

APRIL 1954

The Vulnerability Of Indian Society

by Dr. Sampurnanand

THE vulnerability of society in all countries, particularly in India, depends almost entirely on factors which, for want of a better name, may be called "spiritual." Politics and economics cannot be ignored, but they do not occupy that dominant position which one might be tempted to ascribe to them.

In the history of India we find that during periods of great political depression, our society was able to preserve its character and individuality. When the Huns and the Scythians invaded India, they were assimilated and absorbed into the social structure of the country. During the political domination of the Pathans and the Moguls, a defence mechanism was evolved which enabled our society to withstand the impact of a powerful alien influence. But things have changed today; and as the old spiritual values have declined so has the vulnerability of Indian society increased.

A social organisation stands together if it has a system of common fundamental belief, if it has an article of faith it can cling to and which it can fall back on in times of crisis. A belief may be wrong, but even a wrong belief, if honestly held, may later be abandoned in favour of a right one—provided the importance of belief itself is recognised. Today in India we seem to be living in a period when all that is believed is that there is nothing to believe in; and there lies the danger.

We have lost all faith, there is nothing we hold sacred, there is nothing to which we can cling in a crisis and which can form the basis for our intellectual and political activities. The result of such moral and intellectual anarchy is obvious. A person who is a cynic, an unbeliever by preference, can have no place for any permanent values. He lives only

for the present and quite naturally, his conduct may well be one of unbridled licence; the only restrictions which he can acknowledge are those imposed by exterior physical conditions. But the absence of belief cannot be a permanent state of the human mind; at some stage or other, some belief manages to enter; it may be camouflaged as unbelief—and that is what is happening in India today. Our intellectuals started by giving up all belief and have ended by believing in a coarse materialism; this may be the logical end of unbelief but it is really the most perverted kind of belief.

Communism is a belief of this nature; it is dangerous because it must inevitably do away with the very basis on which our society has been built and which has enabled it to survive the many and varied onslaughts upon it. Our philosophy has been that the individual is an end in himself and that he has a significance apart from any other that he might have as a member of society. This might sound selfish, but in reality it is not. The individual is not in conflict with society, rather he is one with it, and his joys and sorrows are the joys and sorrows of the society—and not vice versa. Such a concept alone can form the basis of democracy in India. The only alternative to it would be anarchy and later the dictatorship of a small clique.

Under a dictatorship, an individual has no meaning except as a member of society and he becomes merely an instrument for serving the purposes of the society, in other words, of the ruling clique at the top. Complete enslavement of the mind can be the only result of this. Democracy in India, or anywhere else, can only rest secure on the recognition of human individuality. If the individual has no purpose save that of the community, then his rights and his very individuality can have no meaning. The triumph of such logic must destroy democracy. We have then to decide as to what kind of dispensation we are going to live under. That is our most vital problem.

But our difficulty is that there is a chasm between our leaders and the mass of our people; in New Delhi

one cannot help but recognise this. Naturally a great capital city cannot truly and exclusively represent national tradition; but whereas the difference between Washington and the U.S.A., or London and the U.K. is merely one of degree, the difference between New Delhi and the rest of India is one of kind. The impression in New Delhi is that of a foreign world, imported and transplanted on alien soil. In such surroundings it is not surprising that the country's leadership is not attuned to the traditions of the land. As a result of this our people have not had any cultural, much less spiritual, guidance from those who are their chosen leaders. They, being out of tune with Indian tradition, can speak only in their own terms. These terms are those of secularism. All talk of religion is suspect, and secularism has been equated with the absence of faith, and an attitude of contempt for religion. Our educated classes regard this definition of secularism as sacrosanct, with the result that cynicism is the order of the day. Gradually this way of thinking is percolating down to the masses and they too are discarding the traditions of the centuries in favour of a mental void. The inevitable result is an increasing general absence of faith, and therefore of any factor of national cohesion. Such a state of spiritual vacuum cannot last; it can suppress only for a short

time these fundamental questions which invite answers in keeping with the spirit of the times and in consonance with our spiritual heritage. Such answers have to be given.

What then is our task? Certainly we must put an end to this state of affairs, but we must also once more make the individual the centre of all activity. If our approach to problems is to be in the spirit of *Dharma* then we must create the proper climate for it. We must get over the narrow, negative conception of secularism and adopt a more real and positive attitude. A beginning can be made in our institutions of learning where education can include an attitude of faith, reverence and inquiry.

In a world divided on philosophical grounds, we Indians are mere spectators without a philosophy of life. This absence of some concept of lasting values is what makes our society a prey to evil influences. But there is a philosophy which is as Indian as the soil of our land and that must be adapted to modern conditions. The last person to attempt this successfully was Gandhiji. If India is to survive, if our society is to be the living and vital thing we all desire it to be, then we must translate, like him, into practical terms the teachings of our sages and the deep and abiding traditions of our country.

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Notes

Agarwal's Challenge to C. P. I.

PROFESSOR S. N. AGARWAL, General Secretary of the A.I.C.C., has placed the Indian communists fairly and squarely on the horns of a dilemma. In an article entitled *Conspiracy of Communism* on the front page of the A.I.C.C. *Economic Review* of March 15, 1954, the General Secretary of the Congress has asked the Communist Party of India either to establish in a court of law its plea that the documents contained in the book *Communist Conspiracy at Madurai*, which has just been published by the Popular Book Depot for the Democratic Research Service, are indeed a "forgery" or to face the consequence of the Government and people of India accepting the inescapable fact that they are a conspiracy out to subvert the Indian Constitution and Government in the interests of their masters overseas. "The onus," rightly says Professor Agarwal, "surely lies on the Communist Party of India." He then proceeds to point out how, incidentally, "recent happenings in the country, including the Lucknow riots, Calcutta uprisings and the Patna Kisan March, appear to conform remarkably with the clear cut thesis laid down in the Tactical Line." Professor Agarwal calls on the Government of India to "probe into these secret activities of the Communist Party and place relevant facts before the public as early as possible." We agree with the Congress Secretary that the publication of a White Paper by the Home Ministry of the Indian Government stating what they have to say on the real nature of the Behind-the-scenes proceedings of the Third Congress of the Communist Party of India and the documents circulated there is a measure of popular education which is greatly to be desired.

