

The Superintendent of Police has been warned to report to the Magistrate and to wire to this office if Mr. Gandhi goes to Champaran.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. RYLAND

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[No. 8.]

*Bihar Special Branch Intelligence Report, dated 13 January, 1917.*<sup>1</sup>

A Special Branch Officer who attended the meetings of the Indian National Congress held at Lucknow during the X'mas holidays has submitted the following report regarding visitors from this province :—

...Pundit Raj Kumar Shukla<sup>2</sup> of Champaran while supporting the Xth Resolution "Planters and Labourers in Bihar" said, "The relations between the planters of Champaran and the *ryots* have not been very cordial for a long time. The planters first get leases of lands from the Ramnagar and Bettiah Raj and begin to cultivate indigo. According to the terms of the contract 3 *cottas* in every *bigha* cultivated by tenants are set apart for the cultivation of indigo. The planters, however, are not satisfied with the fulfilment of the condition only but they make the poor tenants work in their fields without any payment and subject them to various kinds of ill-treatment if they for some reason or other are unable to carry out all that is required of them. They have become so powerful that they decide civil and criminal cases themselves and punish the poor *ryots* according as they choose. The Government was several times requested to make enquiry into the matter but for a long time all our efforts proved futile. In 1908, however, there was a great disturbance in Champaran on account of the oppression of the planters. The Bengal Government deputed an

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar and Orissa Police Abstract of Intelligence for 1917, para. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Sir E. A. Gait recorded marginally on this report, "There is a Raj Kumar Shukul in Mr. Amman's *dihat* who was trying to raise an agitation against Mr. Amman (of Belwa Indigo concern in Champaran). I don't know if it is the same man.

E. A. G(AIT)."

Raj Kumar Shukla was a resident of village Murli Barharwa in P.-S. Shikarpur of Champaran District. His ancestral home was in village Satwaria of the same district.

officer to make an enquiry into the matter but the result of his enquiry has not been made public and several hundreds of the poor *ryots* were sent to jail. I am a *ryot* of Champaran. I do not know what I shall have to suffer when I go back to Champaran for my coming here and relating the story to you all. (Cries of "Shame" "Shame".)"

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[No. 9.]

*Extract from the fortnightly report for the first half of March 1917 (Letter No. 311-T.C, dated 16 March 1917, from Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar and Orissa, to Secretary to Government of India, Home Department.)*<sup>1</sup>

7. The Commissioner of Tirhut reports that there has been some recrudescence of trouble as regards the relations of landlord and tenant in the Champaran District since the return from Lucknow of one Raj Kumar Shukul, who attended the Congress meetings there and made a speech on the subject.<sup>2</sup> *Raiyats* who are on friendly terms with their zamindars are being intimidated and forced to join the anti-landlord movement. The situation is being carefully watched.

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[No. 10.]

*Extract from letter No. 80, dated 10 April, 1917, from the Superintendent of Police, Champaran, to Bihar Special Branch.*<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Gandhi was expected at Bettiah on the 7th and a large crowd collected at the station to receive him. He, however, did not come. His expected arrival seems to have been kept a secret as the Bettiah police do not appear to have heard of his expected arrival until the very day. It is possible that the whole thing is a "false report" deliberately engineered by certain local people. Gandhi was said to be coming to make enquiries in connection with accusations made by Raj Kumar Shukul against Champaran planters before the India Congress, vide the Secret Abstract for January 1917.<sup>2</sup> I want to know by return of post what is Gandhi's position politically? How is he to be treated?

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<sup>1</sup> Political (Special) Department, file No. 1571 of 1917.

<sup>2</sup> Vide No. 8 *ante*.