

JULY 1954

Sapping The Foundation

by V. B. Karnik

THE Indian Parliament is not a sovereign body. The Constitution and the Fundamental Rights guaranteed by it impose a number of limitations on its legislative authority. The Constitution has further empowered courts of law to examine the laws enacted by Parliament or State legislatures and declare them void if they infringe any of the Fundamental Rights or other provisions of the Constitution.

These provisions naturally slow down the pace of social and economic reforms. In the first place Parliament has to be very careful and see that none of the provisions of the law that it intends to enact encroaches on any of the Fundamental Rights. In the next place the law must stand the scrutiny of law courts and examples are not wanting when the Supreme Court or the High Courts have declared some laws or some of their provisions *ultra vires*.

The administrators and the Government of the day find these provisions irksome. They feel as if their attempts to ensure social and economic progress are being frustrated by the High Courts and the Supreme Court. They feel as if the will of the people is being negated by the technicalities of the law.

But the Constitution is after all the highest expression of the people's will. The Indian people deliberately decided in favour of a written constitution embodying a set of Fundamental Rights and giving courts the right of enforcing them. Their conception was that certain rights of every individual should be inviolable and that no Government, whatever the majority it may for the moment command, should be in a position to encroach upon them. This could be ensured only by accepting the principle of the rule of law and establishing courts empowered to enforce and scrutinise laws. The Constitution was framed in accordance with these declared views of the people.

The people could have chosen a different form of government or a different order of society, one which recognises no rights of individuals and places absolute power in the hands of the government of the day. It is the experience of history that though some spectacular progress may be achieved in the field of heavy industries and armaments under such a regime, it is always achieved by establishing a dictatorship operating under a system of slave labour and depriving the people of all their rights. India deliberately rejected that system and chose the democratic form of government, knowing full well that progress under a democracy is gradual but sound.

These considerations deserve to be kept in mind while discussing the amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Constitution Sub-Committee of the Congress Working Committee. The Sub-Committee has done well to publish its suggestions for it gives the public an opportunity to consider them before they are submitted to Parliament.

One of the major suggestions of the Sub-Committee is to amend Article 31 so as to exclude from the purview of courts the quantum or the rate of compensation to be paid for the acquisition of property. Under the Constitution possession of property is regarded as a Fundamental Right and Article 31 provides "no person can be deprived of his property save by authority of law."

Clause 2 of the Article provides for the payment of compensation for any property acquired for public purposes. Once the principle of paying compensation is accepted, it is difficult to see why courts should not be allowed to have their say on the question of its quantum or rate. It is not necessary to assume that courts will always insist on full compensation. They are sure to be guided by considerations of equity and public policy and courts can also move with times. The Supreme Court of America has shown its ability to move with the time. It will be unjust to assume that the Indian Supreme Court will be more conservative.

The other amendment suggested to the same Article stands on a better footing. What it demands

is the enlargement of the Article to cover any law providing for temporarily taking over possession or control of any property. In view of the Supreme Court judgment in the Sholapur Mills case, it is clear that such an amendment is desirable. The State must have the power to temporarily take over property if the owner is deliberately mismanaging or destroying it or for purposes of ensuring production or employment.

The most objectionable of the suggestions is the one to restrict the High Courts' power to issue writs. One could have understood the propriety of the Sub-Committee making the suggestion if it had given any instances of the High Courts misusing the power. Another suggestion of the same order is to exclude "tribunals" from the superintendence of High Courts and the Supreme Court. There have been a couple of instances where the exercise of this superintendence has caused serious hardship. But these are some of the minor inconveniences flowing from the acceptance of the principle of the rule of law. If law is to prevail in the country, all acts of the Government and of inferior courts and tribunals should be open to the scrutiny of higher courts. The High Courts and the Supreme Court have been exercising this scrutiny according to certain well established principles. The suggestions in this respect should not be therefore entertained.

These suggestions imply a distrust of courts which is highly improper. An independent judiciary, with the power and authority of scrutinising all acts of the executive government, is essential for the healthy functioning of a democracy. The courts are the watch dogs of democracy and to circumscribe their functions is to put limitations on the rights and liberties of the people.

It is equally understandable why the Sub-Committee has suggested that a public servant should not be able to challenge his dismissal from service in a court of law and that it should be possible to effect reduction in rank without giving him an opportunity

to show cause against it. In a democracy, it is essential that public servants should have security of service. If the suggestions are accepted, the public servants will be denied two of the essential ingredients of that security of service.

The suggestions of the Sub-Committee are before the public. They are being considered at present by Chief Ministers and by Presidents of Pradesh Congress Committees. They will be debated in the next meeting of the All Indian Congress Committee. It is only after that, that they may be introduced in Parliament.

Public opinion has therefore the time to assert itself. It is heartening to see that the Indian press has, on this occasion, given a correct lead to the people and helped them to form an independent opinion on the proposed amendments. The Constitution is the fundamental law of the land. To effect changes in the Constitution merely to suit the convenience of the executive government is to sap its foundation. The rate at which changes are being effected in the Constitution will undermine its prestige in the eyes of the people. It should not be changed lightly. And whenever changes are to be effected, they should be effected not for narrowing the bounds of freedom, but for expanding them. To increase the authority of the executive government and to restrict the powers of the courts of law is not the way of expanding freedom. Rapid economic and social progress is no doubt essential, but it will not be a desirable ideal if it is to be achieved at the cost of the rights and liberties of the citizens.

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a case like this. Generally judges tend to act like glorified prudes when they are called upon to decide whether or not a particular work of art is obscene. But in this case, the Magistrate, Mr. M. Nasrullah, stated pointedly: "A painting which is creation of artistic talent does not become obscene for the simple reason that it contains an expressive pose which in other settings may even be considered objectionable, but, from the artistic point of views, does no more than justice to the subject before him." One must also congratulate Mr. Rudy Von Leyden, who by his impeccable and scholarly evidence turned, perhaps for the first time, the gloomy room of a criminal court into the bright classroom of an Art academy.

"The H Bomb Racket"

A READER writes to express doubt about the authenticity of the facts concerning the snag reported to have been struck by the Kremlin in regard to the use by the Soviet Union of the H Bomb which were mentioned in paragraph 3 of the first Editorial note in our May issue.

