

Indian Opinion

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— EDITORIAL —

Malnutrition And The Workers

The average diet of the working family in B.G. may be considered far below the standard required to maintain physical fitness and health. The energy output involved in the daily work is far above the intake, causing a continuous overtaxing of the workers system and the running down of the reserves of the body.

The real basic causes of malnutrition lies in the poor wages that the workers earn. It would be of far greater benefit to the employer to have well fed and strong persons to work for them, as the amount of work performed would compensate for the higher wages paid. It is beyond the imagination of any human mind to figure out how the average sugar estate worker's family can live on two fifty and three dollars per week; no wonder malnutrition, with its train of diseases, is so apparent among the entire section of the masses employed by the sugar estates.

We are of the opinion that a change of heart and spirit is required by the management of labour everywhere in B.G. especially the sugar estates. A wage aimed at providing a proper balanced diet, and enough calories for the energy output should be constantly kept before the minds of the employers of labour.

Repatriation Of Indians Right Of A Return Passage

We reproduce hereunder a report by Mr. M. B. Laing, O.B.E. Commissioner of Local Government and the Hon. J. A. Luokbo, K.C. on the right of an Indian Immigrant to a return passage under the Immigration Ordinance, Chapter 208, for the information of our readers.

It is proposed to deal with this matter in our editorial columns as from the current issue.

— Editor,

"RIGHT TO A RETURN PASSAGE UNDER THE IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE CHAPTER 208.

We have the honour to submit the following report on the right of an Indian Immigrant to a return passage under the Immigration Ordinance, Chapter 208.

Under Section 192 of the said Ordinance, every Indian Immigrant introduced into this colony is entitled to a return passage to India in accordance with the terms of his agreement entered into between him and the Agent General in India.

The Legislative Council

British Guiana has not had an election for nine years for the Legislative Council. Children who were twelve at the last elections, are now twenty one, and can hardly remember the bustle and bustle in the colony as happens at election time.

We are satisfied that the majority of the elected members of the present Legislature have outlined their usefulness and have ceased to be the choice of the people. The Legislative Council has reached a moribund stage and it is time we have general elections in the colony.

We are of the opinion that if America can have elections for the presidency in war time, then there is no reason on earth why British Guiana should not also have elections for the Legislative Council, which is now overdue by four years.

We urge therefore that the change of Franchise be expedited and in our opinion this can be done in time to have a general election in September 1945.

There were three types of agreement and shortly put are as follows—

(1) All immigrants introduced into the Colony, at the expense of the Government or of the Immigration Fund, previous to the 1st day of September, 1895, are entitled to be registered free of charge to a return passage if they have completed a continuous residence of ten years.

(2) All immigrants introduced in like manner from the 1st day of September, 1895 and the 30th day of September, 1898, are entitled to a portion of the passage money namely, Males one-quarter (1/4) and Females one-sixth (1/6) thereof.

(3) All immigrants introduced also in like manner from the 1st day of October, 1898, are required to pay the following proportion of the passage money—males one-half and females one-third thereof.

(To be continued)

Another Berbician to Qualify in Dentistry

MR. JOHN DEONARINE LEAVING FOR UNITED STATES

Mr. John Deonarine, son of Mr. and Mrs. Deonarine of Bush Lot Village, Corentyne Berbice is expected to leave this colony shortly for the United States of America where he will pursue studies in dentistry.

Mr. Deonarine is an old-boy of the Berbice High School. His father is a Corentyne spirit shop owner.

Mr. John Deonarine was for some time a teacher at the Canadian Mission School at No. 47 Village, Corentyne Berbice.

Daily Argosy Adverse Opinion Challenged with Respect to Transfer of Certain West Indian Colonies to America

The Editor:
Indian Opinion
Dear Sir,

I have read with keen interest the question raised in the U.S.A. that they (the Americans) should take over some of the British West Indian Colonies.

