

Panchayati Raj

by V. B. Karnik

PANCHAYATI Raj is being gradually established all over the country. Rajasthan and Andhra were the first to introduce it. Maharashtra has just joined them. Gujarat will follow soon and other States, it is confidently expected, will not lag behind. A network of Village Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads will develop in the country and the people will get the opportunity of conducting and controlling a large part of their affairs.

The Five Year Plans have from the beginning laid particular emphasis on the development of these democratic institutions. The framers of the Plans knew that rural development would not be possible without the participation of the people and the mobilisation of local initiative and resources. With that end in view, they suggested the setting up of popular organisations at the village, taluka and district levels both for the formulation as well as the execution of village, taluka and district plans. It was in the latter part of the second Five Year Plan that the idea took the concrete form of Panchayati Raj.

The Balwantrai Mehta Committee elaborated the idea and suggested the three-tier framework of a Panchayat, a Panchayat Samiti and a Zilla Parishad. The Committee was emphatically of the opinion:

"So long as we do not discover or create a representative and democratic institution which will supply the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon local objects conforms with the needs and wishes of the locality, invest it with adequate power and assign to it appropriate finances, we will never be able to evoke local interest and excite local initiative in the field of development."

The second Five Year Plan had already recommended that the functions of such popular organisations, when set up, should "include, if necessary by stages determined in advance, the entire general administration and development of the area other than such functions as law and order, administration of justice and certain functions pertaining to revenue administration."

The Acts that have been enacted in various States have generally conformed to this pattern. There are a few variations. But the basic purpose is the same, namely, to set up democratic institutions at the Block or the District level and invest them with power and

resources to look after the developmental and other general administrative activities in the area covered by them. The Government at the State capital has thereby divested itself of a large measure of power and responsibility with regard to matters falling, as described in the Maharashtra Act, in the 'District List'.

Apart from the influence that these popular organisations may have on stimulating and expanding developmental activities, they will also have a big impact on the functioning of democracy. Democracy will no longer remain a formal or a technical affair. People will be able to participate in the management of their affairs directly at the village level and through elected representatives at the Block and the District Level. The power of the Government will not remain concentrated in Delhi or in State capitals. It will flow into villages and into district and subdivisional towns. The people will decide for themselves what amenities, improvements and developments they need and how to finance them. They will not have to wait on the sweet will of a bureaucrat or on the whim of a Minister. They will be able to decide the issue themselves at the village or the district level. Democracy is said to be a government of the people by the people. Panchayati Raj does not attain that ideal, but it is a big step in that direction.

Panchayats are not new to our country and to our people, nor is local self-government entirely a novel affair. The British Government introduced local self-government in many parts of our country over sixty or seventy years back. Those institutions of local self-government did not prosper because they had hardly any powers and resources. Nor did they serve in any significant manner their declared purpose of training persons for bigger responsibilities. The village Panchayats of old times are now only a memory. They have left no living tradition behind them. Besides, the circumstances in which they had to function were entirely different. They had to keep together and conserve a hierarchical society in which each individual and group had his own appointed task to perform. The Panchayats of modern times have to develop and build a new society of equality and prosperity. They have to awaken the latent potentialities of the villagers and to utilise them for improving the standard of the community as a whole. They have to strive for securing a better life for all and not merely for a few who may happen to be at the top of the social ladder. They have to change social relations, they have to break down the barriers of caste and custom, and lift the community as a whole to a higher standard of well-being.

The Panchayati Raj can, if it succeeds, bring about

a veritable revolution in the countryside. It can drive away the indolence, the apathy and the helplessness of centuries. It can stimulate the desire to work together for the common good and provide the technical help that may be needed for making the work more productive. It can spread knowledge and education and awaken the desire to improve the physical and social conditions of living. It can develop the habit of self-help. It can create a climate of social equality. Panchayats would then become the most effective instrument of a rapid social and economic advance. They would make democracy real as well as stable.

