

The Choice Before Praja Socialists

by V. B. Karnik

THE Praja Socialist Party is holding this month its silver jubilee conference in the city of Bombay. On this occasion it will receive cordial greetings and hearty congratulations not only from socialists in India and abroad but also from all those who are devoted to the cause of freedom and democracy. As a result of its work during the last twenty-five years the PSP has come to occupy a position of distinction amongst the world-wide forces of progress and freedom. The P.S.P. may not have succeeded in growing into a big mass party. It may not have succeeded in winning elections and in securing a substantial number of seats in the Central or State legislatures. It may have faltered sometimes and followed wrong policies or made opportunist alliances. But by far and large it has since independence held aloft the banner of democratic freedom and social progress far more consistently than any other party in the country. It is this record of its past which inspires hope about its future.

The Praja Socialist Party is a curious phenomenon in the Indian political scene. It arose as a left wing in the national movement and because socialism was a popular creed in those days it assumed for itself a socialist label. Its socialism was, however, far different from the socialism of the Marxist line. It was more an amalgam of Gandhism and the utopian socialism of Owen, Faurrier and others. Later, because of its competition with other socialist groups it had to absorb more and more of Marxism and shed more and more of its Gandhian outlook. It never went to the extent of accepting in full the Marxist doctrine and methodology, but a strong Marxist tendency developed in the party. After its breakaway from the Congress it could have developed as a Marxist Party, but the trend in that direction was checked by the amalgamation that was effected with the Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party. The amalgamation gave the party its present name, Praja Socialist Party. By its very name the party represents the interests and ideology of two classes, the workers and the middle classes in the cities and the peasants in the

villages. It is this amalgam which is responsible many a time for its conflicting policies. But it is this very amalgam which may enable the party to outgrow its present limitations and strike out a new path, provided it has the courage to subject to a searching re-thinking some of the concepts of its socialist creed.

Socialism developed in Europe as the ideology of the working class, of a class of workers who, in the classic phrase of the Communist Manifesto, had nothing to lose but its chains. Marx gave it its economic and political programme, the economic programme of the social ownership of all means of production, distribution and exchange and the political programme of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He also laid down its method of operation, the method of developing and intensifying class struggles for the overthrow of the established State through the organisation of a militant, monolithic party of professional revolutionaries. This resulted in the development of communism and Communist Parties and in the rise in Russia of a communist State of unparalleled tyranny and oppression. The cruel and the ugly form that the socialist dream assumed when it became a concrete reality shocked the conscience of the world and a large number of socialists who had been attracted towards socialism as a movement of social protest and as an endeavour for establishing greater equality, liberty and fraternity left it in disgust.

There were some in the socialist movement who were alarmed by the Marxist emphasis on violence and class war even before the manifestation of this ugly picture of socialism in Soviet Russia. To distinguish themselves from socialists of the Marxist variety they called themselves social democrats and advocated democratic socialism as against communism which became the name of the Marxian version of socialism. The social democrats eschewed violence and revolutionary action and hoped to secure the economic transformation that they desired through democratic, parliamentary activities. The economic transformation that they desired was, however, the same as the one desired by the communists, namely, the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange. They accepted the Marxian concept of classes and of the irreconcilable conflict between them. In common with the communists, they regarded themselves as the representatives of the working class and as such in duty bound to defend and advance the interests of that class.

In some European countries the social democrats were able to build up big parties. But they were

always on the horns of a dilemma. If they pushed their socialist programme too far they came in conflict with the State and the society and had to abandon their faith in democracy and take recourse to undemocratic or anti-democratic methods. If, on the other hand, they diluted their socialist programme and toned down their ardour for its accomplishment, they were in the danger of losing their following to the Communist Party. From the point of objectives and as a socio-economic theory there is no essential difference between democratic socialism and communism and many a time it is found that a consistent practice and advocacy of democratic socialism paves the way for the rise of communism. Social democrats in many countries were, therefore, faced with the choice between their faith in democracy and their adherence to a socialist programme. In most cases it must be said to their credit that they chose the former in preference to the latter.

The socialist programme of socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange has now lost much of its glamour and appeal. Experience has proved that socialisation, which in effect means State ownership and management of all economic activity, does not either lead to the emancipation of workers or to more efficient production and more equitable distribution. On the other hand, the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a few at the top results in an all-embracing and all-pervasive total tyranny. Besides, capitalism under the pressure of democratic political institutions has undergone a radical change and workers, more particularly in industrially advanced countries, are no longer the miserable wretches that they were in the early period of industrialisation. They have now, in many countries, acquired a stake in national economy and a recognised and honoured place in society. They are no longer prepared to regard themselves as a class apart from the society as a whole. The basic socialist concept of a class appeal and class outlook are no longer valid in the conditions of the latter half of the twentieth century. The British Labour Party, the strongest of the social democratic parties of Europe, found it to its cost in the last general election. That experience should have its lesson for the socialists in India.

Social and economic conditions are no doubt very different in industrially backward countries of Asia and Africa. A socialist outlook in the sense of rapid economic development, equitable distribution of the national product, abolition of glaring social and economic inequalities and equalisation of opportunities for all has found in most of those countries a more or less general acceptance. There is nothing socialistic about these aims of national policy. But one need not quarrel if some people would insist on attaching to it a socialist label. There is no dispute over the desirability of the transformation. The dispute is over the means and methods to be adopted for bringing it about. Is it to be brought about in

freedom with the consent of the people or by force, marches tyrannically imposed upon the people? Is it to lead to the expansion of the rights and liberties of the people or to their contraction and abolition in the interests of economic development? Will the State be the Leviathan exercising total control over the people or a social institution created by the people for a limited purpose and with limited authority? What will be the role of the individual, will he be a mere cog in the wheel of the State or an independent entity whose progress and welfare should determine all the policies of the State? These and similar other issues are the issues of the moment. On their decision will depend the emergence of a democratic or a totalitarian regime in each country. It is in this sense that that great thinker, M. N. Roy, used to say: "I think that the choice today is not between communism and democratic socialism, as is often said, not between red and pink socialism, but between communism (or socialism) and democracy". Roy has no place in the pantheon of the P.S.P. But he was the father of the socialist movement in India and in the mature thoughts that he expressed after a lifetime of endeavour for developing socialist movements in many parts of the world, the PSP will find much that is of value for setting its course in the new period.

