

INDIAN OPINION

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ONE PENNY

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-EDITORIAL-

CLASS LEGISLATION

On Friday May, 18th. the British Guiana Legislature finally passed a Bill to limit the Rent payable for the letting of Rice lands.

The Government was at pains to exclude all sugar estates from this Bill and although two or three leaders of the mass of the people pleaded that it is improper to exclude the sugar estates the Governor as the President of the Council allowed the Government members to support the measure.

About twenty per cent of the rice area in the Colony is actually controlled by the sugar estates and what is more they can, if they wish, cut off or limit the supply of water from this latter area. They can also keep water in this area if it suits them.

It is common knowledge that the sugar factory at Pin. Ogle ceased to manufacture sugar about a month ago. Five miles further up the East Coast the factory at Pin. Lusignan has also ceased to manufacture sugar

Daily Chronicle Attacks Indian Community

Distorted facts and Deliberate untruths used to attack the Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru

By the WATCH DOG.

The Indian hating Daily Chronicle has opened a new attack on the Indian Community deliberately using as a lever part of a quotation by the Hon Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. This attack was published in the Daily Chronicle on May nineteenth.

For some time now I have been of the opinion that the Daily Chronicle disliked the Indians in British Guiana and spared no opportunity offered at any time to have a "dig" at the Community.

In connection with the present attack I was present when the Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru met the representative of the press. His statement to the Daily Chronicle was the same as to the Argosy and remained the same at the Town Hall meeting a few days later.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru said he was not in favour of the B. G. East Indians returning to India but

qualified this statement by saying that the lot of the East Indians in this colony was far from satisfactory and that every effort should be made to settle these people on good agricultural land and make them peasant farmers. He was emphatic on the point that the lot of the Indians in B. G. was no better than that of his brethren in India and was in many cases worse. This conviction was confirmed after his trip to Barbice. He went on to say that in the event of all efforts failing to persuade the authorities to settle the East Indians on the land here and thus relieve the excess population in the sugar estates; he was prepared to advise the Indian Government to make provision for the return of all those Indians that wished to return to their motherland even if it was one hundred thousand as it would be easy to absorb them in a population of four hundred millions, especially so since

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this year. As was pointed out by one member of the Legislature, what guarantee have the rice growers that their rents would not be increased by the Sugar Planters on the East Coast of Demerara?

A correspondent from Pin. Albion writing to us on this question stated.

"That a certain sugar estate in the Barbice county rented lands up to 1944 at \$3.20 per acre, supplying water without any extra charge, but since a change of managers, here is a sudden rise to \$5.00 per acre and no one is allowed to cultivate more than 4 acres of land. Your challenge of what would take place after the Bill was passed is nothing short of class Legislation. Another important feature is that the main navigation canal of this said sugar plantation passes

through the lands of small proprietors who obtained water freely (some of them) at a nominal figure (in some respects); but today, they are asked to pay either \$2.00 an acre or be served with a year's notice to block the canal. In the former case, would not the imposition of \$2.00 per acre as water rate cause the tenants to pay more to the landlord?

We can look forward for a further decline of the production of rice and if it is thought that this decline in the production of rice would mean the increase in the production of sugar those who are thinking in this direction are sadly mistaken.

Let our administrators, who pretend to have the welfare of the masses at heart change their pretence to something more practical before it is too late.

Sugar Estate Exploitation In British Guiana

[Appeal from the Industrial Magistrate, Babinda].

Australian Cane Cutters get Minimum wage of Six dollars and forty four cents per day and the average cane cutter earns ten dollars a day. The average cane cutter of, British Guiana still earns on an average a dollar a day.

The following extract from the Australian Sugar Journal gives a general view of the wages etc paid to persons employed in the Sugar industry in that dominion of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Readers are asked to judge for themselves.

JUDGMENT

This is an appeal from the decision of the Industrial Magistrate at Babinda fixing the rate for cutting sugar cane growing on nine acres of land on the appellant's farm at Babinda.

The appellant contracted with Patrick Dass and others for the cutting of cane on his farm, including the block in dispute which is comprised of the variety of cane known as Clark's Seedling. The employer and the cutters were unable to agree upon a rate and the cane inspector was called upon to fix it. He thereupon fixed 10s. 6d. per ton. The present appellant objected to the fixing of this rate and thereupon the Industrial Magistrate proceeded to hear and determine the dispute. After having heard evidence and inspected the block of cane in question, the Magistrate fixed the same rate as that fixed by the cane inspector, viz. 10s. 6d. per ton.

It was contended by the appellant, *inter alia*, that the Industrial Magistrate acted contrary to the award in that he took into consideration matters which had no relation to the crop, namely the national emergency, and therefore his decision was invalid. In addition, it was contended that the decision of the Magistrate was against the evidence and the weight of evidence.

The evidence of the appellant was that 20 per cent. of the disputed crop was damaged by rats and pigs and that the remainder was a normal crop. He estimated that the average cutting rate should be between 5 and 6 tons a day and that a fair price overall was 8s. 6d. per ton. He denied that he had offered 10s. per ton for the cutting of the cane in question.