Panchayati Raj can develop along these lines. But the development along those lines is neither inevitable nor predetermined. It can also develop in an entirely different manner. Panchayats can be captured by those who are already entrenched in positions of power. Monied people can use their money for manipulating elections. Caste loyalties may prove powerful and they may determine the choice of electors. Apathy and cynicism may prove powerful factors and there may not be enough of interest in the election as well as the functioning of local bodies. Small coteries may get control over Village Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads and may utilise them for advancing their own interests. With the powers that will be now vested in them, they will provide ample opportunities for self-aggrandisement as well as for the distribution of favours. In the hands of unscrupulous men, they may even become engines of oppression against minorities and against independent or nonconformist elements. The aim of democratic decentralisation, of the people acquiring control over a large part of their affairs, may be foiled, and what were meant to be people's organisations might degenerate into strongholds of anti-social elements. Good laws and good institutions are not enough by themselves. There must be willing and capable men to implement and work them. The success of laws and institutions depends to a large extent on social conditions.

The most effective guarantee against this possible degeneration is, of course, popular education, education to train the people in the proper discharge of the new rights and responsibilities that are now being vested

in them. But education is a long process and may take years to bear fruit. The Government, the political parties and other organisations must immediately undertake that task. There is an additional responsibility laid upon political parties. They must not vitiate the atmosphere by their contests to capture seats in local bodies. Once they enter the field, rural areas will be split into rival and warring factions and local bodies will be torn asunder by faction fights. There are already factions in villages. They will attach to themselves the labels of various parties and their foul faction fights will assume the respectable garb of political struggles between parties. Work in local bodies does not involve any issue of principle or policy. It is more or less of an executive character. There may be differences of opinion regarding the projects to be undertaken or the amounts of money to be spent on them, but such differences can be always resolved through discussion and through mutual give and take. The differences will not be of a political character with parties aligned against each other. The intrusion of parties in local bodies will defeat the basic purpose of Panchayati Raj which is to bring the people together to work unitedly for solving their local problems and developing their local areas. Parties can enter local bodies only with the intention of utilising them in their race for power in State and all-India politics. The temptation to put local bodies to that illegitimate use will be strong. But they must resist it in the interest of the people and of advancing the cause of democracy. The party in power should set the example in that respect. However, even if it is not wise or courageous enough to resist the temptation, others need not follow it on a path which is obviously wrong and self-defeating. The Sarva Seva Sangh had some time back decided to make an attempt to persuade political parties to agree to keep out of elections to local bodies. The attempt has not been made so far. There is little time to lose. Let the Panchayat Parishad and its President Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, move before it is too late.

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Notes

Welcome

WE welcome the election of Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan as the President of India and that of Dr. Zakir Hussein as the Vice-President. Both, Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Hussein are outstanding men in their own right. Dr. Radhakrishnan is a universally recognised philosopher of great merits and Dr. Hussein enjoys the reputation of being one of the foremost educationists of the country. Dr. Radhakrishnan has devoted himself to interpreting Eastern religions, particularly Hinduism and Indian way of life and culture to the rest of the world while, Dr. Hussein has distinguished himself as the co-author with Mahatma Gandhi of the Basic Scheme of education which was evolved to suit the peculiar needs of Indian children.

Plato in his "Republic" suggested that philosophers should rule while Francis Bacon in his "New Atlantis" idealised the state where educationists, along with scientists, were in power. The election of Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Hussein is indeed, an honour to the philosophers and educationists of the country.

Constitutionally, the President and the Vice-President are not responsible for the formulation of governmental policies nor do they have an active say in the day-to-day administration of the country. Yet, due to the unique status they intellectually enjoy in the country, irrespective of their official positions, Dr. Radhakrishnan as well as Dr. Hussein are eminently suited to guide the governmental policies and administrative decisions in various ways. They are, in fact, the watchdogs of Indian democracy. They can do justice to their positions by watching the governmental policies and administrative actions and exerting sobering influence on them so that without encroaching upon the rights and liberties of the individual, they help him to realise his potentialities and make his life meaningful and rich with opportunities.

Man of Courage and Convictions

MR. MILOVAN DJILAS has been sentenced to over eight years' rigorous imprisonment for the crime of writing a book and attempting to get it published. The book that he wrote is *Conversations with Stalin*. Whatever the contents of the book, it was not going to affect in any way Yugoslavia's relations with any country, including Russia, for nobody has done more to denounce and denigrate the erstwhile dictator than his countryman and successor, Khrushchev. Mr. Djilas had to find a foreign publisher because he could not get his book published in his own country.

The prosecution was based upon the charge that Mr. Djilas divulged official secrets in that he must

have based his book upon the information gathered by him when he was acting as his country's representative over a decade back. The charge is ridiculous for, if such a charge is sustained, nobody who held any official position would ever be able to write his autobiography or memoirs. History as well as literature would be the worst sufferers if such a rule were to prevail.