As regards the communists vindicating themselves in a court of law, the sad fate that would await them if they were to be so foolhardy as to risk that course is indicated by the result of a libel action which the French Communist newspapers *Humanité* and *France Nouvelle* brought against *L'Aurore*, the Paris daily. The communist journals complained that an article which said that the communist press in France was able to survive only because of Soviet subsidies was libellous. The court, however, on March 15 dismissed the libel action and made the communist journals pay the costs of defendants. Sad to say, therefore, it looks as if the Indian communists will have to remain painfully impaled on the horns of Professor Agarwal's dilemma.

Travancore-Cochin

THE formation of a government in Travancore-Cochin by the nineteen-member Praja Socialist Party with the tacit support of the forty-five member Congress Party brings to a happy close the electoral

struggle in that State where the communist dominated U.F.L. came so close to grasping power. Mr. Pattom Thannu Pillai, the State P.S.P. and P.S.P. National Executive must be congratulated on their decision not to form a governmental alliance with the communists; very welcome also is the patriotic decision of the Congress Party to give the P.S.P. government tacit support without demanding ministerial seats in return. All in all this has been a victory for the patriotic and democratic forces against the communist efforts to manoeuvre themselves into power.

Communist reaction to the election results is strikingly summed up in a letter written by a prominent member of that party and addressed to another where he states: "The election result is very depressing; the re-elections, instead of solving problems not only created national problems and also problems in the Party...there is unanimous opinion that the Party failed to get the peoples' support."

Success of the democratic parties should not, however, blind them to the fact that the communist menace is still alive in Kerala. They must, therefore, concentrate, not only in Kerala but all over India, on providing clean and honest governments mindful of public opinion and approach problems without being either doctrinaire or faddist. In fact it is their duty to prove to the people that democracy can deliver the goods.

Tribune's Apology

THE London Bevanite journal *Tribune*, in its issue of February 12th, 1954, carried a front page article entitled "U. S. Spies in India" by Mr. Ian Mikardo M.P. in which several slanderous allegations were made against the Democratic Research Service. This article was re-printed, almost in its entirety by a Bombay daily newspaper in bold type on its front page and made use of by a pro-communist Bombay weekly. It was also read out in Parliament by Mr. R. N. Reddy, a communist M.P., on February 22, 1954.

Thus, what was obviously a communist plant on Mr. Mikardo was made use of for smearing the Democratic Research Service under the pretext that neither the author nor the journal concerned were communist. We are indeed surprised that Mr. Mikardo, a British M.P., should have been taken in in this manner and allowed himself to be made use of in this communist brand of McCarthyism.

On a demand for amends being made by the Democratic Research Service, the *Tribune*, in its issue of March 5, 1954, retracted the entire story and agreed that all the allegations therein were false and unfounded. While the handsome apology is to be appreciated it cannot unfortunately undo all the damage done in such cases. Democrats are always at a disadvantage against the technique of the Big Lie so unscrupulously used by communist propaganda. One wonders why newspapers and public men rush into print with communist inspired smears believing them to be genuine. The naive can often become carriers of communist propaganda in their zeal to believe what they are told without questioning the source.

Terror In Goa

THE arrest and deportation of Dr. Gaitonde of Goa for a mere remark not very palatable to the Portuguese rulers is the latest example of the reckless tyranny that they have let loose in what they call a leading overseas province of their empire. Ever since the Goan people started their struggle for freedom the Portuguese imperialists have been increasingly behaving like fascists attacking every manifestation of the Goan people's love of freedom with ruthlessness. It seems that the new awakening in Asia that had made colonial rule an outrageous relic of the dark era has not even touched the fringe of their consciousness, or else they would not have continued to brag about the civilising mission of their imperialism. Their so-called civilising mission presumably has nothing to do with elementary human rights. They do not seem to have outgrown the buccaneer mentality with which they have disfigured the entire history of Goa. We hope the freedom fighters of Goa will successfully resist this tyranny. In the meanwhile we expect the international partners of Portugal to teach its rulers some elementary lessons in decent and democratic behaviour.

Light in Kenya

MR. OLIVER LYTTLETON'S proposals to associate Asians and Africans with the government of Kenya have come not a day too soon. While they do not go all the way towards the formation of a multi-racial government in that colony, they are undoubtedly a big first step towards that ideal; and Asians and Africans by agreeing to cooperate have shown constructive statesmanship.

Thus, we hope, ends a sordid chapter in Kenya where events were dominated either by the savage Mau-Mau terrorist attacks and the equally savage demands of the wilder European settlers for the execution of the entire Kikuyu tribe in batches of twenty-five. Indeed, some actions of the British security forces has revealed in trials and court martials cannot be said to reflect very favourably on Britain, to which a great many people look for the highest standards of legal and political conduct. However, it is important that the people responsible for brutalities were brought to trial and punished, and Mr. Lyttleton, in spite of many pressures exerted has kept his political balance and taken a positive step towards improving affairs in Kenya.

Kenya is a multi-racial state and it must be realised that the three racial groups, European, Asian and African, are there to stay and only cooperation between them can produce a popular government. It is to be hoped that Mr. Lyttleton's proposals will go a long way towards realising the dictum of "equal rights for all civilised men" propounded by Cecil Rhodes.

Exit McCarthy?

IT seems that at long last Mr. McCarthy is approaching the fate that he richly deserved all these days. In a democracy popular wrath is the worst possible punishment, and the Senator's actions seem at last to have aroused the conscience of the American people. His latest essay in demagoguery which meant humiliation for a popular war-hero like Zwicker, has angered the American people as never before.