I have also read the adverse opinion of the Editorial of the Daily Argosy on the subject. This editorial was published almost simultaneously with the statement raised in America.

Certainly the Daily Argosy could not assess public opinion on such a major issue over night, I am sick of the damage such opinions as that of the Daily Argosy is causing to the general inhabitants, especially the masses of the West Indian Colonies, as a whole.

I have made it my duty as a citizen of British Guiana, interested in its welfare since the question was raised to conduct a private survey throughout the colony among the different classes of all the races in British Guiana.

The usual answer has been that their lot could not be worse under any other circumstances than it is at present, they dislike the idea of being ungrateful to the present form of Government but knowing full well that their lot could never improve under the British Administration who have neglected them and allowed with closed eyes the continuous and indefinite exploitation of their very lives. They welcome the idea raised in America that this area be transferred to them; most of these people expressed the opinion that America is the land of liberty, the land of prosperity and enterprise.

Those who have worked with them at the bases in British Guiana and were consulted were quite satisfied as to the treatment meted out to them.

In conclusion Mr. Editor, I have addressed this letter to you and not the Argosy because I am certain they would not publish it.

Thanking you.

I am yours,

WRETCHED AND MISERABLE

Wakenaam Primary School Problem

SHAMEFUL NEGLECT BY GOVERNMENT

BY "RR. DEMOCRACY"

It has cost the poor peasants of Wakenaam more than one thousand dollars, within the last seven months to maintain the primary school known as the "Mackay Memorial School" at Good Success Wakenaam. This school came into being as a result of the disgusting and unsatisfactory state of affairs that existed at the Govt. aided Methodist School there, and the neglect of Government to set up and maintain a Govt. control school on the island—which would be free from impartiality and prejudices of any kind.

This new school is run by a governing body comprising of fifteen residents of the island. It costs nearly one hundred and fifty dollars per month to maintain, with Head-master W. H. Pollard (1st class T.T.C.) and a staff of five efficient teachers. It has enrolled more than two hundred and seventy five pupils with an average daily attendance of over two hundred.

Dr. Giglioli was favourably impressed with the condition of this school. The residents who send their children, contribute what could be afforded. But this cannot meet the demands of this evergrowing school. The governing body appointed by the people of Wakenaam is appealing to all Indians and the general public for contributions to assist them in their efforts to school their children advantageously—no amount is too small.

Please remit your contributions to "The Governing Body of Mackay's Memorial School",

c/o Abdool Rahman,

San Souci, Wakenaam.

All contributions will be acknowledged in the Indian Opinion.

[Editor's Note]—Indian Opinion admires the spirit of the people of Wakenaam and wholeheartedly associates itself with this appeal, and hopes that Government will also extend its "human interest" to these neglected peasants of Wakenaam.

Joint Organizations Continue To Hold Mass Meetings

RESOLUTION PASSED

At a meeting at Grove of around six hundred persons of African and Indian descent, a unanimous resolution was passed asking that Universal Adult Suffrage be introduced forthwith in British Guiana.

Grave concern was expressed at the meeting regarding the Hon King who represents the area in question in the Legislative Council as he did not consult the people, nor voiced their feelings in the Franchoise Commission and Legislative Council.

The question asked was, who does the Hon. King represent today in the Legislative Council?

Is it the people of the East and West Bank, Demerara?

Is it the Government of British Guiana?

Is it the Bauxite Industry?

Is it himself?

The Editor, Indian Opinion, will gladly publish the Hon King's answer to these questions.

V. Lam

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Interior Development Depends On Road Communication

By THE WATCH DOG

Undoubtedly the Administration of British Guiana and the rulers from No 10 Downing Street, should have realized decades ago that means of Communications to the interior is one of the chief reasons that such a vast section of the country is uninhabited, undeveloped and unexplored.

