But the very bourgeois law which you are trying to operate is basically against human considerations being applied to those whom it attacks, and as such your judicial and impartial decisions are bound to result against every human demand of ours. For instance whenever any one of us (including myself) applied for bail on grounds of the sickness of our families, who have none to help them, your Honour in your orders "sympathised" with us, but refused bail on "judicial grounds," "as the law does not permit." So, even when the human consideration in an I.C.S. Judge allows him to "sympathise" with us, the "law" does not permit the human sympathy to be brought into actual practice; it prevents it from bearing fruit. It means that bourgeois imperialist law is incompatible with the exercise of sympathy and human considerations, that means it gives no quarter to its class-opponent on any ground. In our system we do not hold the human to be above the supposedly abstract nature of law. Hence on your own observations, our system would be superior, therefore deserving to take the place of bourgeois-imperialist "law." It also proves, Sir, that you may be "judicial," but you will not be human!

D/-5. 1. 32

149. *Misinterpretation of our attitude on the question of violence and non-violence—are our statements Defence or Defiance? It is defence of the right of every Indian to be a Communist and to belong to a Communist Party.*

I have stated so far the principles that I held and the activities that I engaged myself in. In the first part of the statement from paras 1 to 72, I have described the Phenomenon of Social Growth that generates the class-struggle and the course it has followed in the foreign countries from which communist theory is derived. This is done in order to refute the false statements made by the Prosecution regarding the origin and growth of Communism.

The second part from para 73 to 105, deals with the Social Basis of the Class-struggle in India, in order to refute the allegation that we create artificially a class-struggle where there is none and that we import ideas and methods at the behest of the Communist International, where there is no basis for them. The third part from para 106 to 147, deals with the Trade Union Struggle in which we took part and especially the Bombay Textile Strike, about which so much evidence is led. It also deals with the smaller and detailed items of exhibits which may have been left in the first two parts. All the three parts are necessary in order to understand the case. They will show that what we have done is to subscribe to the principles, of Marxism-Leninism, and to tell them to the people. To hold certain views, to propagate them and to form parties for that purpose is our inalienable right, which exists in most bourgeois countries. We claim to exercise that right in India and it does not amount to a "conspiracy to wage war." The Prosecution have tried to make out that the trade union work that we did, the big strikes in which we took part, were a step leading to a violent upheaval and armed insurrection. But if they were honest and if they had read properly the very literature they have put in evidence, they would have found that the strikes and demonstrations that we led were not of that type that were calculated to lead to an armed insurrection. Armed insurrection and revolt is not a joke nor a piece of romanticism for a few youths to indulge in. They require a deep economic crisis, affecting not only the oppressed but the oppressors also. But that alone is not sufficient. They require a strong working class Party. But that also is not sufficient. They require intense work in the army, in the navy, in all classes of the population, intense technical preparation. Now in all the evidence that has been put down here, is there a single scrap of paper, a single word to show that we were preparing for or had even the intention of preparing for such an insurrection? There is none. There is no doubt that as Communists we pointed out the historical course that the Indian working class and the peasantry will take in its class struggle against capitalism whether foreign or Indian. But "bourgeois democracy" in the heart of the British Empire, near the very threshold of His Majesty's Palace in London, permits its citizens the right of telling this. We are certainly not Utopians nor dreamers to think that Imperialism and the bourgeoisie will allow any party to actually prepare for and embark upon insurrection. But we do claim the right to hold the principles of Leninism and propagate them.

In their affidavit filed before the Hon. High Court on 18.6.31 the Prosecution admit in the first para "That there is no evidence

on record showing that any of the accused herein committed any overt act of violence. " The Crown Counsel in his argument before the High Court, in April 1931 had gone even further (from which position he retreated later on) and said that there was " no overt act *alleged* against the accused. ". The question of *violent* overt act was raised after this. Paragraphs 2,3 or 4 in the affidavit filed in June make the unwarranted statements that in consistency with the principles of Leninism to which we owe allegiance we " clearly contemplated and made preparation for the commission of acts of violence." Now the only evidence on record on this question of violence and nonviolence are the speeches delivered by some of us and the Leninist works dealing with the Marxian theory on the overthrow of the State, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and the historical aspect of the revolutionary struggles. The question of violence and non-violence is so much emphasised, not because we were contemplating "acts of violence" but because in the present atmosphere of India all political activity is incessantly cut across by insistence on non-violence as a principle. Attempts are made by Gandhism to distort History and the people are told that the development of India in the past has been based on the strict adherence to non-violence and that the future also must be so, if we are to achieve freedom. It is to explode this false claim, which is encouraged by Imperialism, because it is to its advantage, that correct historical data have to be put before the people. If this is not done, the weapon whether non-violence or violence in the given situation becomes a fetish, and social progress is hampered. But just as an ordinary citizen carrying a revolver in England and not pledged to non-violence cannot be said to be preparing for commission of acts of violence, so a Communist carrying Lenin's Books, "on the Road to Insurrection" or "The State and Revolution" cannot be charged with contemplating "commission of acts of violence against the state".

