

DECEMBER 1952

Priorities

by Philip Spratt

(In our last issue, we published an article with regard to the controversy whether a political party should have an ideology. Here we publish an article on the same subject. Another contribution appears on page 6.)

SHOULD a political party have an ideology? Of course. What sort of ideology should it be? That is the question.

Political bodies can be arranged in a series according to the significance of their ideology. At one end stand the parties in the fullest sense, the organised expressions of great historical movements; at the other merely *ad hoc* associations, coalitions or blocs. The most temporary bloc has at least one point of common policy, but unless its constituent parties agree on more than the immediate purpose, people are apt to denounce it as "unholy"—unprincipled—and its working is apt to be uneasy. Any more permanent organisation is inevitably more united than such a bloc, and to that extent it has an ideology.

A party which aspires to rule a country must have something which can be called an aim in view, even if it is only to keep things as they are; and it must have some idea how it hopes to get there, or stay there. An ideology is nothing else but an aim and a method of getting to it; the rest is frills, quite likely unnecessary, and often dangerous.

Consider some well-known ideologies. The Liberal theory proclaimed a vision—of men, free and equal, going about unrestrained by States, sufficiently rational to see that the interest of all in the maintenance of ordered freedom is the interest of each individually, and sufficiently self-controlled and benevolent to behave accordingly. The aim is abstract enough to be called ethical rather than political. The liberal political method, democracy, change by agreement, etc., follow from these generalities.

Liberalism also had a specifically economic element: that concerning the rights of property, free

trade, and so forth. The liberal economic policy purported to follow logically from a universally valid theory, and this theory was the most interesting intellectual and "ideological" part of liberalism; but we all know now that it was hardly more than a disguised appeal to self-interest. In the early days both the ethical and the economic, the altruistic and the selfish, elements were needed to inspire a movement with real drive. But the economic policy proved inappropriate, soon in some countries, eventually in all. Their obstinacy in clinging to their economic dogma doomed the liberal parties to extinction, but the ethical vision of liberalism retains its validity.

Consider Marxism. It also proclaims an ideal vision, of men equal, freed from economic subservience, from poverty and from national narrowness and religious obscurantism, freely cooperating in economic and cultural construction. It also has an economic-political or sociological theory, all about the concentration of capital, crises, class struggle, etc., so delightful to the ideologist that he entirely forgets the ideal. Marxism frankly avowed that the attraction of the ideal was not enough to inspire a strong party, and appealed to the self-interest of labour, but we now know that no less important was the disguised appeal to the self-interest of the intellectuals contained in that fascinating theory.

Of Marxism it is also true that its ideal or ethical element largely retains its validity, and indeed is not so very different from the liberal ideal; while the sociological element has become out of date. Communists would deny this, but it is quite clear to the outsider that their movement is not now guided by Lenin's classical formulation of revolutionary Marxism. Social-Democrats would also deny it, but at least it was strongly borne in upon me when I read Sternberg's *Capitalism and Socialism on Trial* recently that the Social-Democratic version of Marxism has failed to grapple theoretically with events since about the first world war.

Gandhism similarly puts forward an ideal, in which the main features are equality, free cooperation, local

self-sufficiency, decentralisation, a rural, anti-industrial bias, demand limited by self-restraint, and a strong religious inspiration. Its political element, the method of truth and non-violence, is less theoretical than in Marxism, and is related to the ideal in the same sort of way as political democracy is related to the ideal of liberalism. Where liberalism and Marxism appealed to self-interest, Gandhism appealed to the sentiment in favour of national freedom, and proved to be so closely bound up with this, that on its attainment the Gandhian movement quickly declined almost to insignificance. But again the ideal element in both object and method retains its appeal.

In these instances of great movements the principle is perhaps unusually clear, but probably the ideas of any party can be analysed in the same way into ideals, including ideally valid methods; appeals, open or disguised, to self-interest; and economic, political or sociological theory, which guides political practice, but is controversial and gets out of date, and contains hidden appeals to sectional interests.

From the party point of view the most important function of theory in ideology is this function of disguising appeals to self-interest, and thus maintaining the appearance of consistency in what the party says. In liberalism this is perfectly clear, though of course the pure theory of capital has independent interest. In Marxism the open appeal to the self-interest of the workers was always felt to be a blot, and many Marxists apologised for it, inconsistently, by referring to the liberal principle of majority rule and postulating that the workers were a majority. The accusation that the Marxian theory is a disguised appeal to the self-interest of the intellectuals (first advanced 50 years ago by Machajski) has always been felt to be an intolerable insult and if true a final refutation.

We seem then to be in a dilemma. Parties cannot get on merely on the strength of an ideal appeal: the liberals and the Marxists agree about that, and the decline of Gandhism seems to confirm it. But they can win support, if they follow recent precedents, by appealing to sectional interests, either openly or through the clouds of a sociological theory; and that is distasteful.

There is another popular method of acquiring appeal. That is to go in for what is called practical politics: to forget or neglect theory, and to angle for the support not of one big group but of many small groups one after another. In countries where democratic politics is a familiar institution and people are bored with it, this works very well, though it is apt to produce disasters like Coolidge and Neville Chamberlain. The Congress party is tending towards a policy of this kind, but the Indian public are not yet sufficiently bored, and one wonders uneasily what sort of disaster it will lead to here.

National temperaments differ considerably. All Englishmen, Gladstone said, hate two things: the Pope and a general proposition. Most Continentals have what Englishmen regard as an inordinate respect for general propositions. Aside from temperament, countries which have long enjoyed stability will tend to take abstract principles for granted.

India, newly starting a free political existence, needs to make her abstract principles explicit. If I can judge her people's temperament, I should say that her educated class are more interested in theory than Englishmen, but less intoxicated by it than Germans or Russians, while the uneducated are of course indifferent to it. All, however, educated and uneducated, are strongly attracted by high ideals, and still more by men who live up to them. (But it is not unfair to say that they are not much worried by a political practice which departs widely from the ideal).

