

IMPORTANT SPEECHES

MASANI: "Ministers stand before this House radiant with self-satisfaction at their non-achievements"

By Our Correspondent

THE objectives of the Third Plan as stated in the document were unexceptionable. They were, broadly, more savings and investment; secondly, greater production and productivity; and, thirdly, more exports.

Unfortunately, the document that has been circulated to us shows that the results are entirely different from what had been hoped.

Even if the admission of failures is 'ambiguously worded', the fact remains that the picture is one of dismal failure. In fact, it is the kind of picture which no Government should bring before Parliament without accompanying it with its own resignation.

Now, let me say that this is a fair summary of what the document itself says. On page 1, it says:

"It has been a period of slow economic growth. The increase in national income has been of the order of 5 per cent in 2½ years."

That is, 2 per cent per year, as opposed to what was hoped for, 6 per cent — one-third of the rate of growth expected to be achieved. And when it is recalled that our rate of population increase is more than 2 per cent, this means an absolute deficit, going back, not even keeping abreast.

On foodgrains, the document says:

"It was of the order of 77.5 million tons in 1962-63 as compared to 79.79 million tons in 1960-61 and 1961-62."

In other words, there is a drop, going backwards. Industrial production does not show a much better picture. This is what it says:

"Industrial production increased by 6.5 per cent and 8 per cent in the first two years of the Third Five Year Plan."

Once again, it is clear that these increases are not in consonance with the rise of anything like 11 per cent per annum anticipated in the Third Plan document.

Prices and taxes

have increased

Coming to employment, it says:

"Taking a view of the additional employment to be generated during 1961-66, it does appear that in the first two years at any rate, employment has been somewhat below expectations. . . . The conclusion given above is reinforced by the increase in the number of persons on the live registers of employment exchanges."

THE ONLY TWO THINGS THAT HAVE INCREASED DURING THE THIRD PLAN AND THEY ARE WELCOME TO TAKE CREDIT FOR THEM. AND THOSE TWO THINGS ARE PRICES AND TAXES.

"If one takes the period of nearly two and a half years since the commencement of the Third Plan, the increase in the general price index would work out to about 7 per cent."

On taxation:
"Against a target of additional taxation of Rs. 1,750 crores, during the first three years of the Plan, Central and State Governments have undertaken taxation yielding about Rs. 2,400 crores over the Plan period."

Scrapping the Plan

implementation is defective. There is nothing wrong with the honest officials whom you ask to implement your plans.

It is because your plans are wrong-minded, because your plans do not take into account human nature, because your plans are against economic realities and economic laws, that they are bound to fail, however honestly and well they are implemented.

PM makes a few

intelligent statements

I am very glad to say that in the last few weeks both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister have been making occasional statements that show the first glimpses of economic realism. The Prime Minister has made three or four intelligent statements in the last couple of months, a somewhat unusually high ratio.

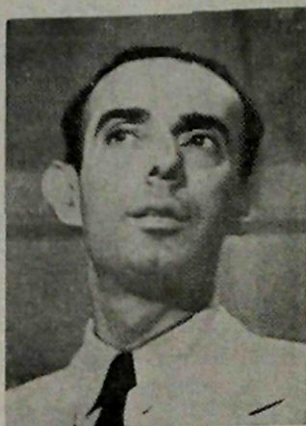
He said at a Seminar at the India International Centre on 22nd September that big plants are all very well but it is the villages which need attention and that when there is no drinking water in the villages, to talk of big plants is rather idle.

I was glad to read this because only last August I said the same thing from these same benches when the Prime Minister said: "I did not think intelligent men like Masani did not think of the priority for steel plants."

I am very glad that some sense of priority has come at least even to these gentlemen opposite. Mr. Nehru also said that the Planning Commission has developed into some thing which he had not intended. He said it had become a huge bureaucratic organisation, that it had all the departments of government duplicated there.

Indeed, we from these benches have made this criticism that the National Planning Commission has no place in a democracy and that this Moscow Gostplan transplanted on our territory belongs to a communist dictatorship and that if you have a Moscow Gostplan in India then you are setting up a parallel government to the Parliamentary government and to a cabinet responsible to Parliament and through it to the people.

