

Let Us Modernise Our Thinking

M. R. Masani, M.P.

THE result of the past budgets of the last twenty years has been that this country has made about the slowest and lowest economic progress, except for Burma, even in the background continent of Asia. Twenty years of these policies have reduced this country to stagnancy and bankruptcy. Our *per capita* income at constant rates, taking 1960 values as the base, has been more or less stagnant. The figure for 1960-61 was Rs. 307 and, by the same token, for 1968-69 it is Rs. 319, a piffling rise.

Inflation, meanwhile, has been taking its toll. Over the last eight years prices have risen by 73 per cent; during the last twelve months by seven per cent. Specially during the last few weeks, the rate of inflation has become galloping. From November to January, which are the latest figures we have, inflation was proceeding at the rate of 15 per cent per year. It is against this back log and pace of inflation that we have to judge this budget.

The budget claims certain virtues. Let us examine to what extent they bear scrutiny. One is improving the lot of the common man, which would come first; secondly, increasing savings; thirdly, diffusion of ownership of economic power; and, fourthly, providing employment opportunities.

So far as improving the lot of the common man is concerned, perhaps the only little feature of the budget which may be of some use to some middle class people is what has been called the raising of the exemption limit of income-tax. So far those who did not have incomes over Rs. 4,500 to Rs. 4,800 a year, which varies according to marriage, children, etc., were exempted from income-tax. In place of that, a piffling rise from Rs. 4,800 to Rs. 5,000 has been brought about. And for this a great amount of credit has been taken and some newspapers have been foolish enough to give headlines to this trifling concession.

I see nothing in this budget that will, in the coming twelve months, improve the lot of the common man. Against this, we have put a tremendous burden of crores of rupees of additional taxation in the form of

excise levies and increase of railway freights. The increase of railway freight means that every commodity except milk and foodgrains, which have been released under pressure, used by the common people will have now to bear the cost of additional freight which will be passed on to the consumer.

On top of this come the excise duties. These excise duties, as we know, are on a wide range of commodities like aerated waters, sugar, cigarettes, tea, coffee, kerosene, and so on. Somebody has estimated that, except for a very small amount, which might be on air-conditioners and refrigerators, the bulk of the indirect taxation this year falls on the lower middle class and the poor people of this country.

The biggest burden on the poor consumer is going to be deficit finance. The Planning Commission itself has admitted that over a period of five years deficit finance should not exceed Rs. 850 crores. In the first two years of the Fourth Plan, that target is almost being approached, leaving nothing for the remaining three years. I say that it is an inflationary budget of the worst kind and the cumulative effect of excise duties, railway freight and the printing of currency notes is going to impose a burden of several hundred crores of rupees on the poorest section of our people.

Now I come to savings and investments. All I would say is that, as far as I can make out, this budget is going to dampen further the very low average rate of 8 per cent of savings of our national product which we have managed in the last twenty years. I say this because this budget transfers another Rs. 170 crores from the pockets of the saver and the investor to the sterile pockets of the Government. This is called "mobilising resources." This is a beautiful phrase that the Marxists have coined. What does this mobilisation consist of? It consists of this—that a rupee which in the private sector earns a return of 7 paise earns in the State sector, the governmental sector, only 2 paise! That is the wretched record of our State sector. Every rupee of the Rs. 170 crores that could have earned 7 paise for the nation is going to earn 2 paise for us, that is, a net loss of 5 paise per rupee of the tax-payers' money. This is not mobilisation but demobilisation of resources, pouring them into the gutter.

Then I come to the diffusion of ownership. We all agree with the idea that economic ownership and power should be spread as widely as possible. That was Gandhiji's thought. But this budget, far from diffusing ownership, places more of it in the hands of those who do not pay taxes and accumulate fortunes in black money.

Now I come to employment opportunities. The budget has some gimmicks to create employment, as if employment can be created by allocating funds in a budget. Rs. 27 crores are put aside for various schemes. They are good. I have no objection to rural welfare schemes or if roads are built and wells are dug. But to think or say that by providing some money in the budget the unemployment problem is going to be solved would amount to this that we are throwing dust in our own eyes. It may give employment to a few lakhs of people for a few years. That is all. It cannot solve the unemployment problem permanently.

Mrs. Gandhi thinks, she has said so, that she is in the company of "forward looking people." I wish she was, because then I can see a bright future for our country. Alas, she does not know that the fact is that she is not. She seems to be living, according to her budget and her policies, in the era of the kind of Marxism that young people like her and others picked up in the Universities in England in the middle thirties. In the middle thirties, it was fashionable to be a Marxist, and all young people naturally picked this up as no doubt she did also. I suggest to her that it is time she moved from what she learnt in Cambridge or in London in middle thirties. Things have moved since then. Socialism the world over has changed. Take countries like West Germany that practise socialism because now, Mr. Willy Brandt, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, is the Chancellor of West Germany. If you examine the programmes of the Swedish socialist party or the German socialist party, you will find that this kind of budget, this kind of planning has no place in their make-up.

I will read a passage from the programme of the German Social Democratic Party which sounds like a passage from the programme of the Swatantra Party:

"Free choice of consumer goods and services, free choice of working place, freedom for employers to exercise their initiative and free competition are essential conditions of a Social Democratic economic policy."

It goes on to say:

"The Social Democratic Party, therefore, favours a free market wherever free competition really exists. As much competition as possible, as little planning as necessary."

I could go on reading from the Swedish socialist manifesto. I commend to Mrs. Gandhi a little book, *20th Century Socialism* by Mrs. Rita Hinden, a woman socialist in England. Above all, I would like her to read this book which I am showing to her: if she will look at it—*The Unperfect Society* by Djilas, a great communist. He was a communist till recently. He has learnt, because he is moving with the times, and he says what I am trying to say to Mrs. Gandhi: if she would listen:

"The philosophical foundations of Marxism laid down in the mid-nineteenth century and systematized by the eighteen-seventies, have remained in essence unchanged, while the modern sciences have been pushing forward inexorably."