Senator McCarthy represents an important object lesson for all democrats. You cannot fight totalitarianism by totalitarian methods without jeopardising democracy itself. The ultimate strength of democracy is the people's belief in certain fundamental human values, and a movement based on the negation of these values cannot help democracy however well-meaning the efforts be. But it is difficult to believe that Mr. McCarthy is inspired by exactly honourable motives. His record is not reassuring on this point. We cannot forget that on at least one occasion he had no compunction in having communist support for securing votes for himself. Even today the anti-communist hysteria he is trying to create is more for promoting his personal political ambitions. In any case, he is using techniques which, in the words of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, "are dangerously similar to the techniques long used by the Communists to confuse and control their subject people" (see page 9) and advocates of cultural freedom cannot but be firmly opposed to them.

(HEMINGWAY—Cont'd from p. 5)

Evening Post with 'I'm a strange old man.' But the finest comment came from a plain G.I. who when asked who Ernest Hemingway was, replied 'A big shot. I don't know exactly what he does but he's really a big shot.'

In conclusion, an examination of Hemingway's latest short novel *The Old Man and the Sea* and his remark about it, 'It's as though I had gotten finally what I had been working for all my life', would appear to be as far as we can get along the Hemingway road. This book succeeds where all his others have failed because for the first time the reader feels that here is a writer completely at one with his medium. This simple exciting folk tale is more than good story-telling; it is Hemingway's hope that, 'all the things that are in it do not show, but only are with you after you have read it.' The story of this fisherman is Hemingway's struggle, a grim battle against time and tide. This masterly parable of his life would appear to be his 'last word'. One can almost ask, 'what is there left for him to do?' Some would even set out to prove that Murchison Falls was not a mistake. Is Hemingway cheating the climax? Has he written his last chapter but refused to close the cover? Has the Hemingway legend become history or has it just begun? We must wait ten years more before deciding whether there was any truth in his line "having been hurt and badly hurt he could understand the path of others."

Hemingway—The Strange Old Man

by Rex Berry

"Pinned up against the cold rocks between the plane wreckage and the jungle Hemingway stared at the death waiting below. All around him the Murchison Falls played out their symphony; but far away stretching towards the setting sun he could see the mill pond stillness of the Nile inviting him to sip the strange silence. At last Hemingway was face to face with his motto, 'the Lord is my shepherd, I'll not want him for long!'"

This extract from an unwritten novel is based on a series of obituary notices which appeared recently on the reported death of Ernest Hemingway.

HEMINGWAY has practically written this article with the words, 'since he was a boy he has cared greatly for fishing and shooting. If he had not spent so much time at them... he might have written much more. On the other hand he might have shot himself! From his earliest childhood Ernest Hemingway was more interested in a fishing rod than a violin bow, much more interested in singing sea shanties than sitting third from the vicar in the choir. He would rather have his nose broken by a down-at-heel Chicago professional than anything else in the world.

Now after three wars, more scars than he dare count, a pocketful of wives, and some of the finest prose written in the last hundred years, Hemingway is still in trouble. But fortunately for us, the Hemingway audience, he still writes. Unable to sleep he has to write. From the moment he spots the sun in the morning he works hard until lunchtime. After a long drink he counts up his wordage for the day, puts on his cap and goes to war. Armed with his gun he marches through France, Italy, Africa, Spain and Montana. Sometimes his wife and a legion of cats go with him but usually Hemingway, the Hunter of mankind, is on his own.

This Hemingway is the gossip columnist's delight. Wherever he is, the newspapers are full of long drawn out and inaccurate accounts of what Mr. Hemingway said on waking up in the Taj Mahal, of the number of whiskeys Mr. Hemingway consumed in one sitting at the Red Lion and Sun, the swear words Mr. Hemingway used when he discovered that someone had mistaken his writing for that of Mr. Faulkner. He has been one of the leading 'ten most fascinating men' that leading Hollywood stars have met for the last twenty years. His picture is always to be found in a big circulation daily, usually bandaged or bearded. The legend still exists and will continue to do so until Hemingway shoots it down.

A shy adolescent with a large frame and a pleasant smile has matured into a fuzzy headed, big jowled tiger, whose growl is much worse than his bite. But nevertheless the gentleman who once said the rather stupid words, "so you're Hemingway... tough guy, huh?" and then pushed him in the face, can vouch for the bite. He was only able to hear the reply to his question thirty six hours later. Mr. Hemingway means business. He doesn't like competition, he is wickedly ambitious and above everything else a

fighter. He is in the ring with anyone who writes, even his own wife. 'Read everything', he once told a young writer, 'so you'll know what you have to beat'; and he won't stop until he has fought everyone and beaten them. The word vanity will be printed in black type across his heart. Hemingway will tell you after a few doubles that he has written more writers off the map than you could possibly imagine. Take it or leave it, but don't dispute it.

Still there is another side to this complex portrait of a 'tough guy'. The side which announced that death had come to all Gods and yet the man who went to early mass at a Roman Catholic church every Sunday and can quote large portions of the Bible. He prides himself on 'knowing black from white' but it has been written that Hemingway, the rock-like Mr. Hemingway, does not like to travel on a Friday, and is upset at the sight of a black cat. What are we to think?

His beliefs, however deep their roots, are beyond question and uncompromising. Indeed, he has devoted much of his time to making life difficult for himself, his battle is not a self infliction in the strict sense of the words but a toughly argued reasoning of the in's and out's of living. Your acceptance of Hemingway the man depends on your allegiances. It is either a bad fairy tale, or it is the tale of a man diseased, who has tried to define his disease and still can't find the answer. Mr. Phillip Young in his book on Hemingway claims that Freud answers the problem in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. But Hemingway's own attitude to psychiatry would seem to answer that. When asked the name of his analyst, Hemingway is supposed to have replied: 'Portable Corona No. 3.'

