The British Sun Sets on a Rumbling India!

Gandhi and his followers have beenadroit enough to take advantage of the precarious situation of Britain at war. They will not listen to promises that their rulers will begin to consider India a candidate for dominion status when the struggle is over. Instead they are using their strongest weapon in an attempt to get independence now. That weapon is noncooperation.

The India Congress, as Gandhi's Nationalist party calls itself, controls the legislatures of eight British Indian provinces. From each of these legislatures is chosen a council to advise and assist the provincial governor in administrative affairs. Under the system official acts within the range of provincial authority have, at least on the surface, the approval of India as well as of Great Britain.

Within the last two months the eight Nationalist-controlled ministries have resigned. The governors must function without native support and maintain order in a manner plainly dictatorial; they must enforce their decrees with the police powers granted them by the crown. In effect the Nationalists have said: "We will not help longer to maintain a government that refuses us what we want—self-government. The color of our authority will not be added to the reality of yours. Give us the right to rule ourselves first; then talk about the details."

Gandhi has hinted that there may be an extension of noncooperation; that his party may engage in a campaign for mass civil disobedience. It is an alarming threat. How can the British enforce their own law if the Indians of eight provinces, a total of 200,000,000 people, simply refuse to accept orders—to pay taxes, for example?

There is no ready answer, and therein lies the secret of Gandhi's power. The administrative units which his party controls politically (see map) are Bihar, Orissa, Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Central Provinces, the Northwest Frontier, and Assam. More than half the population of India is under the party sway.

The British empire, world's greatest landlord, has possessions and affiliations on all the continents. But it has none that needs and gets as much attention as India; it has none that is so truly an imperial possession.

So important is it to British economy and British tradition that the route leading to it thru the Mediterranean, the Suez canal, and the Red sea is known as the empire's life line. The British navy has but one duty paramount to guarding that line—the safety of the British isles from invasion. How did Britain acquire (Continued on page back)