

Indian Opinion

OFFICIAL WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE BRITISH GUIANA EAST INDIAN ASSOCIATION.

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ONE PENNY

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— EDITORIAL —

The Coconut Industry

The stern decision of Government with respect to the price of copra and edible oil seems to be inexplicable and has left the entire public waiting for an explanation of its attitude. The producers of coconut who are the principal persons hit by the present actions of Government have reacted in various ways, some have written stinging letters to the press others have relaxed their cultivation and gathering of nuts but the majority seems to be planning concerted action in order to preserve themselves. On the other hand we find certain Government Officers making irresponsible statements and writing letters without due care.

We are of the opinion that Government should endeavour to meet the demands of the coconut industry and seek at all times to maintain the confidence of the people of the colony in their action. We hope this advice will be well received and definite Governmental action follow to the benefit of the dissatisfied producers, before the whole industry is thrown into further chaos.

All letter intended for publication MUST be signed, and addressed to the Editor and MUST be written on one side of the paper only. Unsigned letter will be surely thrown into the waste paper basket.

Sugar Again Tramples Upon On Work People

The Guiana Graphic—Condemns labour in British Guiana—it says 'Leisure has become synonymous with idleness and a standard of living is judged by the ability to earn more by working less.'

It has by now become clear to all and sundry that the Sugar Industry will have to change its present system of exploiting the human sweat and blood of the labouring section of the Sugar Estates, if it is going to survive and prosper in this colony. Unfortunately there is a strong tendency on the part of the proprietors and their local managers to preserve things as they

have been for the past century. They are prepared to employ every conceivable ingenious means and methods to achieve this end, as a result, they have quite recently started the running of a newspaper with the object of fooling the public into believing, that they have the welfare of the labouring section at heart, to so influence their minds as to make them feel that without sugar the colony is lost and to belabour any person, organisation or even the government in their column into submission.

Such action cannot be condemned too strongly and cannot be regarded other than with scorn and contempt for both proprietors and local managers.

British Guiana has been suffering in every quarter from developing because of Sugar, which wants to continue its blood-sucking exploitation of the human masses of the colony for as long as it can. It has been allowed to continue undisturbed to undermine the entire development of the colony and its people to the present date;

But there is a limit to every thing, and sugar is now interfering with the sanctity of Man's existence on earth dastardly says in its official organ the Guiana Graphic that "Leisure has become synonymous with idleness" etc, Sugar cannot compel mere skeletons with bones and flesh sticking together without energy, other than that merely required to preserve a soul in it to go on exhausting what it does not possess.

Malnutrition causing physiological deriliets can be seen everywhere among the sugar estate labourers because of the poor wages and semi slavery conditions under which the labourers have to live. Will the Sugar Gods try to remedy these conditions of humanity and cease undermining the development of British Guiana? To God we raise these prayers for deliverance.

Indian Barrister Returns Home

MR. FRANK R. JACOB, son of Hon. G. R. Jacob, Elected Member of the Legislative Council for North West District since 1935, and Mrs. Jacob, of 115 Third Street, Alberttown, returned home by P.A.A. plane on Saturday after an absence of nearly six years in England.

Mr. Jacob was in England three weeks before the war broke out and lived in London for some time and in Bristol during the serious raids.

SOCIAL WELFARE WORKER

While in England Mr. Jacob did Social Welfare work and delivered several lectures on the West Indies. He is also a member of the League of Coloured Peoples of which Mr. John Carter, his friend, was Secretary. Mr. Jacob said that Mr. Carter and he travelled on the same ship to Trinidad.

Mr. Jacob, a member of the Gray's Inn; was called to the Bar in July 1943. He has gained the unique distinction of being the only Guianese to become a member of the English Circuit, and is one of the few West Indians to be a member; as such he

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British Guiana East Indian Association

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1945-46

PRESIDENT: Mr. Jenarine Singh.
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT: Mr. Amos Rangela
JUNIOR VICE PRESIDENT: Mr. J. Rampershad.
TREASURER: Mr. C. R. HANOOMAN.
In accordance with the rules of the Association, the President in consultation with the other newly elected Officers, appointed the following persons:—
SECRETARY: Mr. N. C. Janki (Solicitor).
COMMITTEE MEMBERS—Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan, Dr. Hardutt Singh, Messrs. Ahmad Khan, Ramroop, M. Hoosain L, A Sookhoo and Sugrim Singh.