In view of this, we may mention that this information was derived from the April issue of the *Intelligence Digest* edited from London by Kenneth de Courcy, a news bulletin which has been known, in some instances, to be ahead of the world press in regard to news from behind the Iron Curtain.

FREEDOM FIRST

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Notes

A Pity

IT is a pity that the good work that the International Labour Organisation has been doing all these years should now be threatened with "disruption, disintegration or at best slow paralysis." The cause of this is the re-admission to that organisation of Soviet Russia and its satellites. The credentials of their delegates were challenged—though unsuccessfully—by representatives of both employers and employees from the other countries and their resentment is shown by the fact that not one of the twenty elected to the Governing Body by the workers' and employers' colleges respectively is a communist.

The structure of the I.L.O. is a tripartite one—made up of representatives of governments, employers and employees. The real difficulty is that Soviet society does not conform to the pattern of life which is normal in the free world. In Soviet Russia, the Government itself is the sole employer, while the so-called trade union is no longer an organ of collective bargaining but a Labour Front of the dictatorship seeking to squeeze more out of the workers.

The Rules and Regulations adopted at the tenth All Union Trade Union Congress of the U.S.S.R. on

It is a scandalous anomaly that the rules of the I.L.O. did not permit of a rejection of the Soviet application for admission until, at least, an undertaking had been extracted for the doors of the slave labour camps to be thrown open and its millions of victims liberated.

Soviet Rebuff To Asia

M. Molotov's contemptuous rejection on June 7 of the Western proposal that an international commission to supervise an Indo-China armistice should be composed entirely of the five Colombo Powers shows up once again in its true light the fraudulent nature of the communist claim of friendship towards the Asian peoples. It also reminds us once again that neutrality is something the Soviet mind is incapable of understanding. As Mao Tse-Tung has said, "There is no third path," and those who pretend to be neutrals are hypocrites and worse. While rejecting the claims of India and its four Colombo associates to be truly neutral, M. Molotov illustrated his own idea about neutrality by holding up Poland and Czechoslovakia as those better qualified for the purpose of acting as umpires.

Now that Geneva has proved, what was always obvious, that negotiations with communists can only result in deadlock or surrender, it is just as well that the Korean and Indo-Chinese problems have got back to the forum of the United Nations where they properly belong. In an effort to keep

'ASIA FOR THE ASIATICS'



Yardley in The Baltimore Sun

Soviet Union perform all their activities under the direction of the Communist Party." In an article in direction of the Communist Party." In the result, the Soviet workers have been correctly described as "the most underpaid, overworked persons in any modern industrial state. They are the most managed, checked-on, spied-on and unrepresented workers in the world today."

Is it to be believed that the Soviet dictatorship has, by joining the I.L.O., indicated a willingness to conform to civilized standards of treating its oppressed workers? Only the most naive will entertain such an illusion. The best guess is that the splendid work done by the Mudaliar Committee set up by the I.L.O. and the U.N. in exposing the existence of slave labour on a mass scale in the Soviet Empire has so alarmed the men in the Kremlin that they have decided to come in and stop the I.L.O. from functioning, just as they are strangulating the functioning of the U.N. with their noxious presence.

the world body from being seized of the problem of communist aggression in Indo-China, the Soviet delegate cast on June 18 the sixtieth Soviet veto to block the resolution proposed by Thailand that "peace observers" should be sent into Thai territory to observe developments.

It is to be hoped that this resolution will now be taken to the U.N. General Assembly which, fortunately, is not cursed with the handicap of the Great Power veto.

Art In A Criminal Court

THE acquittal of artist Akbar Padmasee who was charged with exhibiting an obscene picture is a matter on which not only the artist but also the magistrate should be congratulated. This is for the first time, in our memory, that a magistrate has brought to bear a genuinely artistic point of view on

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The Committee And America

Mr. Prabhakar Padhye's article "The Committee and America" published in the May issue has evoked reactions from readers. We are publishing below two of them. We may publish more in subsequent issues.

—Editor

by Anant Kanekar

YOU have very ably and lucidly explained the Committee's stand with reference to America, and no honest democrat can differ with you on any point in the said article. The friend to whose letter your article is a reply, will gladly endorse every opinion expressed in the article. Even before reading your article, I am sure, he knew and accepted all that you say. And yet he had his suspicions. We must pause and think why a typical, well-meaning Indian intellectual—not at all pro-communist or gullible to communist propaganda—persists in entertaining such suspicions.

To me the reason is quite obvious. The mighty debate between the forces of the democracy and the forces of totalitarianism, to which you refer in your article, is certainly mighty and very much real; but as much real and perhaps mightier—particularly to Asian and African peoples—is another fact. That fact is that the forces of democracy have amongst them a very sizable crowd of suspicious characters. Not only is it there, it is unfortunately in the very forefront of the great debate. This crowd consists of British imperialists in Kenya, French colonialists in Indo-China, Tunisia and Morocco and American big business which has joined the debate on our side not because they are particularly anti-totalitarian but because communism threatens its vested interests.

I am quite aware of the fact that these elements are a dying force and less dangerous in this period of history than the communist totalitarians; but to the Asian and African masses they look more dangerous. That is quite understandable. They are so much on their neck even now. Indians are, of course, free of them, but the cramp in the neck has not as yet completely disappeared. The doctrine, that the devil you know is preferable to the devil

you do not know, does not apply in this case. It is exactly otherwise, as we very well know from the psychology of our people during the last war. They knew that fascism was much more hateful than imperialism, and yet in their heart of hearts they used to be glad whenever Hitler scored against the British. It is impossible for people who are still under imperialism or have only recently been free from it, to see things in proper perspective. We cannot and must not quarrel with them for not seeing things in proper perspective. It is not they but History as made and as still being made by the capitalists-cum-imperialists that is responsible for this distortion of perspective.

We say that Nehru's neutrality raises a very faint voice of protest against communist misdeeds and shouts vociferously against Anglo-American errors of commission and omission. The well-meaning Indian intellectual says that our Committee behaves exactly vice-versa. Hence the persisting suspicion that the Committee may be existing as an outpost of Western policy in India and toeing the political line of the Western nations.