The Sugar Industry has been a determining factor in this direction as it wanted to hold, to the coast lands the entire population and exploit their sweat and blood; ingeniously keeping large sections of the inhabitants unemployed and landless. The influence of Sugar in the local Administration and at No 10 Downing Street is also a known fact, hence logically the conclusion easily arrived at is that sugar has deliberately kept British Guiana back for at least one hundred and odd years.

British Guiana's Destiny to a great extent lies in the interior, where its mineral wealth lies unexplored, its forest and agricultural possibilities are mere conjectures of men who sit in Georgetown on cushioned chairs.

It is time the Government becomes serious on this matter and cease to base its workings on academic theories and get down to realities. The first step is to build a decent road to the interior as rapidly as is possible.

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Letters to the Editor

FLOUR, CYCLE TYRES & TUBES

Sir,
I wonder what Mr. Macfie is doing with the distribution of flour in the Skeldon district?

I notice that from time to time the situation is getting worse. I have seen big plans laid out for black marketing on flour and other items. Why are certain business men in the district who only started business just one or two years ago are allowed to get 12 to 14 half bags of flour? Are they given this flour to wholesale or retail? Would it be fair to those business men or shop men who just started business to get 12 to 14 half bags of flour while some of them who have been carrying on business for over 12 to 20 years can only get two and three half bags which supply is insufficient? And when they make application for an increase they are told that there is a shortage of flour, and those who were getting three half bags were cut down to two, and then they were suddenly stopped altogether without any good reason while others with their 12-14 half bags are getting just the same. I observe that there is no shortage or limit for the "big shots."

Flour is always sent in boats for the Upper Corentyne River district and neither the Control Board nor any like department questions it or even cares to know where it is going, for what purpose, to whom it is to be sold—whether it be Dutch men or English men. But the poor seller or baker with his three half bags must be questioned and crucified and not allowed to live.

Some of the shopowners who are getting these elaborate amounts of flour are selling to the poor bakers and other shop men who have plenty customers but are not getting their full supply. They have to pay black market prices of \$4.00 and \$5.00 per half bag!

Now, there is a big shortage of bread in the district on account of the fact one of the largest bakeries is closed and the flour for some is allowed to be transferred to another district, and the Skeldon district is now entirely out of from the use of that flour. Will the Control Board investigate why, and whether that district will consume that amount of flour, or it is sent there for black marketing?

Cycle tyres and tubes are being disposed of under the same condition. Most of the stores have tyres and are glad to get rid of them as they are getting dry rot on their hands, and workers who have the need for same cannot get from the C.B. and have to buy at black market price from those who can get by greasing the wheel.

FAIR-PLAY

The Editor Indian Opinion
Sir,

Kindly permit me space in your columns to ask the Commissioner of police to direct that the speed of the Police car's be more moderate. I have been in a street corner when one of these Cars took a turn at such a speed that two old ladies on the pavement fell on the pavement running away from the oncoming vehicle. I appreciate the fact that they are supposed to be on duties that require fast driving but certainly there is a limit to it in the city or it would be found that they would be breaking the law instead of preserving it.

yours
CITY DWELLER

The Editor:
The "Indian Opinion"

Sir,
I do not want you or anyone to believe that I am anti-British, but I do want to say that those whose faults are never told them—heedless think the angels mould them and this is a constructive suggestion. My reason for saying so is that the British nation is a Christian nation basically; their very lives, laws and customs are so moulded, and despite the knowledge that the Commonwealth of Nation is a mixture of nearly all the different races and religions of the world they impose their laws and customs on all.

The voice of the people must sound with contentment before their prayers could be heard, and this

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should be done by promoting sound bodies in sound minds.

All prosperity is the gift of God, and unless mankind return to God their efforts, human efforts alone cannot lead them to permanent mundane bliss, therefore the fear of God is the root of all blessings.

In connection with this, I must say that in the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Muslims form a very large part. Their entire life is devoted to religious thoughts and actions, so much so that even in the heat of war in the battlefield they do not give up worship according to their custom. Peace is their aim for here and the hereafter despite being dubbed as being too lax in worldliness.