Notice

The office of the British Guiana East Indian Association is now situated at lot 133 Church Street, Georgetown, opposite St. George's school.

Anjuman Ajmaa Ay Ijtihadul Islam of Pin. Versailles

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Anjuman Ajmaa Ay Ijtihadul Islam of Pin. Versailles was held on Sunday 8th April, 1945. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were presented. The following are the results of the Election:—

PRESIDENT: Mr. Mohamed Latiff.
VICE PRESIDENT: Mr. Didar Baksh.
SECRETARY: Mr. S. A. Hakeem.
ASST. SECRETARY: Mr. Sulayman.
TREASURER: Mr. M. H. Khan.
COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Messrs. M. Kaziq, M. Azeze, M. Bassir, Snaffee Wazeer Khan, Madaar, and Kadir.

Indian Teacher Designs Books For Infants

New type exercise books approved by the Education Department for use of children in Stages I, II, and III, will be on the market this week.

Designed by Mr. Rolf Ajodha Parsad, of the Esperanza C.M. School for whom they were prepared at Guardian Commercial Printery, the books carry the regulation 4 inch spacing which experts in infant teaching advocate. They carry signs and appropriate tables for the various stages.

Mr. Parsad who is planning to design books for senior stages has already published a Phonetic Alphabet for infants which is on sale in the city.

The Viceroy-Gandhi Correspondence

The following correspondence has passed recently between H. E. the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi:

'Dilkusha',
Panchgani
15th July, 1944

Dear Friend,

You have no doubt seen the authentic copies, now published in the Indian Press, of the statements given by me to Mr. Gelder of the News Chronicle. As I have said to the Press they were meant primarily to be shown to you. But Mr. Gelder, no doubt with the best of motives, gave the interview premature publicity. I am sorry. The publication will nevertheless be a blessing in disguise, if the interview enables you to grant at least one of my requests contained in my letter of 17th June, 1944.

I am

Yours etc,

(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

His Excellency the Viceroy,
Viceroy's Camp

Indian Overseas Association Sends Sympathy

In a letter to the Hon. A. M. Edun, the Secretary-Treasurer of the "Indians Overseas Association," Mr. H. S. L. Polak, writes:

"I shall be glad if you will kindly convey to those affected my sincere sympathies with them in the loss and suffering they have undergone on account of the disastrous fire in Georgetown...."

New Delhi
22nd July, 1944,

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter of 15th July. I have seen the statements you made to Mr. Gelder, and your subsequent explanation of them. I do not think I can usefully comment at present, except to repeat what I said in my last letter that if you will submit to me a definite and constructive policy I shall be glad to consider it.

Yours Sincerely,
(Sd.) WAVELL.

M.K. Gandhi Esqr.

MR. GANDHI'S PROPOSAL
As at 'Ashram,' Sevagram.
Camp Panchgani.
27th July, 1944.

Dear Friend,

I must admit my disappointment over your letter of 22nd instant. But I am used to work in the face of disappointment. Here is my concrete proposal.

I am prepared to advise the Working Committee to declare that in view of changed conditions, mass Civil Disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August, 1942, cannot be offered and that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by the Congress, if a declaration of immediate Indian Independence is made and a

Continued on page 3

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PHONE C 341

British Empire War Casualties

Prime Minister Churchill in the House of Commons today declared that British Empire war casualties (armed forces) up to the end of February stood at 1,126,802 including 307,000 killed wounded, missing or taken prisoner. Of the total killed 215,000 servicemen were from the United Kingdom.

The Viceroy-Gandhi Correspondence

Continued from page 2

National Government responsible to the Central Assembly be formed subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India. If there is a desire on the part of the British Government for a settlement, friendly talks should take the place of correspondence. But I am in your hands. I shall continue to knock so long as there is the last hope of an honourable settlement.

After the foregoing was written I saw Lord Munster's speech in the House of Lords. The summary given by him in the House of Lords fairly represents my proposal. This summary may serve as a basis for mutual friendly discussion.

I am,

Yours Sincerely,

(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

His Excellency the Viceroy.

(To be continued in full next issue)

Indian Barrister Returns Home

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practised in the North of England, appearing in the Assizes, Sessions and County Courts. He also appeared in the Appeal Courts in London as well as in several cases in which West Indians were concerned, especially seamen in Liverpool and Manchester.