It follows, if this is true, that an Indian political party which wants to get anywhere must stress the abstract, ethical or utopian element in its ideology. (And if it can get an authentic saint for a leader, its fortune is made). It should give second place to theory, political, economic or sociological, but it should take care that any theory it does profess is not too difficult to reconcile with its professed ideals. Will it not then fail of popular appeal? Has not Gandhism collapsed for lack of open or covert appeal to self-interest?

It is not certain. It may be that Gandhism has collapsed since Independence rather because its ideal is not wholly acceptable. The way for an Indian party may be to proclaim an ideal which is worthy, and yet is free from elements which are merely idiosyncratic and out of date, and for the rest to stand not on theory but on truth: the truth that progress towards any ideal must be slow, and must involve hard work, hard thinking, and honest administration; and to promise that effort and honesty (relying upon the Indian public's merciful indulgence towards normal lapses from the ideal) would be rewarded.

The stress on theory in political ideologies is dubious both morally and intellectually. Priority for the ideal aim is logically sounder, and would raise Indian politics to a higher moral level. Whether it could appeal to the electorate can only be found out by trying it.

FREEDOM FIRST

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Notes

Benedetto Croce

A STATESMAN who was also a scintillating critic and a great philosopher, the world has lost Benedetto Croce, one of the Honorary Presidents of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Croce was born in Italy in 1866, was a staunch protagonist of the free and democratic way of life, and fought against all forms of totalitarianism. He began to publish his philosophical works at the age of 36, and soon they began to draw applause and deep appreciation from philosophers of an older generation, specially of those who belonged to Idealist Schools. Croce named his system as the "Philosophy of the Spirit." This spirit or mind, to him, was the only reality, and in expressing itself it produced history. His philosophy was divided into four parts: Aesthetics as the science of Expression, Logic as the science of the Pure Concept, Philosophy of the Practical, and History, Its Theory and Practice. Also his *Historical Materialism* has been an outstanding thesis on the subject. His works on literature, which include *Defence of Poetry* and *European Literature in the Nineteenth Century* are world famous for their clarity of presentation and depth of thought.

The world movement for cultural freedom has lost a Titan, whose life was a great moral and spiritual support in the struggle against intellectual slavery.

Chaim Weismann

IN the death of Chaim Weismann, the first President of the new State of Israel, the world has lost not only an ideal statesman, but a great scientist, to whom some of the major discoveries of modern science are due. It was he who discovered, while on the staff of the University of Geneva between 1901 to 1904, a system for synthesizing polycyclic compounds that is still bearing scientific fruit. Again, after he joined the faculty of the University of Manchester, England, in 1904, he made some very important discoveries including the method for producing synthetic rubber. Once again, in 1916, as the director of the Laboratories of the British Admiralty he discovered and developed the means of synthesizing acetone — the most vital discovery which went a long way in winning the First World War for the Allies, and for which the then British Prime Minister Lloyd George was so grateful that he offered any reward Weismann wished.

Politically Weismann was chiefly responsible for the realisation of world's oldest and most hard fought for dreams — the dream which was born in the year 70 A.D., when the army of the Roman Emperor Titus crushed the Jewish defendants of the city of Jerusalem, destroyed their temple and brought to an end the independent existence of the nation of Judæa — the dream of Zion, which persisted through 19 centuries

for "an independent homeland for the Jews on the ancient soil of Palestine."

Weismann fought for the establishment of Israel for fifty years against immense odds. When on May 14, 1948, the Provisional Government of the new State of Israel was proclaimed, Weismann, as its first President, declared "we are a small country but a big people.... We must prove that we still possess the force that once gave the world moral and social laws. Our relations with other people must be pervaded by the spirit of peace."

Chaim Weismann was born on November 27th, 1874 in a small Russian village near Pinsk. He was educated in Germany and became a naturalized British subject in 1910.

Weismann was a great democrat and opposed to all forms of totalitarianism.

Organised Attendance

SOME of the Indians who have visited the Communist countries have come back with pæans of praise for what they call the popularity of the Communist Party in those countries as judged from the "mammoth" crowds that attended the Communist convened meetings. The fact that those "mammoth" crowds were stage-managed seems to have been lost on them. Recently a document which was smuggled out of Bulgaria shows how Communists plan to the last detail to stage-manage their "mammoth" meetings. The document, which is very stereotyped, is entitled *The Plan for a District Meeting Celebrating Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship in the Town of Chustendil*. The plan, in fact, has omitted nothing from printing and distribution of posters to steps for security and maintenance of order at the meetings, etc., etc.

It will be worth while to quote below a part of the plan for the edification of those who are still impressed by the "mammoth" nature of the Communist meetings. The plan which determines the exact number of people who are to attend the meeting and manifestations is most interesting. The plan calls this an "organized attendance," but what type of organization this is, is clearly revealed by the formulation of the plan. After a short introduction, the first part reads:

• (2) The meeting will consist of public speeches and manifestations. In this connection:

(a) Five thousand people from enterprises and institutions are to be organized to attend the meeting. Atanas Gerginov, is responsible for this;

(b) Three thousand persons from schools. Kosta Stoilov and Tonche Minchev are responsible for this;

(c) Eleven thousand persons to attend the meeting from the countryside. Georgi Velinov, Metodi Josipov, Krum Grozdanov and Kiril Popov are charged with organizing attendance from the villages;

(d) Five thousand people to attend the meeting from the city wards. Stefan Janchev, Nadka Angelova, Nikola Rizov and Kosta Stoilov are responsible for this;

(e) The number of persons in rest homes to be

organized to attend the meeting depends on how many people are spending their holidays there. Veliko Slanchoev is responsible for this.

(3) People will come to the meeting from within the trade unions, the Otechestveni Front and the Democratic Federation of People's Youth. Atanas Gerginov, Georgi Velinov, Kiril Popov and Kosta Stoilov are responsible for this.