It is highly regrettable that Mr. Djilas did not get even a public trial. He was tried and sentenced in a secret manner. As a protest, he did not defend himself and refused to answer questions. The plea that the prosecution related to state secrets has no force. The so-called secrets are no longer secret. They are known all over the world.

The civilized world is shocked at this treatment meted out to a man of the eminence of Mr. Djilas who was at one time the Vice-President of his country and the friend and colleague of Marshal Tito. However different Yugoslavia's communism may be from that of Russia and other communist countries, it still has no place, it is now clear, for men of independent opinions. Whatever the rulers of his country may think of Mr. Djilas, the world will acclaim him as a high spirited man of courage and convictions.

MIG Deal

MYSTERY surrounds the reported move of the Defence Ministry to purchase MIG jet fighter planes from Russia. When the news was first published in the press, it appeared as if the deal was struck, that Russia had agreed not only to supply the planes but also to establish a factory for their manufacture in India and that Indian officials were shortly going to Moscow to finalise the details. Later on, one does not know what happened, but the Defence Minister had to adopt the senseless pose of not knowing anything about the matter except through newspaper reports.

The move to purchase the planes from Russia was mooted on the ground that both Great Britain and the United States of America had refused to supply similar types of aircraft and that the supply was necessary in order that India may not be less equipped than Pakistan. The later developments made clear, however, that neither of the two countries had been approached and neither had turned down the request. It appears, therefore, that it was the bright idea of somebody in the Defence Ministry to turn away from our traditional suppliers and make our country dependent upon a communist power for the supply of one of the most vital weapons of war.

The Defence Minister has invoked in support of the move the sovereign of a country to purchase its requirements from any quarter that it thinks fit. Nobody questions that sovereign right. But why this preference for Russian planes? Are they cheaper? Are they more effective? Can one rely upon their constant and regular supply? Will they be available even when they are required for our defence against the aggression of a communist power? Will it be a

straightforward business transaction, or will any open or hidden strings be attached to it? It is necessary to raise all these questions and to demand a definite and unambiguous answer to them. One cannot forget that, after all, the transaction is with a communist country and under communism nothing is done without a political purpose.

If similar aircraft are not available from other countries, we may have to turn to Russia and then do our best to protect our interests. But it is necessary first to investigate the facts. As things stand at present, it appears that the Defence Ministry took the decision first and then started looking around for excuses to support it. The Defence Minister has now declared in Lok Sabha that the decision, if and when taken, will be that of the Cabinet and not merely of his Ministry. That gives some hope that all aspects of the situation will be properly taken into consideration before the step is taken.

Boneless Wonder

MR. H. V. KAMATH accused the Government of India of being, in the words of Mr. Winston Churchill, a "boneless wonder". The accusation was made in view of the "supreme inactivity" of the Government in the face of the aggression committed and the war of nerves carried on by the communist rulers of China. Mr. Kamath said the "insulted, humiliated and rebuffed" Government of India was "licking the feet that were kicking it."

The words that Mr. Kamath used are no doubt very strong. But they are the expression of a patriot's anger and resentment at the inability of the Government to do anything about the Chinese aggression which has now continued for over five years. We are being told from time to time of the preparations that are being made to repel the aggression. Years have passed but not an inch of land has been liberated. This is bound to make anybody angry. The angry explosion of Mr. Kamath is in a large measure a correct reflection of the public sentiment on the matter.

As days go by the Chinese are becoming bolder and bolder. The tone of their notes is becoming ruder and their propaganda is becoming shriller and more malicious. Their claims are also increasing and there does not appear to be any desire on their part to accept the suggestion that the Prime Minister made about both the countries withdrawing their forces in the Western sector beyond the boundary line claimed by the other party. As negotiations cannot take place unless this preliminary condition is fulfilled, it amounts to a virtual refusal to settle the issue amicably. It appears moreover that some troop movements are taking place on the Chinese side, and they may be a precursor to a fresh aggression.