It is interesting to read what other authors think of him as a writer. Arthur Koestler claims Hemingway to be the greatest writer living today. As Mr. Young has pointed out, this statement seems slightly exaggerated when you realize that Mann, Eliot, Shaw and Faulkner were all alive when this statement was made. But John O'Hara went one better by declaring that after carefully considering all the literature written since 1616 in his opinion Hemingway is 'the outstanding author since the death of Shakespeare'. It seems reasonable to ask, 'What makes Shakespeare better?' The contender for this great title answered his admirer in the *Saturday*

(Continued on p. 4)

Style In The Cinema

By Kobita Sarkar

"STYLE" in the cinema is apt to be given such diverse interpretation that it is perhaps best to give a personal definition, however circumscribed, before proceeding. In this connection, "style" specifies, in its larger sense at least, a nationalistic approach to the cinema, but more especially an individualistic or distinctive manner of self-expression. It refers here also mainly to the director, who after all, by reason of his role in the making of a film, is, or should be, responsible for the total effect of it.

Even the most casual spectator can to-day differentiate between films from different countries by more than the language. An American film can be relied on to reproduce a pleasing general effect based on technical perfection, while the British rely for effect on sounder story material. The French have a suavity and polish that is rarely connected with story or technique, but in their general attitude to the film in particular and life in general. They also seem to have gifted to their films a poetic quality rarely met with elsewhere and which is very difficult to define. The Italians seem to vary between a stark realism that is often terrifying and a casual acceptance of daily occurrence, while the Swedes still capitalise on their penchant for imparting "atmosphere" by exploiting their natural scenery, often to the detriment of the film as a whole. The Russian outlook is coloured by political ideology, while the Germans seem to make solid but relatively unimaginative films. Japan manages to temper western modes with an oriental flavour, often producing something rich and strange which has endless potentialities. India still seems to labour under the impression that quantity is better than quality, and has too many models to achieve much originality. To all these categorical classifications there are the obvious exceptions.

In any case, to the general trend of the movies, it is the individual rather than the mass outlook which makes all the difference. For the individual by prescience and effort changes the course of the cinema. Frequently they have to contend with box-office considerations. But once they are able to override such handicaps, their contributions are of lasting value. The most ubiquitous of the film industries is the American, and here style seems to have crystallised most perceptibly. In the case of American comedy, for instance, there are recognisable talents like Capra and Preston Sturges — the one for his comforting humanity and the other for his cynical and clever underlying commentary. There is Chaplin, at the moment without a country, whose individuality has never been questioned, and on an infinitely lower plane there is de Mille, who perhaps has his finger closest to the audiences' pulse. The "thriller" in the hands of Alfred Hitchcock becomes a work of art and his reliance on technical bravado provides some of the most exciting moments in one's expe-

rience of cinema-going. Orson Welles is the person who is perhaps most conscious of the technical jugglery of the movies and his personality is so overwhelming, that even where he is associated with a film in a lesser capacity than that of director, he leaves his imprint on it, as happens in "The Third Man". John Ford who has contributed much to the cinema on many occasions, is perhaps known best for the fact that he raised the "western" from a "horse opera" level to a more classical one; while John Huston has a style so personal, that even the finest actors vie with each other for the honour of being directed by him. A lesser known, but interesting talent is Robert Rossen. In his more recent films, (though they are both more than a couple of years old), "All the King's Men" and "The Brave Bulls," he dealt with themes as divergent as a moral dictatorship and the demoralising effect of a fear complex, he managed to convey a point of similarity by his insistence on suggestivity. He leaves one with the feeling that what is implied is of greater significance than what is said. It is basically, however, the kind of style that appeals to an esoteric coterie, as the average moviegoer is not concerned with deeper significances.

The Italians are interesting, though often inconsistent. The most flamboyant talent, Rossellini, is always an uncertain factor. There might be the sheerest excellence of "Open City" or the variations between sound common sense and sentimental moralising as in "Europe 1951", which merely confuses the audience; while Blasetti, in many respects the most typical of Italy's directors (since he seems to have covered all phases of film making), seems to range between the colossal wastes of the super-spectacle like "Fabiola" and the charming, almost fantastic whimsy of "Four Steps in the Clouds". Even de Sica, who is normally more consistent, seems to be veering away from his central focus, though in his films till "Bicycle Thieves", he developed a style that is quite unique.

Often, as in the case of many of the French directors of note, there may be a wide difference in the subjects they choose, but they manage to co-relate them to their particular style and one welcomes evidences of this with interest when seeing their works. Perhaps one of the most interesting of the French directors of to-day is Marcel Carne, whose main theme is an obsession with fate. In England the films of Carol Reed have earned for him a niche of distinction. In India, there are many directors whose competence is cynically denied by the critic, but there are few who have the hall mark of originality.

There is an added fascination in this game of tracking down the personality who is invisible beyond a credit title, but who, in point of fact is the pervading spirit hovering over the production.

Style again, can be influenced by a person's original

pre-occupation before his assumption of the director's role. This might account for the fact that Dudley Nichols' "Mourning Becomes Electra" could not be saved from its overwhelming literary quality despite all camera artifice, for Nichols first and foremost, is an excellent scriptwriter. But few scriptwriters could have got away from the brooding spirit of Eugene O'Neill.

John Grierson has said that when a good director dies he becomes a cameraman. In the case of Rudolf Mate the statement may be inverted, for he is still the cameraman *par excellence*, unable to achieve that wider understanding necessary to view the medium as a whole. Then again, Robert Montgomery in "Lady in the Lake", by his interesting experiment of equating the main actor with the audience proved that the role of the star is only one element of a complex production, and by no means the whole of it, as the public is tempted to suggest. Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder, so long as they worked as a team had a highly individualistic approach. After their separation, Billy Wilder has made "Ace in the Hole" and Charles Brackett, "Niagara", neither of which, artistically at least, can be fully recognised with the style of "Sunset Boulevard" or "The Lost Weekend."