Thus the exact number of persons (24,000, plus those unfortunate creatures who happen to be on holiday) who are to display their enthusiasm for "Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship" in its present form, has been provided for.

No comment is necessary.

A. I. R. and Film Songs

TO what depths of degradation art can be led by the blandishments of a pseudo-humanistic concept is well illustrated by the growth of film songs at the expense of classical music. The gentlemen who compose these songs appear to have the laudable ambition of uplifting the masses by means of art, and consequently believe firmly in the theory that the larger the mass popularity of an air the higher its artistic level. Proudhon did a great deal of mischief

when he said that the aim of art was to better humanity. Actually what happens is that the composer is forced to lower himself to the lowest tastes, and turns out a melody, if it can be called that, indistinguishable from a thousand others.

Someone said that he cared not who made the nation's laws as long as he made its songs, or something like that, but it is very fortunate that at least in India the 'law-makers' of All India Radio have at last turned upon the 'song-makers' with a ferocity that must be commended by everyone who has had dinned into his ears—from morning to night, from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning—the caterwaulings of a certain female playback singer who shall be nameless.

He would be a mean soul indeed who would begrudge more and more people of our country cultivating an interest in the immortal heritage of Indian classical music; but any person who has had his soul stilled by the first stroke on the *tabla* after the *alap*, cannot but be sickened by the evergrowing volume of sound and fury signifying nothing that has been discharged by our Phillistine radio owners. Therefore, the recent decision of All India Radio to reduce drastically film songs and increase the playing time for classical music calls for enthusiastic welcome and vigorous applause.

Freedom FIRST?

NO, SAYS PROF. M. L. DANTWALA

THE poser, Bread or Freedom is often debated in a manner which calls for some comments. In a recent issue of *Freedom First*, Masani, for example, argues that empty minds rather than empty stomachs make countries vulnerable to Communism. He goes one step further and suggests that even in countries like India where poverty and malnutrition are rampant, if the people were asked to register their preference between bread and freedom, freedom would "take priority." With his remarkable facility for reference he quotes surveys of opinion among industrial workers in America for listing priorities in regard to incentives in which wages were placed "somewhere near the bottom." He concludes, "It is the non-material values that take priority" and with a courageous generalisation, infers "This is true of our workers in India."

His anxious quest for weak spots in free countries which make them vulnerable to Communism leads him to worry about empty minds or souls rather than the empty stomachs. Once again he has his references. Did Czechoslovakia go under the iron curtain because its people were groaning under starvation in the months before the *coup d'etat* of February 1948? Certainly not. The End of Economic Man took place (so he did exist?) long before and the thing to bother about is Freedom not Hunger. So he argues.

Now I feel impelled to combat this trend of thought not so much because it is obviously erroneous but

because it is dangerous for those very values which both he and I cherish, namely respect for the personality of the individual and human dignity. I must therefore preface what I have to say on the subject by stating that if I am stressing the urgency of the battle for bread, I am not insensible of the value of freedom. The point I wish to make—and probably the one which Crossman in the Fabian Essays wished to make—is that in *Under-developed* countries with starving populations it is the hungry stomach rather than the empty mind which makes them more vulnerable to Communism. The situation in these countries is basically different from the one which prevailed in Czechoslovakia before it fell victim to Communism or in the United States to-day. The problem of bread in these situations was—and is—not urgent. There is no wonder therefore if the American worker places wages as incentives "somewhere at the bottom of the list." But it would be a grievous error to conclude from this that "that is true of our worker in India." Such a generalisation would be as faulty as the one which would project the opinion on priority of food gathered from a party of men returning home after a banquet at the Taj to the loitering beggars on the nearby footpath. It is a simple statistical error which may be condoned in a class room but is too dangerous to ignore while discussing issues concerning humanity.

Man does not live by bread alone, but he dies without it; and it is wrong to equate the reactions

of mind of a man with a full stomach with those of a hungry man. Values no doubt are universal, but there are circumstances under which they become clouded; and the remedy is to remove those inhibiting circumstances rather than preach the value of freedom from a high pedestal. Gandhi knew this better than those who seek his support on the importance of non-material values. "God comes to the hungry man in shape of bread," he said. It was his unwillingness to run away from realities which distinguished him from many early saints. He who valued the freedom of the soul more dearly than the anti-totalitarian of to-day realised that foreign domination was smothering the soul of the people of India. What was his reaction? Not mealy-mouthed sermons about the dignity of man but a mighty non-violent fight against imperialism. To-day the incubus inhibiting the flowering of the soul in countries like India is the poverty of the people. And those keen on preserving the dignity of man should set about removing the cause which makes the issue of preserving freedom appear almost irrelevant to the hungry millions. Masani has urged "the need to follow up economic and military cooperation on the ideological plane." I do not know what exactly this means, but I hope that it does not imply that India should give up its neutralism, join the Western bloc and swear to fight Communism as a condition for receiving economic and military aid. I do want India to fight against Communism and for the preservation of human dignity, but in the name of that very

dignity, I would not pledge it for receiving military and economic aid. You cannot compel any country to swear by freedom on pain of cutting off military or economic aid. Non-material values cannot be born out of material consideration. And how long will the virtue born of necessity last?

Fortunately, American opinion for the last year or two — I do not know what the policy of the Republican administration will be — has been very appreciative of this dignified stand taken by India. I want American aid as an ally in our battle against poverty and not as aid to our indifferent moral awareness. As for our alliance in the fight against Communism, since it is a matter of values and ideology, it does not admit of any *quid pro quo*.

Those who believe in non-material values need not give a lower priority to fight against hunger; all that is needed is that the fight must not sacrifice the non-material values. Communism is unacceptable to us because it does so. But it may become acceptable to many if men who believe in non-material values would refuse to fight the battle against hunger in the name of *Freedom First*.

