that only unifying workers (of) all countries—particularly (of the) orient and occident—lies the road to successful day-to-day struggle for their vital economic interests and to complete class and national freedom. The setting up of joint advisory committee by the trade unions (of) Britain and USSR furnishes ample proof of growing demand among broad masses for united front and unity. The establishment of connections between All-India Trade Union Congress and Red International (of) Labour Unions, with (the) unions (of) China, Korea, Mongolia, Indonesia, Persia, Egypt, Tunisia and other colonial and semicolonial countries in its ranks, would advance (the) cause (of) world trade-union unity in which western and eastern workers are equally interested. In (the) North-Western Railway strike and heroic (and) victorious Bombay textile strike (the) Indian workers displayed not only (the) will to fight, not only class endurance, but high degree (of) proletarian solidarity. (The) RILU expresses hope that your congress will display such proletarian solidarity likewise in (the) question (of) international trade-union unity and take initiative in establishing connections between labour movement of east and west. All success to (the) sixth All-India Trade Union Congress! Long live (the) alliance (of) oppressed peoples and classes of east and west! Forward to world trade-union unity!—Executive Bureau, Red International Labour Unions. A. Lozovsky, general secretary.

II. The Hindu-Muslim Problem

6. THE CALCUTTA RIOT

M. N. Roy

The antagonism between the hindus and the muslims is an old phenomenon in the social life of India. This antagonism, which has its roots in the history of the country, has been fully exploited by British imperialism. It has always provided the basis for imperialist policy of “divide and rule”. During the last two decades the religious conflict broke out into bloody riots on several occasions. In each case the hidden hand of the government was to be noticed behind the scene. Provocation acts on the part of the police were the immediate cause of such bloody riots. The latest one in Calcutta has been of an unusually acute nature.

In spite of the fact that hindu-muslim unity was one of the planks of the nationalist program, the bourgeois leaders have totally failed to solve the vexing problem. The reason of this deplorable failure is the inordinate importance given to religion in nationalist agitation. It is also due to the fact that the bourgeois-nationalist leaders only searched for a basis of compromise.

Before the British conquered India in the middle of the eighteenth century, the country had been ruled by
Muslim invaders for nearly five hundred years. Although the Muslim conquerors settled in India and practically severed all connection with their land of origin, they were always regarded more or less as aliens in the country. Religious antagonism and the consequent persecution was the order of the day in that period. A handful of British invaders were able so easily to conquer India, largely owing to the tacit connivance of the Hindu majority of the population. The memory of the three centuries of Muslim domination did not die easily among the Hindus. The bogey of a new Muslim invasion from the northwest was successfully held up by the British rulers to terrify the Hindus into subjugation. On the other hand, the Muslim minority was held in check by the fear that the disappearance of British protection would place the Muslims under the revengeful tyranny of the Hindu majority. The British rulers very successfully played upon the mutual fear and suspicion of the two communities. The policy would not have been so disastrously effective had these elements of fear and suspicion not had a traditional basis.

The Muslim community constitutes a minority of the population, being in round numbers 70 million as against 200 million Hindus. In its earlier stages (until the beginning of the world war) the nationalist movement was almost exclusively a Hindu movement. After having overthrown the decayed Muslim power with the help and connivance of the oppressed Hindu majority, the British conquerors changed their policy. They pretended to be the protector of the Muslim minority as against the possible dictatorship of the Hindu majority. This pretension was backed up by certain favouritism towards the Muslim intelligentsia who received preference over the Hindus as regards state employment. This policy of favouritism kept the advanced elements of the Muslim community away from the nationalist movement. Consequently, the latter became predominantly Hindu and came under the influence of Hindu religious ideology. This rendered the situation still worse. It enabled imperialism to play more upon the fear and suspicion of the Muslims. It was pointed out by imperialist writers that program of the nationalist movement was to establish a Hindu kingdom in India, and that if that program were realised the Muslims would find themselves in a precarious position; they would be subjected to a revengeful tyranny or even driven out of the country like the Moors from Spain. On the other hand, the government refused to pay heed to the demands of the nationalist movement, on the pretext that it did not represent the view of the entire population. This state of affairs culminated in the organisation of the Indian Muslim League under official inspiration, as a standing challenge to the claims of the National Congress to speak on behalf of the entire nation.

The reactionary nature of Hindu nationalism greatly helped the divide-and-rule policy of imperialism. It strengthened the religious preoccupation of the Muslims who considered themselves Muslims first and Indians last. Whenever necessary the government, with the help of the mullahs (Muslim priests), could stir up religious fanaticism among the lowest section of the proletariat and turn their fury against the Hindu nationalists. Muslim fanaticism, on its parts, provoked, the corresponding passion among the Hindus.