The evidence of Dass was to the effect that one-third of the crop was seriously damaged and of the balance portion was standing and portion lying down. He further swore that the cutting rate averaged 3 tons per day and that the appellant had agreed to pay 10s. per ton.

Leumann, a member of the cane-cutting gang, also swore that the appellant had

offered 10s. per ton, and he estimated that at 12s. per ton he would make £2 6s. per day. He further swore that 4 acres of the crop was seriously damaged and that only a small portion of the remainder was normal.

Barry, the cane inspector, said that during the discussion with the cutters and the appellant, the latter offered to pay 10s. per ton and the former offered to take 11s. He stated that the cane was damaged and that a "goodly lot" of it would fall over when burnt. He estimated that the cutters should average 3 and a half to 4 tons per day. In cross-examination, he swore that he functioned under clause 19 (9) (a), but that he did not have regard to the sub-clause in so far as it fixed a minimum of £1 6s. per day. He also said that he took the war conditions into consideration and regarded the manpower position as a special circumstance, presumably under clause 19 (24).

The Magistrate made a number of findings, some of which, namely Nos. 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 are in our opinion irrelevant. He accepted the evidence of Dass, Leumann, and the cane inspector as to the condition of the cane and found that the rate fixed by the latter mentioned was fair and reasonable. No finding was made as to the probable cutting rate nor as to the alleged offer by the appellant to pay 10s. per ton.

(To be Continued next Week)

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15 & 16 WATER STREET.

Daily Chronicle Attacks Indian Community

Continued from Page 1

India today stood at the verge of a vast Industrial and Agricultural development.

I wish to state here that when the Daily Chronicle stoops to such dirty tactics in attacking the Pandit and the Indian Community it only shows us how low and cheap is the mentality that directs the policy of the paper. It has been made clear that it is not in the best interest of the proprietors of the Daily Chronicle to have Indians return to their homeland as it is much more convenient if the Indians remained here as semi-slaves so that they may be easily exploited. It is a very unfortunate thing in this world when men sell their knowledge to keep thousands of men, women and children in a state of serfdom, the world cannot but cry shame at them. It would appear that the editor of the Daily Chronicle has fallen in this category of shameless men. It was hoped that with the advent of a good Catholic Christian Editor the policy of the Chronicle would have changed in some respects but much to my disgust and disappointment it has remained the same.

The Indian leaders, are fully satisfied that it is in the best interests of the colony and Indians that are about fifty percent of the working people, young energetic ones, should be settled permanently on their own land or be taken back to India by the Indian Government. This is the policy of the leaders with the exceptions of few job hunters and favour seekers. The proprietors of the sugar estates, the Daily Chronicle and others may do whatever pleases them about it; but let it be finally understood clearly, that the leaders are prepared to do all that lies within their power to see that their unfortunate brethren in the sugar estates are properly settled on the land or have them return to India under a proper organized repatriation scheme.

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Letters to The Editor

(Continued from last Week)

The Editor:
Indian Opinon.

Sir,

Please publish the following article for the purpose of informing workers about the letter which I wrote to the manager for putting up two black boards.

The Manager Pln. Albion
27. 4. 45.

Sir,

On behalf of the workers I kindly ask you to put up two black boards to enable all the workers to know the nomination day likewise the election day. One black board can be put up in the central yard and the other at the Reef wherever suits you, Thanking you

Yours faithfully
Jagnarine.

I have not received any answer up to the 2nd May. I again wrote a next letter to the Manager.

The Manager Pln. Albion.
2nd May, 1945.

Sir,

I wrote you a letter on the 27. 4. 45. concerning two Black boards I have not heard anything from you. I beg to remind you about it again. I do not mean to ask you to print the boards. Simply plain black boards I want. if you are not in a position to help us, we would do it ourselves but with your consent. Thanking you.

Yours faithfully
Jagnarine.

Mr. Editor: The Manager refused us point blank he sent a book-keeper who told me the Manager said he had printed papers and pasted it outside the office. The attitude of this manager is rather disgusting. I do not know what to do there is no co-operation here at all with the Union and this manager, whenever I go to make representation to him he always walks off and says go and see Mr. so and so. I have written several letters to him but on to now I have received no answer I am now prepared to publish all the letters one by one that I have written to him. The department of Labour is aware of all these facts:

Jagnarine
District Secretary
M. P. C. A.

HINDI SCHOOL OPENED AT BUSH LOT W. C. Berbice.

The Indian residents of Bush Lot West Coast Berbice have recently organized a Hindi-school. The school is being run under the auspices of the Branch organization of the B. G. Saratan Dharma Maha Sabha. President of the School is Mr. Harry Saywack prominent resident of the district. Classes are being held in the afternoon and the evening. Indian opinion wishes all success for the future growth of the School.

X X X X

Mr. R. Sobhai President of the B. G. E. I. Association branch of Canje Rose Hall and business man of the district was in town during the week. Mr. Sobhai came to the city in the interest of his health and would be travelling back shortly to the county of Berbice.

X X X X

Mr. Goorbary prominent businessman of Letter-Kenny Corentyne was in town during the week in connection with his business. He travelled back to Berbice towards the week end.