Our battle against hunger must be informed with an awareness of the non-material values; it would be undignified to insist upon their acceptance by the starving as a condition precedent for waging the battle. It would only reveal how feeble is our faith in the essential goodness of human beings. If good ends imply good means, we must have faith that good means will lead to good ends.

YES, SAYS M. R. MASANI

THERE is a considerable measure of basic agreement between my friend Professor Dantwala and myself. It is only in the matter of emphasis that there is divergence. In the absence of time for a detailed reply, I limit myself to the following brief comments:

1. At no point did I say, as suggested by Dantwala, that freedom "takes priority" over bread among the people of underdeveloped countries like India. What I said was that non-material values like "their traditional way of life, their religions, their places of worship, their families and their homes" take priority with the masses as against the "left-wing" intellectual's obsession with Soviet-model Five-Year Plans and "giantism." By that statement, which is obviously correct to all who will see, I still stand.

The fact that the Indian worker, like most other workers, would, by and large, give priority to non-material incentives like the preservation of his self-respect and basic human dignity, courteous treatment by his supervisors, a chance to express his grievances and an opportunity to be consulted about the running of the plant as against the question of wages is, I believe, now increasingly understood by all those who deal with labour and industrial relations. It has been observed by many that the demand for higher wages is often but an outlet for expressing the frustration and bitterness that comes of being "pushed

around" and treated in an unequal fashion. There is nothing "basically different" about the Indian worker or peasant.

In regard to both these points, it is Dantwala who projects his intellectual point of view on to our common people in the villages, whose outlook is much better reflected by Jayaprakash as expressed in his article in the September issue of *Freedom First* with which I wholeheartedly agree.

2. I fear the last five paragraphs of Dantwala's contribution are not altogether relevant to a consideration of what I had said. Let me reassure Dantwala that at no point was there the slightest suggestion made by me that India should determine its attitude in any manner "as a condition for receiving economic and military aid." I *could* not have made any such suggestion simply because what I had to say was addressed to the American listener and not to the Indian reader. Perhaps Dantwala's suspicions were unnecessarily aroused by the absence of any explanation in the last issue that what appeared over my name was a condensation made by the editors of *Freedom First* of a Convocation Address delivered by me at Mount Holyoke College in the United States on October 3. It is perhaps a pity that this was not made clear in the first instance.

The United States are at present giving unconditional economic aid to India. They, along with their

allies in the U.N., are also indirectly protecting India and other Asian countries by their resistance to totalitarian aggression in Korea and by the help they are giving to the defence of Viet Nam without asking for any *quid pro quo*. There is every indication that under President-elect Eisenhower's leadership, this constructive trend will be quickened, for has he not said that "they should be the ones — from Israel to India, from Syria to Indonesia — whom we should be quickest to help, for they should be the quickest to share our faith in freedom's future in the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God"? What I did in my Address was to ask my American audience to continue giving material aid, while at the same time seeking a meeting of hearts and minds with the peoples of Asia.

I do believe that India should abandon neutralism for, as the Declaration adopted by the Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom on March 31, 1951, concludes, "indifference or neutrality towards totalitarian tyranny amounts to a renunciation of the Indian tradition and our human heritage, and a betrayal of all spiritual values." But I believe in India doing the right thing on its own merits and for its own sake, quite independently of American policy and certainly not in return for any economic or military assistance. I was one of the few in India who criticised President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill for appeasing

Stalin towards the end of the war by betraying Poland and other countries.

3. Dantwala appears to misunderstand the significance of the phrase *Freedom First*. We selected this title for our Bulletin because we consider Liberty, with the great historian Acton, to be the supreme good. We do give priority to freedom — not in point of time, but in point of fundamental importance. The fight for bread and freedom has of course to be waged simultaneously. We want *both* for our people — but we want bread *through* freedom, because that is the only way to get it.

How I wish Dantwala had stressed the wide area of agreement that exists between him and myself as against the condescending and offensive attitude to Asian and African peoples shown by R.H.S. Crossman, who would "write off" his democratic Socialist friends in this part of the world. But I do not lose hope. When I wrote *Socialism Reconsidered* in 1944, I recall Dantwala was similarly worried by my attitude. Today, I wonder if there is any part of that heresy of mine that is not shared by Socialist thinkers like Ram Manohar Lohia and Jayaprakash Narayan. There is such a thing as the conservatism of the "left," but I am confident that Dantwala will before very long share without reserve the emphasis that some of us place today on *Freedom First*.

Principles And Incidentals

by S. R. Mohan Das

AN average dictionary defines "ideology" as "the science and study of ideas." Both the words "science" and "study" postulate and prohibit any rigidity by conclusions. The *science* of ideas demands ceaseless investigation and rational analyses of past experiences and obtaining a synthesis. These analyses naturally require seeking the ultimate causes for all human experiences which takes us to the question of philosophy.

It is quite evident that in this process of analyses, a point of isolation to the very fundamentals of philosophy has to be reached. The question then arises, whether on the basis of the "reverberating circuits containing negative feed-back mechanism", an irrevocable concept on absolute fundamentals is possible and rationally justified. This seems to be a very crucial question that involves all the problems of philosophy, and the confusion over this question seems to be reflected in the malaise we find amongst the intelligentsia—to wit—lack of or loss of faith.

Even the fundamental principles once considered irrevocable seem to call for at least a moderate revision when re-examined through the "feed-back" mechanism. Absolutes have tended to become elastic and the process of a fresh probe seems to start all over.

It is in this context that we have to find an answer to the question posed by Shri Asoka Mehta, Acharya Kripalani and Shri Rohit Dave.

