

# Indian Opinion

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## — EDITORIAL —

### A Free India Can Build A Free World

We depart from our usual local topic to give the Indian Community a glimpse into the Indian Political situation.

A Canpress report from London dated 14th July last stated that Mahatma Gandhi has modified his attitude. The same report intimated that Mahatmaji was ready to ask the Indian National Congress to join a National Government if this body will be given full control of the Civil Administration. The Vice-roy and the Commander-in-Chief would, it is stated, then have control of the Military.

This offer by Mahatmaji came as no surprise to us.

We are satisfied that Mahatma Gandhi's release from internment was due more to political negotiation than mere health condition.

The greatest obstacle in the way of Indian Independence from the British Angle has been the sore question of Hindu-Moslem Unity. Although Sir Stafford Cripps told the India Office that all parties in India were unanimous on Home Rule question, Secretary of State for India Mr. Amery maintained that the Hindu-Moslem question in India was not a domestic one.

This was contrary to the declaration of Hindu, Moslem and Congress leaders.

Since Mahatma Gandhi was released from internment, press reports from Bombay indicate that an end has been

## India's Independence Is Britain's Acid Test

### "Country In Sober And Realistic Mood"

(This article was first published in the "New Republic" of New York. We reprint it from the January 1940 issue of "World Review", edited by Vernon Bartlett M.P., and John Sutro, and published in London.)

During the last war, Great Britain made a promise of self-government for India. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Montagu, made a declaration to that effect in the House of Commons on August 20th, 1917, and then went to India to work out a plan with the Viceroy, Lord Chemsford. In the past twenty-two years, a little progress has been made, but not much. The provinces, as distinguished from the native states, have provincial Legislatures with elected members and with control over certain functions of the local governments.

### GENUINE SELF GOVERNMENT

The subjects that are still reserved to the British Raj are, however, more important than those which the Indians now control. The majority of those Indians who are politically

conscious consider that the promise given during the war has been betrayed and that the reforms instituted do not constitute genuine self-government. It is because of this feeling that Mr. Gandhi has been fighting for twenty years by his sometimes extremely effective weapon of non-co-operation, and that Mr. Nehru and the other more aggressive leaders of the National Congress have continued their efforts.

### DOMINION STATUS

To all supporters of the Congress, it came as a slap in the face when the Viceroy recently announced that the subject of dominion status for India is adjourned until after the end of the present war. In the previous struggle, India got a promise that was never carried out; this time, she doesn't

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put to the Hindu Moslem question.

The Mahatma and President Jinnah of the All-India Moslem League are said to have decided to declare their intention to solve India's problem.

This obviously left the Vice-roy, working with his Cabinet, and his Expert Advisers at the India Office in London, to take the initiative.

Later declarations by members of the Indian Central Government and the Bombay Legislative Assembly stated that Home Rule in India is expected shortly after the war.

All things considered Independence for India is inevitable. If the British Government is seriously committed to the United Nations Pact involving Russia, and the United States then there is no other way out.

Premier Stalin has openly declared that "the world of tomorrow will be an age of free nations," and "no people who are ruled by another

nation can be regarded as free."

The Leader of Russia in order to convince the world that he means what he said has declared each state comprising the Soviet Union a Republic free to remain with, or quit the Socialist Union, and free to trade and negotiate with foreign powers without consulting the Central Authority.

We have no doubt that Britain's efficient Prime Minister Winston Churchill has accepted these principles and therefore is working to arrive at a decision to free India.

We have observed that during the past seven months several sincere supporters of the National Congress have accepted responsible offices in Lord Wavell's Cabinet.

We are confident that such acceptance was conditional, and in uncertain terms we say it all points towards a free and independent India which can help to build a free and independent world.

## Majority Report of B.C. Franchise Commission Wholly Unsatisfactory

(THE "DAILY ARGOSY" DECLINED PUBLICATION OF THIS LETTER)

The Editor :-  
"Indian Opinion"

Dear Sir,

Permit me through the medium of your columns to make a few comments on the long-awaited Franchise Commission Report, which, at last, has been released and presented to the Legislative Council. This Report seeks to dub the intelligent though unfortunately letterless industrial population of British Guiana, as being so incompetent and gullible, as to render the bestowal of UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE a "Hazardous Experiment". At the hands of a Franchise Commission dominated by a few politicians of the OLD SCHOOL the mass of workers and peasants who constitute the industrial backbone of this Colony are to be denied that sacred right to choose their representatives to the Local Parliament—a right which their compatriots in Jamaica, living under much the same conditions, and letterless but intelligent as they are soon to receive. This right came directly from Downing Street to them and did not require any go-between or Franchise Commission to convey it.

