

Indian Opinion

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INDIAN OPINION: Items of news in interest and literary contributions must be addressed to P.O. BOX 43, Georgetown, B.G. Features and other items appearing in this journal do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board. The editorial column reflects the policy of the British Guiana East Indian Association.

— EDITORIAL —

Universal Adult Suffrage

Certain members of the B. G. Franchise Commission, the capitalists, the Secretary of State for the colonies and the Governor of British Guiana may be patting themselves on the back at this moment for having pushed an undesirable franchise down the throats of the people of British Guiana especially the masses. Their task like those of the same as it has been for the past centuries, absolute camouflaged dictatorship and disregard for the masses.

The composition of the franchise Commission was in itself farcical and far from representing the people but very representative of certain sections and vested interests. We therefore can not for one moment regard its findings as unprejudiced, to the contrary it was very self preserving.

The decision of the Legislative and Executive Councils are equally farcical in that these bodies have long ceased to be representative of the people, they serve their own interests and that of the Government, as they only represent themselves and the Government.

We solemnly protest in the name of humanity and God against the decision reached by the Secretary of State for the colonies. An appeal is being prepared to be forwarded for a reconsideration of this decision. In the meanwhile plans are underway for action to be taken to see that the rights of the masses are secured. We certainly feel that the present form of action by the Secretary of State cannot lead to improved and better relationships between rulers and ruled. We know we are a subject people, it is being thoroughly rubbed into our skins at this moment; we shall remember it always.

B. G. East Indian Association Appeals To Prime Minister Of England

PROTESTS AGAINST DECISION OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES

9th October,
The Hon. The Colonial Secretary,
Georgetown.

Dear Sir,
We have the honour to ask that you be good enough to transmit the following cable at our expense to the Prime Minister, the Rt. Honourable Winston Churchill, as soon as possible and let us know the cost:—

“NLT PRIME MINISTER,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON,

British Guiana East Indian Association solemnly protests against Colonial Secretary's decision to withhold grant Universal Adult Suffrage people British Guiana. Respectfully appeal reconsideration Making representations to Indian and United States Government.
Indian Association.

(2) We have cabled our friends in London to take the matter up by question in Parliament as soon as possible.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Yours obedient servant,
JENARINE SINGH
President, B. G. East Indian Association.

9th October, 1944.
Fabian Colonial Bureau,
11 Dartmouth Street, London

Nlt Have telegraphed Prime Minister solemnly protesting against Colonial Secretary's decision withholding grant Universal Adult Suffrage. Making representations to Indian and United States Governments Please interview Prime Minister and raise matter by question in Parliament.

INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Rice Industry .Hl

The Bureau of Publicity and Information in its Supplement of October 1, 1944 wrote "All About Rice." The Publicity Officer began by quoting certain figures broadcast by Mr. H.E. Gadd, Secretary and Manager of the Rice Marketing Board. As we pointed out previously the figures are misleading and almost wholly incorrect. The area under rice is given as 73,000 acres and the quantity produced is recorded as 50,000 tons a year, of which 25,000 tons are eaten locally, leaving 25,000 for export.

Actually the area in the Report of the Director of Agriculture for 1941 and 1942 is 103,157 and 96,418 acres respectively. The figures for 1943 are not yet available. The quantity of rice exported during the years 1941 to 1943 according to figures supplied by the Comptroller of Customs is 8,881 tons in 1941, 22,480 tons in 1942 and 15,180 tons in 1943. It is quite possible that owing to restricted opportunities for

shipping in 1941 a fair quantity was carried forward to 1942. The average exports for the three years is therefore 16,180 tons. We are reliably informed that there was not a large quantity on hand at the end of 1943.

The Bureau of Publicity and information is a Government Department which should not mislead the public and we now call on the Government to advise the Publicity Officer not to reprint incorrect facts and figures. Further, we call on the Bureau of Publicity and Information to ascertain the reason why the area under rice has declined from 103,000 acres to 73,000 acres and to enquire further what is the area now under rice in the sugar producing districts as compared with 1931 to 1935. The figures will reveal the real "assistance" given to the Rice Industry by Sugar Producers. Will Government take action? We doubt it. The British Guiana Government has Proved its supineness in regard to the Welfare of the Peasants. Something must be done for the under Privileged.

Tit Willow

Mohandas K. Gandhi was amused. To the tune of 'Tit-willow' from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, Khorshed Naoroji sang him a song just published in the Times of India:

"A Mahatma sat singing on top of a fence

Quit India, quit India, quit India.
He would pause for a while, then again would commence

Quit India, quit India, quit India,
And I said, 'Oh Mahatma, I fear I am dense

But your song doesn't seem to make very much sense,

His reply was to chant in a tone more intense;

Quit India, quit India, quit India.
So I said, 'Oh Mahatma, pray why do you chant

Quit India, quit India, quit India?
For with things as they are it's quite clear that we shan't

Quit India, quit India, quit India,
And he answered indulgently,

'Brother, I grant

That at present perhaps it is true that you can't,

But it's just the idea that I wish to implant:

Quit India, quit India, quit India."