A similar suspicion exists even about Asian Socialists, and only a little while back Dr. Lohia had to urge presumably to counteract such suspicion—"the necessity" for the Anti-Colonial Bureau of the Asian Socialist Conference, "of doing something urgent and concrete to help colonial people in their struggle for freedom....passing resolutions was of no avail.... we must initiate bold programmes like mass-meetings, demonstrations and collection of funds to help the freedom movements....to adopt a virile anti-imperialist approach....."

Don't you think that our Committee should do something on these lines to allay the understandable suspicions in the minds of some of our good friends?

by "R"

SIXTY years ago, a saffron robed youth spoke to a meeting in Chicago on Hinduism. He was, himself till lately an atheist, a disciple of an unorthodox priest. Overnight his speech of short sentences, with words rarely of more than one syllable, echoed round the world; he had barely a decade more to live and only two years in which to tour his own country. The immediate effect of Vivekananda's fervent plea for action, reason, a renaissance in Hindu philosophy, was alike to that of Shankara. Since that day, a turbaned Indian known as Hindu, be he Parsi or Sikh or Moslem, has been received in U.S.A. Exiles from British persecution sought sanctuary there, even as Mazzini and Kossuth migrated to England in the 19th

century. Har Dayal with his call to regard not Benaras or Madura as places of pilgrimage but rather the homes of Jefferson and Tolstoy; Lajpat Rai with the stress on a revolution in education; the missionaries of Ramkrishna gathered round them persons like Huxley and Isherwood; all these and others were welcome to the U.S.A. Further, in the last war, Roosevelt and his emissaries, Phillips and Johnson, threw their weight on the side of Indian freedom.

When the constitution of India was drafted, many were the ideas of U.S. polity incorporated in the new political structure. The supreme court of India receives the decisions of its sister body in U.S.A. with respect. The whole of modern civilization dates from

the French Revolution. The ideas of that Revolution were first put into action in U.S.A. and only later on the banks of the Seine. Jefferson's writings can be quoted here any day to suit our daily problems. Thus the links between us and U.S.A. are not only many but unbreakable. One would have thought after 1947, whenever the birthday celebrations of Vivekananda were in the swing, the mention of the U.S.A. would be made with gratitude; the 14th July or the 4th June would be celebrated here with joy; on the 14th August demonstrations would be held before the U.S.A. embassy.

On the contrary. For some years the daily bread was made of imported wheat, the experiments in Community projects received impetus from technicians from the U.S.A.; but the space allotted by newspapers to these acts has been disproportionate to a critique of U.S. foreign policy and often enough no mention could be obtained of downright documents of treason on the part of local disciples of the Kremlin. The fulsome praise, by highly-placed if illiterate women, of Moscow and Peking, as a result of a short visit, was paraded in newspapers but a criticism by others similarly placed was ignored. The Mudaliar Report on Slave Labour was nowhere reviewed. The whole picture is distorted before the public by a feeling among the people and the press that somehow the Prime Minister would like all this done; actually, a mentality wholly unflattering to this distinguished if subtle and vague dialectician. Every intelligent student of affairs knows that, after World War I, the whole of Europe including Russia—its terrible famine of 1924 cannot be forgotten—was fed by the U.S.A. After this War, the U.S.A.'s role in matters of mercy and rehabilitation has been on its own fabulously generous scale.

Of course, there are faults on the other side and friends must point them out even with some asperity. The U.S.A.'s machine for spreading its view is rickety. Why does not someone publish the despatches of Phillips and Johnson? But of course we must go a little deeper to analyze what the Asiatics expected of the U.S.A. after the war and how far the U.S.A. has failed. Now, the first thing an Asiatic remembers in its history of the last century is the racial arrogance and exploitation by the Whites. He is touchy about self-government and is not impressed with a story of supposed good government under others. The record is clear. Burma prefers to nationalize a lot of things without compensation although clearly its industries have thereby been decimated. Iran's entire economy is shattered by its choice because of an idea, even where others feel that some compromise to its advantage could have been arrived at. May be Indonesia's trade could have prospered under foreign guidance, but freedom is what she chose.

This desire of the Asiatic for complete non-intervention in his domestic affairs must receive the due first priority in any evaluation of U.S.A. foreign policy in Asia. If anyone suggests, for instance, that if France leaves or gives independence to Indo-China, the communists will step into S. E. Asia, reasonable as the argument appears, to the Asiatic the first

reaction will be, that the French have no business to be there and secondly he will expect the U.S.A. to have urged and to continue to urge on the French the immediacy of granting real independence to Indo-China, as a first measure.

Now it happens that this first priority in values has a vital connection with the interpretation of the history of events during the period between the two wars. Every democrat knows that World War II did not start across the Rhine in 1939 but it started in the seize of Madrid. The Spanish Loyalists represented modern civilization as against the tyranny of nobility and priesthood. It was a fight akin to the French Revolution. The so-called democracies let the Loyalists down in the name of "non-intervention" and peace. Abyssinia followed and the attack on the Ardennes and all it entailed was only a natural corollary.

Thus, we wept at Czecho-slovakia's fall; at the murder of Jan Masaryk and, as a consequence, at the broken heart of Benes. Thus we were astonished at the recognition of Franco, Salazar, French action in Morocco; while we regarded with approval the U.S.A.'s action in Korea, Rhee left us unmoved. Will people in U.S.A. stop to consider one simple proposition based on our reading of recent history? Means inevitably mould the ends; what was bought at Munich was not peace but the sacrifice of Benes and the nurture of Hitler, the War and the Frankenstein of Stalin. If you allow democracy to perish in Spain, Indo-China, Morocco, you do not buy peace and strength but nurture the soul of predatory Czars. The arguments of expediency, of compromise, balancing evils, just do not apply. The battle is for far graver issues than military strategy, immediate allies, immediate action. The whole of history is telescoped within these few months or years we have yet to live and strive for. Lenin's inheritance is a menace to the spirit of modern civilization. It has set back socialism, rational thought, secular spirit by decades. It will be ended by the relentless enforcement of the democratic spirit and democratic institutions on this side of the border; it will be exercised by the terrible face of truth and not by incantations of formulae.