After twenty-five years of useful, though not very effective, work the time has come for the PSP to think calmly and dispassionately over the choice. It cannot grow in the country as a class party of workers wedded to a socialist programme. Apart from other considerations, there is already another party in the field. It is not bothered by democratic convictions and can therefore pursue the policies of class struggle and class warfare more effectively. In trying to compete with the Communist Party in that field the P.S.P. will always be at a disadvantage for nobody can compete with the communists in dishonesty and unscrupulousness. Moreover, the need of the hour is not class differentiation but social consolidation, the development of a national outlook, the organisation of a national effort. A party can hope to accomplish that task not by acting on a class basis but by operating as a people's organisation, with the welfare and progress of the people as a whole as its goal. Socialism as it is commonly understood, with the State growing as an Octopus and with men reduced to the position of production units, will not ensure that goal. What is far more necessary is to emphasise the values of democratic freedom, individual initiative, cooperative endeavour and rational outlook and the growth of such political, economic and social institutions as will embody those values. The PSP can on the occasion of the jubilee conference decide to re-orientate its activities in that direction. It may or may not then develop as a big party; but it will in any case grow as a powerful moral force with a distinct and proud role to play in the country's social and political life.

Notes

Khrushchev Visit

THE Khrushchev visit to the United States raises many problems which deserve close attention and mature consideration. The visit has passed off without any untoward incident for which full credit must be given to the arrangements made by the Government and the generous and hospitable nature of the American people.

Khrushchev returned to his country apparently satisfied with the result of his visit. In the first place, he was able to have a triumphant tour around the United States and, in the next place, he was able to have his talks with Eisenhower. Both were his long cherished desires. The tour and the talks have strengthened his position at home. They have also strengthened his position in the satellite States of East Europe. A dictator is always in the need of providing such evidence of his strength to the people over whom he rules.

What have been the gains on the other side? They are all in the womb of the future. On none of the issues which have divided the two worlds can it be said that the Khrushchev visit has led to any progress towards solution. The issues are yet to be discussed and debated and only at the end of the long debate will one know what and, if at all, any compromise Russia is willing to make. Until then the free world must rest content with the hope that the visit will lead to a relaxation of tensions and that there may be in course of time a keener desire to settle the issues in dispute!

What will be the result of the visit on the peoples of the countries of East Europe? Will they not conclude that their subjugation and the division of Europe is now an accepted fact? Will it not lead to demoralisation in their ranks? Will not the visit and the reception that Khrushchev received in America also be a damper on the efforts of the Russian people to liberate themselves from communist tyranny? Have any efforts been made to reassure them that the free world stands as committed as before to the people's right to self-determination and to universal acceptance and implementation of the rights of man? Nobody suggests that the Heads of States should not meet from time to time and discuss various issues. But the meetings and the discussions should not cloud the basic fact that a stable peace can be founded only on the basis of the freedom of peoples and nations.

It is also necessary to keep in mind another dangerous trend. Are we moving towards the acceptance of the right of the giant nations to decide the future of the world and its peoples? Khrushchev and Soviet Russia have suggested on many occasions that the only two countries which mattered in the world were Russia and America and that they should get together

and solve all problems. The Summit is getting narrower and narrower and one result of the Khrushchev visit may be that it is reduced to two. Free nations of the world should take note of this possibility and ponder over its likely consequences.

Hostile And Arrogant Action

CHINA has for the time being changed the tone of her talk. The messages that came recently on the occasion of the anniversary of her revolution were couched in friendly terms. But that does not indicate any basic change in her attitude or in her approach to the border problem. There is no reply yet to the Prime Minister's letter though over a month has passed since it was dispatched. In some statements issued by important persons China talked of her intention to settle the border issue by negotiations. But so far she has contented herself only with making vague statements.

In the meanwhile, China continues to be in occupation of parts of Indian territory in Ladakh and NEFA. The Government of India have so far taken no steps to expel the aggressors. It should be clear that there can be no negotiations unless the aggression is vacated and the status-quo is restored. The negotiations must also start with the acceptance of the McMahon Line. There can be discussions about its exact alignment, but there can be no discussion about its existence or validity.

The Prime Minister stated at a press conference in Calcutta that "he did not think that there was any 'major idea' behind recent Chinese incursions into Indian territory." It is difficult to understand and appreciate this position of the Prime Minister. The Chinese would not embark on their aggressive activities on the Indian frontier, which have cost them so much goodwill in the world, unless they had some "major idea" in their mind. Their refusal to give up their claims on slices of Indian territory shown in their maps gives the clue to the "major idea" which has actuated their action. Their "major idea" is to grab the territory shown in their maps and thus deprive India of the age-old protection of the Himalayas. Without understanding this significance of the Chinese action, it will not be possible to take effective steps to checkmate their moves.

The leader of the Communist Party, who has just returned after a visit to Peking and Moscow, has again tried to reassure the people of the Chinese rulers' desire to settle the border dispute through negotiations. But even he had nothing to report except their vague statements about age-old friendship between India and China. India is now tired of this endless repetition of meaningless phrases. What is important is positive action and that continues to be as hostile and arrogant as before.

After this was written came the news of the latest Chinese action in Ladakh resulting in the treacherous death of nine Indian policemen and the kidnapping of ten. The action proves again how the Chinese words are deceptive and how there must be some "major

idea" behind their moves. It is high time now that the Government of India abandons its indifference and complaisance and takes stern action against the violators of our borders.

Wicked Appeasement

WE give below the editorial which appeared in a recent issue of the *Hindustan Times* under the heading "Degrading". We agree with every word of the article and regard it as the most effective condemnation and exposure of the craven and humiliating action of our representative in the United Nations on the issue of Tibet.