What does he say? He says that the choice before the world is Lenin on the one side and Gandhi on the other. He was a great Marxist-Leninist and he describes in his book how Lenin was his first prophet and how he turns to Gandhiji.

And what do we do? We form a committee to celebrate the centenary of Lenin, distinguished by fellow-travellers, and build up this man who openly proclaimed his belief in lying, deceit, murder and treachery for the benefit of the Communist Party. We try to elevate him in this country with the patronage of our Prime Minister, and at the same time we turn our backs on Mahatma Gandhi.

This budget does not represent 20th century democratic socialism. This budget is a reflection of the kind of decadent, reactionary State capitalism which has been so far practised by despots like Nkrumah of Ghana and Soekarno of Indonesia. I was in Ghana for a meeting in January. People said to me: "Do not talk of socialism here. It is a dirty word, because Nkrumah has vulgarised this word so much that people will not look at anyone who calls himself a socialist." Do we want that day to come in this country, and it will come if this goes on. People will spit at the word "socialism." It is a good word which I have professed for many years and I still accept the objectives. The objectives of socialism are good objectives. They are a classless, equal and free society. But, unfortunately, the methods of socialism are the slowest and the most impossible methods to get to those objectives.

Therefore intelligent socialists like the Germans, the Swedes and the British discard them as rusty, outdated weapons and take up new weapons with which the German socialists, the Swedish and others have taken their countries forward.

If the Prime Minister really wants to modernise the country, I can assure her that people like me will be with her. But before she can modernise the country, she will have to modernise her own thinking, and the thinking of many of her colleagues.

Mr. B. K. Nehru—I will quote one Nehru to another, because it may make a bigger dent than I can hope to—has put his finger on the spot in discussing the mentality of the kind of socialists sitting there. He says:

"There is ignorance about the nature of modern wealth. Modern wealth is totally different in kind to traditional wealth; these two kinds of wealth are not created the same way, their social consequences are entirely different and the manner therefore

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Laos & Cambodia-Communist Infiltration

Adam Adil

PRESENTLY, Laos presents a classical example of communist aggression and treachery. Taking advantage of the weak military position of the Laotian government, communist North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops nearly overran the Plain of Jars and inflicted a near defeat on government forces. The democratic world was shocked but was helpless to come to the rescue of Laotian government. In the United States even well-meaning people were afraid that while America was on the verge of pulling back from Vietnam she might get involved more deeply in the Laotian crisis. The American anxiety to be out of trouble is natural, particularly when the rest of the democratic world does not actively cooperate in America's defence of democracy against communist aggression in South-East Asia. But that raises a relevant question: Will the South-East Asian countries be allowed to be easy victims of communist betrayal once the United States pulls out of Vietnam and Britain withdraws its troops and disbands its bases east of Suez by 1971? This is not to suggest that America or Britain should be the only defenders of democracy whenever it is threatened by communist totalitarianism. In fact it is the primary duty of Asian democracies like Japan, India, Ceylon and Malaysia to be concerned with the fate of democratic regimes in South-East Asian countries and take concerted steps to protect them from communist threats and subversions. The events in Laos have made this task more urgent. It would be fatal if we are oblivious of what is happening in Laos.

In the wake of their victories on the Plain of Jars the Communists swiftly captured Xieng Khonang, then moved south and east towards the government position at Muong Soui. It was easy for the communist forces to neutralise Muong Soui's airstrip and make reinforcement impossible. The 100-man government garrison had no alternative but to pull out under the cover of darkness.

It was quite clear that the government forces in the Plain of Jars were not in a position to hold on for long in the face of determined attacks by communist forces which were superior in number as well as in equipment. The capital, Vientiane was already pessimistic about the capacity of government troops. This pessimism was understandable. It was a known fact that Hanoi had 50,000 troops in Laos — it had around 16,000 in the Plain of Jars. Besides, the communist Pathet Lao itself had over 50,000. Against this formidable force, the government had only 63,000 regulars and another 10,000 Meo guerrilla fighters under General Vang Pao.

Till now, the war between Communists and government forces was of a seesaw pattern. The Plain of Jars had changed hands many times — sometimes government forces occupying it and at other times Communists seizing it. In other areas also each side knew the extent to which it could proceed against the other. In other words, each side knew its limitations and observed a sort of code of its own.

But this time, however, there was genuine fear that the communists might attempt more than they had done in the past. It was feared that they would move West and cut the road link between Vientiane and the royal capital of Luangprabang. If this happened, it would seriously jeopardise the position of government — in fact major part of Laos would be at the mercy of the communist forces. It was also feared that the Communists might drive south with new targets in view, which would be equally serious. In this case, particularly vulnerable would be Sam Thong, headquarters of the U.S. aid operations in Northern Laos, and Long Cheng, a secret base for guerrilla operations conducted by the C.I.A. From the strategic point of view, the latter was very important as it successfully conducted operations against Communists which could affect the fortunes of war in Laos. It was here that the Laotian guerrilla soldiers were trained by American personnel in a variety of technical war activities. It was a township of 40,000 people — Asians and Americans — all dedicated to one purpose — the winning of war. Neither the Laotians nor the Americans could afford the falling of this strategic place in the hands of the enemy. Hence there was uneasiness because of the possibility of enemy attack.

At the first instance, Hanoi was keen on the reconquest of the Plain of Jars for two reasons: Firstly, it provides the North Vietnamese a much bigger buffer around its frontier, secondly, it protects the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which serves as a life line for communist war in South Vietnam. According to the information available, much greater traffic passes through the Trail now than at any time before, and North Vietnam would not like this traffic to be disrupted. The U.S. is, however, determined to resort to most concentrated B-52 attacks on the Trail as well as near the Plain of Jars. Naturally Hanoi was provoked to declare, "The American Imperialists and their valets in Laos must be held responsible for the consequences following their intensification of the war."