The public mind is naturally agitated by this state of affairs. Instead of sympathising with it and trying to reassure it, the Defence Minister has thought fit to blame it for being "more concerned, about the border dispute with China than with the more imme-

diately threats from Pakistan." According to him, "the real danger at the moment was the possibility of a violation of the Kashmir ceasefire line by Pakistan". He should know, but apparently he forgets, that we are well equipped to resist any aggression that Pakistan may commit, while in the case of China there are many difficulties and many inadequacies. That is why the danger from China is far more serious than the one from Pakistan. The deliberate refusal to see this obvious fact is significant. The Defence Minister has all along tried to minimise the danger from China and to exaggerate the danger from Pakistan. It is this attitude which makes the people suspicious. Energetic action will alone remove that suspicion and will be a fit reply to the criticism of Mr. Kamath and others.

"Complete Distortion"

AN Ambassador is expected to know a lot about the country to which he is accredited. As long as he is holding the post, he cannot give out in public all that he knows. There are certain restrictions which he must observe. But after retiring from service, he can be more forthright and honest, more particularly, when he chooses to make public declarations.

At a meeting of writers in Trichur, Mr. K. P. S. Menon, our former Ambassador to Russia, referred to that country in the course of his talk on "integration". He could not deny the obvious fact that integration was achieved in Russia by force. He toned down the force of the admission by adding that it was only "partly" achieved by force. He then went on to say: "But to say that the Soviet Republics were held together simply by force was a complete distortion." They were held together, he said, by the "consciousness that they were participating in a great adventure, an adventure of building a new society, free from want, disease and ignorance."

Mr. Menon might be correct in saying that the various Republics in Russia were not held together "simply by force". Force may not be the only factor, but is it not the major factor? It is the Communist Party which rules in all Republics and controls the social, economic and cultural life of the people. The Communist Party is the one, single, indivisible party of the Soviet Union and behind it stand all the armed forces of the country. No Republic can deviate in the slightest measure from the line laid down by Moscow and history is replete with instances of the direst punishments meted out to individuals and tendencies exhibiting even a faint trace of independent thinking. Even today the Governments of the various Republics are made or unmade in Moscow and the peoples of the Republics have to accept them without even a murmur of protest. Mr. Menon cannot be unaware of this state of affairs. It was not obligatory upon him to disclose this information to the Indian people. He could have remained silent. But he need not have made a statement which can be regarded, in his own words, as "a complete distortion."

Communist World Youth Festival

(Contributed)

THE turbulent history of the Seventh World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Vienna in 1959, has been repeating itself in the stormy events accompanying the preparations for the Eighth Festival to be held in Helsinki. Despite the unanimous opposition of Finnish youth organizations, despite strong popular opposition, and finally despite the Finnish Prime Minister's polite advice that the holding of the Festival in Finland would be unwise under the circumstances, the Communist organizers have gone ahead with plans to convene the next Festival in Helsinki in the summer of 1962.

The World Youth Festivals have a definite place in international communist efforts. They are not what they pretend to be — amicable gatherings of young people from all over the world for the purpose of strengthening friendship and mutual understanding. Their real aim, mass demonstrations of support for communist international policy, is being recognized by an ever increasing number of young people throughout the world. The Festival, held for the first time outside the Soviet orbit, was considered by most objective observers to be a failure for the Communists. Far from being a friendly gathering, the Vienna Festival was a spectacle of violent conflict between communist and non-communist youth, and it clearly revealed the regimentation and limitation which the communists imposed on their own young people.

It seems, however, that festival sponsors were not discouraged by the events in Vienna. They have already begun preparations for the next World Youth Festival, to be held in Helsinki in July or August 1962. The developments to date closely paralleled the preparations for the Vienna Festival: sponsors of the festival have approached the government of the prospective host country directly, disregarding completely the national youth organizations; the national youth and student organizations have voiced their determined opposition to the festival and have refused to cooperate in any preparations; local government bodies have indicated their unwillingness to make available facilities for meetings and accommodation of delegates; the government of the host country, a neutral one, has indicated that it is not pleased with the prospect of having to play host to the festival, but has been unwilling to prohibit it outright; the local Communist Party and its youth section are the only organizers and supporters of the Festival in the host country.

The prominent impetus behind the festivals emanates from two communist-dominated international organizations: the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the International Union of Students (IUS). The former has its seat in Budapest, Hungary, and is headed by Italian Communist

leader Piero Pierrai. The latter has its secretariat in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and is headed by the veteran Czechoslovak Communist leader Jiri Pelikan, former Member of Czechoslovak Parliament for the Communist Party.