### FIGURES FROM THE 1931 CENSUS MISLEADING

Employing figures from the 1931 Census—fully thirteen years ago, the

### Country Wide Meetings To Retain Sir Gordon Lethem's Services

RESOLUTIONS PASSED IN  
DEMERARA, BERBICE AND  
ESSEQUIBO

REQUEST TO BE FORWARDED TO  
COLONIAL OFFICE

Meetings to retain the Services of His Excellency the Governor Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G. for one full term of five years, and possibly for another term, are being held everywhere in the Colony. Resolutions supporting this request have been passed at several centres in Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice, and subsequently these prayers of the community will be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. A meeting held at Craig, East Bank less than a fortnight ago spoke in high terms of Sir Gordon's schemes introduced since his arrival in the colony in 1941. This meeting was held under the auspices of the Indian Publicity Committee which is an Advisory body to Governments' Bureau of Publicity and Information.

Report has painted a somewhat gloomy picture of the illiterates in this Colony, making out that 30.1% of the population of this Colony are illiterate, and more than half—59.2% of Indians cannot read nor write. Would the Commissioners deny that during this period 1931—1944.

1. There has been a colony-wide awakening in education, and a marked effort on the part of letterless people to educate themselves.
2. A substantial number of aged people among whom illiteracy is most apparent have passed away thereby reducing the number of illiterates.

In the face of these facts, apparent to all, is it not erroneous and misleading to tell His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies that 30.1% of the general population and 59.2% of the Indian population are unable to read and write? Have the Commissioners made any effort to ascertain through Government the figures today? Perhaps it was not necessary to support a Report which to me is more a Literary achievement than a Constitutional Guide.

### DISINTERESTED MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

As a representative of the BRITISH GUIANA EAST INDIAN ASSOCIATION before this Commission, I was hoping to find a conclave of interested Commissioners, with open minds, anxious to listen to witnesses, and eager to obtain information to prepare their minds to report. but to my surprise and disappointment, I discovered after only a few minutes discussion that there was a general lack of interest among members of the Commission, in spite of the Chairman's efforts to whip enthusiasm. Not only were there timely arrivals, but the Commission could not even muster a quorum provoking the following remark from the Chairman—The Hon. Eustace Gordon Woolford K.C. (Vide D.A. 24/4/43).

"It is my feeling, and I have consulted everyone present, that we do not appear to have the power to continue our deliberations. This is the second time on which there was no Quorum, and I cannot help feeling that it is my duty with your consent to report the matter to His Excellency the Governor." Mr. Woolford referred to Ord. No 5 of 1933 and afterwards stated that it would appear, that under the circumstances, the Governor had power to revoke the Commission and appoint another (Vide D.A. 24/4/43).

From this disinterested get-together of Commissioners, the British Guiana

### Indian Medical Officer Arrives From London

DR. S. R. MARAJ

Dr S. R. Maraj has arrived in the Colony; he has taken up appointment as Government Medical Officer at the Public Hospital in Georgetown.

Dr Maraj is a son of Managing Attorney Mr Meghbaran Maraj of Messrs Resaul Maraj and Company limited in Water Street, City.

He is also a brother of Mr Seetal Persaud, Honorary Treasurer of the British Guiana East Indian Association. THE INDIAN OPINION congratulates the young Doctor on his appointment wishes him success and welcome home.

### Mr, Beeram Singh Doing Well In Jamaica

It is understood from reports reaching the Colony that Mr. Beerasingh, one of the six candidates under Social Welfare training in Jamaica is doing fine.

Classes under the supervision of Professor T. S. Simey, Social Welfare Advisor to Sir Frank Stockdale of the West Indian Welfare and Development.

### Leaving For Jamaica And The United States

It is learnt that Mr Basil Thakoor is leaving the Colony for Jamaica within the next few days.

He has been selected to study 4-H Club work in Jamaica and the United States of America.

Mr, Thakoor expects to cover the course in about six months.

of the New Order, is to receive its new CONSTITUTION. With all due respect to a few members who have given invaluable service, and with all due respect to the flow of oratory from the Chairman of the Commission and the galaxy of encomiums be earned during the recent Franchise Debate, there is no doubt that this Report does reflect the considered views and wishes of the masses but represents, on the contrary, deductions of a few politicians of the OLD BRIGADE who being so accustomed to see them asses kept out, that their entry on the Voters' Register baffles their imagination, and they can see nothing save that Universal Adult Suffrage will up-turn their apple-cart. Would it be out of place to ask how many appearances the following Members made in the sittings of the Commission and whose names today appear prominently to the Report?—Hons. F. Dias O.B.E., E. A. Luokhoo O.B.E., H. C. Humphrys K.C. and A. G. King, also Messrs, R. V. Evan Wong and C. E. Tulloch

[To be continued.]

