

Hindus in the Punjab areas much a Punjabi-speaking people as the Sikhs are. The difference between them, apart from religion, is that one group prefers the *devanagari* script, while the other uses by and large the *gurmukhi*. But this issue — if it really was an issue—could have been settled amicably had not the communal question been superimposed on it. Whatever the origin, and despite all the disclaimers of Master Tara Singh and his immediate followers the position now is that the demand for a Punjabi Suba has come to be associated in the popular mind with the demand for establishment of a separate Sikh State.

In this conjuncture, it is difficult to see how a Punjabi Suba can be carved out without making nonsense of 'emotional and political' integration of India. With the world situation being what it is, we cannot hope to live as a nation if we do not recognise the need for such integration. The country looks up to leaders like Master Tara Singh to help it achieve a measure of unity transcending the bounds of race, religion or language. The greatest contribution that Master Tara Singh can make to the good of the country at this juncture is to end his fast before the Frankenstein monster of communalism rampages the Punjab and the rest of the country. On Master Tara Singh fervently hopes that the Akali leader will not let matters of face or prestige stand in the way of making this supreme contribution.

### Portuguese Possessions

WHILE the merger of Dadra and Nagar-Haveli with the Indian Union is a matter for satisfaction, the fact that the bigger Portuguese possessions in India like Goa, Diu and Daman are still suffering under alien tyranny, more severe than ever is a source of continuing concern to the nation. Fourteen years have passed since the mightiest imperial power in the world withdrew from India and yet a tiny despotism like that of Portugal is still clinging defiantly to little pockets in this country and brazenly calling them integral parts of Portugal. This provides a strange commentary indeed on Indian forbearance and Indian reluctance to use force to deal with a problem which could be settled in no time on that basis. Expectations that the people of these enclaves would throw out the alien power or

at least make its continuance increasingly difficult have not been fulfilled, and no wonder.

Events in Angola in West Africa have shown how ruthless the Portuguese oppressors can be in dealing with any attempt at rebellion, and the methods employed by them in crushing individual or group demonstrations of resistance over the years in Goa itself have painfully underlined the tragic futility of such protests. Success of the revolt in Dadra and Nagar-Haveli which are encircled by Indian territory and where the Portuguese troops could be easily overpowered, or the seizure of a Portuguese enclave by Dahomey in Africa cannot provide any clue to the technique that will have to be adopted to oust the Portuguese from more unfortunately situated and more strongly defended possessions like Goa.

### Time for Action

IT is good that this line of thought has lost its advocates. And what is more encouraging still is the fact that the tendency to let time and circumstances solve the problem somehow is gradually declining. Equally encouraging is the realisation in high quarters that the solution of the problem cannot be left to the terrorised people of Goa or to bands of volunteers proceeding from India to the enclave to encounter torture or death and that indeed the only way to end Portuguese obduracy is for Government to take action on its own. Indicative of this trend was the speech made by Prime Minister Nehru on the Hill for the merger of Dadra and Nagar-Haveli with the Indian Union in the Rajya Sabha this week. The Prime Minister said that the steps to be taken for the liberation of Goa could not be considered 'a closed chapter'. If he refuted the suggestion of a Communist member to send armed volunteers into Goa, it was because he felt that this would only create a situation in which Government would be forced to march in its troops. "I am not prepared to be pressed into action until I think the time is ripe for that action . . . The time may come when we may decide even to send our Army there. When that comes, it will be an open effort of ours, not a secret or furtive one."

This certainly represents an improvement on the old thinking, but

the issue still hinges on when time could be considered ripe for taking the necessary action. To most people it might seem that the psychological moment for taking action is right now or in the near future if only because Portuguese colonial possessions everywhere are under stressor are actually subject to revolt or the threat of revolt. A concerted move by Asian and African countries, suffering from pockets of Portuguese oppression could well make short work of Dr Salazar's tattered empire. But the trouble is that in the contemplation of the so-called bigger issues and what not, Portuguese misdeeds are apt to be brushed aside as minor irritations to be tackled at leisure.

### Balance in Oil Products

IF the success that has attended oil exploration efforts in Gujarat lends to discount in the public mind the dangers involved in heavy investment in the search for oil, it is only necessary to turn to the failure of the Standard-Vacuum Oil Company to find oil in West Bengal to obtain a more balanced picture. Writing off of expenses incurred in the abortive search for oil in West Bengal in 1960 more than wiped out the profits earned by the Company on its refining and marketing operations and left, it with a net loss of Rs 13 lakhs for the year.

The exploration programme in the 33,000-square-mile Bengal Basin was begun in 1949. For the first five years, the search was carried out by the Company alone. On January 1, 1954, the Indo-Stanvac Project was formed in partnership with the Government of India, and exploration work was continued over an area of about 10,000 square miles. From the time of the inception of the Indo-Stanvac Project alone, total investment was about Rs 723 lakhs, all of which was lost except for proceeds from sale of the drilling equipment. Stanvac shared this loss in the proportion of 75:25 with the Government of India.

The other interesting pari of the activities of the Company relate to refining. The Review for 1960, published by the Company, shows that the Stanvac management, like that of other oil companies, is aware of the problem of the pattern of production of oil products in relation to the pattern of consumption of these