I am very glad that the Prime



M. R. Masani

Minister at last has come to his senses and has seen that the National Planning Commission is seeking to duplicate the role of government.

Perhaps the most important of the change of front is made on agriculture. Let me quote the Prime Minister at Jaipur in November. He said:

"Agriculture is the key and the base of all progress—we dare not be slack. If we fail in agriculture, it does not matter what else we have got."

Not even steel, I presume, about which we have been so enamoured all these years! This is exactly what we have been saying.

Now even Mr. Nehru has started talking about the rural areas. But who has done all this? It is the Prime Minister and his government which are responsible for creating this National Planning Commission as a parallel government.

Indian people will

Judge

It is the Prime Minister and his government who have been responsible for neglecting the villages and diverting their hard earned resources when they needed them badly for water, fertiliser, seed and so on.

But while one is pleased to hear these gentlemen mouthing slogans lifted from the manifesto of my Party, the question arises: How sincere is this repentance, how sincere is this awakening?

I am quite prepared to keep an open mind. I am quite prepared to watch and see by action whether this repentance is

(Continued on page 11)

IN THE LOK SABHA

(Continued from page 10)

sincere. The people of India are not going to be taken in by resolutions. They will watch and see whether all this is going to be done or not.

There are many issues by which they will judge. They will judge by the form in which the Company Bills now before the House will finally be passed. They will judge by what happens to the Seventeenth Amendment, whether this piece of expropriation is persisted in or abandoned.

That is how the peasants will judge. Finally, the people of India will judge by the next Budget. It is by these measures that the sincerity of the Hon. Prime Minister and his Finance Minister will be judged.

It is often alleged that we are just critical, that we have nothing to put in the place of this Plan. Let me suggest an alternative approach. You will say, "Supposing the Plan is to be scrapped, what takes its place?" I am prepared to make an alternative approach. The starting point of that approach will be something said by Gandhiji, who once said:

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to HIM. Will HE gain anything by it? Will it restore HIM to a control over his own life and destiny?"

(At this juncture, Mr. Mahavir Tyagi remarked: This is most inspiring. Thank you.)

27.5 nP. consumed

daily

Mr. Masani went on: What are the realities? After 17 years, if this had been the approach of this Government, would we be where we are today? Would our per capita income today be Rs. 330 a year, would the consumption of the average man in India be Rs. 300 a year, would the large majority consume less than Rs. 150 a year?

Today, the lowest 10 per cent of our population—I am going by official statistics, I am not following my Hon. friend, Dr. Lohia, I am following Mr. Nanda—according to Government figures, consume 27.5 naye paise daily.

This is a measure of our destitution and of our poverty! And this is after 17 years of administration by the followers of Mahatma Gandhi!

I want to warn this Government and this house that if they believe that the people of India are going to starve in silence and be exploited in silence till the end of the Fifth Plan, they are making a mistake.

They want change here and now. The people want change here and now. They are not going to stand this 'pie in the sky when you die' business. They demand an immediate return for their hard work.

It can be done

it. I am not quarrelling about figures now. It is a miserable pittance. I do not think any Hon. Member would dream of living on this for a day.

How is this to be secured? It means that today's per capita income of Rs. 330 a year must be converted into the national minimum by 1975. If even after 15 years you want this Rs. 30 a month to be available to the average man, today's per capita or average will have to be the bottom or the minimum.

In order to do that, our per

capita income will have to go up to Rs. 540 a year. In order to get Rs. 330 or Rs. 360 a year as the minimum, the per capita income will have to be Rs. 540. These are things worked out in the Planning Commission itself.

It has also been estimated that to get this per capita income of Rs. 540 a year by 1975, we shall need a rate of growth, not of this miserable 2 per cent which has been put before us, but of 7 to 8 per cent a year, even more

(Continued on page 15)

People of India today are suffering, their patience has come to an end

(Continued from page 11)

than the target which has not been fulfilled.

Now, Sir, 7 to 8 per cent a year is achieved in many countries. Japan has touched 20 per cent; West Germany has touched it, and in Nationalist China which I have visited, it was 7.7 per cent in the last two or three years.