Immediately after the Vienna Festival, the sponsors made it clear that the next gathering would be held in a country outside the Communist orbit. Early in 1960, rumours began to circulate that Helsinki was considered the most likely prospect for the site of the 1962 Festival. In September 1960, Pelikan made exploratory inquiries among Finnish student leaders concerning their feelings on this matter. Although the tenor of these talks was not revealed, the National Union of Students of Finland (SYL) made its negative position explicit a month later in a communication to IUS and WFDY. Copies of these letters were also sent to a consultative meeting on festival preparations which was held in Stockholm from October 4-6, 1960. According to *Sztandar Mlodych*, a Polish youth daily, this meeting was not a very successful one. Because so few delegates attended, it was decided that all final decisions should be left to a future meeting of the International Preparatory Committee for the Festival.

Immediately following the Stockholm consultative meeting, the Central Union of Social Democratic Youth of Finland issued a statement that it would not support the preparations for and organization of the Festival and would not send representatives to the preparatory committee meeting. The Central Union declared at that time that the Festivals in their present form lead young people astray and serve only the communist ends. (*Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, October 21, 1960.)

After the Stockholm meeting, a delegation authorized by the group to investigate the possibilities of arranging the Festival in Helsinki, arrived in Finland. They requested an audience with the Prime Minister, but made no effort to contact the Council of Finnish Youth Organizations or the SYL during their five day wait for the audience. When the delegation finally saw Prime Minister Sukselainen (on October 14) they asked for permission to hold the Festival in Finland. The Prime Minister, in his published reply, stated briefly that it is the traditional policy of the Finnish Government not to interfere in international congresses which are organized by non-government organizations. The organization of a festival is a matter for Finnish Youth Organizations and not for the government. It was not until after this discussion with Sukselainen that the delegation asked for an opportunity to state its views to the Council of Finnish Youth Organizations and the SYL. The procedure, where the consultations of youth had student

organizations took place only after the contact with governmental authorities, indicated that the delegation considered the opinions of youth and students to be of secondary importance. This is difficult to understand since in case a negative reply were given by the representative youth organizations, there would have been no reason to apply for permission to hold the Festival in Helsinki. (This circumvention of major youth and student groups is an exact repeat of the oft-decried Vienna preparations.).

Before the members of this group left Finland, they were informed quite specifically that SYL and the Council would not participate in the preparations for the Festival in any way. It is interesting to note in this connection that both SYL and the Council are recognized by the Finnish Government and by national and international organizations (including IUS and WFDY) as the official representative bodies for Finnish students and youth.

As student and youth organizations throughout the world prepared to take a stand concerning the Festival, the officials of the sponsoring organizations announced a forthcoming IPC meeting in Helsinki on February 20-22. In contrast to the previous preparatory meeting, Finnish student and youth organizations received invitations to attend the February IPC gathering. The announcement and invitation to the meeting was signed by AFDY, the Japan Festival Committee, the Committee of Youth Organisations of the USSR (CYO), and several other organizations well known for their association with previous Festivals. At least two of the signatories, as listed in *Uusi Suomi* (January 27, 1961), are alleged representatives of organizations which are known to be opposed to the Festival.

The Finnish Communist paper *Kansan Uutiset* (January 28) was the only one which welcomed the meeting. For the Finnish Democratic Youth League (SDNL, youth branch of the Finnish Communist Party) it was clear that "the holding of the Festival in Finland would be in agreement with that spirit toward international relations which is supported by a majority of our nation."

Then, on February 17, Prime Minister Sukselainen made an announcement. He publicly revealed the negative and dim view the Finnish Government took of holding the Youth Festival in Helsinki. As reported in the independent dailies *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Uusi Suomi* (both of February 18) representatives of three political parties submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister expressing their opinion that the holding of the Festival in Finland was totally undesirable. In his response, the Prime Minister agreed fully with the basic arguments of the memorandum. He indicated that when he made his announcement in October about the government's not concerning itself with such undertakings, he had left the matter fully up to Finnish youth and student organizations. Referring to the international clashes which erupted in Vienna and to the "passport free" travel agreement between Scandinavian countries, Sukselainen expressed the hope that the orga-

nizers of the Festival would "consider carefully whether the holding of such an event is warranted in view of the small Finnish participation." Although couched in diplomatic terms, this was a pronouncement (later conveyed to the festival organizers) of no uncertain meaning — the festival was not welcome in Finland either by the government or the youth representatives.