In this British colony Muslims participate on every occasion with their Christian compatriots in prayer for peace, yet no respect is paid to their religious sentiments or requirements. Their religious rituals, festivals and so on mean nothing to the Christian Authorities who ignore the Muslims' request to facilitate their religious functions of worship or otherwise. Now that the fasting month has started Muslims have asked for flour and other essential commodities to commemorate fasting—an institution founded by the Prophets Abraham and Jesus, upon whom be peace, which are denied them, how then could the British people expect the noble religion to cooperate with their needs and aspirations? Flour is an imperative item for bestowing charity to the poor and also for sustaining use during the fasting period yet Muslims cannot get it, though Christian festivals abound with it for making patties, etc. etc. to carry on their functions.

This discrimination is certainly biased and so will the prayers of all Indians if the attitude is not changed, as Indians prefer to have God and Right on their side against all the discrimination, and suppression.

Yours truly
M. I. SHEIKH,
Resignol.

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Flood Cup Cricket

DISPLAY OF FINE SPORTSMANSHIP AMONG INDIANS

The most important Indian Social event of the week took place at the B.G.E.I.C.C. on the occasion of the of the Flood Cup Cricket.

The first match was played between Essequibo and Demerara.

Essequibo was defeated by a breath taking margin and the final test was played between Berbice and Demerara.

The Berbice Team was in exceedingly good form and defeated Demerara in a two to one innings.

The presentation of the Cup to Berbice by Miss Eileen Ramdeholl, a grand daughter of the late Thomas Flood took place amidst enthusiastic cheers.

Present at the Pavilion were very many Indian Personalities among those of special mention being Mr. Francis Kawall, Hon. President of B.G.E.I.A. the grand old man of the Indian Community, Dr. J. Bissessar President B.G.E.I.C.C., Dr. J. B. Singh Hon. President B.G.E.I.A., Messrs. Jenarius Singh President B.G.E.I.A., E. W. Adams, D.P. Debidin, Sugrim Singh, G. Kawall, J. Mohamed, Sase Narayan (Essequibo), Chandica Persaud (Berbice), and very many others.

Pandit Jaipersaud

Pandit Jaipersaud Head Accountant P.O. Skeldon has just retired on pension at the age of 65 years. A man of outstanding ability, he now retires to reap the profits of his labour. Indian Opinion good wishes goes with the Pandit.

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AGENTS

The Sugar Industry a curse on humanity of British Guiana

BY LIBERTY

Cheap labour based on a large number of landless and unemployed has been responsible for the existence of the Sugar Industry in British Guiana. Sugar has survived at the cost of untold number of lives, undescribable misery and starvation. Malnutrition is printed on every Sugar worker's face. The mules receive a more balanced nutrition, attention and care than the human workers.

Flood following continues on all Sugar Estates, consequently Malaria is ever present among sugar estate workers. High Sugar cane tourage by flood following, is to the Sugar Industry 'above human lives.'

God help the inhabitants of British Guiana if Sugar is to be according to the Sugar Gods, the economic backbone of the Colony.

Universal Adult Suffrage

LEADERS IN INDIA SUPPORTING CLAIM OF MASSSES

CABLE RECEIVED FROM MAYOR OF CALCUTTA

The following cable has been received by the East Indian Association on 21st August in reply to a Cable from them.

Have wired Colonial Secretary warmly supporting your demand which has fullest sympathy of every Indian. Kunzru (Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath), and Jinnah (Mohamed Ally) informed.

MAYOR CALCUTTA.

A Great Awakening Among The People

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE

Reports reaching the "Indian Opinion" from all over the Colony explain that there is a great awakening among the people on the question of Universal Adult Suffrage. There is every belief that the mass meetings held by the Association have had the desired effect of informing the people of their rights. The right to vote, whether one is illiterate or not is one of the fundamentals of democracy.

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