It is not only Laos that the North Vietnamese had infiltrated into in a massive way. Cambodia too was a similar victim of their infiltration. The deposed Cambodian Head of the State, Prince Norodom

Sihanouk, might have been uneasy at the infiltration by the North Vietnamese. In fact in Cambodia, if reports were correct, there were nearly 40,000 North Vietnamese troops. While the Prince could fulminate against the Americans even over minor issues he showed his helplessness at the infiltration by the North Vietnamese. This was rather strange because the Prince was not a naive person not to understand the implications of such a massive infiltration into his territory.

The latest developments in Cambodia which have resulted in the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk while he was away in Moscow shows that the Cambodians — especially the army officers — were not happy at Prince's policies. There was seething discontent against Prince's near connivance with the North Vietnamese and the Chinese. Therefore, the first act of the new government headed by Mr. Chen Hing was to take up implicitly anti-North Vietnamese and anti-Chinese attitude.

The new Cambodian Prime Minister, General Lon Nol has asked for the return of the International Control Commission to his country "to put an end to the occupation of Cambodian territory" by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong armed units. The Commission had adjourned *sine die* six months ago by its own unanimous decision following Prince Norodom Sihanouk's call for its withdrawal because of the financial burden of contributing to its maintenance.

But the new Cambodian Premier has appealed to

the two co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conferences: Russia and Britain, to ask the Commission to start functioning again. It is doubtful if Russia would respond as General Lon Nol's move is against the North Vietnamese. Russia has already taken a negative attitude to the question of reconvening the Geneva Conference to consider the Laotian situation. It is true that the International Control Commission can on its own, return to Cambodia and start functioning. But the important question is whether Poland which is a member of the Commission along with India, can agree to an anti-North Vietnamese move.

The Cambodian Premier, General Lon Nol cannot be unaware of these hurdles in the way of the I.C.C. He cannot be also unaware that I.C.C. even if it starts functioning in a normal way, will not be much effective in securing the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces and Viet Congs from Cambodian territory. Therefore, the primary motive behind the moves of Cambodian Premier in relation to International Control Commission, is to win the world sympathy for the Cambodian cause.

It is, therefore, imperative for the democratic world to realise that both Laos and Cambodia are seriously endangered by the infiltration and aggression by the North Vietnamese and Viet Congs. While the United States is naturally reluctant to involve itself more deeply in the South-East Asian problems, it is the primary duty of Asian democracies to come to the rescue of Laos and Cambodia in their hour of national peril. Will the Asian democracies rise to the occasion?

BOOKS RECEIVED

1. *The Two Chinas* by Daniel Lyons, S.J., Published by Free News & Feature Service, C-74, Sujjan Singh Park, New Delhi 3. Price: Re. 1.
2. *Glimpses of To-day's India* by B. Shamsunder Rao. Published by R. S. Shaha Typewriting Institute, Fort Road, Gulbarga.
3. *The Soviet Union*, Published by Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow.
4. *Challenges to Secularism*, by A. B. Shah. (Second edition) Published by Nachiketa Publications, Sleater Road, Bombay 7. Price: Rs. 16/-.
5. *Studies in Indian Foreign Policy*, Edited by K. P. Misra, Published by Vikas Publications, 5, Daryaganj, Ansari Road, Delhi 6. Price: Rs. 34/-.
6. *Khushwant Singh's India*. Edited by Bahadur Singh. Published by India Book House, 249, D. N. Road, Bombay 1. Price: Rs. 5/-.

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in which society has to treat them must also be wholly different.

"All the ways of growing rich before the industrial revolution involved the exploitation by the strong of the weak, by the privileged few of the unprivileged majority. Wealth was limited; the rich could not grow rich without robbing the poor. No wonder then that in a society such as ours where the economy has only fractionally moved into the industrial area and which has hardly yet been touched by the present scientific and technical revolution, the minds of the people should be attuned to the concept that there is something immoral in the ownership of wealth."

This is what the budget is based on. Then he goes on to say:

"Modern wealth is not limited: it is capable of being increased without any limit whatsoever." That is, without exploiting anybody. This is what I am trying to say to the Prime Minister. Let us all modernise our own thinking. Let us keep up with what is happening in the rest of the world. Let us not stick to what we learnt thirty or forty years ago.

—From a speech in Parliament

Some Suggestions

Jayaprakash Narayan

LIKE all other backward countries, this country too has had two problems, namely, those of change and development. In regard to both a mistaken notion has been persisting since the very beginning. Gandhiji sought to rectify this notion but he did not get enough time to do so. This mistaken notion was, and is, that change and development can be effected through state power. Only Gandhiji knew the limitations of state power and so he added to it the flavour of *jana shakti* (people's power). At the same time he also knew that the traditional spontaneous initiative of the masses in this country had been deliberately killed in the British period. That is why, even after Independence, an awakened, organised and effective people's power was found wanting in this country. People's minds were full of dependence upon a government which they called their *mai-bap* (father and mother) rather than by a spirit of self-help and self-reliance.

In pre-British days, India had thousands of years' old village institutions and caste *panchayats*; it had guilds (called *shreshthis*) of traders and artisans in towns. There was a long line of saintly orders (of *sadhus, sants and bhikkhus*) and of educational and spiritual institutions (*rishikulas, gurukulas and viharas*), all independent of state and government and relying upon popular funds and support. It were these institutions which ensured, amidst political upheavals, the smooth flow of the nation's lifestream in its varied rivulets. During British rule, these institutions broke or languished; they became ineffective. This was in Gandhiji's mind when he planned to awaken and organise people's power. He thought of mobilising the total Indian population for the sake of national reconstruction, but then his dream vanished with him. It is now 22 years since he departed. Vinobaji has done something on the lines pointed out by Gandhiji but a lot remains to be done.