Under a banner headline, *Komsomil'skaya Pravda* of February 23 wrapped up its coverage of the IPC meeting with the triumphant exclamation "The Festival will Take Place in Helsinki." Ironically, the Tass dispatch from Helsinki stated: "The meeting was in favour of holding the Eighth Festival in Helsinki and once again it thanked the Finnish authorities for making it possible to organize the Festival in Finland."

One of the IPC's motive for overriding the strong Finnish opposition to the Festival was revealed by the chairman of the Soviet delegation Peter Reshetov. He said according to the *Ylioppilaslehti* article, "Helsinki is close to the Soviet Union which makes it easy for people from the Soviet Union to arrive at the Festival; it also facilitates travel for delegations of some other nations which will come to the Festival through the Soviet Union."

The *Ylioppilaslehti* editor commented on the decisions made and noted that "matters were handled on the basis of committee recommendations which had been submitted in writing to participants. Decisions were not listed publicly... The invited correspondents did not know what the meeting decided until a considerable time later." On the final day of the meeting a press conference was held at which the organizers were questioned as to their knowledge of Sukselainen's sentiments about the Festival. A representative of the Ghana Pioneer Organization declared: "Certainly we know. Sukselainen said that the Festival place should be considered carefully. We have considered it carefully for three days and have come to the conclusion that Helsinki is especially suitable."

The circumstances surrounding the Helsinki meeting of the Festival International Preparatory Committee supply additional proof — if any is needed — of the real aims and partisan character of the World Youth Festivals. The Eighth World Festival of Youth and Students will be just another mass manifestation of Communist and pro-Communist youth. People of other political views who, despite all this, still choose to attend the event should remember: (1) the Festival is held in Helsinki against the will of the Finnish youth and people and therefore Festival participants cannot expect to be treated as welcome guests; (2) fellow Festival participants will most likely be communists and fellow travellers; and (3) whatever their actual reasons for attendance may be, by their presence they are lending support to Communist propaganda.

The Hind Mazdoor Sabha Convention

by S. R. Mohan Das

THE Annual Convention of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha was concluded in the first week of May at Coimbatore in Tamilnad. This year's Convention of the HMS ought to compel the serious attention of the organization on many problems of a fundamental nature. The manner in which these problems are faced and resolved by the Convention, shall determine the future of the HMS.

In 1947, after the capture of the All India Trade Union Congress by the Communists, the Congress Party decided to set up its own National Trade Union Federation. The Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) was thus set up, largely at the initiative and drive of Sardar Patel.

The Socialists who were till then within the Congress, decided to quit the Congress Party and organised the Socialist Party. Simultaneously they decided to set up their own union federation, and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha was thus born. Along with the unions that were run by the Socialists, some important unions lead by the followers of the late Mr. M. N. Roy, also joined the HMS.

The HMS enjoyed quite an impressive strength and influence amongst workers in India in the early stages of its formation. In the city of Bombay, they commanded an impressive following from a majority of workers in the Textile, Engineering, Transport, Automobile and Chemical Industries, during the early stages of its existence. It was only after the disastrous textile strike in 1950 that the HMS started losing its strength steadily in Bombay. During the peak of its strength, it claimed a membership of nearly 900,000 members all over India. Today, the HMS does not have more than 250,000 members. The Socialist Party became the Praja Socialist Party with the merger of the KMPP. Later, when Dr. Lohia and his followers decided to quit the P.S.P. and revive the Socialist Party with their own flag and programme, this affected the HMS too. The "Lohia Group" were seriously considering taking away "their" unions from the HMS and form their own Trade Union Federation, but no decisive action was taken in this regard. Now the "Lohia Group", or the Socialist Party, has decided to set up its own Trade Union Federation and this will affect the HMS strength. Apart from the above factors, the disastrous general strike of the Central Government Employees conducted by the P.S.P. leadership in 1960 very seriously affected HMS strength.

Facing strong opposition from the INTUC and AITUC on the one hand, and embarking on impulsive action on the other, and further consciously or unconsciously tied up too closely with the fortunes of the P.S.P., the HMS has been facing steady erosion of even its depleted strength. Paradoxically enough,

in comparison with other rival Trade Union Federations, this has been happening in HMS in spite of perhaps the most sophisticated leadership and rank-and-file. While the INTUC or AITUC Conventions are in essence considered to be "Rubber-stamping" Conventions by many, HMS conventions are usually very lively in that they ensure active and intelligent participation by the rank-and-file. The reasons for the HMS weaknesses, therefore, must be sought in something else than the character of rank-and-file or leadership. The first reason that could be cited for HMS weakness lies in its failure to consolidate its earlier strength and on the other hand, in the dissipation of its strength through a series of adventurist actions.