These are the fundamentals. It may be that in the utterances of Asiatic politicians, some gentle and some full of tantrums, much may be accounted for by love of publicity, sense of self-importance, egged on by servitors who are no better than cheap press agents. They benefit neither their countries nor the cause they represent. When they talk of areas of peace, they forget Denmark, Belgium, Holland in the War against the Kaiser and they forget Norway in the last War, Switzerland and Spain were under the thumb of Hitler and no one envisages their role in the future for India. We are not spectators of a lion fight in the arena, sheltered by a high wall or by sentries. It is all moonshine. But within all of them discerning men will find that these fundamentals are the real gist of the matter; and it will be to the benefit of human understanding if wise men in U.S.A. and in India concentrate on the solution of what after all, among friendly nations, is a difference of perspective.

Aims And Activities Of P.E.N.

by Sophia Wadia

READERS of *Freedom First* will have examined Shri R. B. Joshi's article, "The P.E.N. Conference at Chidambaram," appearing in its June 1954 issue. We thank the Editorial Board of this journal for inviting us to present our own views. Shri Joshi has shown a kindly interest in our organisation, but we should like to remove any inadequate or wrong knowledge that he and the readers of *Freedom First* may have about the P.E.N. All-India Centre.

The All-India P.E.N. has played a pioneering role in drawing together Indian writers and spreading interest in the various Indian literatures since its inception in 1933. Its membership strength is not very great, but each of its over 300 members is an established writer, a definite force, therefore, who believes in the ideals and aims for which the P.E.N. association has been established. The P.E.N. stands primarily for unity and for peace. Rising above all differential and divisive barriers it believes in unification through culture and works for the dissemination of culture.

India is fortunate to have a varied culture, a treasure-house of many literatures. The All-India P.E.N. is not blind to this fact as assumed by Shri Joshi. On the contrary, it recognized this in 1933, long before the after-freedom linguistic interest. The Preamble of its Constitution states that the P.E.N. All-India Centre.

...aspires to serve the cause of literature in India by spreading familiarity with and appreciation of the Indian literatures in the outside world and to serve the cultural unity of India by disseminating throughout the country information on the literary activities of the different linguistic cultures.

Has our organization followed this aim? Certainly. We have been successful in our undertaking through our programme of work. This programme includes our conferences, periodical public meetings and discussions and our publications. The proceedings of the P.E.N. sponsored All-India Writers' Conferences, published in book form, are unique compendiums on current literary developments in the different languages, viz., *Indian Writers in Council* (Report of Jaipur Conference, 1945), *The Indian Literatures of Today* (A Symposium on 16 Indian languages, Jaipur Conference) and *Writers in Free India* (Second All-India Writers' Conference, Banaras, 1947). To introduce modern Indian writing to the English-speaking world, we have also started an Indian Literatures Series. The volumes on Assamese, Bengali, Indo-Anglian, Sanskrit and Telugu literatures have already been published.

One of the most important ways in which our centre serves the country's writers is through its monthly organ *The Indian P.E.N.*, now in its 20th volume. *The Indian P.E.N.* reiterates the ideals for which the P.E.N. stands. It has published from its

first issue articles on the different literatures of the country and notes on literary developments, conferences, awards, etc. From December 1937, however, it treats the several literatures (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Oriya, Telugu, to name a few), separately, in the "From Everywhere in India" columns.

The Indian P.E.N. has always published appreciations of outstanding Indian writers, both past and present, as well as poetic efforts, and often translations of poems written in the regional languages. Besides this, *The Indian P.E.N.* features reviews of Indian publications. These publications include books in the regional languages, both original works and translations. There is also a regular column of "New Publications of Our P.E.N. Members." At the same time current literary trends in and articles from foreign countries have been noted. We are also in active touch with most of the world-wide P.E.N. centres.

Hence to say that the P.E.N. All-India Centre "could easily serve as a link between the various regional literatures of India on the one hand, and the world body on the other," is an obvious mistake, since it is already doing this important work. As to its getting into "closer touch with writers," is it not also necessary for the writers who believe in its high ideals, to contact and co-operate with it? Among our members, eminent writers represent the regional languages, viz., Shri B. K. Barua—(Assamese); Shri Buddhadeva Bose, Shri A. S. Ray, Dr. S. Majtaba Ali—(Bengali); Shri Umashankar Joshi, Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Prof. V. R. Trivedi, Shri C. C. Mehta—(Gujarati); Shri S. H. Vatsyayan, Shri Vishnu Prabhakar, Shri Dharendra Varma, Shri Suryanarayan Vyas—(Hindi); Shri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, Shri V. Sitaramiah—(Kannada); Shri Amaranatha Jha, Pandit Jayakanta Mishra—(Maithili); Prof. K. P. Kulkarni, Kakasaheb Kalelkar—(Marathi); Shri Valathol, Shri K. S. Karanth—(Malayalam); Shri A. P. Panda, Shri K. C. Panigrahi—(Oriya); Shri Teja Singh, Shri Mohan Singh—(Panjabi); Shri R. Krishnamurthy, "Kalki"—(Tamil); Shri Puripanda Appala-swamy—(Telugu); the late Shri L. A. Jagtiani till recently, Prof. M. U. Malkani—(Sindhi); and Shri K. M. Abdul Ghaffar, Shri M. Mujeeb, Shri R. A. Siddiqi—(Urdu).

Lastly, Shri Joshi advises that "regional P.E.N. centres" should be organised. Efforts have already been made in this direction and we are glad to say that besides the centre functioning in Bombay, there are two other active groups, in Calcutta and New Delhi. These groups hear addresses on different Indian literatures and discuss writers' problems. With right enthusiasm and continuous support other groups could be started elsewhere.