"The country has borne patiently enough with the involvements and tortuosities of the policy of non-alignment. But if Mr. Krishna Menon's immoral and degrading performance at the United Nations on the Tibet question is non-alignment, then let us drown it here and now, deeper than did ever plummet sound. That India would oppose the inscription of the Tibet issue on the General Assembly agenda was known. The decision, though a bad one intrinsically and entirely out of tune with the national mood, was not wholly indefensible. We had got ourselves into a thoroughly untenable position by conceding to China suzerainty over Tibet and mortgaged our moral right to cast a judgement after being in some degree the abettors of the rape of Tibet that followed. We could have understood it if a consciousness of guilt had imposed on us a shamed silence. What we have not deserved, in spite of the sins of our policies, is the abounding iniquity Mr. Krishna Menon has brought on us by the manner in which he chose to make known to the world an imposed paralysis of arbitration.

There is some validity in the argument that a debate at the United Nations is not going to be of any help to the hapless Tibetans whose right to self-determination we have so readily bartered away in defence of a legal formula of questionable origin. The outside world, however, must think it strange that a similar practical outlook has not dissuaded us from returning year after year to the problem of the apartheid-harassed Indians of South Africa. In any case if a debate at the UN cannot bring solace to the Tibetans it can still be argued that it is not without some advantage in mobilizing world opinion, and particularly opinion in Asia, on the danger from expansionist China. Had Mr. Menon confined himself to this one argument of the impotence of the United Nations to rescue the Tibetans from their bondage, no great harm would have come. He chose to go on to defend China as being in no way bound to observe ordinary human decencies because she had not signed the Human Rights Charter. As well might a murderer plead that he had not accepted the Criminal Procedure Code. Worse still was the argument that a discussion on Tibet would exacerbate the cold war. No doubt, the Chinese are not exactly amused at our protests at the seizure by them of some of our territory. If we want to preserve their good humour we

should not be reminding them that they are aggressors. There might even be a good case to let the Chinese have NEFA and whatever else they want as a contribution to the great cause of relaxation of tensions. But this is not the non-alignment Mr. Nehru had once defined in noble words—"Where freedom is menaced, or justice threatened, or where aggression takes place, we cannot be and shall not be neutral". This is appeasement, craven, humiliating, wicked appeasement."

Disputes In Kerala

NEWS from Kerala is disturbing. It is reported that democratic parties are finding it difficult to adjust their rival claims to various constituencies and to the number of seats to be allotted to each party. The differences are reported to have assumed a serious character. This is regrettable as it will weaken the strength of the democratic front against the communists. The best way to settle these quarrels is the one suggested by Mr. Mannath Padmanabhan, the leader of the Liberation Struggle. He had suggested that the best person from each constituency should be selected irrespective of his party label. That would ensure wide popular support to the candidate and his success in the election. It is reported that Mr. Padmanabhan is trying hard to get the political parties accept his idea. We wish him all success. We hope the democratic parties will have the wisdom of accepting his suggestion. Democratic forces all over the country will not excuse them if by their petty squabbles over seats they will allow the Communist Party to get more seats or more votes. In this connection one must commend the decision of the Swatantra Party to keep out of the election. It could have easily rushed into the State and staked its claim to some seats. But in the larger interests of the democratic front against the communists, it wisely decided to keep out of the race. It will be useful if other democratic parties will exercise a similar restraint on their claims and ambitions.

Best News

THE best news of the month was the news of the successful termination of the border talks between India and Pakistan. The talks have resulted in the settlement of all border disputes between the two countries in the eastern region. The communique issued at the end of the talks states that detailed "ground rules" have been framed to secure the maintenance of peaceful conditions and to ensure immediate action to reestablish peace in case of any border incident. It is further stated that the two Governments will settle all border disputes in the eastern and the western regions by negotiations and by impartial arbitration, if necessary. According to the communique "a spirit of give and take in the larger interests of both countries" animated the talks. Everybody in the country will hail with delight this

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The Significance Of Labour Defeat

by B. K. Desai

IN an election victory exceeding all forecasts and confounding public opinion pollsters, the Conservative Party has won a new mandate for a third time to rule Britain. That the Conservatives would win this election was not seriously doubted by discerning observers; but no one expected them to sweep the polls as they did this time with an approximately doubled majority in Parliament. On the other hand, even though the Labour defeat was not something unexpected, it was hoped that the Labour would at least improve their showing in the election. No one, at any rate, could forecast such a sweeping defeat for the Labour. The defeat is all the more surprising because this time the Labour leaders fought a harder, more aggressive and adroit campaign under the able leadership of Mr. Gaitskell than they did anytime in the post-war period. Even such a leading weekly like *The Economist*, which was in no way sympathetic towards the Labour, had, in its issue just before the election, conceded that the Labour victory was more than a possibility in the election. But the election results revealed that the steady decline in the Labour strength — in terms of seats and votes—since 1950, continues uninterrupted to this day. This time not only did Labour lose more than a dozen seats to the Conservatives, but even its successful candidates, except in one or two regions, were often returned with reduced majorities. At the same time, the Liberal Party, which has been reduced to an insignificant minority since the end of World War I, made a surprising show of strength. It more than doubled its votes, and apparently snatched more votes from Labour than from the Conservatives. Though it is yet premature to talk of Liberal revival, the increased vigour shown by the Liberals in the election surely poses a serious challenge to the Labour.