Mr. Jacob attended the McGowan School, Queenstown, under Mr. D. J. Richmond where he won the County Scholarship in 1930. On entering Queen's College he showed marked ability and became a Government Junior Scholar. After gaining his Oxford and Cambridge School Certificate, he obtained his London Higher in 1939, with exemption from intermediate, offering English, Latin, French and History. In 1939 he proceeded to England and entered King's College, London, graduating with the degree of LL.B. (Hons) also winning a Diploma in Philosophy.

Mr Jacob hopes to seek admission to the Supreme Court and will practise in Georgetown.

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Influence Of Voluntary Collective Bargaining

Continued from last issue

INFLUENCE OF FEMALE LABOUR

There has been, for instance, a larger number of women employed on work formerly undertaken by men, a factor which is reflected in the relatively high percentage increase in the average earnings of women.

The most direct evidence of the influence of Trade Union organisation upon the wartime movement of wages is afforded by the rise in the average level of RATES of wages for a full ordinary week's work, exclusive of overtime. The latest analysis shows that there has been a rise of about 35 or 36 per cent. in average wage rates between October, 1938 and July 1944. The difference between this percentage of 35 or 36 per cent. and the average increase of 82 per cent. in weekly earnings represents the net effect of the other factor referred to—particularly fuller employment, overtime working and the marked extension of piece-work and other forms of payments by results.

There has been no considerable increase in the average weekly hours worked during the war years. In October, 1938, the average working week for all workers—men and women, boys and girls—was 46½ hours; and in July 1944, the average working week was slightly more than 48½ hours. On the basis of hourly earnings, the inquiries show that all workers, on the average, were getting about 10d an hour more in mid-1944 than they were getting in autumn of 1938; this represents an increase of about 74 per cent. in the hourly earnings of all workers from an average of a fraction over 1/1d. The amount of average earnings, of course, varies as between one industry and another, and between one category of wage earners and another.

To be Continued

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Requirements.

Engagement

A representative and interesting religious Teelack Ceremony was performed by Pandit Sookdeo Persaud, on Sunday evening last. Among the prominent persons present were:—Dr. and Mrs. Jagan, Messrs. J. A. Verasammy—Barrister at law, Setai Persaud—Managing director of R.M. & Co., Jenarine Singh—President, B.G.E.I.A., John L. Griffith, N. Persaud, Beharry, Omar, T. Narine Budan Singh, Ramroop and many others.

The Teelack of a neat little sum of \$101.25 was given to Kublal Hardeen on behalf of Miss Estell Rangela of 18 Broad Street, Georgetown.

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Letter To The Editor

**The Editor,
The "Indian Opinion."**

Sir,

It is with great pity that any inter-
ested taxpayer of this Colony can
view the entire working of the Agri-
culture Department of British Guiana.
It is more burdensome to the poor
taxpayers of the Colony than is even
the Public Works Department. The
Department of Agriculture ought to
have been at the forefront at this
crucial time to fulfil every appeal of
His Majesty the King with respect
to the sufficiency of necessary food-
stuff and even a surplus of it to be ex-
ported. Instead, what is happening?
One would find practically every offi-
cer of the Department simply running
all around framing laws to stultify
the progress of the poor small farmers
who have all along been of very great
assistance and benefit to the poor con-
sumers of this great Province of ours.

In my opinion, the Department is
certainly perpetuating a very danger-
ous precedent by paying all its atten-
tion to the Government Produce
Depot and none whatever to encour-
age the small farmers as had been
done some years ago.

The Agriculture Department caters
more efficiently for cattle feed than
human food. I would like to also
stress the fact that only 10% of the
fresh provision received in the Depot
are being sold to the consumers in
consumable form—naturally after
"cooking" for the lack of proper pack-
ing, handling transporting and dis-
tributing the balance goes to the mak-
ing of cattle feed. Poor taxpayers!
Cattle feed could always be got at
the Depot as against fresh provision
which is very irregular. Very soon
both cattle feed and human food
might not be seen in the Depot.

I cannot conceive the idea of justifying
myself by imploring the poor small
farmers to produce below the costs of
production without any form of subsid-
isation. If I do that I would be
certainly doing wrong.

Can the prices fixed for sweet cassava
and the 'owko' yam be remunerative?
The Agriculture Department tried the
game at Toevlugt, West Bank, Demer-
ara, some years ago. That should be
proceeded with again, instead of
impeding of progress of the poor
hand-to-mouth farmers.

In most instances it has always been
the ploy of this Government to con-
stitute the personnel of committees not
conducive to the welfare of its
constitution. "Yes men" all the
time with no practical ideas whatever.

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