Shri Asoka points out "A political party does not necessarily need an ideology. Possession of an ideology, however, greatly heightens a party's effectiveness, particularly in poverty-ridden countries where hunger for philosophy is real. *Evolving* an ideology imparts far more strength than *adoption* of an ideology." In regard to the latter part of Shri Asoka's postulation, we again come to the tyranny of semantics. *Evolution* necessarily being a continual, never-ending process in ideology as in anything else, *adoption* could only imply the adoption of a synthesis of the experience in the process of evolution. Thus the process of adoption is always linked with evolution.

Acharya Kripalani terms political ideologies as "fanatical political creeds over which groups and parties and nations fight."

Now we come to the question of the "political party." What is a political party. Shri Rohit Dave has capably analysed the role of a political party in modern society. Is a modern political party to be viewed just as a sector of the political State, or as an instrument of Social change, an all-embracing movement, not just restricted to the political structure. Again, this itself becomes a very important question in itself, though incidental to the main debate. Coming to the point, synthesis of the entire question does, however, postulate for a "sangam" the definite need, a sheet-anchor, for a structural base.

This base necessarily and inevitably should be of first principles or fundamental principles. Without it, there cannot be an incentive to grouping or a "party." Fragmentation is automatic without first principles. The very terminology "party" let alone, "political party" implies crystallisation of fragments which can only take place by the attraction and the holding together of the fragments by the cementing force of common first or fundamental principles.

These principles, drained solid to their absolute levels, constitute the philosophy from which flow the ideas for action that these principles call for. It is in this sphere of implementation or realization through actions of the very fundamentals, that differences arise.

The Praja Socialist Party accepts the first principles of a democratic, egalitarian society. In implementation of these first principles through social, cultural, economic and political engineering, it evolves certain ideas, which in their evolution take a definite form of synthesis which then becomes the ideology. It would perhaps be more necessary to be precise and clear when we usually think in terms of "ideology", what we mean, as otherwise, there can be no way out of the confusion resulting from not comprehending or stressing the proper things first. If, in the process of over-emphasis on the engineering, or the *means* to implement that which flows out of the first principles, the structural base of first principles itself is going to become subservient to the *means*, the resulting confusion would sap the very base. This has been the case with many parties. Social engineering or the means being evolutionary, and the feedback mechanism being the gauge to measure the appropriateness or efficacy of the engineering experiment in relation to the unchanging and definitely committed first principles, such means or engineering experiments are always liable to change. There can never be any rigidity about this and the presentday "fanaticism" over "ideologies" which Acharya Kripalani stressed, seems to be as virulent over this sphere of "means" as one could more legitimately expect over fundamental first principles or philosophy.

Stressing "Socialization," "decentralization" and a hundred other important actions of social, political and economic *engineering*, as equally important and the sheet-anchor of principles, means bundling up the fundamental and the detail in the verbiage of "ideology". The details tend, in the course of experimentation, to assume a vested interest and thus become the sheet anchor of the ideology itself. This might lead to a situation in which for example, Socialization, or decentralization becomes the philosophy or first principle even if subsequent events, through the feedback mechanism, distinctly establish "decentralization" for instance as a detriment to the fundamental principles of democracy and an egalitarian society.

The Indian Socialists' and Gandhiji's attitude seem to have coalesced in many respects and matters. Yet for instance, the Gandhian concept of decentralisation emanated more from the religious philosophy which with its insistence on "absolutism" in the discarding of all material values, logically posed that there could never be a limit to human material wants.

Gandhiji carried this postulation to its natural conclusion by discarding industrialisation completely and classifying it as a great evil. The only alternative Gandhiji logically could offer was the return to the village and the realization of bare and minimum self-sufficiency through rural economy.

Some point out that the ultra-secular Socialists' enthusiastic endorsement of this "decentralization" represents an alleged unanimity with Gandhian concepts which is purely co-incidental. The one arrives at this concept on a religious and mystic thesis and the other arrives at a similar concept but insisting that it is through the very antithesis of Gandhian concepts — materialist and secular. Endorsement of Yugoslavia would be the best example. Gandhi was quite categorical on the one point that all political, economic, or social activity must gradually and ultimately — in theory at least — transcend above itself to the more spiritual realization of the aspirations of the Individual soul, and the instruments of this realization through politics, economics or culture, while important in the immediate, were from a philosophical point of view, purely incidental. It is extremely unlikely that the Socialists, in accepting many of the Gandhian methods, concur with this philosophy.

All that the extremely smooth course of the merger of KMPP and Socialist Party establishes is that there is common thinking between the two on the methods and quite justifiably, it has been said that this success has only been possible with a determination on both sides not to be intimidated by semantic tyranny. This itself represents a great change in the present climate in India. But to claim that as a result of this success, it naturally follows that the new political party need not necessarily have an ideology seems to be a disputable point, for there could not have been a merger at all if there was not a similarity of *pattern* in the Socialist Party and KMP ideological methods, though there may not have been similarity in philosophy. When Kripalani comments happily on the introspection of Jayaprakash over his shaken faith in the materialist Goddess, he is safely confident that the inevitable shift towards Gandhian philosophy too has taken place.

If, as Shri Asoka Mehta and Shri Kripalani say, there need not necessarily be an ideology for a political party, to a laymen, the question arises, why not then have a "sangam" in which all could work together. Going further, with a lack of ideology altogether, what will be the identity of the Praja-Socialist Party, in what will they differ from the Congress Party, for instance. From all points of view, it is obvious that apart from the first principles that usually are common to all democratic parties, there must be "something" in a political party, which will identify it from the rest. This "something" most certainly need not become a rigid and irrevocable stamp of identity, but there has got to be an identity and this could only be in the instruments of implementing the first principles.

To summarise, the Party must have an ideology consisting of the definite and rigid first principles and

(Continued on page 8)

Reviews

Southwards from China

By Woodrow Wyatt (Hodder & Stoughton, London 1952, pp. 200, 10/6d.)