Colossal

under-utilisation

The second thing is to provide gainful employment to people so that their hands are used productively, so that there is money in their pockets, some purchasing power with which to buy things. This is important. I am not arguing humanism here. With these hardened Marxists opposite, humanism does not work.

But a certain measure of nutrition is necessary before you can get a productive human being to produce. So, quite apart from humanism and decency, even from the point of view of increasing production, you want healthy, reasonably healthy able people. So long as the colossal under-utilisation of our manpower goes on, as it is today, we cannot expect production to go up.

Now, the implications of this are that, if you must maximise production, the available resources have to be utilised where the return is highest. Every unit of production must give the highest possible return.

And this can only be achieved where production and investment can shift in response to the needs of the consumers. This means the sovereignty of the consumer, consumer preference, economic democracy going alongside of political democracy.

This can only be done by ending the State Capitalist, bureau-

cratic, monopolistic system. It can only be done if the people can produce to meet their own needs and are given incentives and rewards for doing so.

Maximising production, therefore, means two things, first, a change in the order of priorities. Our Chinese Communist enemies, stupid as they are, have learnt at least that lesson. About a year ago, Chou En-lai went to the Chinese Communist Congress and said: Scrap all this heavy industrialisation.

The new order of priorities is (1) agriculture, (2) light consumer goods industries, and (3) heavy and basic industries. This was the Great Leap Backwards after the Great Leap Forward which failed to materialise.

Even these Communists, rigid as they are, the worst Stalinist lot, have come to their senses on this point at least. When then are we going ahead following the old Stalinist model which even the modern Stalinists have discarded?

I have recently become aware of a queer sense of unreality about some of the discussions and the atmosphere in this house. Outside, in my constituency and elsewhere, I find seething discontent. I find raging anger among the common people, and the poorest of them I am referring to.

There is widening cynicism and a lack of faith in the honesty of purpose of this Nehru Government.

Seething discontent

Even the hope of an alternative government, of a change of government, does not appear before their eyes.

When we come to this house, what do we find? An amazing sense of smugness and self-complacency. Months go by, years go by and problems remain unsolved; but Ministers stand before this House radiant with self-satisfaction at their non-

achievements!

The economic policies of this Government have failed as miserably as their defence and foreign policies crumbled last year in October and November in NEFA. The patient grows steadily worse; his health subsides, he sinks. But the Chief Physician and his fellow-physicians gambol about the country proclaiming the soundness of the patient's health and their own magical curative powers.

This image of total composure may be reassuring to the hon. gentlemen on the Treasury Benches and those who support them here. But I want to ask: how long can they shut their eyes to grim realities?

How long can they go on like this ignoring what the people are feeling, for the people have given through various manifestations in the last six or eight months the answer?

Drugged by ignorance

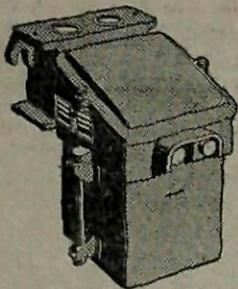
They can go like this only so long as the people remain drugged by ignorance, drugged by the cult of personality, and drugged by absence of knowledge. I can assure you, Sir, and the house that this will not last for long.

Even illiterate people have been known to rebel; even an illiterate people's patience comes to an end. The people of India today are suffering; they are getting desperate.

"The mills of God grind slow but they grind exceeding small."

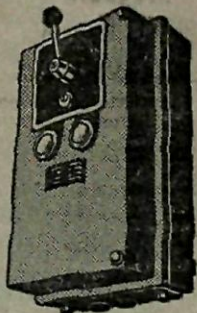
NEXT WEEK

Mr. S. N. Dwivedy's speech in Lok Sabha on the Third Plan and its grand catalogue of failures.



JYOTI CALOR-EMAG Oil Immersed Direct-on-line—for starting motors on full voltage—features

- (1) Double break per pole
- (2) Easy renewability of fixed and moving contacts
- (3) Inherent no-volt protection and bi-metal thermal relays



JYOTI CALOR-EMAG Card Motor Starters—air break contactor with thermal overload relay used in textile mills.