## India's Independence Is Britain's Acid Test

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ven get a promise.

It is not surprising that the Congress has told the eight provincial Ministries controlled by its members to resign in protest. Even the National Liberal Federation complains of the Viceroy's statement, saying that he offers no time limit, even after the end of the war, and gives no suggestion as to what "dominion status" may embrace.

### COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE

India to-day is in a sober and realistic mood. The agitation for complete independence has been tempered, in recent years, by Japan's Imperialist aims and by the possibility of enforced inclusion in the U.S.S.R. Bad as British rule has been, not many Indians, so far as we can judge would willingly exchange it for even a veiled control by Japan or Russia. India, in other words, is in a mood to co-operate loyally in the effort to work out a genuine status of reasonable autonomy within the Empire.

Hitler is far more unpopular with educated Indians than Kaiser Wilhelm was in 1914. India as a whole is prepared to do her part in the war.

### THEIR OWN AFFAIRS.

In the face of such an attitude, for the Viceroy to say bluntly that there must be no discussion of dominion status until the war is ended is a blunder of the magnitude of a crime. This is especially true when he did not accompany his ultimatum by any suggestion that pending this decision, India would, of course, be spared the necessity of contributing to the war. On the contrary she will be asked to give men and money on a heroic scale. The postponement works only one way: Indians are permitted to pay and die for the Empire, but they are not allowed to consider control of their own affairs within that Empire.

### IDEALS OR LOOT?

The development in India is doubly disturbing because of its effect upon neutral world opinion. German propaganda would have us believe that this is not a war between ideologies, but between empires, that England is fighting, not for democracy, but to preserve the encrusted loot of centuries.

Britain, of course, denies this, if not through the mouth of Mr. Chamberlain, then through the numerous mouths of editors, writers and lecturers who direct their special attention toward the United States. They are unanimously sure that Britain is fighting for an ideal, an

## Urging Universal Adult Suffrage for British Guiana

### Six Organisations Cable Secretary of State For The Colonies

### Royal Commission Recommendation Must Be Implimented

Six organisations have cabled a resolution to the Secretary of State for the Colonies urging Universal Adult Suffrage for British Guiana. The subject was discussed and total disagreement with the Franchise Commission Report has been expressed.

Here is a copy of the Resolution.

WHEREAS the West India Royal Commission 1938-39 in its Interim Report recommended that "In order to secure that the Elected Element in the Legislative Council should be as truly representative as possible, the object of policy should be the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage. Some of us hold that this should be introduced forthwith, others that it should be reached by gradual stages,"

AND WHEREAS the British Guiana Franchise Commission 1941 reported in paragraph 43 that "In the circumstances the majority of us regret that we are unable to agree that this Colony, peopled as it is and for the reasons we have already given should embark on so hazardous an experiment without the further examination of the entire problem" that is, the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith;

AND WHEREAS the majority Report of the British Guiana Franchise Commission was carefully and critically discussed by the following Organisations that had in their Memorandum to the West India Royal Commission and the British Guiana Franchise Commission advocated the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith:—

[a] The British Guiana East Indian Association.

[b] The Sid'r-Anjuman-E-Islam

[c] The British Guiana Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha.

ideal which she shares with us, an ideal which justifies our giving her all possible aid.

### HOLLOW SOUND

Yet there could hardly be a clearer test of Britain's intentions than her treatment of India. If the Viceroy's word remains the final one, millions of people throughout the world, and in the United States in particular, will feel that the pretensions under which Great Britain has announced that she is fighting have a singularly hollow sound.

[d] The Islamic Association of British Guiana.

[e] The Man-Power Citizens' Association.

[f] The Guiana United Trade Union.

AND WHEREAS the British Guiana Franchise Commission reported in Paragraph 40 that in the event of Universal Adult Suffrage being introduced immediately a particular race equipped, as we have stated, would render it impossible for the result of any election contest to be accepted as that of the expressed decision of the particular constituency so affected";

AND WHEREAS a Conference of Representatives of the abovementioned Organisations, together with the Cosmopolitan Workers' Union unanimously reaffirmed their demand for Universal Adult Suffrage and expressed their unanimous disagreement with the reasons advanced by the British Guiana Franchise Commission against the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage.

AND WHEREAS these Organisations represent a substantial majority of the people of this Colony;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Conference being of the unanimous opinion aforesaid Cable His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies respectfully requesting the introduction of Universal Adult Suffrage forthwith;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to His Excellency the Governor for his information.

BRITISH GUIANA EAST INDIAN ASSOCIATION

President.