The P.E.N. affirms

"the principle of unhampered transmission of
(Continued on page 9)

M. Camus And The 'Crimes De Logique'

by Yatim Ghaznavi

OF the new writers, M. Albert Camus' books are probably the best that are being written in France today. To what he says we are therefore bound to listen attentively. His objections to political absolutism—to the man who refuses to discuss anything with you, whose theories are fiat—are shared by every civilized man. 'We suffocate among people who think they are absolutely right' he wrote in 1946, in *Combat*, of which he has been an editor. What pleasure it gives us who suffocate. But let us here him again:

The Rebel,* or more precisely *L'Homme Revolte* of which *The Rebel* is an abridged, impoverished translation, has received high praise. Sir Herbert Read, in a foreword maintains: "With the publication of this book a cloud that has oppressed the European mind for more than a century begins to lift. After an age of anxiety, despair and nihilism it is possible once more (in Sir H's italics) to hope." I do not know about the cloud lifting—in those parts of Europe where the book is actually being read a cloud might also be said to descend; but the hope is so odd because if there is one thing Camus has said very plainly it is that we should not hope.

APPARENTLY, Sir Herbert is not alone in his zeal for *L'Homme Revolte*. It has been acclaimed in France by Emil Heuriot, Andre Billy, Jean Lacroix, Henri Petit and Marcel More. On the other hand, the book has also been bitterly traduced in *Les Temps Modernes* where Francis Jeanson called it 'a pseudo-philosophy of a pseudo-history of revolutions,' and Jean-Paul Sartre himself publicly announced that the book put too great a strain on his friendship for Camus: '*Beaucoup de choses nous separaient. Mais ce peu etaient encore trop.*' After all this, the book is decidedly an anticlimax. It seems to me neither very good nor very bad, but intelligent and interesting enough, more literary than most philosophy books, though weak in history and defective in its logic.

L'Homme Revolte is a dialectical continuation of *Le Myth de Sisyphe*, where Camus asserts that the only serious problem of moral philosophy is suicide. *L'Homme Revolte* presupposes that the only serious problem of political philosophy is murder. Both these startling propositions derive from the Existentialist belief that the universe, or at any rate the human situation, is absurd. In view of this absurdity, Camus asks: is life worth living? He finds no very positive answer, except that if life is not worth living neither is it worth ending, so we might as well make the most of it. He urges us to live for the moment and live as intensely as we can, *vivre de plus* which could be translated—could it not?—as 'to burn with a hard gem-like flame.'

In *L'Homme Revolte* Camus demonstrates that the arguments which weigh against suicide weigh equally against murder. His concern here is not with personal crimes but with *crimes de logique*, such as assassination and terrorism, murders committed on principle, murders justified by philosophical precepts. Camus passes from the notion of *absurdite* to the conclusion that there are no principles, no sound philosophical precepts which can justify killing. Assassination and terrorism are therefore condemned, and the message of the book is that we should abstain from revolutionary excess and limit ourselves to the politics of measure. It is a plea for moderation.

WHY should such an argument cause the stir the book has caused? Partly because the message of moderation, implicitly conservative, came unexpectedly from atheist Existentialist quarters, otherwise aggressively Left Wing, and French Right Wing critics received the book with triumphant complacency. Certainly it is the implicit conservatism which alienated Sartre and the others of the atheist Existentialist school.

But there is more to be said. *L'Homme Revolte* is written in an excellent, if perhaps too selfconsciously distinctive a style, and when a book is well-written there are always people who will believe what it says is true. The book also contains many original and penetrating criticisms of other political thinkers. Alas, in the version under review the style is cramped, and some of the best passages have been deleted 'in interest of the economy'—a familiar but still a shocking philistine excuse. At least one reader would have gladly paid five shillings extra to have M. Camus' full say on Baudelaire, Lautremont etc.

At the end of his long inquiry into rebellion and revolution, Camus suggests that 'rebellion with no other limits but historical expediency signifies unlimited slavery.' To escape this fate, Camus recommends return to the source of rebellion and 'draw its inspiration from the only system of thought which recognizes limits.'

COMPANION OF HONOUR

FREEDOM FIRST paid tribute to William Somerset Maugham in the January 1954 issue on the occasion of the famous writer's 80th birthday. It is therefore with particular relish that this Journal greets the latest and much greater tribute paid to one of the finest writers of our time, the bestowal upon him of the rare and Royal award of Companion of Honour.

The contemporary press has made much play with writer being "once lambasted for his cynicism." We deprecate the implication, if there be one, that Maugham looked upon Kingship and the monarchical

**The Rebel* by Albert Camus, tr. by Anthony Bower, Hamish Hamilton, pp. 273, sh 18/-

The Broken Dialogue

T. R. Fyvel

RECENTLY, I was present at an interesting, and in some ways archetypal, Anglo-American conversation. It was between an American visitor to London, an educationist, and his host, an English critic. Both men were cultured, intelligent, and vaguely liberal in political outlook; the discussion went along amiably—until the Critic remarked casually how disgusting was the latest example of American witch-hunting: the labelling of the former Assistant-Secretary to the U.S.A. Treasury, Harry Dexter White, as a communist agent, the way even ex-President Truman had been dragged in, and all the rest of it. Having said this, however, the Critic was taken aback to find that his American visitor believed fully in the charges against White, though he disliked the manner of the Republican attack against Mr. Truman. Of a sudden, the transatlantic dialogue broke down.

In the course of further conversation, the following came out:

(1) Though the Critic had followed in his daily newspaper the controversy over Harry Dexter White, he was quite unaware that President Truman had *not* defended White's loyalty but had instead claimed that he had moved to "get rid of the fellow" as soon as he learned that White was passing information to Soviet agents.

(2) Somewhat startled by his misreading, the Critic accepted the correction, but replied that since Senator McCarthy and his associates threw out so many obviously wild charges of Communism in all directions, one was disinclined to accept any of them. To which the American replied that the accusation had been put forward in this case not by McCarthy but by Mr. Brownell, President Eisenhower's Attorney-General.

(3) He seemed to have his facts mixed up, said the Critic; but, to be frank, it made little difference to his general attitude. What *was* an ugly fact was that people were being hounded in the United States: there was a witch-hunt, which he detested so much that he was most reluctant to believe any accusation of Communism made by any American politician. To this the American was sympathetic, but he was also perturbed by his host's evident lack of interest in whether or not Harry Dexter White had been a Soviet espionage agent—a disinterest that the latter freely admitted, though he could not, under questioning, explain it.