Style, again, can be an insidious thing. Carl Dreyer's "Day of Wrath" is a case in point. It dealt with the unusual and unpleasant theme of witchcraft and exuded a typical Scandinavian gloom, of the variety one comes across in their more popular literature. Its settings, reminiscent of Dutch paintings, were mathematically pleasing, but the film gained whatever prestige it did from the fact that Dreyer is one of the best known stylists in the European cinema, and the style undoubtedly was the only positive element. The same thing happens frequently in the American

cinema. Many directors with an European reputation are asked to repeat their successes by repeating themselves with American backgrounds and stars. This is generally impossible, though there is the freak case of Milestone, who followed "All Quiet on the Western Front" with "A Walk in the Sun", many years later, which showed an adaptability rare in the cinema. "The Halls of Montezuma" which followed, was more in the traditional succumbing to circumstance. The same has happened to others like Fritz Lang who, however, did produce something different in the sociological comment of "You Only Live Once" and the quietly frightening "Woman in the Window".

Most directors, and this is especially true of America, are competent craftsmen, unconcerned by the artistic polemics of the medium. They impart polish and occasionally finesse to their work, and then wait for the box-office to pay the dividends. A little extra effort might have raised the film from competent mediocrity to something worthwhile—personal and exciting, merely by reason of its original approach, even though there might be more obvious shortcomings as a result.

Finally, this is a subject on which the last word will perhaps never be said, for, with the exception of those who have an established reputation for a distinctive flair, others will always claim for their favourites an especial place, which their endeavours might not fully justify. It is true that external factors often make a film what it is, and that with the best of intentions, the director has failed to achieve what he set out to do. These factors seem to influence the finished product less in the case of those with a distinctive style, for if the style is sufficiently original, no matter who edits, writes or acts in the film, the dominating personality stands out of it, with all his excellences and faults highlighted.

Three Kinds Of Communist Colonies—II

by Professor Harold H. Fisher

We do not know accurately the depth and extent of the opposition to Soviet domination of the communist colonies. We know it is considerable. We know that communist policy is making a great revolution in the ways of life of the peoples of Eastern Europe. We cannot measure the satisfactions, the frustrations and the tensions this revolution causes. We have enough information to be sure that the communists have not solved the colonial problem in Eastern Europe, for they have not, and under their system cannot, satisfy the unquenchable aspiration for self-government and equality.

The communists have developed a third type of colony in the communist parties in various countries. These colonies differ in two ways from the national colonies that have existed for a very long time in most countries. They are, in the first place, more strictly controlled, more submissive to the ideology and

policies of the Soviet Motherland. And, second, they are dedicated to work to overthrow the government of the country in which they live and replace it with another government modelled upon and submissive to that of the Soviet Union. These Communist Party colonies are active either openly or underground in economically advanced as well as in underdeveloped countries. We are concerned at this session only with the underdeveloped areas, the colonies and semi-colonies whose problems the communists propose to solve by transforming these regions into what would be in fact, though not in name, colonies in the communist system.

For many years the communists have been telling the world that capitalism—the free enterprise system—is a world system. They have also been telling the world that their ultimate aim is to replace this system by a world system of communism.

Once upon a time it was thought that this revolution might spread as a result of internal developments in separate countries. Nowadays the communists believe that this revolution will be the result of conflicts, contradictions and rivalries within the world system of capitalism and that these conflicts and rivalries will cause the chain of the capitalist world front to break at its weakest links.

The weakest links, the communists have now come to believe, are not, as Marx argued, the advanced countries with the largest number of workers, but the underdeveloped countries. The communists claim that world capitalism cannot exist without controlling and exploiting the natural resources and the people of these underdeveloped colonial and semi-colonial areas. But world capitalism, they say, cannot maintain this control for two reasons: First, the capitalist countries will weaken each other by competition and war. Second, the underdeveloped countries will demand and fight for national independence of foreign political and economic control.

Communist strategy has two objectives and it employs two methods in the underdeveloped areas. The first objective is to promote the inevitable disintegration of the world capitalist system by aiding and abetting all movements for colonial independence and self-government everywhere in the world except in the Soviet colonial system. Stalin once explained it this way: "We are for the secession of India, Arabia, Egypt... because secession in this case means freeing these oppressed countries from imperialism, weakening the imperialist position, strengthening the revolution. We are against secession of the border regions from Russia, because secession in this case means enslavement to imperialism for the border regions, weakening the revolutionary power of Russia, strengthening the position of imperialism... Obviously the question of secession is determined by concrete international conditions, by the interests of the proletariat."

The interests of the proletariat are, of course, what the communists say they are and hence are, in fact, communist interests.

The second objective is to gain communist control of the regions that have gained independence from colonial status. This is to be done by turning against the leaders and parties that have been most influential in the struggle for independence and equality. It is necessary, one of the communist experts says in the wordy fashion of his party, to have a "ruthless exposure of the reactionary bourgeois nationalist ideology in its various forms—whether Kemalism or Gandhism, Zionism or Pan-Arabianism—" for this, he says, "quickens the process of the national and social liberation of the colonial and dependent peoples and foils the provocative designs of the imperialists and their agents."

Communist tactics are aimed at making it appear that those who do not accept communist leadership are in favour of the denial of liberty to colonies. There is no middle ground. They cite the case of Nehru whose campaign for the independence of India the communists once supported. Nehru, they say, has turned from a left wing exposé of imperialism

into "a nimble servant of two masters, Britain and the U.S.A., into an ally of the Indian princes and landowners, a bloody strangler of the progressive forces in India. But such," this communist writer concludes, "is the logic of the class struggle: there can be no 'middle position' between imperialism and democracy."

The communist victory in China is, of course, a victory for world communism, but, to borrow from the communist idiom, it is also pregnant with headaches for communist colonialism. The contradictions which the Marxists have found among the capitalist colonial powers are bound to reappear and create even greater tensions within the rigid confines of the communist system.

The Chinese communists are bound to generate their own colonialism as they have already shown signs of doing. They are bound also to break out of their present semi-colonial status with respect to the Soviet Union as their strength increases. The only possible way of escaping from these communist contradictions is for the two ruling centres—Russia and China—to accept a status of equality. But there can be no equality at the top of a monolithic system. The troubles of communist colonialism are considerable but they have only just begun.