Khorshed Naoroji, who heads Gandhi's foreign secretariat, is a slim Bombay Parsi with an easy sense of humor and a pleasant, informal manner.

Her grandfather, was Dadabhai Naoroji, first president of the Indian National Congress and first Indian member of the British Parliament.

She was recently released from prison. First jailed (for her political views) in Bihar, she was moved under escort of eight armed police men and one wardress to the Poona jail. On the train the sleepy policemen handed her their revolvers to guard. She asked: "How can you dare do this?" Answer: "Oh, we know you're nonviolent."

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AGENTS

Dr C. W. Chandisingh Resigns Trinidad Medical Service

RETURN TO B.G. EXPECTED IN
NOVEMBER

Popular and truly democratic Dr. Charles Washington Chandisingh has resigned the Trinidad Medical Service as D. M. O. of Cedros.

Up to the time immediately following his departure from this colony to take up an appointment with the Trinidad Government Medical Service, the Doctor was enjoying a very lucrative practice in the Village District of Ruxtoq, on the East Coast of Demerara.

His resignation is the result of transportation difficulties, it is authoritatively stated, and he is expected to return to British Guiana in November (next month).

In making general reference to the matter, THE TRINIDAD GUARDIAN of 27.9.44 under caption—"Medical Officer Quits Service" says,

The "Trinidad Guardian" was officially informed yesterday that Dr. C. W. Chandisingh who came here from British Guiana last May to take up an appointment in the Government Service as D. M. O., Cedros, has tendered his resignation, effective from November 1.

It is understood that the resignation has been accepted and that Dr. Chandisingh plans returning to British Guiana immediately to resume practice there.

Reports that Dr. E. J. Sankeralli, Deputy Director of Sanitary Services, has resigned from the Government Services, were yesterday characterized by a Government official as "unfounded."

This official stated that Dr. Sankeralli has been granted long leave due to ill health and that his absence from the department was keenly felt.

Dr. George N. Wattley, scholarship winner from St. Mary's College, who recently appointed to this Colony's medical staff, is expected here from England this week.

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The Allies And The Fate of Colonials

BY LIBERTY

From the general attitude of the British Government in England and their local Representative in the form of Governors etc. it is now clear that the fate of the British Colonies and the coloured peoples in them are to continue in the same old imperialistic routine.

It was hoped that there was going to be a change of heart and policy on the part of our rulers, but unfortunately this has disappeared from the picture and the fate of the colonies is sealed to continue as it was in the past.

The colonies will continue to be the farms of Great Britain and colonials its farm hands to do her bidding.

It is inhuman to declare one principle for the people in Europe and another for colonials. Yet this is exactly what the Allies have done.

It's the duty of the Allies to draw up a Colonial Charter laying down the principle which should be followed in the post war years.

The policy of No. 10 Downing Street of treating Colonials as chattels must cease, as the entire world today thinks and acts almost in identical manner, a factor which has been brought about by modern means of communication.

The entire matter is more serious than appears at first sight. Politicians of the United Nations should realize that the only way to have a lasting peace depends on a free world with free people in it.

Letters to The Editor

Sir,

It is understood that Government is contemplating the purchase of private estates somewhere on the Corentyne Coast where farmers can take up allotments.

This view of Government is greatly appreciated by the majority of the people of the Corentyne, and especially by those who are anxious to engage in large scale farming.

Should such lands be secured, they would prove a boon to hundreds of people who, in their search for arable

and pasture lands, have been pushing towards the interior coastlands, to regions that may possess the advantage of having rich, productive soils, but which, nevertheless, owing to lack of roads and drainage, are difficult of access, are unhealthy, isolated and, for the present, of little value, therefore

The acquisition by Government of such areas as are within practical communicable limits, then, would undoubtedly provide favourable prospect for the farmers.

It is not only to the men of the interior that the new prospect would seem agreeable, but also to the individual who is forced to pay eight and ten dollars rent for an acre producing only one crop of rice per year.

In the areas thought of, the "immigrant" farmers will share the advantages of the postal, telegraph, and medical services. He can easily assemble his products near the public road, and he can find a ready market for his goods.

He would be able to live a less strenuous life than his brother in the interior. He would live in a house of reasonably modest comfort, and be happy.

When the lands are bought and allotted to the farmers, Government will have done a great good for the people of Berbice, and for the colony, generally.

It therefore behoves every good citizen of this country to pray earnestly for that day to come when the poor man, the peasant or the farmer, will begin to entertain hopes of a new vigorous life, and where Government, too, may feel assured that it is strengthening the backbone of this country by providing occupation for the working class.

BAHAWALKHAN

(also known as Mehendra Singh)

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Fundamental Aspects of Communism

Readers can Compare These with Capitalism

BY JENARINE SINGH

It is proposed to briefly state a few of the fundamental facts of the rights and Basic Duties of man under communistic principles in this issue.

(1) The right of every man and woman to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment, with the workers option, alternatively, to join in independent cooperative productive societies, either in industry or agriculture, or to work individually on his own account, without the employment of hired labour.