Hon. Pandit B. N. Kunzru

Hail honoured son of India, you most heartily and sincerely we greet,
National form of reverence, humbly we bow our foreheads at thy feet.
Know that Indians in Guiana, you with unbounded affection admire.
Unfailing champion, who forever their welfare in colonies desire.
Narad like from colony to colony on mission of mercy bent
Zealous patriot, pandit, statesman, and Servants of India President.
Regardless of self in service, as Soul of India our hearts have stirred,
Unceasingly we shall pray, God's choicest blessings on you be conferred.

Ranjans Tiwari

READ THE
Indian Opinion

SHRI MAT BHAGWAT YAG

At Plantation Versailles.

A Shri Mat Bhagwat Yag will be held at Pln. Versailles Hindu Temple commencing on Sunday, 27th, May, and ending Sunday 3rd, June, 1945.

This Bhagwat Celebration is sponsored by Mr Birba! and assisted by Messrs. H. A. Barclay, Manager Pln. Versailles, G. Hares, Deputy Manager, Pln. Versailles and the entire Sanatan Bretheren of the Estate.

A grand Sat-sang is anticipated when important Religious Lectures and songs will be delivered at intervals by distinguished Pandits and Songstors of the Colony.

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Pandit Deodat Sharma will be the officiating Priest.

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THE NATIONS

Skeleton at the Feast

Viacheslav Molotov's dinner for Et Stettinius and Anthony Eden had gone off splendidly. The Foreign Commissar had stuffed his guests with food and drink. A trifle reluctantly, they had let him have what he wanted—news pictures, for Soviet consumption, of all three drinking toasts together in San Francisco. The hour was late, all was obdumy good when Molotov remarked that at last he could tell the others what had happened to those Poles.

Stettinius and Eden perked to attention. For five weeks they and their Governments had been vainly asking about 16 Polish underground leaders who had come out of their holes at Soviet invitation—and vanished. Last time Molotov had been queried in San Francisco, he smiled and said that nobody need be concerned about their health. Now he said bluntly that the Poles were under arrest, charged with "diversionist activity" against the Red Army. He did not have to add that the penalty might be death.

The fact and its meaning were slow to sink in. It was as though Stettinius and Eden did not want to look at the skeleton which had invaded the feast. All next day they and Molotov labored away, in a kind of desperate friendliness, at changes in the Dumbarton Oaks draft of their world charter. But the skeleton would not be banished.

At a stormy night session, Eden took the lead in telling off the Commissar. Sulen and embarrassed, Molotov fought back as best he could. Afterward, in a tone of pained restraint, Stettinius and Eden asked the Soviet Government to account immediately and fully for the whereabouts (and safety) of the "prominent Polish democratic leaders" under arrest, and halted the Big Three's negotiations for broadening the Warsaw Government. In effect the Yalta agreement to agree on a new government for Poland was suspended.

Journey to Limbo. In bits & pieces, the story of the Poles disappearance had already come out. Last March the Russians notified the Poles that they would be glad to talk things over with a select list of underground leaders. The Yalta agreement was not mentioned; this, ostensibly, was an internal affair between the Russians and the Poles. Among the Poles so honored were Deputy Prime Minister Jan Jankowski, and leaders of the principal parties (Socialist, Peasant, Nationalist, Christian Democrat) opposing Moscow's Warsaw regime. Another was General Leopold Okulicki, who had succeeded Tadeusz Bor, leader of ill-fated Warsaw August uprising.

Policies & Principles

Bases v. Trusteeship.

Responsibility for maintaining the peace in the Pacific will rest largely with the U. S. The U. S. Army & Navy cannot undertake to maintain the peace without bases stretching far out into that vast ocean. At the same time, much of the world looks to the U. S. for leadership in the development of the "trusteeship" principle for colonial areas.

A few weeks ago U. S. thinking on this problem was paradoxical and confused. Thanks in large measure to President Truman, U. S. thinking was recently straightened out and U. S. policy gained in clear definition. After hearing the argument, President Truman quite simply decided that "strategic bases" are one thing and all other colonial or subject areas are something else. "International trusteeship" could not apply to actual military bases; it could apply to other areas. (Not many "natives" live in the areas actually needed for bases.)

This distinction was set forth in a brief memo and a confused problem was ended with President Truman's characteristically simple: It is so ordered.

Time.

as commander in chief of the London Government's underground army. Some of the 16 hardly deserved the title of "democratic leaders," but they had what amounted to a Russian pledge of safe conduct.

On March 27 and 28, after checking by radio with the Polish exiled Government in London, they assembled at Pruszkow, a village near Warsaw, to meet the Red Army's General Ivanov. Nothing more was heard of them until Molotov confirmed their arrest last week.

The London Poles' list of vanished leaders had included 70-year-old Wicenty Witos, three times premier of Poland and most distinguished of all the underground figures. Last week the Russians, elaborating Molotov's account, denied that Witos was under arrest. Apparently he was in Moscow, doing what he could to arrange an honorable agreement. The Russians concentrated their propaganda fire on General Okulicki, probably intending to use his record against the rest.

Time.

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