IF Mr. Michiner's book (reviewed in our last issue) is an American approach to S. E. Asia, Mr. Woodrow Wyatt's *Southwards from China* is an Englishman's survey of S. E. Asia since 1945. That is the strength and weakness of the book. (The book reveals an Englishman's intimate acquaintance with historical developments especially in India and Burma, and also betrays well-entrenched prejudices of the English about certain features of situations in these countries.) Mr. Wyatt was a member of the Parliamentary Delegation to India and he also acted as personal Assistant to Sir Stafford Cripps on the Cabinet Ministry. In 1949, he toured Burma, Malaya, Siam, and Indonesia as correspondent of the *New Statesman and Nation* and *Picture Post*.

He had therefore abundant opportunities to study the social, political and economic problems of S. E. Asia. Mr. Wyatt claims that the 'first round in the struggle for the souls of South Asia,' has been won largely due to the speed with which the British Government acted in finding ways to satisfy nationalist aspirations. But in his natural and understandable enthusiasm for the achievements of the British Labour Government, Mr. Wyatt is inclined to ignore almost completely the strength and the role of popular democratic movements in India and Burma. The British, no doubt, acted wisely in India and Pakistan, but the Communist failure in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent was not entirely due to British policies alone but due to the universal influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the national movement. Mr. Wyatt goes to the extent of asserting that the British could have ruled over India by force if they wanted to, a view held by the Conservatives and refuted by Lord Halifax during the debate over the India Bill. In this chapters on India Mr. Wyatt writes more like a Conservative than like a Socialist. No Socialist would claim that Communism can be defeated only by Governmental action. Communism is to be fought not administratively alone but by popular forces.

To Mr. Wyatt S. E. Asia matters because 'strategically the area is vital to the West and to the Commonwealth at the moment. In terms of world power politics the Russian and Chinese Communist groups are approximately matched by the West... But should there be a switchover then the balance of power throughout the world would be drastically affected.' Mr. Wyatt feels that the immediate danger of Communism has lessened rather than increased very largely because Britain, and to a lesser extent America, has given economic aid and has not deserted the new-born nations after assisting at their birth. On the other hand according to Mr. Wyatt, 'The French have so determinedly resisted nationalism in Indo-China that they have now turned almost every nationalist into a Communist, and have rendered, by their foolish

policy, French Indo-China a menace to democracy throughout the whole of South East Asia.'

In this concluding chapter 'Under the Shadow of China' Mr. Wyatt has done good to point out that imperialism is an ancient tradition of China, as the old system of enforcing neighbouring countries to pay allegiance testifies.

In this chapter Mr. Wyatt enunciates two measures which would build up resistance against Communism and the strength of democracies in S. E. Asia. As far as the fear of Chinese aggression is concerned Mr. Wyatt is of the opinion that the least that Britain and America can do is to ensure that any aggression by Communist China or any other country of S. E. Asia is treated by U.N.O. "as an act of aggression which must be dealt with in the same way as the invasion of South Korea... The West must demonstrate that it is determined to resist any act of aggression from China. His other panacea is economic aid; stressing the importance of the Colombo plan he observes "Britain is making her contribution but the Colombo Plan cannot be implemented unless the United States of America is prepared to make up the balance between the British Commonwealth contributions and the total required."

The expenditure asked of the United States is a fraction of her expenditure on armaments but is of enormous importance in assisting the area of stability.

The tendency to regard the problem of Communism in S. E. Asia as merely a problem of increasing the standard of living through technical assistance represents the popular approach today. Important as the T. A. aid is it is not the answer to all the prayers of all S. E. Asian souls. No doubt hunger and poverty are the two most potent friends of Communism in S. E. Asia and yet the 'hunger for philosophy', hunger for a purposeful life is an equally strong motivating power driving many young men and women into the Communist camp. The battle against Communism is not a battle of physical strength, of arms and atomic weapons alone. It is a trial and test of ideas and ideologies. Souls are not conquered by bread but by the superior evocative power and potency of ideas. Democracy must prove itself to be a greater, better, more human and egalitarian ideology than Communism pretends to be. Technical assistance is only one answer to the problem and not the complete answer.

(S. R. MOHAN DAS — Continued from page 7)
an elastic set of engineering instruments open-to-change through the test of experience on the feedback mechanism. The party thus gets its identity in its instruments of engineering that implement the first principles, for it is in this latter factor that the differences between democratic parties arise. While the party should be conscious of the need not to make these instruments its vested interest at the detriment of the first principles, it is certainly essential to have a clear line of defining these instruments which could only be done in adoption of an ideology where the mechanism of demarcation between rigidity on first principles and elasticity on the instruments of engineering would be clearly and consciously understood.

Plays

SINS OF THE COMMISSARS

By a Sunday Times Correspondent.

GOOD plays on contemporary subjects are hard to come by in Russia: that is a constant complaint of all those who have to do with the stage. Bad plays abound and are usually forgotten after a few performances. Just now, however, a very bad play forms the topic of the month in Moscow. Its author is a well-known writer, editor of the *October* magazine, Panfyorov, its title is *When We Are Beautiful*, and its purpose is to expose the looseness of sexual morals among the privileged few in modern Russia.

Soviet playwrights are, of course, in a quandary. Earlier this year, they were ticked off for ignoring "the element of dramatic conflict" in depicting modern Soviet life. Like many others, Panfyorov committed the unpardonable mistake of taking this advice too seriously and of producing a play seething with conflicts—the conflict between love and duty, between family loyalty and infatuation, between "capitalist survivals in human consciousness" and "Soviet mentality." And though his play is poor as a work of art, it is highly revealing as a sample of sociological analysis.

Talk of the British being hypocrites! These "heralds of the new Socialist era," so puritanic in their official contacts with the outside world, so contemptuous of decadent bourgeois morals, talk and behave like heroes in a cheap semi-pornographic novel. Panfyorov's heroes belong to the Soviet elite—not to the masses among which "survivals of capitalist mentality" would be more pardonable. No, they are party members, one and all—industrial magnates, party bosses, leading artists.