The election results, it is true, do not represent a landslide for the Conservatives, but they definitely indicate a setback for the Labour. The return of a party three times running with growing strength each time, is something extraordinary in the British history where the pendulum of public opinion is always prone to swing bothways. The Labour defeat, therefore, not merely indicates the endorsement of Conservative policies by the majority of the British people, it also reflects definite popular rejection of the Labour programme with all its socialistic flavour. In a sense the election results only confirmed a significant trend that has been evident in Britain for the last many years — a swing away from the Left or, to be precise, from socialism. That old-fashioned socialism has lost its appeal was realised even by many top-ranking Labour leaders after the last general election. This realization had forced them to rethink their doctrine in order to readjust it to the changing reali-

ties. And they did make a valiant effort to rectify many of the past dogmatic fallacies and mitigate doctrinaire rigidities in their policy statements issued before the election. But even this diluted socialism has been found to be unpalatable to the majority of the British voters. It is noteworthy in this connection that some of the spokesmen for rigid doctrinaire socialism in the Labour Party have been convincingly defeated in this election. For example, Ian Makardo, a pronounced left-winger, lost a seat he had occupied since 1945, and Michael Foot, another left winger in the Party, was routed in his attempt to regain a seat he lost in 1955 by 100 votes. On the other hand, the issue of nationalisation was studiously played down by Labour leaders in their election campaign. The Labour confined their demand for nationalisation to the steel and road transport industry. But even then, Labour leaders had to admit that the issue of nationalisation "has certainly proved a liability in the election." These facts coupled with the new vigour shown by the Liberals should suffice to point the direction in which the trend of public opinion is moving. The election results demonstrated, if anything, that what the British voters want today is not socialism, but a progressive radical party less extreme than Labour and which would be pragmatic enough to attune its thinking to the changed realities of the day.

The fact that the Labour programme and policies should have been rejected for the third successive time by British voters, predominant majority of whom are industrial workers, shows that the workers have refused to identify or associate themselves with the class concept of worker or the proletariat. They have discarded not only dogmatic communism, but also democratic socialism which, inspite of its democratic orientation, is still based on the doctrine of class conflict. Socialism in the early 19th century arose as a protest against the evils of the incipient capitalist society and was concerned with social justice, equality and removal of inequities which were then prevalent in the society. But in the course of time it became a definite set of political and economic ideas which have continued to be espoused in different forms and variations even today. On the other hand, capitalism has undergone radical transformation during the period, especially after the first world war. It has today transformed itself to the point where it has virtually become a different system. Besides, science and modern technology have increased production and ended the type of poverty for which socialism once seemed to the thinking people the only remedy. In those conditions of appalling misery, the Left was widely respected because of its social conscience or sense of social responsibility. But today, with the

transformation of capitalism and the growth of unprecedented and all-round prosperity, the Left, in the West, has failed to make an appeal even to the working class. As Mr. R. H. S. Crossman has put it in one of his recent articles analysing the election results: "Each year which takes us further, not only from the hungry Thirties, but from the austere Forties, weakens class consciousness." The truth is, with the increased social mobility and the general affluence the rigid class concept itself has become outdated and has assumed a narrow and sectarian meaning which has no relevance to the present day conditions. This point has recently been stressed by the former Labour Minister Douglas Jay, a close friend of Mr. Gaitskell, in one of his post-election articles. "The people better off", he pointed out, "tend to associate the Labour Party with the class to which they themselves no longer belong We are in danger of fighting under the label of a class which no longer exists". Thus the socialist doctrine and programme have proved to be irrelevant to increasing prosperous members of industrial working class and also to the middle class both of which together constitute majorities in the West.

In the field of economic programme, there is no doubt that the unprecedented prosperity achieved by Britain under the Conservatives was a compelling factor in inducing voters to return the Conservatives again this time. But more than this, the election results reflected a general distrust of Labour's economic policies and doctrines. In 1945, the Labour Party rode to power with an overwhelming majority in Parliament because socialism at that time seemed to offer the hope to the war-weary people of fundamental changes in the existing socio-economic system that would cure economic and political evils which had twice in forty years torn Europe apart. But the Labour Party's socialism, with its programme of nationalisation and increasing State control over the economy, failed to enthuse the people. In Western Europe, on the other hand, from roughly 1949 onwards, the aggressive private enterprise of countries like Belgium and West Germany released tremendous popular energies and stimulated productive forces all round which brought about a steady revival of prosperity which was something like miraculous at least in West Germany. But Britain at the same time with its socialist programme lagged behind in economic recovery. This naturally robbed socialism of its popular appeal. Not only that, some of the policies of the Labour Government even became later a liability for the Labour Party which came to be identified in the public mind with the demand for nationalisation and increasing state controls. On the other hand, the Conservatives, when they succeeded Labour in Government, continued some of the progressive reformist policies of the Labour. But with their pragmatic approach and the newly adopted reformist policies, the Conservatives were able to ensure a steady progress to prosperity and social justice. As a result, Britain today under the Conservatives enjoys all time high prosperity with nearly full

employment, a record gross national product and a sound financial structure that has given it a sense of strength and well-being. The British people have today more money in their pockets than any time in the past, and having more money to spend than ever the pragmatic Briton prefers to spend it himself rather than have the State spend it for him. This naturally ensured the Conservative victory for the third time.

As a three time loser, the Labour Party today stands at the cross-roads of its chequered career. The whole future of the Party seems now in question. It is faced with the acute and painful necessity to reappraise its entire doctrine in terms of economic and political realities of an affluent industrial society of the second half of the twentieth century. It has been undergoing the process of rethinking for quite some time in the past; but the general election has proved that it has yet not gone far enough in the required direction. Its thinking as well as rethinking is still confined to the framework of socialist doctrine. If the Labour Party has to survive this defeat, it will have to discard many of its traditional pet notions and theories which no longer have any relevance to the present day society. Illusions and dogmas, of course, die hard, but nonetheless they are the worst enemies of progress. At any rate, they have proved to be the great handicaps to the Labour in winning the British voter to its side.

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news of the peaceful settlement of the border dispute. It is hoped that it will pave the way for the settlement of all remaining disputes between the two countries.

It is a matter for rejoicing that a new spirit of friendship and amity is developing between India and Pakistan. The two countries are such close neighbours and have so many common problems that it is highly desirable that they should have the friendliest possible relations with each other. In course of time it should be possible for the two to develop common defence arrangements, which alone can effectively defend the sub-continent. It is gratifying to learn that the idea is receiving thought in both countries.

The President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Ayub Khan has in a recent statement drawn attention to the danger that the "sub-continent would become militarily vulnerable in the next five years". He suggested that all outstanding problems between India and Pakistan should be settled by that time and that they should "unitedly face the formidable challenge instead of dissipating their energies in futile squabbles." He further assured on behalf of Pakistan that "every endeavour would be made to promote amity with India." This is a very encouraging assurance and India should take advantage of it to redouble its efforts to establish lasting peace and friendship with Pakistan. The danger to which the President of Pakistan has drawn attention also deserves serious consideration of the Government and the people.