The second reason was the total failure of the HMS to develop during the years a competent functional apparatus at every level of union activity. The sophisticated leadership and rank-and-file which could have been turned into a great asset, were actual handicaps in this situation. Each leader functioned as though his union or group of unions was his personal and exclusive empire and the National Headquarters had never able to exercise any control or influence over most of these leaders. This has resulted in the Headquarters of the HMS remaining always at the total mercy of the affiliating unions in terms of finance, personnel, concerted action, decisive policies etc. The only possible control or influence was through political apparatus and even there it was not easy. Thus it was found that the State units of the HMS often functioned with different policies, tailored more to the political conveniences of the P.S.P., than the trade union interests of the HMS. In Maharashtra, for instance, so long as the P.S.P. was a part of the Samiti, the HMS often had to work with the Communist AITUC and strongly oppose the INTUC, though the HMS and INTUC are both affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions!!!

The third reason is the domination of doctrinaire approach that still guides a large segment of HMS leadership. Abstract concepts of idealism are still the incentives for union policies and since these concepts breed high passions, impulsive and adventurist policies are the result. Hundreds of thousands of workers get affected by these policies, and when the actions fail before the requirements or hard realities, reactions are swift and devastatingly unpleasant. This was demonstrated at the time of the General Strike of Central Government employees in 1960 which the HMS sponsored as a vanguard. Had the P.S.P. leaders who championed the strike action been a little realistic, they could have easily found that there was

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Review

The New Germany and the Old Nazis

by T. H. Tetens, Secker & Warburg, London 21 S.

THIS is a book on Germany written from a particular point of view. The thesis of the book is that old Nazis are back again in positions of power and prestige and that the idea that a new Germany, wedded to democracy and values of racial equality and political freedom, has emerged after the destruction of Hitlerism is a myth. The author has tried to prove his thesis by giving instances of a number of old Nazis who, he says, are to be found in important positions in the Government and in the public life. He is particularly worried by the growth of the anti-Jewish sentiment. He has described in detail a couple of more notorious of the recent happenings and has shown how public sympathies were with the Jew-baiters and how the police and other state functionaries tried to protect and shield them.

It is conceivable that many of the things described by the writer have happened and are happening in post-war Germany. But many such unsavoury and undesirable things take place from time to time in every country. Are the incidents mentioned in the book of that type or do they indicate a general trend in the direction of the revival of Hitlerism? Nobody had expected the disappearance in the course of a few years of all traces of that foul disease. It was bound to linger on in some places and erupt from time to time in the body politics. It is likely that the evidence brought together by the writer relates only to such isolated, occasional eruptions. It is also likely that they are not just stray incidents, that they occur very often and are a shadow cast ahead of the likely turn of events in the country.

The writer is convinced that Germany is headed towards a dictatorship of the Nazi type. He has quoted, in support of his forecast, the words of one Prof. Friedrich von der Heydte, whom he describes as "the ideological interpreter and co-founder of Dr. Adenauer's party. Prof. Heydte writes: "Today it is fashionable in Germany to be a democrat. Every German is a good democrat as a matter of course — if you want to "belong" you have to be. But basically Germans do not cherish democracy." The writer's conclusion therefore is: "Nevertheless, our (American) efforts in Germany have achieved neither democracy nor military security. Despite his strength, Adenauer has been barely able to keep the Nazis and nationalists in line. Soon the old leadership will have to give way to the younger forces. They will not be bound by gratitude to the United States; they will work for German interests only." And "German interests" may, he writes, push them in the direction of an understanding with Soviet Russia. He asserts: "The popular Western view of the Bonn Republic as a bulwark against Communism is a dangerous illusion, nourished by German propaganda. No German statesman or

government would hesitate for a moment to strike a bargain with Moscow if the Kremlin were willing to make an attractive offer, such as the return of the lost provinces or a new partition of Poland."

This is really a disturbing picture that has been painted. It is very likely one-sided and highly exaggerated. It is good, however, to know the other side. It will give a balance to our thinking on the German problem.