In confessing to this lack of interest, the Critic was doubtless only giving expression to the general British feeling on this subject. Yet, objectively looked at, isn't such a disinterest very odd? For, after all, Harry Dexter White was by all accounts a Very Important Person. An able man, aggressive and energetic, he was the key figure at the US Treasury for five years, from 1941 to 1946. As Assistant-Secretary to that dignified gentleman-farmer,

Mr. Henry Morgenthau, he had more than an ordinary share in important policy decisions. He drafted the so-called Morgenthau Plan, and was in fact the man in charge of US foreign economic policies. (It is interesting—though perhaps not relevant—that he was regarded as anti-British; and though he favoured the idea of large-scale American aid to Russia, he was distinctly cool to the prospect of providing dollars to Britain.) During the war and post-war international monetary negotiations, he was the American counterpart to Lord Keynes, though with longer tenure and therefore even greater influence, and if one should suddenly learn in London that Lord Keynes had . . . The very idea is unthinkable. But no one could say it was uninteresting.

It is, therefore, surely no cause for surprise if the revelations about White's pro-Soviet activities evoked a political furore in the United States. Even if one takes the extreme sceptic's view that the case against White is not *absolutely* proven—in the sense that it was never put to a legal test—even so, the whole White case must rank as a *cause célèbre*. Yet Mr. Brownell's charges were reported in the British and European press under headlines expressing only scorn, distaste, and, above all, disbelief. "The Wildest Witch-hunt" was the headline of the *Daily Herald*, which seemed to sum up the British reaction.

Why this incredulity? One important general reason is probably the continued spell in Britain of the *mystique* of Roosevelt and the New Deal. Most of those American politicians who have led the shouting about "Reds in Government" are reactionary isolationists who in the past proclaimed that F. D. R. was a tool in the hands of "British Imperialism." Naturally, no section of British opinion will take either these people or their views seriously. Parallel with this go recollections of the Soviet wartime *mystique*; and here, often, a slippery argument is insinuated. Even if certain US officials passed secret documents to Soviet agents, the argument runs, they did so not to an enemy but to a wartime ally, the suggestion being that this was at worst an act of misplaced idealism. Of course, few of those putting forward this argument would uphold it in a case of British senior officials passing secret state information to Soviet agents; and, in any case, the evidence against White goes back several years before the outbreak of the last war.

Here one touches on the radical differences in political climate on the two sides of the Atlantic. Not long ago Sir Hartley Shawcross, formerly Attorney-General under the last Labour Government, pointed out to an American audience, that in Britain, Communist infiltration into government service had also been revealed. Like Mr. Truman, Mr. Attlee had ordered counter-measures. Seventeen thousand out of a million British civil servants were investigated on security grounds, and as a result some hundreds were

suspended and a number of others, not wholly cleared, were moved to non-secret positions. But the whole thing was done quietly, with tacit party agreement instead of strife.

Why should there have been this striking difference in British and American reactions to the same danger?

Among many contributory explanations I should like to emphasise one. Sir Hartley gave out his figures in the course of a speech at the Bicentenary Celebrations of Columbia University. He had followed a number of eminent Americans in a symposium on the theme of "Man's right to knowledge and the free use thereof"—i.e., on what seems to many Americans the burning question of how to combine freedom with security. It is surely significant that a similar symposium in this country would not receive much attention.

Apart from some scientists working on secret projects, few British citizens are worried over the state of freedom in their country. As for security, the old, utterly confident sense of living on a safe island fortress has long been lost in Britain. In this respect, the Americans and British of today appear as if living in different periods of history. No wonder conversation is difficult.

An analogy might clarify what I have in mind. If a contemporary Englishman could be whisked back to the England of 1914-18, he would probably find much to startle him on that earlier Home Front—the cold hate for the enemy (the Hun), passionate faith in the justice of Britain's cause, angry intolerance towards socialists, pacifists, and other dissenters. If he were perspicacious, he would recognise the cause of these fierce emotions in the shock the nation suffered when a century of English security crumbled in August, 1914.

Though the American mood of today is not precisely like that of England of 1914, resemblances are there. In America, too, a longstanding sense of national security has been shattered. This occurred not at the time of Pearl Harbour, which was a piece of carelessness and therefore simply to be avoided in the future. No, paradoxically, the American sense of security vanished with the first day of peace, that is, with the inaugural of the new atomic-bomb age, and with the Soviet Union looming up as a powerful opponent. To the shock of this abrupt loss of their sense of security most Americans have been painfully trying to adjust themselves ever since 1945. Emotionally it has not been easy. The English in 1914 could react to the shock by "legitimate" hate of the wartime enemy, whereas, apart from Korea, the Americans have since 1945 been officially at peace and therefore emotionally frustrated.

I think this situation explains a good deal of what has been going on in the United States—the tendency to see politics in terms of black and white, and, above all, the insistent search for new national security, for a world, indeed, made safe for democracy. Contrast this with contemporary European weariness, and scepticism of any such achievement, and one stares at the yawning gap in historic time, intensifying all attendant misunderstandings: British inability to understand why Americans should think it important what the political views of a feather-brained televi-

sion singer were fifteen years back, and American inability to understand why the British press should consider it unimportant that a senior member of the American administration, able to influence the politics of the free world, should turn out to have been a Stalinist agent. And there are as yet no signs that the gap will be rapidly closed.

[Abridged from *Encounter*]

(P.E.N. Continued from page 6.)

thought within each nation and between all nations, and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which they belong."

When occasion has arisen we have taken a positive stand for freedom of expression. One instance will suffice. When Shri Jawaharlal Nehru was sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment towards the end of 1940, *The Indian P.E.N.* carried on its front page an editorial "The P.E.N. Stands for Free Speech" in which it was said that "the reasons for which the trial took place and the sentence was passed" weakened the Cause of Liberty for which Britain said she was fighting. It may have been the universal respect in which the P.E.N. is held throughout the world that prevented drastic repercussions.