Labour And The Third Five-Year Plan

by S. R. Mohan Das

WITH a proposed investment of 10,000 crores of Rupees for the Third Five-Year Plan and the stresses and strains that this massive investment would produce, the labour movement in India will be subjected to certain trends and pressures. This survey proposes to analyse some of these.

The Industrialising elite: Industrialisation programmes in India, as in the I and II Plans, have to be initiated and set in operation by an elite, which, in an undeveloped country like India, has certain characteristics. The industrialising elite in India can be characterised as Feudal with a paternalistic attitude towards the people at large. In the highly industrialised West on the one hand there was the growth of a strong middle class which provided an industrialising elite with certain characteristics. On the other hand, in the Soviet Union, the industrialising elite was the intellectuals, the professional revolutionaries whose first pre-condition for industrialisation was total power and strengthening of the State.

In undeveloped India, the industrialising elite is primarily feudal and paternalistic and these characteristics bring about outlooks with a strong impact on the labour movement and labour relations policies. Under the feudal-paternalistic industrialising elite the labour movement tends to be fashioned with the following characteristic. The attitude to workers is as follows:

Attitude to workers: "Workers are considered as wards, undeveloped, not capable of deciding or knowing what is good for them. Should be chastised or rewarded ("lathi or lollipop" theory) as the case may be in an effort towards their education and maturity. Anyway, the present generation of workers is incapable of handling their own problems. The next or third generation might. Giving them equality of status and encouraging them to control their organisations directly is utopian on the one hand, and places them, on the other hand, at the tender mercies of the "laws of the jungle" in relation to the private sector employers. Workers should be treated as wards."

The above attitude to the workers is the basis of the strong penchant for the "Trusteeship Theory" in many quarters in India. In fact, all the political groups in India, excepting the Marxist parties, have accepted this paternalistic-oriented Trusteeship theory and "worker-participation in management" ideas. With this basic orientation, the intense industrialisation programme visualised under the Third Five-Year Plan will have certain specific characteristics that would tend to distort the trade union movement into a formal organisation without content.

The paternalistic attitude on the one hand, and the

growing population of industrial workers on the other, would accentuate the already existing tendencies towards the State determining what is good for workers. While the accent would be on amenities and welfare measures for workers, free collective bargaining would be rejected as unsuited for a developing socialistic society as came about in a categorical speech made by the Union Planning and Labour Minister, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, at the annual Convention of the INTUC as early as 1956. In his speech the Minister also made the pontifical pronouncement that Collective Bargaining was valid only for a "capitalist society". It should be remembered that until 1956 the INTUC had at least paid formal homage and lip service to Collective Bargaining as a cardinal trade union principle.

This shift in emphasis from collective bargaining is followed up with the new "socialistic concepts" like worker-participation in management, Worker-Directors, Worker-Management councils etc. The role of trade unions, under the new concepts, would be severely restricted only to such activities as participation, together with the managements, in such programmes as implementing welfare measures, running cooperative canteens, credit societies, making periodic representations to management, conduct sports or educational activity where the primary accent would be to develop a consciousness of cooperation, discipline, ensurance of industrial peace and productivity.

This "special role" of trade unions in a "socialist society" as distinct from an "acquisitive capitalist society" has been quite categorically delineated by various persons in the high quarters. Some of them have called for a "moratorium on all strikes and lock-outs" during the Plan periods.

Another important aspect of the future of the labour movement in India is the emergence of the State and State-owned Public Sector industries as the largest employers of industrial workers. The shape and character of the Indian trade union movement will be considerably determined by this particular development in industrialisation programmes.

With the present orientations, the State, while gladly welcoming private sector managements becoming the whipping boys, jealously guards its ownership and management privileges in the Public Sector industries in terms of labour and labour organisations. The nature of the labour organisations, the types of claims and demands workers make, are all matters of much greater sensitiveness to the Public Sector management than the private managements. There is much greater "security" consciousness in genuine trade union activities in public sector industries.

In one sense, under the third Five-Year Plan, the

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Democratic Planning And Publicity

by S. P. Aiyar

THE controversy regarding the compatibility of planning and democracy is now practically settled. The question 'Can planning be democratic' sounds oddly academic; the dilemma of 'Plan or No Plan' appears to be a false one. Nevertheless, it is still true that nation-wide planning calls for certain adjustments if liberties are to be preserved. For, irrespective of the nature or extent of planning, one inevitable result is the increase in the power of the State. This centralisation, inherent in the process of planning, gives no cause for alarm so long as the proper institutional devices are set up against the possible misuse of power and a spirit of constitutionalism prevails in the society. In India, planning has preceded the evolution of a democratic society: habits of responsible criticism, the temper of tolerance and the determination to settle all differences of opinion through discussion and consent have yet to evolve. In an agrarian society with its centuries of hardened conservatism and passive attitudes towards Government, the accumulation of powers — the result of planning — holds out irresistible temptations for its misuse. The framers of the Constitution have done well to elaborate the chapter on Fundamental Rights and the nineteenth century influence of Mill and Dicey is all for the good. It is a truism that the mere enumeration of rights is not enough. It is the function of democratic Government to respect them and to keep the people adequately, honestly and continuously informed about what it is doing. If this function is not performed, the right to criticise the Government will not only prove ineffective but it might degenerate into a habit of irresponsible obstructionism.

The administrative tasks of the Third Five-Year Plan should be viewed against this background of the problem of the freedom in an under-developed society. The establishment of the Planning Commission in 1950 marks the beginning of a new era. Planning in India has taken place in the context of public discussion. The Draft of the First Five-Year Plan was widely discussed — in Parliament and in State Legislatures, by officials at the District level, in the Universities and by pressure groups of every shade. The Indian press played a vital role in making the people plan-conscious. The preparation for the Second Five-Year Plan was even more elaborate. In the Preface we read that it was "a result of the labours of large numbers of persons in the Central Government, in the States at various level and leaders of thought and opinion in every part of the country. In its preparation, men and women in all walks of life have given generously of their time and experience." Now, on the threshold of the Third Five-Year Plan, we see that public discussion, as a prelude to planning, is fast becoming a regular feature. Already, newspapers enjoying nation-wide circulation

are organising symposia on various aspects of planned development. Learned journals and popular periodicals are full of articles on our national progress. The University Grants Commission has requested Universities to work out their plans of development. The generous help to Universities for expansion schemes, will in coming years go a long way in revitalising them and will enable them to contribute to the process of national planning.