What are the limitations, you may ask, of state power, in the context of change and development. One is that change can not be effected by mere commands, by law or by payments. For change, people must be persuaded; their attitudes must change. We have so many laws on our statute books pertaining to untouchability, prohibition, dowry, land reforms, maximum interest admissible on loans, minimum wages, income tax, price control, etc., but what part of them has been implemented? Slogans echo in the air; down with capitalism, but capitalism dwells in the minds of our common people. Socialism can not be established by law, for it is a way of life, a value system, which can be instituted not by legal coercion, but by univer-

sal educative efforts, which can be made by voluntary organisations and volunteers alone.

In regard to development too, the situation is similar and this is now admitted by those in authority. They confess that their development schemes did not meet with expected success because people's cooperation did not come forth. The crucial question, however, is not of people's cooperation as of awakening the people's initiative. If this initiative is aroused, the people themselves will come forward to make development effort and the question will then become, not of *people's cooperation*, but of *government's cooperation* with the people. Initiative of the people, on the other hand, can not be aroused by commands and commanders, or by plans made at the top and the money allotted for the plans. This was amply demonstrated by the community development plans which robbed the villages of whatever little mutual cooperation they had preserved in their communities. This work too can be done only by volunteers who go to the people to serve them, and hear before they tell.

Thus, both for development and change, hundreds of thousands of volunteers are called for, but where are such youth and citizens who would spare even their leisure hours for the task of national reconstruction? The ugly face of politics has been unveiled but that alone seems to hold attraction; politics is what people talk about and what they aspire, as if the future of the country depended on it.

This decade at the outset has given a warning that if the rates of growth and change are not quickened, the country will be doomed. Even with a successful working family planning programme, our present population of 540 million will grow into 665 million by 1980. Our present number of unemployed, which is 13 million, will be more than doubled, to 27 million, by the end of the fourth five year plan. These two figures are sufficient warning that we have no time to escape our national obligations by passing them on to the administrators.

I would like to submit a few words in the context of political challenges and possibilities to the political leaders and those in authority. In 1967, the Lok Sabha asked the Central Government to appoint an all-party committee to find a cure for the disease of floor-crossing. This committee was constituted under Shri Y. B. Chavan's leadership and it submitted its report early last year. As a member of that Committee and as a citizen, I insist that the Government must bring a Bill in the next session of Parliament to implement the recommendations embodied in that report.

Some amendments in the People's Representation Act seem to be necessary. Election has become very expensive and is day by day becoming more so. This has constantly been pointed out but nothing has been done about it. Many years ago late President Rajendra Prasad drew the attention of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru towards this fact. Immoral practices in elections are also on the increase. As the number of parties grows, among other evils, one more evil is added that frequently, if not usually, legislators are elected on minor percentages of the electorate. There are some other defects too, discovered in the election system. This is no occasion to suggest remedies for all those defects but I will definitely like to suggest that the Government of India or Lok Sabha must, without further delay, appoint a high power committee for amending the Act. The Committee should submit its report soon, so that the Act can be amended before the next general elections.

Another problem is becoming clear day by day, for which too an amendment of the Constitution seems to be obligatory. I have already spoken of political instability in more than half the states in our country. The same situation has now arisen at the Centre due to the split in the Congress Party. With the support of some opposition parties, at the moment, the Union Government is not expected to fall soon, but we cannot ignore the fact either that such a thing can happen any day. Then if do not arm ourselves with constitutional and institutional provisions in our Constitution today, to meet such an emergency, the instability at the Centre, together with general instability in the states, can lead to dangerous political and economic consequences. We do have a provision for President's Rule, but the Constitution is not clear about the shape which this Rule should take in the Centre.

An all-party Council for National Conventions was called to discuss the situation arising out of the general elections in 1967, in which all parties, except Swatantra, were represented. This Council suggested, *inter alia*, that an advisory President's Council should be constituted at the Centre, charged with the task of advising the President on such complex but important functions as the imposition of President's Rule over the states; dissolution of state assemblies; or appointment of governors. The Advisory Council, it was made clear, was not intended in any way to limit the authority of the Union Government, but only to clear the doubt or suspicion arising among the people that the party in power at the Centre may sometime use the governors indirectly to serve its partisan interests.

Some suggestions regarding the composition of this President's Council were also given which included that the Vice-President should be its Convener. Its members should be the Prime Minister or, in his absence, his nominee, an ex-chief justice of the Sup-

reme Court and five other persons authentically known for their integrity and impartiality. These five persons should be nominated by either an electoral college of speakers of state assemblies presided over by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, or by the President, but in consultation with, and the consensus of, the leaders of various parties in Parliament.

It seems to be evident that in the present political situation, such a provision has become absolutely necessary. The suggestion I have spoken of is not perfect or final. It is only a pointer to the problem. During the two years, since this suggestion was made, unexpected falls have come in our political situation. So, it need not be stressed again and again that concrete steps must soon be taken in this direction.

Further, I have asked that Article 263 of the Constitution be amended and a Constitutional Council should be formed to settle disputes between the states and the Centre. Let me clarify the difference between the two Councils. The Constitutional Council shall settle disputes and its decisions shall be binding like those of the high courts. The President's Council shall be an advisory body though, in my opinion, it should be obligatory in order to strengthen its hands that its advice tendered to the President from time to time be published for general information.