The Committing Magistrate in his Order while dealing with this question has distinguished our outlook from that of the Terrorists or Anarchists and said : " In justice to Communism, however, it must be emphasised that this violence is in no way allied to anarchism or terrorism. It cannot be denied that communism is, when once its premises have been granted, ruthlessly logical. " (Page 38). The Magistrate recognised this but he put his own premises behind our conclusions, without which he could not have kept us here, if he had followed our premises and ruthless and correct logic. The Prosecution did the same, with the result that our premises about insurrection and commencement of the revolution are taken away, and our outline of principles and their

preaching is twisted by their own bourgeois premise into "conspiracy to wage war" and intention to commit acts of violence and we are put in prison. They take our logic, but insert their own premise and illogically convict us.

I have, however, to say one thing with regard to this reference to our differences with anarchism or terrorism. There is no doubt we do not agree with their principles or methods. But our disagreement is not of the treacherous type as is exhibited by the nationalist bourgeois Congress. I have in my statement criticised the Congress leadership and also other parties with whom I disagree. The Congress also disagrees and denounces the terrorists and communists. But it does not rest with mere denunciation; it does something more. We disagree with the Congress leadership; but we are not prepared to cooperate with the British Government in putting it down. We disagree with the terrorists, but we are not prepared to assist the armed terrorism of the British Dictatorship in sending them to the gallows. While the Congress leadership (the first amongst them being Mahatma Gandhi himself) in their official statement say, "As to Bengal, the Congress is at one with Government in condemning assassinations and should heartily cooperate with Government in the measures that may be found necessary ..". (Their latest statement dated 31st December 1931) which means the Congress is willing to be the hangman on behalf of Imperialism. The Congress President, Mr. Patel, while condemning the Comilla young girls, made the idiotic statement that "It does not become our women to wield lethal weapons of death and destruction. It is given to a woman to create and sustain life and not kill". This ignoramus forgot the history of India, of his own province, where women have led armies and fought battles. But a reactionary as he is, unable to wield any weapon and given to "sustaining only himself and creating life", he wants to condemn Indian womanhood to cooking and rearing children; and yet he is not ashamed to hypocritically call upon women to work in the national movement, at the same time intending all along, as is revealed above, to keep them slaves of the kitchen and the cradle in future India. We are not prepared to subscribe to treachery and condemnation, which can be indulged in by a bourgeois president because he is protected by his nationalist newspapers, who print his interviews but are afraid to say what the defenceless women themselves have to say in defence.

Our attitude is of disagreement with both the Congress and the anarchists; but we believe in winning over to our side by argument and reason, by our work and by the indication of the correctness of our principles by History, those youths, workers and peasants who follow the wrong lead of these two organisations. But we do not betray them, we do not become their hangmen "at one with Imperialism". We recognise that the Congress as well other parties have hundreds of self-sacrificing men willing to give up their lives for national freedom. We disagree with the views and methods, of the Congress Leadership when they tell the working class and peasantry to cooperate with Capitalism, their class-enemy; but that does not mean that we will join hands with foreign Imperialism in massacring them. We must in special circumstances, even defend them, not by joining their organisations but under our banner, when they are attacked by Imperialism. While at the same time we will tell the workers and peasants and youths under their influence that the methods preached by them will not lead India to freedom; however revolutionary their actions might look temporarily; that not "mock-battles by permission" nor midnight armed coups can achieve freedom but only the historical road of Leninism can do it.

A question has been sometimes put whether what we say is defence or defiance. I have to state, Sir, that we are putting up a defence if such a thing is allowed under bourgeois law. But if defence means desertion of principles we cannot put up with it. It is not defiance, because thereby I do not gain my objective. It is defence and not defiance, in deadly earnest. Only it is not defence so much of an individual, as of the right to propagate the principles for which that individual stood and stands.

I do not defy; but defend and urge that this Court do recognise the right of every Indian to hold communist principles, to belong to a Communist Party, to be one with the International of the World Proletariat, to carry on trade union and literary activity, while subscribing to Leninism—a right which exists in all the advanced bourgeois democracies and in England itself, on the basis principles of whose judicial system and political liberties this

country is said to be governed.

Sd./ R. L. Yorke.

Q. You have now read over your statement and it has been corrected and amended as and where requested by you. Are you now satisfied that the above record is correct?

A. Yes.

Sd. R. L. Yorke.

13/ 1/ 32.

Sd. S. A. Dange.

13/1/32.

Certified that the above is a full and true account of the statement of the accused taken down by Stenographers (except for portions indicated) or read out in my presence and hearing and transcribed by Stenographers subsequently and read over by accused and corrected and amended as and where requested by him and admitted by him to be correct.

Sd./ R. L. Yorke.

13/ 1/ 32.

Saraswati Machine Printing Press Meerut, U.P. (INDIA.)