[Jearine Siugg]

## GROW MORE FOOD

LANDS AVAILABLE FROM

## sankar Brothers

## India Owns One-Third In Bank Balances Of \$12,000,000,000

POST WAR TRADE WITH BRITAIN

—MOTION FOR FOREIGN TRADE DEFEATED—

India owns, about one-third of the huge bank balances—nearly \$12,000,000,000—accumulated in Britain by other Nations (including her colonies) for war materials and services.

India's delegates wanted the fund to liquidate these sterling balances so that it could spend them to buy goods elsewhere than in Britain. This proposal worried the British, since they could not possibly pay the huge debt except in goods over a period of years. Other Nations worried because the whole \$8,000,000,000 Fund could have been exhausted in liquidating these sterling balances alone.

An Indian resolution to liquidate the balances was defeated in Committee on the grounds that the Fund was not being established to handle such problems. As a result the direction of India's post-war trade will depend on Britain's balance of trade: If Britain has a favourable balance and can spare foreign exchange, India will get her share and can trade with it where she will. Otherwise, India will be forced to do the bulk of this trading with England, TIME.

## Sir J.C. Bose was Professor of Physics at Twenty-Seven

INVENTOR OF CRESCOGRAPH

INSTRUMENTS FOR GENERATING ELECTRICAL WAVES

Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose is dead. His name is known to almost every Indian. The Indian Scientist was born on the 30th November 1858.

He was educated both at Calcutta in India, and Cambridge in England. Jagdish became Professor of Physics at Calcutta University when only twenty-seven years old.

He devised a Coherer of the type used in wireless communication in 1896. He also devised several delegate instruments for generating and studying electrical waves. Sir J.C. Bose invented the Crescograph. This device multiply the incidents of plant growth ten million times.

Many of Bose's inventions have proved themselves invaluable for the development of agriculture every where in the world.

Jagdish Chandra Bose was knighted in 1917.

He became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1920. O'Hard

## The Youth Council Of British Guiana

THE GOVERNOR COMMITS AN ERROR

The Indians in British Guiana have been deliberately insulted by the Government when His Excellency left out the Indians in the appointment of the Youth Council. The Governor is the Servant of the people and whenever he errs it is his duty to correct it.

It is true that the Indians are a subject people but when they have such insults rubbed into their skins they cannot but feel that they have to make a stand and plant their feet in the ground and face the issue squarely. We ask the Governor openly as to what are his intentions in this matter?

## Moribund Legislative Council

DISSOLUTION ONLY DECENT THING FOR GOVERNMENT

The recent deliberations and debate in the Legislative Council has been nauseating to the gallery for the most part.

Most of the members in the Council have a perverted view of things which go for the advancement of British Guiana.

Much the same could be said of the Government and its painful methods both in the Legislative Council and its general behaviour outside of it. This is the age when things happen with speed and accuracy and not with untold slowness and blunders. When will the people of British Guiana really and truly have a Government of the people, a Government by the people and a Government for the people?

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AGENTS

## Hon E.G. Woolford Is Misinformed On Indian Affairs

STATEMENTS ON INDIAN WOMEN ARE A DELIBERATE INJUSTICE

COLOSSAL DISTORTION OF FACTS

The Hon. E.G. Woolford is misinformed when he says "Is there any Indian Member of this community who would deny the fact that wives of illiterate East Indians or women with whom they live in familiar relationship, are not entirely under the dominion of their husbands? Aren't they people who are very largely in Bondage? Are they free people? Isn't it frequently claimed by their leaders that their proper place is in their homes?"

Mr. Woolford's statements in the Legislative Council regarding these women is nothing but a deliberate injustice showered on the Indians in British Guiana, such colossal distortion of facts knows no precedent. Men who commit such gross errors and misjudgements are the ones who have been the advisers to Government for many years. No wonder British Guiana is stagnant with regards to development politically economically and socially.

British Guianese are beginning to acquire a smell of discontent.

## India Now Has "Sky Ambulances"

I.A.M.C. PARATROOPS SPEED UP AID TO WOUNDED

A development of far-reaching importance in the speedy treatment and evacuation of war casualties is the creation of airborne surgical units in the Indian Army Medical Corps.

Specially selected by reason of their qualifications for all-round medical work, their physical fitness and, most important of all, their adaptability for the strain and stress involved in parachute jumping, medical officers, stretcher-bearers and orderlies today are fully trained and equipped, ready to go into action whenever required.

Training has all along been carried out with paratroop formations, of which these flying surgical units form an integral part. Every man and every item of medical equipment has been thoroughly tested under the same conditions as imposed on the fighting elements among paratroops.

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