It has often been said and cannot be said too often, that it is not enough to proclaim our championship of liberty against a new Soviet colonial slavery. Such declarations will not persuade people whose greatest grievance is racial discrimination and who are therefore more concerned about equality than liberty. It is not enough to stand up for the right of self-determination unless that is supplemented by the right of association on a status of equality for purposes of collective security and international cooperation in the fight against ignorance, poverty and disease, in developing and sharing more equitably the fruits of science and technology. Perhaps the most important thing for the preservation and extension of freedom is to recognize that these depend not only on the strength of the strongest member of the free world but on the strength of the weakest link in the free world system.

(Concluded)

Read Proceedings Of The Madras Conference

of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom
Containing
Important addresses, Seminar Reports, Resolutions. Obtainable from the

Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
BOMBAY 1.

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Ethics Of Controversy

THE American Committee for Cultural Freedom, issued, on March 4, 1954, a statement signed by a leading group of anti-Communist writers, scholars and scientists deploring the recent trends (which can be described as McCarthyist trends) of political discussion in the United States.

The Committee which issued the statement includes writers James T. Farrell, Arthur Koestler, John Don Passos, John Steinbeck and Thornton Wilder; Reinhold Niebuhr, Dean of the Union Theological Seminary; philosopher Sidney Hook; stage and screen director Eliza Kazan; Nobel Prize-winning biologist H. J. Muller; labour leaders David Dubinsky and A. Philip Randolph; college presidents Harry Gideonse, Charles S. Johnson, and George N. Shuster.

The American Committee have announced that they would hold a forum on the subject of "The Ethics of Controversy" on April 8. Speakers will be philosopher Sidney Hook; poet W. H. Auden; Daniel Bell, labour editor of Fortune Magazine; economist Henry Hazlitt; and author Will Herberg.

The text of the statement is as follows:

"In recent public controversy, Americans have made grave accusations against other Americans, including the charge of wilful treason. These accusations climax a long series of irresponsible public statements by men of all parties. Political opponents have been pictured as enemies of the democratic system. Harmful consequences of an action or policy have been considered sufficient evidence of evil intention. Attacks on motives and personal character have too often replaced criticism of opinion and policies. Relevant evidence has been ignored and suppressed. It is shocking to see how persons in positions of trust have thus abandoned logical persuasion as a form of discourse and have instead resorted to demagogic talents for the spreading of calumny and confusion.

"It is our duty as citizens and scholars, and as observers and opponents of Communism to call the attention of the public to the fact that the techniques of controversy presently employed by some speakers, writers, and public officials are dangerously similar to the techniques long used by the Communists to confuse and control their subject peoples. Those who now consciously and maliciously turn Americans against Americans are causing what may be irreparable damage to the strength we have derived from our unity. We do not know of anyone who can benefit from this state of affairs but the Communists.

"This destructive demagoguery can be resisted only if all of us insist that those who speak for us and to us respect the following standards of ethical controversy:

1. Nothing and no one is immune from criticism.
2. Everyone involved in a controversy has an intellectual responsibility to inform himself of the available facts.
3. Criticism should be directed first to policies, and against persons only when they are responsible for policies, and against their motives or

purposes only when there is some independent evidence of their character.

4. Because certain words are legally permissible, they are not therefore morally permissible.
5. Before impugning an opponent's motives, even when they legitimately may be impugned, answer his arguments.
6. Do not treat an opponent of a policy as if he were therefore a personal enemy, or an enemy of the country, or a concealed enemy of democracy.
7. Since a good cause may be defended by bad arguments, after answering the bad arguments for another's position, present positive evidence for your own.
8. Do not hesitate to admit lack of knowledge or to suspend judgement if evidence is not decisive either way.
9. Because something is logically possible, it is not therefore probable. "It is not impossible" is a preface to an irrelevant statement about human affairs. The question is always one of the balance of probabilities.
10. The cardinal sin, when we are looking for truth of fact or wisdom of policy, is refusal to discuss, or action which blocks discussion."

I. C. C. F. NEWS

DURING the months of February and March Mr. M. R. Masani paid visits to Madras, Delhi and Patna. In Madras, Mr. Masani met members of the I.C.C.F. group and discussed with them the problems of development of the I.C.C.F. work there. In Delhi also he met the I.C.C.F. members and also delivered a lecture entitled "The Social Significance of Bhoodan under the auspices of the Committee" with Mr. Eric da Costa in the chair. In Patna a garden party in Mr. Masani's honour was given by Pandit M. S. M. Sharma, Editor of *The Searchlight* and a dinner-party by Mr. Uday Pratap Sinha of Suraipura, Patna.

During these two months, Mr. Prabhakar Padhye, the Secretary of the Committee, visited Delhi, Lucknow, Patna, Calcutta and Nagpur. In Delhi, he was accorded a reception by Messrs Eric da Costa, Jaipal Sing, M.P., and Ram Singh, members of the Executive of the Committee which was attended by many prominent persons. The Art Asia Amateur Combine of New Delhi also held a reception for him.

At Lucknow, Mr. Padhye was the chief guest at the Annual Day of the Culture Circle of the Lucknow University when he spoke on "The Problem of Cultural Freedom in India." Acharya Jugalkishor, Vice-Chancellor of the University, presided.

With the help of Dr. Sampurnanand, member of the Executive Committee, Mr. Padhye was able to enrol many prominent persons as members of the Committee at Lucknow and establish a group there.

At Patna and Calcutta Mr. Padhye met many friends and members of the Committee and discussed the question of the expansion of the Committee there. At Nagpur, he addressed the group on "The Curse of Moral Neutralism."

Mr. H. R. Pardiwalla, member of the Administrative Board of the I.C.C.F. also visited Delhi during the first week of March. He was able to make many valuable contacts there.

Review

Stalin Versus Marx

By Dr. Klaus Mehnert (George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London. sh 8/6d).