Even now when authors are not receiving the best treatment, especially from publishers, we support those who raise their voice against such instances in *The Indian P.E.N.*

It is earnestly hoped that this brief account of the aims and activities of the P.E.N. All-India Centre will help clear up whatever misunderstanding there may be in the minds of the writers of the country. If any doubts remain, however, we shall welcome their questions and answer them gladly. On our side, we assure them that we sincerely desire their moral support and their active sympathy and participation in our work for Unity, Peace and Freedom.

ENCOUNTER

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Review

Essay in Politics

by Scott Buchanan Pub. Philosophical Library, New York, 1953.

ANALYSIS of what is going on in the world with a view to finding ways of canalising energies frittered away in tensions is the theme of this significant contribution of Dr. Buchanan. It is an up-shot of a discussion among Liberals about their "stations and duties in life" in an essentially American context.

The problem today is to ensure a harmonious co-existence of the political (Rousseau) and the commercial (Adam Smith) republics and the workers' commonwealth with its promise of a classless society as visualised by the forerunners of Marx. These visions, before being worked out fully, seem to be turning into spectres which can only mean 'death, of the spirit.' Our frustrations today result from the means having become so complicated and overwhelming as to hide the ends. But the failure to integrate the different visions does not mean our suffering from a "collective schizophrenia" and it should be possible for every community to discover ways of making "the world a home for the human race."

The context in which the author discusses the problem leads him to formulate the claim and conditions of dissent. "The pragmatic devices of mutual veto between citizen and citizen, between minority and majority, between the Government and the parts of the Government rest finally on the principle that "rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Coupled with the commitment that just governments derive their power from the consent of the governed, the view furnishes a criterion for taking stock of the entire institutional media through which we give consent. For, "they are the places where new rights, liberties and responsibilities germinate and articulate themselves as the basis for laws that become political discoveries and not merely ideological inventions." In the extremely complex nature of these institutions, Dr. Buchanan discovers a common form viz. the corporation, with a variety ranging from the small business unit to the nation-state. And his plea is for making the "membership and consent in these more articulate." This might increase, he is aware, their power but that will only impel the withdrawal of consent from many of them. "We would have to sort, eliminate and choose our associations and finally to determine the community or communities in which we are genuinely responsible members." The possibilities of old associations and the nature of the new ones to be established will thus become clear and the beginning of the political process, the alternate granting and withdrawal of consent, can mark the rebirth of political freedom.

If the participation of Government in economic activities is bound to increase, it is but proper that "economic returns to the framework of political

economy and the wealth of nations" and the legal theory of corporations can supply the missing frame of reference. The dangers implicit in the process of integrating the 'economic man' and the 'political animal' can be avoided if "trial combinations" like the kibbutz in Israel and the TVA serve the purpose of driving home the lesson that their primary purpose is "the making of men and societies, that is to say they are educational." Both economics and politics therein are subordinated to the educational end and can thus produce successful economic and political enterprises.

It is a serious and thought-provoking book. Its argument is in line with the pleas for transforming the organisation and functioning of corporations so as to make them suitable cells of a new society. But the application of the concept to the state raises a series of questions. The treatment of the corporation, on the other hand, merely as a 'unit' of government, can supply only a partial answer. It may perhaps be neither legitimate for economics to absorb politics nor for politics to absorb economics; a fruitful approach may lie in the direction of reorientation of both, with full awareness of their interdependence, in the light of a comprehensive philosophy of freedom.

G. D. P.

India Going Red?

by A. Nevett, Indian Institute of Social Order, Poona, Re. 1

THE progress of communism in this country needs to be publicised and *India Going Red* written by a Jesuit Father is a valuable book from this point of view. While there are a few original ideas in the book, the systematic presentation of facts, about which everybody is vaguely aware of, will help to alert people against a menace which is growing day by day.

The author has taken the trouble to send out questionnaires to a wide group of people eliciting their views on communism. From the replies received it is clear that most people have no clear idea of how communism will solve our problems. They "know" that both Russia and China have made great advance and are impatient of any further Democratic dilly dallying. The book contains two chapters on how they did it in Russia and China and *Fellow Travellers* would do well to consider carefully whether they are prepared to pay this price for our economic advancement.

Unfortunately, as is always the case with books of this type the Finale is very weak. After being told how bad communism is and why it will not solve our problems we expect to be told one of two things. Either that existing conditions here, taken all in all, are better than in communist countries and therefore there is no point in following in their footsteps. Or we expect to be told how we are going to better our lot without the undesirable totalitarian methods. What is most disheartening is to be left in a vacuum in the hope that some new panacea will turn up round the corner.

ZAFAR FUTEHALLY

BOOKS IN BRIEF

SIGNOR Salvador de Madariaga can always be counted upon to provide a work which is unusual, full of wit, urbane and stimulating. In *Essays With A Purpose* (Hollis & Carter, sh 15/-) he once again shows himself as an enemy of slipshod thinking.

*

The late Mr. James Agate dismissed the early performance of *French Without Tears* in a five-line notice: "Nothing. It has no wit, no plot, no characterization, nothing. Fifty Marie Tempests and fifty Charles Hawtreys could make nothing of it, for it is nothing." Now, in the preface to his two-volume *Collected Plays* (Hamish Hamilton), Mr. Terence Rattigan labours to prove how wrong his critics were. After all, he says, "I have a sense of theatre," whatever it may mean.

*

History is perspective: we see a past age, not as it was but from our own point of view. Dr. Ernest Walter Zeeden, who is a lecturer in modern history at the University of Freiburg-in-Bresigan in Germany, had the excellent idea of tracing the changes in German estimate of Luther from his own days until 1800. In *The Legacy of Luther* (Hollis & Carter, sh 25/-) Luther begins as God's agent in striking down the papacy. Then he is the defender of the true faith. By 1700, when confessionalism breaks down, he is the preacher of inward piety. In the eighteenth century he is the pioneer of intellectual freedom. Then, with the romantic movement, he is the dynamic genius. So each age sees not Luther but itself. R.H.

(COMPANION OF HONOUR—from page 7)

system with the same aloof indifference that he had towards other institutions of humanity; and that, therefore, there was something ironical in his obtaining the Royal award.