(2) The right to leisure and rest, is provided for by law, laying down the number of hours of employment in office, field, factory and shops; together with the provision of paid holidays and resorts where workers can go to profitably use it.

(3) The right of security in old age, in condition of incapacity to work or in sickness is provided for by social insurance of workers at state expense. Free medical service is also provided at state expense.

(4) The right to education, for all races, free of charge including higher education, applicable to persons of any age and either sex.

(5) The rights of women are accorded them with equality to that of men in every sphere of activity economic, cultural, social and political. Proper provision is made for women to fulfil the function of motherhood with all possible alleviation of the physical suffering involved. The state protects the interests of the mother and child, pregnancy leave with pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

(6) The equal Rights of all citizens, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an irrevocable law.

(7) The right to Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens. The church is definitely separated from the state and the schools from the church.

(8) The Right is guaranteed by law of (a) Freedom of speech
(b) Freedom of the Press
(c) Freedom of assembly meetings
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations

(9) The right to criticize every branch of the public administration, and to agitate for its improvement by public organizations such as Trade unions, cooperative societies, scientific societies and cultural associations, by speeches at public meetings and by printed matter.

(10) The Right of inviolability of the person is guaranteed. No arrests can be made except by an order of the court or with the sanction of a state attorney.

(11) The Right of inviolability of the homes and secrecy of correspondence are protected by law.

BASIC DUTIES OF MAN

[A] Work under communism is a duty, a matter of honour, for every able bodied person. He who does not work shall not eat. This duty of not to be a parasite, living on the work of other men, is strikingly absent in all capitalistic and landlord countries. In British Guiana the capitalist Sugar Proprietors and managers are the "leisured men" are envied and honoured by their fellow men, they are never penalized.

[To be continued next week]

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"We Shall Not Betray This Trust."

"There is evidence that the dependent peoples of the Caribbean and other areas of the world are watching the work of the Commission with interest and hope, perhaps with some scepticism. They know that no matter how perfect the machinery of international organisation may become, the benefit to be derived will ultimately depend upon the vision, courage, and above all, upon the integrity of the participating nations. "We must not and shall not betray this trust."

These remarks were made by Mr. Charles W Taussig, Co Chairman of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission in the course of an address which he delivered recently before a meeting of the Foreign Policy Association in Washington, and which was reproduced over the West Indian Radio Newspaper in its programme yesterday afternoon.

SUFFER FROM LOP-SIDED ECONOMY

Mr. Taussig said that the interest of the United States in the region known geographically and politically as the Caribbean sprang from several causes. Their ties with the area were many, — historical, romantic, and humanitarian, and of the national security.

Perhaps the most impelling, from the human interest point of view, are the historical ties which date back to the Colonial period of our history when West Indian trade was the life blood of our New England economy — that rugged, vigorous through, cruel era, of slaves, rum, romance, and rebellion. But of more importance are the traditional interests of the United States in the well-being and political advancement of the dependent peoples, which interests are connected in these regions with vital consideration of national security.

The tranquility and virility of the Caribbean countries are important elements of that security. The European colonies in the Caribbean area belong to the Netherlands, France and Great Britain. The majority of the inhabitants of those territories and our own United States possessions are an under-privileged people. They suffer from a lop-sided economy and are for the most part poor, under-nourished, inadequately educated and badly provided for in matters of health and sanitation and many are dissatisfied with their political status.

SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL CHANGES

Politically, substantial changes in the direction of self-government are now taking place.

Jamaica has been granted a new constitution, which a lower House elected by universal suffrage and an Executive Council composed equally of elected and appointed members. The new set up contains the beginnings of a municipality system.

British Guiana has increased the number of unofficial members in its Legislature and will have a majority of elected members. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has accepted the Report of the British Guiana Franchise

Commission reducing the property qualifications for voting by approximately one-half."

"Barbados also has sharply reduced her requirements for voting, and only two months ago the Secretary of State for the Colonies announced his acceptance of a plan for universal adult suffrage, for both men and women in Trinidad.

RIGHT TO ELECT OWN GOVERNOR.

"Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands of the United States have had universal suffrage for many years, and President Roosevelt has intimated a plan under which the people of Puerto Rico will have the right to elect their own Governor. That plan and principal have already been approved by the United States Senate and they are now awaiting the sanction of the House."

After referring to the need for and the formation of the Anglo-American Commission Mr. Taussig touched on the meeting of the Commission recently held in Barbados and the valuable work done and the splendid co-operation and collaboration manifested by those concerned.

"The possibility has not been lost sight of," he continued "that the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission might point the way to the creation of other regional Commissions for the benefit of dependent peoples in other parts of the world.

"It is axiomatic that regional Commissions such as the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission should neither frustrate normal development in Colonial self-government nor pose as alternatives to it. Through their forward looking policy and ethics, however, such bodies should contribute much to the appreciation of dependent peoples for economic self-help and political self-sufficiency.

"The Commission is still in its trial period but it found by its approach and method to be an institution of regional collaboration."

Mr. Taussig then made the remarks quoted at the outset — *West Indian Radio Newspaper*.

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