I have some more suggestions to make in the present situation which are minor but seem to me important. The first is about administrative reforms. Since we became independent, the administrative system we inherited from the British has been bitterly criticised by everyone, from Jawaharlalji to Indiraji. To call it outdated is the least one says about it. But what is amazing is that though several committees have recommended reforms in this system, like Soul, it remains unchanged. Whenever a question is raised about it, a Committee is constituted, which in due course submits a scholarly report and then that report is filed. Only the other day the AIR reported a recently-elected chief minister's declaration that he was seriously considering the appointment of an administrative enquiry committee in his state. Even if this gentleman remains at his post until the committee's report is received, I have no doubt, its recommendations will meet the same fate as of the numerous other committees, from Appleby Committee onwards. The need is not to study this question repeatedly, but to bring about boldly the necessary fundamental reforms on the basis of available studies and experiences without delay. With my experience gathered in serving the people, I can say without hesitation that if this is not done quickly, the country's development, the implementation of the best policies of the government, the social welfare schemes, all will remain tardy.

My other suggestion is that development works be kept aloof from political uncertainties. It is my

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Task Of Radicalism

B. N. Datar

MR MAYHEW'S book* is addressed to answer some questions which intelligent supporters of any political party in a live democracy may pose. Using his own experience as a guide he writes semi-autobiographically as a working politician of the British Labour Party about what the party sought to achieve before the war and what it actually achieved when entrusted with real power, the difference in approach between the two dominant political parties in the U.K., Labour and Tories, the changes needed in them to face the tasks of the future and so on. In doing so the author, while recognising the struggle between conscience and party discipline, accepts the limitations on objectivity imposed on a practicing politician and yet is prepared to reveal failures in the hope that he may 'sleep well at nights but on a comparatively humble bed.' The result has been 'a ruthless reappraisal of ourselves (M.P.s) and our own role.'

Mr. Mayhew opens the account, naturally enough, with the influences that operated on him in the formative years in his home, his school and his university including those of G.D.H. Cole whom he considers as his mentor. He then describes the impracticable solutions to the problems of the day born out of his youthful exuberance, his encounters with the more senior among the Labour Party whose approach was then considered utopian though mixed with a certain measure of pragmatism. In his search for a solution of a more egalitarian society he discards the Russian model particularly because of its stifling atmosphere for development of the individual. He is equally impartial in his attack on race relations in the U.S.A. The implied criticism of other systems of Government then prevailing leads one to expect an attempt at self-justification, but a closer reading of the book dispels this impression.

Mr. Mayhew's acquaintance with serious politics began in the 'thirties when the British countryside was recovering from the effects of the depression. The descriptions he has given of farm workers and Welsh miners of those days are poignant in spite of the protection which the latter had of trade unions along with the rest of the industrial labour force; the main cause in either case was the dread of unemployment. The sight of the entire community living on doles can indeed be depressing. By the time Mr. Mayhew became a mature politician in the 'sixties the situation changed beyond recognition. The economy was working at the full employment level. Both urban and rural

wage rates had considerably improved and differentials between them narrowed. With rise in living standards, workers, irrespective of where they were employed, started experiencing crises of expectations and aspirations justified in part by rising levels of productivity, farm or non-farm. While this has been the phenomenon in all advanced countries, Mr. Mayhew gives a big chunk of the credit for this to the post-war Labour Governments which endeavoured to introduce welfare policies deliberately. He does not withhold, however, what is due to the Tories who if they so desired could have soft-pedalled reforms. The result has been the blurring of distinction in domestic policies between the parties and the special constituencies from which each derived electoral support. Post-war Parliamentary debates on such issues have assumed the character of mock fight because both Government and Opposition have in the party a sufficient number of 'middle of the road' M.P.s whose voice may count. This does not mean, however, that there are no issues which divide this group and make the two political elements in it side with the more extreme sections in their respective parties. By and large, however, Mr. Mayhew's conclusion is that "M.P.s do not effectively influence the executive, cannot effectively represent the views of their constituents and are prevented from voting sufficiently often in accordance with their conviction".

This discussion brings Mr. Mayhew to the central theme of the book: the changes which are needed in the British political system in order to cope with the challenge of the future. It is here that he examines different alternatives like the establishment of a third party carved out of the two major ones, the American system of the President and his executive and the like. His verdict is in favour of something which could be evolved from within the British system itself. He trusts that the Crowther Commission which is currently examining these issues will come out with an appropriate solution. He also expects that the Commission will examine the question of how the standing of the M.P.s could be improved at a time when the real difference between the parties no longer justifies an all-out party warfare as in the U.S.A.

And yet with all the achievements of the post-war years the people in Britain feel that their social and economic advance has misfired — a conclusion stated by Mr. Mayhew on the basis of Gallup polls organised in the country. The five defects in the development of Britain in last twenty-five years listed by him are (i) the society neglects human factor in technological development. (ii) the society creates stresses by

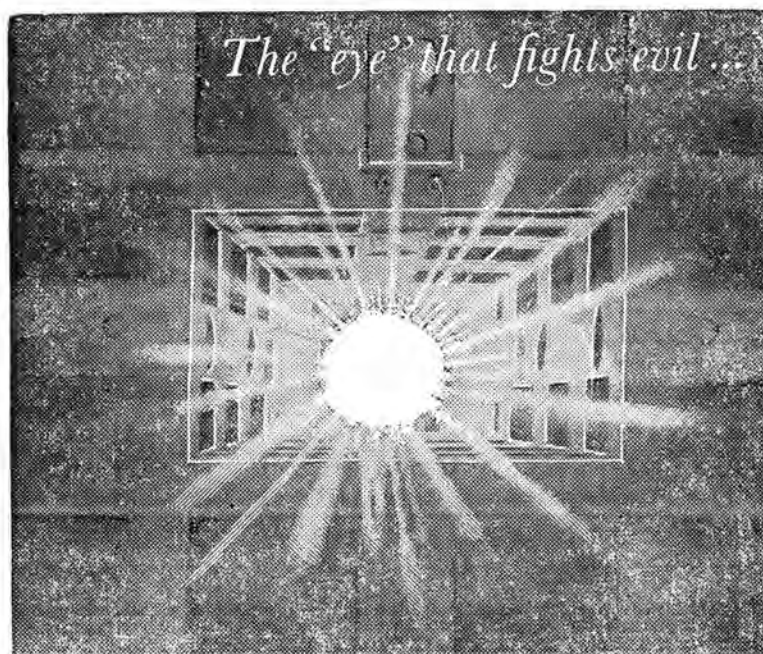
* *PARTY GAMES* by Christopher Mayhew M.P., Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers) Ltd., London pp. 176, 30s.