The acuteness of this unfortunate state of affairs was somewhat relieved by the rapid development of native capitalism during the years immediately preceding the world war. Economic interests enabled the bourgeoisie to overcome religious prejudice. Eventually, in 1916, nationalism found a common platform. Hindu and Muslim bourgeoisie united in the demand for self-government and fiscal autonomy. Imperialism answered with a very clever move. The very limited franchise (embracing less than two per cent of the population) granted by the reforms act of 1919 was based upon the principle of communal representation. In the beginning the evils of this system were not so clearly felt. They were temporarily drowned by the gigantic mass upheaval of the postwar years. The inclusion of the...
The Hindu-Muslim Problem

Blood was shed; but the cause on that occasion was just the contrary—it united the struggle of the working class irrespective of religion.

The Calcutta event has its special reasons. It is a part of a plan carefully laid down by the government to break up the Swaraj Party, which, in the province of Bengal, is under certain revolutionary influence. In Bengal the two communities are nearly balanced, the Muslims having a small majority. A pact between the Hindus and Muslims led to the return of a Swarajist majority in the last parliamentary election. The next election will take place at the end of the year. The plan of the government is to break up the Hindu-Muslim pact so that the Swarajist majority in the provincial legislative council will be eliminated. The bankruptcy of the Swaraj program of parliamentary obstruction has disrupted the nationalist bloc. Now the government is endeavouring to win the Muslims to its side by promising the introduction of communal representation in all branches of the public services; in other words, by promising government jobs to the Muslim intelligentsia. In order to realise this sinister plan it must be demonstrated that the communities are in a perpetual state of warfare and fly at each other's throats at every opportunity. The agitation for the organisation of a Muslim party, obviously under official inspiration, strengthened the hands of the reactionary Hindu leaders, who are ever ready for an antimuslim campaign. There are a thousand and one pretences on which the slum proletariat in large cities like Calcutta can be incited into a street brawl. A few bottles of alcohol and pieces of silver can always work miracles. That is how the bloody riot of Calcutta, the news of which has been flashed all over the world by Reuters as a proof of Indian's incapacity to govern himself, was engineered.

The growing importance of the proletariat and the rapid development of class-consciousness amongst the poor peasantry render these artificially provoked religious riots of much less gravity than they appear. Nevertheless the
problem of a national minority is there. The bourgeois nationalism, under the ideological influence of the reactionary intelligentsia, has failed to tackle the problem. But approached from the angle of class interests and class struggle this problem becomes comparatively easy.

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7. HINDU-MUSSLUMAN STRIFE

*SAFdar*
(Excerpts)

**ECONOMIC CAUSES**

As a matter of fact, the primary cause of the hindu-musluman strife is not that it is impossible to unite all the nationalities populating India into a united and independent state. The real cause of this strife lies in the economic conditions of the hindus and muslumans respectively. The musluman bourgeoisie represents the most conservative section of the Indian bourgeoisie. While the hindu bourgeoisie, aided by the National Congress, was fighting British imperialism in defence of its interests from the end of the last century, the musluman bourgeoisie, as such, had then not yet arisen. It is not surprising that at that time Muslim League was established as a counterbalance to the National Congress. This League was an organisation of mohammedan landowners who represented the social bulwark of British rule in India. The whole activity of the League consisted in combating the National Congress, the majority of the members of which were hindus. Naturally, the musluman landlords found it to their advantage to give this struggle a religious character.

At the present time one of the factors in hindu-mussulman strife is the competition between musluman merchant capitalism and the more developed industrial commercial capital of the hindus. This is indicated by the fact that the majority of those who took part in the Calcutta riots were hindus and musluman merchants. The attacks of the mussulmans were directed largely against the hindu merchants. The situation becomes more complicated from the fact that in some provinces the peasants are mohammedans and the landlords are hindus while in other provinces the position is just the reverse.

**THE MOPPLAH RISING**

The moplah rising on the Malabar coast was purely peasant in character, both in its aims and those who took part in it. As, however, the landlords in this district are hindus they described the revolt of the peasants as a mussulman attack upon the hindus. This they did in the hope that they would obtain the help of other hindus, including peasants.

A similar state of affairs prevails in Bengal, the centre of hindu-mussulman strife. Here too the strife is not religious but social, and is a problem of first-class importance. In Bengal the majority of the mohammedans are peasants, the landlords are in the main hindus; the exploitation of the peasants by the landlords has assumed terrible dimensions. If to this is added the exploitation of the peasants by usurers who are also hindus, it will be clear that the conditions of the peasantry are absolutely intolerable. Nearly 45 per cent of the peasants are almost constantly in debt to the usurers who extort interest amounting sometimes to 75 per cent per annum. Moreover we must bear in mind the heavy burden of taxation and the extreme shortage of land from which the peasants suffer. The Bengal peasant on the average possesses about three acres of land.

From this it will be clear what measures the hindu peasant must take in order to emancipate himself from his