ALL discerning students of Soviet affairs know that Stalin's ruthless rule with all its sadistic manifestations was, to a large extent, a result of an ingrained inferiority complex. Trotsky attributed this to a physical deformity. But people in this age of psychology, cannot be satisfied with so simple an explanation. Stalin's inferiority complex had more complex roots.

Stalin's colleagues in the Bolshevik Party were infinitely superior to him in intellectual achievements. They granted his organisational talents but had utter contempt for his intellectual efforts.

Stalin never forgot these insults. He took revenge by physically annihilating those responsible for them. But this was not enough to put him at rest. Nothing would satisfy him till he could establish his claim to intellectual eminence.

This, of course, could be done by ordering his hired scribes to glorify his intellectual achievements—but he aimed high. He set his heart on emerging as a Marxian master. He started with an excursion in the tantalising field of dialectics. Then he proceeded to revise the Marxian concept of history. Afterwards he ventured into the field of linguistics and finally he dared to redefine even the Master's economic doctrines.

In this book, Dr. Klaus Mehnert has elaborately examined the various changes that Stalin warily but steadily introduced in Marx's doctrine of history. He has tapped twelve elements of the change and has traced their origin and development. The point of departure is extremely interesting. The Revolution did not take place in the industrially developed countries as Marx had predicted but in backward Russia. Lenin and Trotsky tried to explain this lapse of history in terms of the unequal development of different sections of world capitalism, but Stalin saw in it the unique nature of the Russian people. The political expression of this could be found in his cry of 'Socialism in One Country.' The other elements like 'the eternal Russian language,' 'the supremacy of the slavs,' 'Russians as peacemakers' etc. followed, and Stalin easily went on to the remaining aspects like 'the return of personality' and 'the active role of the State.' The author has examined all these with great insight and information.

PRABHAKAR PADHYE

The Emperor's Clothes

By Kathcen Nott (William Heinmann, 1953, pp 328, sh 18/-).

FOR those among us for whom belief is still not a mere surrender of intelligence but something connected with at least the possibility of discussion; who cannot, with Tertullian or Sir Thomas Browne, believe the more, "because it is impossible;" nor even with the Queen in *Alice In Wonderland* perform one spiritual exercise before breakfast, by believing six impossible things, there is only one way in which they can give scholasticism, old or new, any meaning, and that is by trying to investigate its terms.

The Emperor's Clothes may be regarded as a defence of liberal and humanistic philosophy and faith, against the attempt to involve us in a return to dogmatic orthodoxy. Miss Nott believes that she has a case that can counter the view, the neo-scholastic claim, that humanism is dead. This view implies that the true cultural tradition of Europe was based on the philosophy of dogmatic theology; that round about the 17th century this tradition fell victim to an unfortunate accident, the rapid development of the physical and mathematical sciences, that, granted a sudden and unexpected enhancement of his practical powers, Man became inflated with pride; and that humanism, a man-centred philosophy, is simply the expression of this pride, this *hubris*.

Since the publication of *After Strange Gods*, Miss Nott complains, Mr. T. S. Eliot, in his prose works, has told us relatively little about sensibility, either Christian or poetic, but a great deal about how we ought to behave. This is understandable, since thought and feeling are narrowly circumscribed for him by dogmatic standards. The dislike of the scientific, that is, the critical and observational, spirit could be discerned in his work, even while it remained ostensibly literary.

"Mr. Eliot reminds me of a dignified landlady," writes Miss Nott in *The Emperor's Clothes*, sub-titled 'An Attack On the Dogmatic Orthodoxy Of T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Dorothy Sayers, C. S. Lewis and Others,' "who without a word retrieves the tribal ornaments from the cupboard where the guest has hidden them, and puts them back on the mantle-piece." The ornaments in question are the dogmas of Catholicism, and Miss Nott does not see why she should be expected to believe in them against the evidence of her senses and of her intelligence.

Miss Nott is reasonably anxious not to appear crudely progressive; the times are hardly propitious to her argument. She wishes, with the rest of us, to see established "a society in which charity is more important than power." Nor is there reason to quarrel with her when she defines charity as a particular kind of "sharply individual awareness," and when she attributes this characteristic to "the good artist and poet." But we are dumb-founded when she adds, "to whom therefore, dogmatic abstractions of any kind are special poison." Were the "dogmatic abstractions" of the Creed poison to Dante and Langland, to Tintoretto and Van Eyck, to the Mr. Eliot of *The Four Quartets*?

R.H.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Dr. Edith Sitwell is a metrical virtuoso and one very important factor in all her work is the conscious patterning of sounds. Moreover, Dr. Sitwell's is a use of imagery that transforms rather than represents the natural world. *Gardeners and Astronomers* (Macmillan, Sh 8/6) shows still that increasing command of cadence, which is poetic rhythm, suddenly evinced in her verse written during the war. There is an hieratic authority in her present-day work, and we see her recognizing more adequately her own remarkable sensuous capability.

*

A logical appreciation of De Sade is closely linked with important changes in human behaviour, concerned not only with the sanctioning of moral anarchy but with the end of hypocrisy. Designed to give contemporary readers some first hand knowledge of one of the most interesting and controversial minds in literature, M. Leonard de Saint-Yves in his *Selected Writings of De Sade* (Peter Owen, Sh 30/-) has brought together extracts from his most famous works as well as some lesser known but equally important writings. Social, moral and sexual problems are discussed, in a style almost Voltairian, with absolute freedom for nothing, however incredible, lies outside the experience or imagination of De Sade.

*

In his study of *Ernest Junger* (Bowes and Bowes, Sh 6/-), Mr. J. P. Stern produces some splendid sentences of approval when he takes the writings of his subject to pieces, examining the various "existential" moments of which they are composed; yet going a stage further and reducing these brilliant impressionist effects to their technique, he finds abstraction reaching a dead-end; language being used with unparalleled cruelty; and the whole feeling to be the inhuman one of contempt, not the fertile one of hatred.