stimulating artificial consumer needs, (iii) it overstimulates the sense of grievance against each other, (iv) it creates a climate for delinquency and (v) it neglects mental health. He illustrates (i) with special reference to multi storey dwellings. Advertising is the obvious target of (ii). The instance quoted to establish (iii) needs to be quoted. "A young man of twenty-three recently came to my surgery who had a family of five children and a sixth 'on the way.' He wanted the Borough Council to provide him with a four-bedroom flat instead of his present three-bedroom flat. When I asked politely whether it was by design he was having such a large family so soon, he replied that 'it was'. 'I've got a good job. I can look after them.' 'But what about housing them?' I asked. 'Well that's up to the Borough Council isn't it,' he replied and complained bitterly of the delays and difficulties he had been meeting with". As to (iv) Mr. Mayhew disagrees with the thesis that poverty and unemployment are the major cause of crime by citing the example of British people "who have become better off, better educated and more delinquent than ever before." Mental illhealth is more or less a consequence of causes stated. For each of these ills the remedies suggested make one feel that Mr. Mayhew is unable to shake off his traditional garb.

Of particular interest to trade union workers are Mr. Mayhew's observations on changes which have taken place in the attitude of labour. The new worker is different from the old, so is a new factory or a new

mine, as also the new tools a worker has to handle. For a trade union in the thirties there was something to fight for: unemployment, low wages, poor housing and the like. New worker does not recognise these problems. The old appeal for socialism does not appeal to him any longer. And with a better living of 'masses' in the working population, the political loyalties are also not as exclusive as they were before. What is more, the new worker is showing an element of apathy towards his organisation and for this the reason is not merely the 'generation gap' between the workers and trade union leaders. Several issues that irk labour have been already settled. Those left over "are too heterogenous and skimpy to provide the basis for a radical political programme." Mayhew points out "forcible conversion of both parties to 'Butskellism' was a major turning point in our party system." Mixing of 'collars' on the shop floor may well prove to be a turning point in the British Trade Union Movement.

The issues discussed in the book have indeed a wider context. They pervade every democratic society developing or developed. In the former, new farming techniques and family planning are held up by traditional beliefs about land tenure or marriage behaviour; in the latter, men pursue success but the need is for deeper sense of values and emotional security. As Mayhew sums up in the widest sense the main problem is the same—the recasting of conventional attitudes. This is the task of radicalism today. There can be no disagreement on this conclusion.



The "eye" that fights evil...

The glaring "eye" of the Cobalt Bomb helps fight cancer. It's one of the many modern weapons used in the world-wide crusade against this dread disease. In India too, the battle is on. Research is helping find a cure for cancer. But research costs money. A lot of it, in fact. You can help with your mite. Every rupee you give will help develop new medicines, new techniques to help save lives.

Remember: cancer is curable if detected early. WATCH FOR THESE DANGER SIGNALS: 1. Any sore that does not heal/ 2. A lump or thickening in the breast or elsewhere/ 3. Unusual bleeding or discharge/ 4. Any change in a wart or mole/ 5. Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing/ 6. Persistent hoarseness or cough/ 7. Any change in normal bowel habits. If you notice any of these 7 Danger Signals—consult a doctor AT ONCE.

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CANCER SOCIETY, Hospital Avenue,
Parel, Bombay 12.

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Soviet - Aid Projects

(Contributed)

THE construction of the Bokaro steel plant has suffered a further costly delay. After much controversy over the project, the *Economic Times* of February 4 suggested that India's contract with the Soviet Union should be re-examined and more scope and responsibility handed over to Indian contractors in this "could speed up the completion of the project and contain costs".

The latest delay, revealed by the Minister of State for Steel on November 24, is largely due to delays in delivery of essential equipment from the Soviet Union. It is the fourth since the project was conceived in 1964 and puts the estimated completion date of the first stage to early 1973, compared with the original schedule of late 1968. *The Hindu* reported on January 30 that deliveries have fallen short by about two-thirds, while equipment so far received had not arrived in the correct sequence "with the result that no erection work can commence although the foundations have been ready for a long time".

These "stultifying" delays, the *Economic Times* commented on February 4, have "pushed up the cost of the project over and over again to a fantastic figure forbidding any further similar exercises". Soviet consultants had originally undertaken to complete the first stage of the Bokaro project at a cost of Rs. 590 crores (£ 338 million). It is now likely to be around Rs. 800 crores (£ 445 million).

A further point of controversy surrounding the Bokaro project is the decision to import refractories (heat resistant materials) for the coke ovens from the Soviet Union rather than using locally produced models, even though two refractory units situated near Bokaro have recently been forced to close down through lack of orders. While the Bokaro plant authorities blame the local refractory manufacturers for delays in deliveries, the manufacturers have complained that the specifications laid down by the Russian planners "have been needlessly rigid and stringent" (*The Hindu*, January 30, 1970). Although a committee was set up to investigate the dispute, Soviet experts made it clear that no change in the specifications would be accepted.

The controversy has revived an old complaint that the Soviet attitude to Indian participation in aid projects is overbearing and disparaging, and that the exclusion of Indian expertise and materials can hardly promote the country's technical advancement and self-reliance. It was originally planned that 50-60 per cent of the machinery for the Bokaro scheme would be built in India and that the plant would be constructed and operated essentially as an Indian project. Early in 1964, Soviet experts described as "first rate"

the designs and calculations of the Indian firm of Dastur and Co. Later that year, however, the Soviet Union was insisting on full managerial control of the steel plant and of the supervision of the designing and construction — a policy which the *Economic Times* described on October 17, 1964, as "an attempt to reduce our contribution to that of contractor-coolies".