While these are encouraging signs on the Indian landscape, there are other features and developments that do not augur well. In spite of the emphasis on administration in the First and Second Five-Year Plans, little has been done to rationalise and streamline the administration. The O & M division set up on the recommendation of the Planning Commission has done precious little to justify its existence. According to the Estimates Committee, the O & M unit in the Planning Commission — the very body that recommended the idea — has done nothing to enable as to congratulate it.

Meanwhile, under the stress of planning, the administration is growing in size, only to justify the worst fears of the critics of Big Government. Staff expansion in various departments has taken place, in mute obedience to the celebrated Laws of Parkinson. Like our own ancient and indigenous Banyan tree, the administrative system is shooting out new branches. In the organisation of the Government of India, coordination, consciously and imaginatively carried out, is nowhere to be seen. The result of this uncontrolled growth is that today there are vast twilight regions in our Government wherein things happen without the public even coming to know of them. The ugly episode of the Mundhra shares is not an isolated one. It is an index to the complete absence of responsibility at many levels of the administration. One suspects that, for the most part, members of Parliament are themselves ignorant of what is happening in the tortuous byways of administration. As in Defence Matters and Foreign Affairs, they are often kept in the dark regarding details of internal administration. The annual reports of the various Ministries tell us very little about the real state of affairs that exist in them. In the field of public enterprises, we face fresh problems of Parliamentary control. The reports of various corporations gather dust in the Parliamentary library. They are very rarely on public sale. What is even more disturbing is the fact that reports are often misleading. Through clever use of suppressio veri, very attractive window-dressing is presented. For example, the Report of the Ministry of Transport and Communications for the year 1955-56 does not mention the fact that the Indian Airlines Corporation lost substantial amounts of

money, though we are informed that Air-India International made a good profit.

In the various States, the reports of the Government of India are scarcely available. On paper, the Manager of publications has his agents in important cities but they hardly stock Government literature. The red-tapism that surrounds the process of acquiring reports directly, from the Manager, successfully closes the available channels of information. The Report of the Planning Sub-Committee of the A.I.C.C. remarks that the message of our plans seldom reaches the people at the grass-roots because administration is carried out in English and not in the language of the people. Theoretically, this is true, so far as it goes. But the real reason why people's participation has not become a reality is the fact that publicity within the country has been a total failure. Several months ago, the Publications Division opened a branch in Bombay on the Dadabhai Naoroji Road. How ineffective its work has been can be inferred from the fact that most people hardly know that it exists and even those who have taken the trouble to discover it complain that they get scarcely anything from there.

Publicity is a major problem of administration in India today. If the Third Five-Year Plan is to make public participation significant, a great deal of attention will have to be paid to the problem of educating the Indian public, which has now, for the most part, relied entirely on newspapers. They, the public, get more than their full quota of foreign news and the speeches of the Prime Minister — but little else. If public criticism under these circumstances has often seemed irresponsible, the Government is largely to be blamed. When the U.P.S.C. acquitted Mr. H. M. Patel after all the "findings" of the Vivian Bose Board of Inquiry, there was a widespread suspicion that the Commission is not really independent and is a tool in the hands of the Executive. This suspicion still continues. For this misunderstanding the Government is entirely responsible. Neither the Resolution of the U.P.S.C. nor the Report of the Vivian Bose Board have been made available to the public, though they have been laid on the Table of the House. Even teachers at the University have succeeded in acquiring these only with extreme difficulty. In the absence of a full-fledged programme of publicity, the public is bound to have dark suspicions and lose its faith in Government. This will be the beginning of the end of constitutionalism in the country. The Government can do much to educate the people and make the freedom of speech a vital reality.

1. In every major city branches of the office of the Manager of Publications must be set up in a prominent place. These should be similar to the ones now existing on Janpath at New Delhi.

2. In all important cities, like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, an Information Service should be set up where members of the public can freely read all Government publications—those of the Publications Division as also those of the various Ministries. Parlia-

mentary Debates and the valuable literature brought out by the Lok Sabha Secretariat should be available for reference. It is sad to note that the public does not even know of the existence of a useful publication like the Journal of Parliamentary Information. These Information Centres must be run by an independent quasi-Government body which will be assisted by the Librarian of the University and by the Director of Publicity who will supply to the Information Centre all literature concerning the State.

3. The Lok Sabha Secretariat must set up a Bureau of Research on the lines of the British Central Office of Information and publish similar Reference Papers on various aspects of the Government of India and on the politics and policies of the country.

4. The University Grants Commission and/or the Ministry of Education must work out a scheme whereby Indian Universities and all research institutions will automatically get all relevant information, which they regard necessary for teaching and research.

5. The Minister for Information and Broadcasting should be of Cabinet rank and it should be his responsibility to coordinate all publicity of the Government of India.

It is true that establishment of such a net-work of publicity in the country will cost a great deal but until this is done, all talk of freedom and democratic planning will be futile and public participation will be a sham. The "Phantom Public" will still be with us. The Third Five-Year Plan and those that will follow it will place immense powers in the hands of the ruling party. If a New Despotism is not to jeopardise our New Freedom, the problem of educating the public must be vigorously tackled. The old truth, that 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty' acquires a new depth of meaning in an era of national planning.

LABOUR AND THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLAN

(Continued from page 7)

approach is towards making the "Nation" stronger and more prosperous. 'Increase in per capita income is cited as the most desired goal without bothering that an increase in per capita income does not necessarily imply an overall, genuine, universal improvement in the economic condition of all sections of the people. It is not realised that a "Nation" can be made very powerful but the people may remain completely impoverished.