If it were not for the cumbersome titles of the heroes, the plot would be quite "bourgeois": the party secretary loses interest in his wife and falls for a glamorous geologist. Lia, wife of a trade union official, reveals this fact to the ageing wife who, in her turn, starts an affair with a famous sculptor to arouse the husband's jealousy. The plan succeeds, the husband returns, while the geologist switches her affection to the managing director. As a side show there is a sordid intrigue between the T.U. wife and a visiting artist.

Both the plot and the sentiments expressed in the play ("There is something wrong with a man if he doesn't go in for the girls," or "Don't look into your husband's life, look into his wallet," are choice examples) proved too strong a dose of Socialist realism for the official supervisors of Soviet literature. Both authoritative Party organs, the fortnightly *Bolshevik* and the daily *Pravda* shook their prim heads. Panfyorov, they say, is guilty of "relishing the purely negative aspects of Soviet life, of artificially isolating and exaggerating them, and of thus giving a wholly misleading impression of life in the U.S.S.R. as a whole."

But it is precisely this rot among the elite which has caused the Politburo to revise the Party Statutes and to institute a thorough discussion of them in preparation for the Party Congress to be convened on October 5 in Moscow. A minor purge is already in progress as a result of this "discussion"—not on political, but on purely ethical lines. Corruption, embezzlements, nepotism are rife among the Communist bureaucrats ruling the country, and the papers have begun to print reports of local Party meetings at which men belonging to Panfyorov's world are exposed as moral rotters. The big discussion is turning into an orgy of mutual denunciation.

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M. R. A.

ONE need not strongly deplore the cynicism displayed by many good people over the visit of the M.R.A. Team to Bombay. All along we have derived great but dubious comfort from the thought that what we lacked in material achievements is more than compensated by a cultural and moral heritage superior to any nation in the world. Two types of people are conspicuous in their utter contempt for M.R.A. The most vociferous vilifications of M.R.A. have come from the Communists and fellow-travellers who flaunt before M.R.A. and its leader Dr. Buchman the slogan the latter was alleged to have made "Thank God for Hitler." The science of dialectics conveniently forgetting the disgraceful honeymoon of the Red God with Hitler and the carving up of the new Soviet Empire in connivance with Hitler, the Communists find M.R.A. a threat to their hold on the average Indian intellectual.

The other type of person whose antagonism M.R.A. has invoked is the cultural snob who having paid lip service to Gandhiji more on account of Gandhiji's moral stature being of an indigenous nature than for the moral aspects of his teachings themselves, strongly resent any Westerner daring to bring out the same ideas with impressive techniques.

Apart from these two groups, the M.R.A. team, during its hectic activities for the past ten days in the city of Bombay, have clearly and definitely established one fact, that M.R.A. just cannot be ignored or waived away with a sneer. A Movement which has succeeded in impressing and arousing enthusiasm in sober and sophisticated men and number of militant trade unionists cannot just be ignored.

All the sting of attack is removed when one sees the evident sincerity and frankness of each member of the team and even the well-intentioned cynic cannot help feeling silly when he fails to find the hypocrisy which he expected so much in a "racket of this sort." Their four brilliant plays bring out the first-rate techniques of M.R.A. in putting their message across effectively.

On the other hand, the average Indian intellectual, always conscious of the appalling poverty around him, senses a disappointing emptiness in the atmosphere of the plush air-conditioned Taj Ball-room where the daily meetings of M.R.A. are held, and wonders at the composition of the crowd, society ladies of fashion rigged in their best outfit and the well-dressed business magnate, or a newspaper editor. Yet at the end of each meeting the ultra-sensitive consciousness of material inequality gradually gives place to a sense of moral and spiritual equality with the richest and the poorest.

If M.R.A. succeeds in indelibly impressing this moral revolution which Gandhiji so effectively lived for, that would represent the greatest incentive to the uplift of the toiling masses of India and the growth

of democracy which alone can ensure the fulfilment of material and spiritual aspirations of this great land. M.R.A. in India may be "old wine in new bottles," but the wine seems to have lied buried all the while and if the novelty and fancy of a new bottle could make an individual addicted to the universally acceptable absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, one need not have a vested interest in the shape or newness of the bottle.

MONA

Ferry to Nowhere

AS of yesterday an unhappy gentleman listed as M. P. O'Brien, which his friends say is a contraction of a longer Hungarian name, was fluctuating between the Portuguese-owned port of Macao and Hong Kong. For two weeks he has been abroad the ferry which covers the fifty miles between these two cities. He had gone abroad at Macao without an adequate passport. His story is that he is an American. The American consul at Hong Kong says he isn't an American. He is not allowed to land at Hong Kong. Nor is he allowed to land at Macao. As Stanley Rich says in his Associated Press dispatch, "The ferry company would like to get rid of him but can't just throw him overboard."

Mr. O'Brien's personal fate must somehow be adjusted. He will get off somewhere, some day. The boat is scheduled to enter drydock soon, and perhaps he may then be permitted to get off. Or the boat may some day wear out, in which case he will have to get off. Or he may live to a great old age and finally pass away. But while he continues to oscillate between Hong Kong and Macao and between Macao and Hong Kong he is a symbol. He is like a man trying to make up his mind in an election. He is like humanity faced at times and in places with a seeming choice between the tyranny of the Left and the tyranny of the Right. He is like civilization fluctuating between peace and war, between hope and despair, between constructive labour and the sad toil of hammering out armaments. He is the future and the past and the mind of man going back and forth between them.

These meditations might surprise Mr. O'Brien if in the circumstances he is capable of being surprised by anything. For two weeks he has been ticking and tocking like a human pendulum. Perhaps he has got used to it. Perhaps his predicament is no longer strange to him. Perhaps this is what he thinks he was born for. In any case, we wish him a happy solution. If he gets where he really wants to be perhaps we may take it as a happy augury. Perhaps all ferries come to their slips at last and all the passengers happily disembark.