Maugham tried to show in his innumerable stories that human nature is not so much contemptible and that we should not be surprised at a spark of virtue in the worst of us or a black spot in the best of us. It may be that Maugham is a cynic at a much deeper level. He believes that it is good for humanity to postulate the irreconcilable opposites of virtue and vice and to cleave to virtue, since virtue brings its own reward; that in the long run it does not matter who wins, since we may all be mere actors in an imaginary play.

"And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rock behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of,"

If this be cynicism, then that other William of that other Elizabethan age may also be labelled a cynic. But just as Gloriana honoured Shakespeare for his art and not for his private views, so Elizabeth II, we like to believe, has honoured one who, perhaps, may be reckoned by posterity the greatest novelist of her time. R.H.

C. C. F. NEWS

On June 4th, 1954, was established the Australian Committee for Cultural Freedom, with Sir John Latham, who is generally considered as the greatest living Australian as its President. Among other members of the Executive of the ACCF are Justice T. M. Barry (President of the Industrial Court), Mr. D. A. S. Campbell (Director, Australian Institute of Political Affairs), Dr. Jan Clunies-Ross (Chairman, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and member of the Council of the Australian Academy of Science), Dr. J. C. Eccles (Member of the Council of the Australian Academy of Science), Mr. Justice Marcus G. Gibson (Justice of the Supreme Court of Tasmania), Mr. Eugene Goossene (Director of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music), Sir Kerr Grant (Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Adelaide), Prof. A. C. Fox (Professor of Philosophy, University of Western Australia). Mr. J. J. Krygier is the Secretary of the Committee. The headquarters will be in Sydney.

I. C. C. F. NEWS

The Executive of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom met in Bombay, on 11th and 12th June, 1954, with Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan in the Chair. Among those attending the meeting were Messrs. E. P. W. da Costa, P. Y. Deshpande, M. R. Masani, Asoka Metha, Ram Singh, Phillip Spratt, J. B. H. Wadia, V. B. Karnik, H. R. Pardivala and Mr. Prabhakar Padhye, Secretary of the Committee.

The progress made by the Committee and its work since the last Annual Conference in Madras in September 1953 was reviewed and ways and means of advancing the work of the organisation and its journal *Freedom First* were discussed. The Committee took note of the stringent financial position of the organisation and considered ways of balancing its budget.

It was decided that the next Annual Conference should be held in Delhi some time next winter.

*

Mr. Prabhakar Padhye, Secretary of the ICCF visited Rangoon in the first week of June. There he met office-bearers of the Society for the Extension of Democratic Ideals and others and discussed with them the possibility of establishing cultural contacts in Burma.

*

On 23rd June, 1954, Mr. Rohit Dave, editor of *Janata*, addressed a well-attended meeting on 'The Recent Intellectual Trends in America.' Mr. V. B. Karnik presided.

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"The deep
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'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

—Tennyson.

Premier U Nu's wholehearted support of a religious revival has won the interest and the affection of the people.

—A report in *Statesman*, June 22, 1954.

"I have sympathy for anyone who made a mistake and then reformed; but I think they should be reformed somewhere else than in the armed services."

—U.S. Defence Secretary Charles Wilson, as quoted in the *Statesman*, June 3, 1954.

"Liberals are people who have their feet planted solidly in mid-air."

—Shaw quoted in *Thought*, June 12, 1954.

"Of all the top Congress leaders, barring Shri Nehru, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai commands the maximum respect among communists."

—*Free Press Journal*, June 7, 1954.

"It is true that this patriot and diplomat, whose name and fame have spread today to the farthest corners of the world, is really without a home, a joy or anchor he can call his own. The least he (V. K. Krishna Menon) has deserved of us is a portfolio in the Government of Free India which he helped to create no less than any other of the Great Immortals who have made our recent history."

—Mr. R. K. Karanjia in *Blitz*, June 5, 1954.

"Burma has a right to know whether India will stand by her in case communists try to infiltrate into the country. The provisions of the Indo-China treaty on Tibet are not very popular with Burma."

—'Insaf' in the *Hindustan Times*, May 25, 1954.

"There is no difference of opinion in outlook, thought, policy or action between us. Anything else could happen, but Sadiq and Bakshi cannot afford to fall apart."

—Bakshi Gulam Mohammed, as reported in *Times of India*, May 23, 1954.

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"Russian Communist imperialism sought to impose its will on the world and join to the old imperialism of conquest of territory the new ideological imperialism which seeks an empire over the minds of men and women."

This was a "creed utterly different from the free Socialism in which Western Socialists were reared."

—Mr. Attlee as reported in *Statesman*, June 6, 1954.

"It fully bears out the view that, so far from this (the Oppenheimer case) being a case of McCarthyism, on similar findings of fact a scientist would almost certainly have been excluded on security grounds here."

—*Sunday Times*, London; June 13, 1954.

"In depicting a subject such as lovers, you cannot have brotherly pose."

—Mr. M. Nasarulla, in his judgement in Akbar Padamsee case, *Times of India* June 17, 1954.

"The last time he (Djilas) was in the United States, he told an old non-political acquaintance: 'I would rather be a dishwasher in New York than second in the line of succession to Stalin in the Soviet Empire.'"

—Bogdan Raditsa in the *New Leader*, April 26, 1954.

"One evil of McCarthyism (is) that it has induced woolly libertarians to suppose that it is respectable to start hunting for witch-hunters as a sign that one does not believe in hunting for witches."

—Arnold Beichman in the *New Leader*, March 29, 1954.

"Not even the most neutralist of nations will deny that at some point and some time forthright military action is unfortunately unavoidable."

—Surveyor in *Times of India*, June 21, 1954.

Trade unionism could better be understood through a "formula like 'trade unionism=wages plus productivity plus democracy.'"

—Raja Kulkarni as reported in *The Indian Express*, June 9, 1954.

"'Never forget,' Sir Lincoln Evans, a veteran trade union official, warned recently, 'that the Soviet Union is the residuary legatee of Anglo-American differences.'"

—*New York Times*, May 31, 1954.

"Now Mr. Nehru has come along to give the word ('fellow-traveller') a new twist (or may be an old one). The Congress Party is 'not a sectarian body, consisting of the select. We are fellow-travellers with the people.'"

—Pandit Nehru, as quoted in *Statesman*, June 8, 1954.