The labour movement, thus, faces during the Third Plan period stresses and strains that would seriously inhibit its development as a powerful, healthy and effective instrument of democracy and self-help. It is more likely to develop into a distorted form, as an instrument of State and party machines, rather than an organisation controlled and run by the conscious will of workers themselves. The workers in India can prevent this distortion, only if they become aware of these processes. Labour needs its own Five-Year Plans to reject emancipation by proxies.

Review

Thirteen Days that Shook the Kremlin

IMRE NAGY AND THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION
by Tibor Meray; Fredrick A. Praeger, New York; Price
\$5.00; pp. 290.

THIS book is a narration of events that took place during the thirteen days of the Hungarian Revolution in October-November 1956. But it is not just a plain matter-of-fact history of those stormy days. The author, a brilliant journalist and Hungarian writer of repute, was at Nagy's side during the eventful days and had the opportunity to be his close associate even before the outbreak of the revolution. He is very sympathetic to Nagy and at the same time is aware of his failings and weaknesses. The result is a brilliant exposition of different factors contributing to the Hungarian tragedy and a sympathetic but dispassionate analysis of Nagy's role in the drama before, during and after the Revolution.

Nagy stands out as a tragic figure in the sad Hungarian drama of October - November 1956. He played the leading role during the thirteen days that shook the Kremlin to its roots, but he could never be the leader of the revolt. The stormy events that swept him up as the Prime Minister offered him a chance to be the man of Hungary's destiny; but he proved unequal to the role. Instead of being a leader of the Hungarian people during the crucial period, he rather symbolised their hopes and aspirations for a better and free life. The Revolution, in fact, started with the popular demand that Nagy should assume leadership of the Hungarian Government. But when Nagy assumed the charge, the popular uprising instead of subsiding went beyond his control and threatened to spread anarchy throughout the country. How could this happen?

This can be explained partly by Nagy's personal failings as well as by circumstances beyond his control. The Hungarian people came to look upon Nagy as the repository of their hopes because, before October 23, he was the only top Hungarian communist leader whose record was spotlessly clean and whose hands were not stained with blood. He had also the reputation of being a liberal and humane leader whose policies during his brief tenure in office in 1953 did much to relax the socio-economic and political tensions in the country. He was the only communist leader who could understand and sympathise with people's grievances and really wanted to make their lives happy. Moreover, he had shown the courage to stand by his own views and to go in the wilderness for his convictions. He was, perhaps, the only Hungarian communist leader who could tell the Kremlin bosses to their face that "you made not a few mistakes of your own when you formed your Kolkhozy". He was ready to pay the price of his defiance and was at one time even on the verge of being executed. As the author points out, Beria and

Rakosi hesitated for some time in choosing between Rajk and Nagy as the principal victim of the proceedings against Titoism. Their choice did not fall immediately on Rajk. This intellectual integrity, moral courage and human qualities characterised Nagy's action upto the end of his life. They endeared him to the people and made him the object of their affection and esteem. But for the same reason he was ousted from the Premiership in 1954, ostracized and expelled from the Party by the ruling Rakosi clique. He was stripped of all power and privileges and was forced to lead the life of a political and social outcast in pre-Revolution days. But this victimisation only enhanced Nagy's prestige and popularity and it also saved him from the stigma of having been associated with the hated policies of Rakosi and his clique.

Nagy, therefore, came to embody, in the people's eyes, all that was good and liberalising in the Hungarian political life and the Communist Party (as both were identical under communist rule). The popular revolt, therefore, began with the demand for his reinstatement as the Premier. As a result of the popular pressure, Nagy was restored to Party membership only ten days before the Revolution broke out on October 23. And even when the people rose in open revolt, Rakosi and his clique tried to prevent Nagy's come-back till the last minute. This naturally infuriated the people who in desperation rose in armed revolt against the whole leadership of the Party.

Even when Nagy was nominated as the Premier, he was not given a free hand to choose his colleagues and formulate his policies. Outside he was a man of the masses, but in the party he was totally isolated and ineffective as he never had the control of the Party apparatus. This explains Nagy's initial inability to satisfy demands of the people. Nagy had to fight the Stalinist clique which was entrenched in the party and to compromise to avert the crisis every time. He therefore could not openly break with the die-hard Stalinists in the party for nearly a week after the Revolution started. He had to include many old Stalinists in his team. He thus could not keep pace with the impatient temper of the people who wanted to make a clean sweep of the old order. His failure only enraged the people further who ultimately came to distrust Nagy's ability to purge the party of old Stalinists. The people were in a hurry and impatient to achieve their demands before they would lay down their arms. On the other hand, Nagy was busy in intra-party manoeuvres and compromises. Eventually he did get rid of the old Stalinists, but by that time many other factors had intervened and the people had totally rejected the Communist Party itself. They were demanding a multi-party Government, the renunciation of Warsaw Treaty and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.

Thus Nagy's failure to control the party apparatus in the beginning proved fatal in the long run. Besides, his ideological inhibitions also contributed to his failure to cope up with the rising expectations of the people. Though he wanted to reform communism,

till the end Nagy remained a confirmed communist whose thinking was confined to the closed system of Marxism-Leninism. From the beginning he imagined his role to be that of the saviour of the Communist Party. He could not think in terms of a multi-party system. The people first wanted to rid the party of Stalinists because initially they could see no hope of a multi-party system being introduced in the country. But when the revolution gathered momentum, the Communist Party collapsed in no time. When the people realised their strength they wanted to abolish the dictatorship of the Communist Party — a demand to which Nagy could not reconcile himself. Thus there was always a gap between the popular demands and Nagy's position during the revolution. And when eventually Nagy was forced to close the gap by conceding the people's demands, it was too late — the Soviet tanks were already grinding the people under their wheels.