—New York Times.

Bull In A China Shop

JACOB A. MALIK, retiring permanent delegate of the Soviet Union at the United Nations, struck out yesterday before the conversational fast ball delivery of Mikhail Koriakov, Professor of Russian Literature at Fordham University, when they met unexpectedly in the Four Continent Book Corporation store at 55 West Fifty-sixth Street.

Professor Koriakov was on his way out of the place with a volume by an eighteenth century Russian writer when he saw Mr. Malik glancing through a looseleaf folio of reproductions from the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. The diplomat was accompanied by his wife.

"Mr. Malik," said the professor politely in Russian, "I would like to ask you something."

"How did you know who I am?"

"Ah, everyone around here knows you and that's why I'd like to ask you——"

"Usually I avoid answering questions," Mr. Malik declared as he laid aside the folio.

"Yes, of course, but this question interests me personally, believe me, very, very much," Professor Koriakov insisted, smiling.

"Well, then, if it is personal, go ahead."

"I've always been puzzled why they don't open a bookshop in Moscow like this one, a shop where all kinds of American, French, British and Russian books would be available?"

"Well," Mr. Malik replied, taking a cut at the first pitch, "this question doesn't concern me at all. I'm not in the publishing business."

"I know that," the professor said, "yet, you know, the question is of general interest."

"What can I tell you? I haven't been home for four years. Perhaps there are such bookshops in Moscow now."

"Frankly," the professor countered, "I doubt it, for I come from Moscow myself."

"When?"

"In 1944."

"Who are you, anyway?" Mr. Malik demanded more irritably.

"Oh, just a Russian. I am living here now," Professor Koriakov said, but without explaining his work at Fordham or identifying himself as the author of *I'll Never Go Back*, published four years ago.

"If you are a Russian," Mr. Malik went on, "you must know that there is an international book-store in Moscow."

"Indeed I am aware of it; it is on the corner of Pushkin Square and Gorki Street," was the reply. "Before the war, though, when I was studying in the Moscow Institute of Philosophy and Literature, the only French book I could get in that shop was Maurice Thorez' *Le Fils du Peuple*."

"That's a very good book, isn't it?" Mr. Malik said, swinging hard at his second strike.

"I'm not sure," the professor replied, "but if Thorez (the French Communist leader) were to write another

volume saying how he deserted from the army with German help and escaped to the U.S.S.R., that would be a very interesting study."

"I see your point of view," Mr. Malik retorted for his third and final swipe at the argument, "and I don't want to talk to you any longer."

Professor Koriakov murmured his thanks and walked off into the street, beaming with contentment.

DAVID ANDERSON in *New York Times*

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With Many Voices

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

—Tennyson.

"Walking with Gandhiji was like walking with Aristotle."—Dr. Frank Buckman.

—*Times of India* 9th November, 1952.

Singapore.

Captain Sing Tat-Chey is wondering what they think of him back in Communist China.

For, when the Duchess of Kent reached Malaya on her tour of the area, Captain Sing decorated his ship, the freighter *Hai Hsuan*, with all the flags he could lay his hands on.

A local newspaper reported the gesture, emphasising the fact that a Chinese vessel had gone out of its way to honour royalty.

"Libel," roared Captain Sing and made his way ashore to consult a lawyer.

"Those decorations," he declared, "were put out to celebrate China's Liberation Day on October 1."

Nobody knows why, but for nearly three years the *Hai Hsuan* has been anchored in Singapore with a cargo of salt that should have reached India early in 1950—NAFEN.

—*Free Press Journal* 8th October, 1952.

Berlin, Oct., 7

Circulating among teenagers in Berlin are two newspapers each called "The Young World." One, published in the Soviet sector, aims at converting its readers to Communism. The other is an exact reproduction if you look at it casually—but the text is violently anti-Red.

The Eastern version is the official one. The other is produced by anti-Communists in the West. It carries the same title, headlines and photographs and its make-up is carefully designed to imitate the Soviet-produced original.

The publishers of the Western version are a group of young refugees from the East who realise how dangerous it is to be seen there with a democratic paper.

They hope their "young world" is sufficiently deceptive to Eastern officials to be read more or less openly.

Rockets are sometimes used to spread the paper. A volunteer will go to a mass demonstration with a rocket stuffed with copies. He sets the fuse in a sheltered spot and walks off. A few minutes later the projectile shoots into the air and automatically releases the publication when it is in the air—NAFEN.

—*Free Press Journal* 8th October, 1952.

"The 600 million people who lived in Asia were a deciding factor at the crossroads of the world" declared Dr. Frank Buchman, initiator of the Moral Rearmament Movement, in Colombo.

—*Times of India* 9th November, 1952.

"The colonial system is obsolete and should be done away with as soon as possible."

—John Foster Dulles.

Reports say that during the Peking Peace Conference, there were few references to the Soviet Union and fewer still to Communism. That is a new tactic that is being adopted by the worshippers and incense-burners at the Kremlin Shrine.

—*Nagpur Times* 9th November, 1952.

The Communists will never gain power in India, although they might win limited victories in certain localities. By cultural heritage the Indian people are totally opposed to either a dictatorship or a dictator.

—*Nagpur Times* 9th November, 1952.

According to the Communist phraseology no country is truly liberated unless the Red Army marches in.

—B. Sekhri in *National Standard* 13th November, 1952.

"As far as we know, Russia does not contribute to any of the assistance programmes of the United Nations Organization."

—C. D. Deshmukh, India's Finance Minister, *Free Press Journal* 13th November, 1952.

The Communists' reluctance to lose face over the return of their prisoners needs no explanation. It will be better for the Chinese if they do, in the end, accept the fact that 15,000 Chinese "volunteers" refuse to return to their country.

—Editorial in *The London Times*, Sept. 6, 1952.

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