An article on February 4 by Professor K. V. Subrahmanyam, member of the Indian Cabinet Subcommittee on Science, described Soviet policy as "derogatory to the self-respect of the country". The representatives of India, instead of specifying "what they want from the USSR, ask the USSR to specify what they would expect us to ask them", he said. It meant that "the Russians alone will decide to what extent the project shall utilise indigenous resources as suited best their interests and conveniences, thus reducing the Indian steel industry to a satellite of its Russian counterpart and striking at the very roots of its existence."

Delays at Bokaro are holding up expansion at two other Soviet-aided projects, the Heavy Engineering Corporation at Ranchi and the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation at Durgapur, where it is now clear that expected demand was grossly over-estimated and where, as in many other Soviet projects, there is serious under-utilisation of expensive plant. Miscalculations by the Russians have frequently been compounded by Moscow's insistence on pressing ahead with existing plans, and even on expanding production to near full capacity, although there is no demand for the finished product.

A case in point is the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL) project, which after a searching inquiry by the Indian Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertaking (in April, 1969) was said to have involved India in a "huge loss". The project was dogged from the outset by faulty equipment, rising costs, designs unsuitable for Indian conditions and delays in delivery; and it was later suggested that much of the plant was in fact second-hand, having been built for China and dismantled. The Soviet project report had not included a feasibility study, estimates of demand having been "assumed" from Soviet experience elsewhere; there was consequently a heavy surplus at the plant. Indian consumption of the tetracycline group of drugs, for instance, was ten metric tons a year, estimated to rise to 40-50 metric tons by 1971-72. But Soviet experts insisted on a capacity of 120 tons, 100 tons of which was chlorotetracycline, which had become obsolete and was not used by Indian doctors.

(Continued on page 11)

Review

Challenge and Stagnation

Chanchal Sarkar, Vikas Publications, 5, Daryaganj, Delhi 6.
Rs. 15/-

“ULTIMATELY, all power systems are systems of communication”.

“There are 158 million literates in India, one would expect that the circulation of newspapers would be 70 million or at least 30 million and not the 6.5 million it actually is.”

“What ails the Indian Press? You have to deal with an organ suffering from multiple diseases: heavy blindness, creeping paralysis, gutless, imbecile apathy and obsessive neurosis. What can you do about it? As things are, I think what is needed is a series of transplants, starting with a heart.”

Rather harsh but not without justification. Most of the thoughtful lectures in this excellent collection, though tinged with pessimism, once again confirm the already known fact of the Indian press being fifty years behind the times.

Mr. Chanchal Sarkar is of course eminently suited to write thus about the Indian Mass Media and all thinking persons will take what he writes about the Press and the Mass Media in general seriously.

Although this is a collection of lectures given and essays written on different occasions, the theme is the same and going through the whole book is a rewarding experience.

We have had a good deal of talk about industrialisation and urbanisation. But, as Mr. Sarkar rightly points out, there seems to be no link between industrialisation and newspaper growth. The smallness of circulation is particularly strange when the radio is so undeveloped in India. It is time that like Mr. Sarkar, Editors and Publicists seriously ask themselves the question why even millions of people living in cities do not read the newspapers. Could it be that they do not find them interesting or relevant? To me it appears self-evident that if one does not have any interest in politics, one can do without a newspaper in India. Mr. Sarkar's observations about the readers in villages are very true. He has himself said in so many words on what is expected of a responsible and free press in any democratic society. He says:

“Can we say that we have a governmental system which explains issues and keeps a stream of information flowing? Also, thinking of our Press, can we say that it meets the following demands which any democratic society needs: First, a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent, account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; second, a forum for the exchange of comment and opinion; third, a means of projecting the opinions

and attitudes of the groups in the society to one another; fourth, a method of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of the society; and fifth, a way of reaching every member of the society by the current of information, thought, and feeling which the Press suppose”.

No, we neither have that kind of an information system nor that kind of a Press by which I mean the mass media.”

There are many other important topics dealt with in these 104 pages. Even the chapter on K. Rama Rao is not a mere personal praise but gives us a revealing picture of the decline and fall of the Editor.

There is a good deal of valid criticism against the working of the All India Radio especially the presentation of news. One can only hope that those concerned with broadcasting in India will read this book carefully.

Although Mr. Sarkar himself has been a working journalist, he has not overlooked the fact that journalists too are not keen on self-improvement but on pressing claims for benefits. There is so much of talk about monopolies and newspaper chains but no one seems to have any time for the more urgent task of reaching a wider public, increasing newspaper readership, and doing something about the technological inadequacies and the lack of professionalism.

While commending this book to all thinking citizens, one would like to refer to the novel suggestion of Mr. Sarkar. He asks: “Why should we not consider the newspaper as a public utility as today roads and electricity are considered? If it is very important that the primary school teachers should read a newspaper — and it is very important because it is through him that his pupils will be linked to newspapers — then why not give him a newspaper along with a blackboard, chalk and books?”

Our progressive Prime Minister has been good enough to allow an expenditure of Rs. 20/- per month on conveyance. She might consider allowing an expenditure of Rs. 25/- per month on newspapers and journals. This would be considered a really progressive measure.

Since this is a very perceptive book and deserves to be read by a large number of people, one hopes a cheaper edition of this will be made available soon.

ARVIND A. DESHPANDE

A Survey of the World Communist Parties

Free News and Feature Service G-74, Sujan Singh Park, New Delhi, Rs. 5.

THE booklet brings together information about Communist Parties in various countries of the world. It covers in all ninety-nine parties, fourteen of whom are ruling parties while the rest are in opposition and some even illegal. The information given is

about membership, the name of the leader and the name of the party journal.