Nagy's failure thus stemmed from his inability, on the one hand, to carry the party with him from the beginning and, on the other hand, to rise up to the occasion by shedding his ideological inhibitions and come to terms with rebels. International developments and the impotence of the Western Powers to assist the Hungarian people also conspired to bring about Nagy's downfall. He was not cast into the role of the leader of a revolution, he was essentially a man of peace and a political thinker. The leadership of the revolution was thrust upon him in spite of himself and if he fell short of his role during the period of revolution, he rose to his full stature after it. In spite of the pressure brought to bear upon him by the Russian authorities during his internment, he refused to confess and bravely withstood their attempts to cow down his spirit. He refused to soil the glory of the revolution by false confessions and preferred death for his convictions.

B. K. DESAI

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The Charm of Politics

by R. H. S. Crossman, published by Hamish Hamilton, London.

WICKEDNESS in a woman, someone has said, has a fatal attraction for men. It is perhaps some such quality about politics that tempt men — and in our century even women — to fall for it. Why else would the scholar, for instance, whose proper place is the ivory tower, be rubbing shoulders on a public platform with the politician who is "native here and to the manner born"?

It is of such men — the politicians and the pundits — from British and American public life and of their political decisions that Mr. Crossman speaks in some thirty essays collectively brought out in book form and aptly entitled *The Charm of Politics*. A delightful reading it makes for. Himself a politician, scholar and intellectual rolled into one, Mr. Crossman writes with depth and shrewd insight. A couple of quotations from his essays will illustrate the point:

Writing on "The Strange Case of Mr. X", for instance, Mr. Crossman observes: "Utopia is still with us so long as we believe that democracy means government by public opinion, and that war can be banished once world opinion has made international law the rule of a world society. But politics is the exercise of power and political wisdom begins with the understanding that our task ... is not to abolish power politics and Great Power diplomacy, but to civilise them". Then again elsewhere in the book he writes: "It is no more realistic to deny the place of morality in international affairs than to affirm its supremacy. Utopianism and realism are two complementary movements in the dialectic of world history and of the individual mind."

Brilliant stuff, this. But writings of this sort have their defects. These are the defects of their author's qualities and arise from a highly intellectual approach to matters that are essentially political. True, Mr. Crossman understands the game of power politics inside out and loves to play it. But he is too much of an intellectual, much too much fascinated by the spell of an idea to forget that he is in politics but not of it. Who can imagine Mr. Crossman being opportunistic or unscrupulous enough to kick the ladder he has climbed by? And yet to be a successful politician one must pass this supreme test without so much as a twinge of conscience! For power politics is a game in which its rules are honoured more in breach than in observance. No wonder, with all his equipment, Mr. Crossman is not a successful politician.

It is not, therefore, as a guide to success in politics that *The Charm of Politics* can be recommended but as a critical appreciation of some thirty distinguished personalities in the context of their political techniques and ideas. And a more sensitive, tremblingly alive critique will be difficult to come by.

AZIZ MADANI

With Many Voices

"The deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

—Tennyson.

The Prime Minister distrusts his own people, while reposing a pathetic faith in the Chinese communist leaders. Parliamentary democracy is limping to its inevitable denouement in our country.

—H.V. Kamath, *Current*, October 21.

Mr. Nehru is content to repeat his magic *mantra*, reiterating that there will be "no yielding to force" and countering the loss of 17 Indian lives with a warning to Peking that the Government of India 'reserves the right to demand compensation'. How much, one wonders, in Chinese currency are 17 Indian lives worth?

—*Indian Express*, October 26.

The cause of India-China Friendship Association is making headway steadily backwards, thanks to China's volte face. We must resist this violent nonsense. If China is spoiling for a fight, she will get it in full measure.

—V. R. Krishna Iyer, Law Minister in the former Communist Government of Kerala, *Indian Express*, October 26.

I want to tell my Communist Party friends in China that they are pursuing a wrong line and they must realise it.

—S.A. Dange, Leader of the Communist Group in Parliament. *Times of India*, October 26.

Socialism is either dictatorship or arm-chair philosophy. —Gandhiji to Louis Fischer in 1946, quoted in the *Hindu*, October 16.

It (Moscow) is the least polite city I have ever been in; the general slogan seems to be 'Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost!' I imagine that New York and Chicago in 1890 must have been very similar.

—Recent visitor to Moscow quoted in Newsletter of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, October 16.

He (Krishna Menon) is the master technician capable of setting down the Nehru ideals in operative term... He (Krishna Menon) reflects your brilliant mind and noble heart in action... he *works out your words*.

—R. K. Karanjia, Editor, *Blitz* in an open letter to Mr. Nehru, Oct. 24.

Christianity in Russia today is a proletarian religion —as it was in the beginning under the Roman Empire.

—Recent visitor to Moscow quoted in Newsletter of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, October 16.

I am afraid, China intends that sooner or later the McMahon Line will be replaced by the Nehru-Chou line or, may be, the Mao-Menon line.

—H. V. Kamath, *Current*, October 21.

We tell them (the Chinese) that they can kick up their heels but not against the people who have not offended them.

—V. K. Krishna Menon, *Hindustan Times*, October 21.

His (Krishna Menon's) role in the U.N. debate on Tibet has, to put it mildly, been an essay in unedifying jugglery of words: To discuss Tibet is to add to the cold war; to shoot the Chinese out of Indian territory would be to go against the fundamental principle of India's foreign policy based on non-alignments. In a different language, we are now being asked to remain neutral against ourselves!

—*Thought*, October 17.

India, through that apostle of democracy, Mr. Krishna Menon, now appears to be busy breaking the back of the Tibetans and strengthening the spine of the communist Chinese.

—*Indian Express*, October 22.

"It, (the way in which the proposition in the United Nations to discuss Tibet was dealt with on behalf of India) appears to pass the line of non-alignment and is indistinguishable from abetment of oppression."

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Indian Express*, October 21.

A nationalist communist is a contradiction in terms — except in the Soviet Union and perhaps also in China.

—*Times of India*, October 17.

We are creating our group of glorified shopkeepers with talents unknown to them when we treat them as capitalists concerted out to save capitalism.

—Dr. K. Shridharani, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, October 11.

The Swatantra Party has been the first Party in India to steal some newspaper space from the Congress... it hurts the monopolists of newspaper space.

—Dr. K. Shridharani, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, October 11.

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