*

Into the life of 15-year old Helene, a withdrawn, lovely, lonely child of a French provincial town, who lives with her widowed father who understands her not, comes Tamara, a fascinating, perceptive, egoist with a strong homosexual streak allied to a brutal determination to dominate and hurt. From the bitter-sweet mazes of this entanglement Helene can find no escape, until the day comes when Tamara in her lust for power overplays her hand, and at last Helene can say, "this love of ours had reached its limit. I was at last free." In the person of Tamara, Made-moiselle Françoise Mallet has created in her *Into The Labyrinth* (Secker and Warburg, sh 10/6) a character on the grand scale, a frightening exposi-

tion of a bewildering complex of perversion, passion and pathos.

*

It was not salaciousness but the urgency of old age that led John Ruskin to cut away the formalities of human relationships. Thus, barely 10 days after his chance encounter with Kathleen Olander in the National Gallery, he wrote her, "Darling Kathleen, there never was such a sweet as you are." Now collected for the first time under the title *The Gulf of Years* (George Allen and Unwin, Sh 10/6), hitherto unrecorded account of Ruskin's last great love comes to life in his letters to Kathleen Olander.

To The Editor

Sir,

Your readers might be interested to know that the *Tribune*, the Bevanite weekly of London, has published the following unconditional apology to the Democratic Research Service on the front page of its issue dated 5th March 1954:

"DEMOCRATIC RESEARCH SERVICE

Tribune published on February 12 an article by Ian Mikardo entitled "U.S. Spies in India" making allegations against an organisation called the Democratic Research Service.

We stated that the organisation was run by an ex-Communist, that it was financed by the United States Information Service and that its function was to maintain a dossier of any Indian firms which did business with Communist countries.

This information was obtained from a source which Ian Mikardo believed to be reliable. But we now find that all the allegations contained in the article were incorrect and without any foundation.

In particular, the Democratic Research Service has no financial assistance from the U.S.I.S. and is strongly opposed to McCarthyism. It was set up by a number of prominent Indians and is devoted to the spread of democratic values and information.

Both Ian Mikardo and *Tribune* deeply regret that we should have been responsible for publishing information which was incorrect and misleading and we are glad to make our full apologies to the Democratic Research Service."

Yours truly,
Shankar Shetty,
Secretary,

Democratic Research Service.

With Many Voices

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

—Tennyson.

"The essayist Walter Savage Landor, whose death in 1864 puts him beyond the ken of Congressional investigating committees, once said: "When a small man casts a long shadow it is a sign the sun is going down."

—Anon. *New York Times* March 8, 1954.

"We had met often since then—mostly in Gandhiji's camp where my friend (M. R. Masani) was a favourite because of his refreshing habit of calling a spade a spade, and not diamonds and pearls. This great quality which endeared him to Mahatma Gandhi is finding remarkable expression today in his laudable activity in connection with the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom which I would appropriately characterise as providing strong and stable foundations for the structure of Indian parliamentary democracy."

—M. S. M. Sharma, Editor of the *Searchlight*.
Quoted in the *Searchlight*, March 11, 1954.

"Delhi, at the present moment, was not a good example to the rest of India or anybody."

—Mr. Nehru. *Amrit Bazar Patrika*. March 8, 1954.

"We (the communists) love every blade of Indian grass," they declared. So do the locusts, so much so indeed that in their devouring devotion to their native soil, they swallow it up all.

—Mr. S. N. Agarwal. *Times of India*,
March 16, 1954.

Speaking at the Government College for Women here today, Dr. Rao said that girls should refuse to marry men in Western clothes."

—*Times of India*, February 28, 1954.

"Hands Across the Himalayas."

—Title in *The New Age*, February 28, 1954.

"The PSP has never recognised that the label Leftist really represents the real article."

—*Janata*, March 7, 1954.

INDIAN COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM

127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
BOMBAY 1.

Please enrol me as a member of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom. I remit the annual membership fee of Rs. 3/- by.....

Name :

Address :

Date : Signature

"Our greatest misfortune in these days has been that literacy is being confused with knowledge."

—Dr. S. N. Sahay, Vice-Chancellor, Patna University, quoted in *Searchlight*, March 8, 1954.

"It is a matter of pride for us that an Indian was privileged to assist at the birth of democratic freedom in the Sudan."

—Mr. Nehru, *Times of India*, March 1, 1954.

"In India, temporarily and psychologically, we are more averse to Communism than people in the U.S.A."

—Mr. Hanumanthaiya, *Times of India*,
March 1 1954.

"True friends do not ask others to do what they would never themselves."

—Dr. Syngman Rhee, quoted in *Times of India*,
March 1, 1954.

"Most of our troubles are those that do not happen and about which we worry."

—Mr. St. Laurent, quoted in *The Times of India*,
March 1, 1954.

"The time has come when in the very interests of the Constitution India should follow the Australian example and ban communism for good or evil and prevent it by every constitutional weapon open to the state from demoralising the patriotic forces in the land."

—*Searchlight* March 10, 1954.

"To Communists democratic forms and procedure, as Czechoslovakia provided, are at best a convenient Trojan horse."

—*Times of India*, March 4, 1954.

"Today in England, the Communist Party has a very small proportion of workers and a very high proportion of "intellectuals," artisans and members of the upper and middle classes who may be described as having unco-ordinated guilty consciences."

—Woodrow Wyatt, Labour M.P. London quoted in *Bombay Sentinel*, March 10, 1954.

✓ "Eastern Europe is littered with the dead bodies of democratic socialists who thought it was possible to co-operate with Communists."

—Woodrow Wyatt, Labour, M.P., London, quoted in *Bombay Sentinel*, March 10, 1954.

"I have heard many speeches on Bhodan and have read quite a few articles on this subject. But I must confess that I have yet to come across a portrayal of the movement as convincing and graphic as the one presented by Mr. Masani."

—"Beachcomber" in *Thought*, March 20, 1954.