The information was collected by the International Documentation and Information Centre having its office in Hague in Netherlands. The booklet reviewed is the Indian edition of a booklet published abroad by the Centre. It will be of great interest and use to all students of communist affairs in India.

K. V. B.

Jammu and Kashmir Guide 1969

Edited by Mulk Raj Saraf, Universal Publication, 5, Pratap Park Flat, Srinagar, Price: Rs. 25.

IN this big volume Mr. Mulk Raj Saraf provides a mine of information on the State of Jammu and Kashmir covering all fields of economic, historical and political developments. Important aspects of development in the State are given in the form of short and interesting articles. A large number of Tables and Indices and a chapter on "Who's Who" form a major portion of the book. Some of the Tables could have been dispensed with in order to reduce the size of the book which is rather too bulky for comfortable reading. The publisher could in the next edition use thinner paper to help reduce the size.

The book falls short of one very important aspect. In a book of 500 pages claiming to be a Guide to Jammu and Kashmir room should have been found for an exclusive and exhaustive chapter on "Tourism" which is the most important trade in the State. Attractive photos and information of different places of tourist interest could have formed an important and interesting chapter. The book as it is can well serve as a good Trade Directory rather than a Guide.

The articles on various fields of development are informative. The main reason for the rather poor development and the low standard of living of the people of the State is the lack of large industries owing to lack of basic raw materials, and of coal and electricity, proper means of communication and the dearth of private investment. Private investment will be attracted to the State only if the Government succeeds in removing the feeling of political instability. Once that feeling is removed, private investment will increase and advantage can be taken of the vast resources of the State in the form of timber, silk, cattle husbandry, handicrafts, fruits and other commercial crops.

The book will serve well the interest of traders and others interested in the State. It is a commendable effort on the part of the Editor.

V. K. KARKARIA

SOME SUGGESTIONS—Continued from page 6

personal experience that repeated changes in cabinets inhibit development schemes. In Bihar, for example, there was a great awakening among the peasants during the terrible famine of 1966-67. However, the state could not benefit from this awakening because governments were constantly changing; the administration became lax and policies became uncertain. Industrial development and education suffered likewise. As it appears to me, and I have said it before, this instability of governments is going to increase rather than otherwise. Therefore, I suggest that each state should have an industrial development corporation and another for agricultural development. These corporations should be truly autonomous, unlike many corporations presently existing in some states which have only nominal autonomy. They are fruitless except that they provide high posts to some officers and some opportunity of patronage to the ministers. If the political leaders and high officials were genuinely willing to part with their authority, constitution of such autonomous corporations should not be difficult and they would function, not like government departments, but like independent commercial institutions.

(Continued from page 9)

The Parliamentary report also accused Soviet experts of "tremendous" under-estimation of production costs. Vitamin B¹ was estimated at Rs. 100 per kg., while the actual cost worked out at Rs. 1,200 per kg. The Russians had insisted, too, that the plant should produce penicillin, although sufficient quantities for Indian needs were already being produced elsewhere in the country. It was found that the surgical instruments plant was not economic unless it worked at full capacity, but demand was much lower because between 60-75 per cent of the Soviet-specified instruments were not acceptable to Indian surgeons.

Trade Unions & Politics

BY V. B. KARNIK

Price: Rs 3.50

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127, Mahatma Gandhi Road

Bombay 1.

With Many Voices

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

Keep your lathis ready and spears sharp.
—Harekrishna Konar, Land and Land Revenue
Minister, West Bengal, *Indian Express*, March 16.

First they looted the paddy and then the fish. Now,
there is nothing else left and so they have started
looting women.
—Ajoy Mukherjee, Chief Minister of Bengal,
Opinion, March 3.

To kick out subversive foreign agents is logical and
eminently desirable..... To penalise Indians by
depriving them of desperately needed access to valu-
able books is criminal.
—*March of the Nation*, March 21.

The best thing that could happen to Bengal would
be three years of sound, impartial, vigorous Governor's
rule.
—*Opinion*, March 17.

Most of the weaknesses and failures of the demo-
cratic system are moral in character.
—G. L. Mehta, *Janata*, March 15.

Civil officials have been greatly politicalized in many
States under the pressure of local political masters.
—C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, March 21.

To the Editor,
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The bane of the BHU, as of many other Universities
since independence, is that it has become the hotbed
of party politics and a breeding ground of student-
politicians.

—*Deccan Herald*, March 21.

If I were to be reborn, Oh God, make me a Parsi
or never make me a man again unless my next birth-
place is Switzerland.

—Shiva Darshan Lal, *March of the Nation*,
March 21

The Congress President's latest proposal amounts
to admitting that he looks upon politics as no more
than a matter of manipulation and manoeuvre with-
out reference to the people of the State.

—*Mainstream*, March 21.

Anybody claiming himself or herself to be a secu-
larist has to be a staunch Hindu.

—Guru Golwalkar, *The Statesman*,
February 23

I'll keep manoeuvring as long as I have cards in
my hands, first a little to the left and then a little to
the right. And when I have no more cards to play,
I'll stop.

—Prince Norodom Sihanouk, *Time*, March 30.

The times when political glory could be brought
about by a touch of power had gone. Both Congress
(O) and Congress (R) had diminished in power. That
is why they will need support and adjustments.

—N. G. Goray, *Times of India*, March 30.

The sinister forces that seek to prevent all studies
on our campuses have now found an ally in the
mounting disillusionment over the value of our
degrees.

—V. V. John, *Times of India*, March 30.

India's constitution like the UN Charter is built on
a basic fallacy — the fallacy of wishful thinking.

—Frank Moraes, *Indian Express*, March 30.

The caste system in politics is even stronger than
in society.

—Badr-ud-din Tyabji, *Indian Express*, March 30.