V. B. K.

(HMS CONVENTION — Cont'd from page 7)

not one factor which would be favourable in realising the aspirations of the employees or the leaders through a strike action. There were two forces exercising terrific pressure in exactly opposite directions on the HMS. The INTUC was strongly opposed to the strike. The AITUC supported the strike as a matter of strategy and tactics. Should the strike prove a success, the AITUC leadership among the Central Government Employees could claim the credit, and should it prove a disaster, the HMS could be put on the spot for the failure. All these indications were quite clearly there before the strike and yet the HMS clearly went ahead with its strike decision with the results we know now. Faced with strong rivalry on the one side from the INTUC which is well-equipped with the support and influence of the ruling party, and on the other side with the AITUC, with the support and influence of an international apparatus, the HMS needs all its ingenuity to survive and expand. This, however, would not be possible unless the HMS formulates fresh policies and guiding lines for its future activities. The following steps could be considered:—

1. The present unions of the HMS should be consolidated with a stronger organizational base in terms of worker-leadership, competent administration of unions, better financial resources etc. Day to day routine administrative activities like typing of letters, replying to correspondence promptly, keeping appointments punctually and little things like that which are not considered very "exciting" or "romantic" should be started. It is through these day-to-day grind that organizations and apparatuses get built up.

2. HMS should develop more tolerance for co-operation with other democratic units at functional levels without worrying too much about HMS labels first. There are many non-HMS unions which are good and competent, but having other labels or no labels at all. Excepting totalitarian groups, the HMS could fruitfully cooperate with such unions to the benefit of both.

3. The Headquarters of HMS should have more support from affiliating units in terms of providing personnel, financial resources, reports and suggestions. The HMS national centre is the most ignored office today.

These, in brief, are some measures which the HMS could initiate to strengthen its position. If such measures are not initiated, the HMS will become a spent force even before it reaches its adolescent age.

Revolutionary Defeatism

by M. A. Venkata Rao

IT is a futile task to see all the basic assumptions and derivative convolutions of communist theory (as set out in Karl Marx, Engels and Lenin) as a consistent body of scientific thought based on logic, experience and history. Marx himself seemed to have realised this towards the end of his life when he clinched the matter with the pragmatic declaration that communism is more concerned with action and transformation of society than with explanation in terms of theory and science.

Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism (and now with Khrushchevism added to the inheritance) has developed into a complex "arsenal of war weapons" to suit all possible situations and contingencies in the struggle for world revolution.

Communist parties of the different countries of the world where the Bolshevik revolution is yet to take place, choose from time to time different ideological weapons by way of tactics and slogans for use in their campaigns. They are aided in this choice by the directions of the international communist executives first called Comintern and later Cominform, fulfilling its historic role under the guidance of the Russian Communist Party chiefs as before but now without any particular nomenclature).

There is reason to anticipate that the Indian Communist Party will bring out and use the strategy or tactics of what Lenin called "revolutionary defeatism". To charge true communists of any country with indulging in high treason will leave their withers unwrung! For, a true communist has no place for nationalism and patriotism for the country of his birth and lineage, for he is wedded by indoctrination to what he calls "proletarian internationalism."

So today we find the members of the Indian Communist Party embarrassed before the Indian public and having to hide and prevaricate with regard to their real loyalties to China as an important member of the international communist bloc. They perform remarkable feats of tight-rope-walking in seeming to remain good Indian nationals while defending Chinese interests even in their aggression into the Indian borders. They say that Chinese inroads do not constitute aggression in any real sense and adduce the so-called reason for the outrageous position they take up that the Indian borders have never been demarcated on the ground. The Chinese advance into what we call Indian territory is really an advance into Tibetan territory which the British had falsely claimed for themselves as masters of India.

The Communist Party leaders are known to be carrying on a whispering campaign along the border areas to the effect that the Chinese armies across the border should not be regarded as enemies but rather as "friends of the Indian people and their true libe-

rators" from capitalist masters and oppressors who are now running the government of free India under the leadership of Nehru!

In such a situation, it can well be imagined what the real inwardness of the communist attitude towards Indian armed forces will be in any future clash! Their ideology will teach and prompt them to hope for the actual defeat of Indian military units and to wish for the victory of Chinese enemies and aggressors!

It is in such a situation that the weapon of "revolutionary defeatism" comes in handy to communist leaders!

For, if the national armed forces are defeated, confusion will ensue behind the domestic front. *Revolution then becomes easier!* The objective of communist technique (namely to convert the present bourgeois democratic government under Nehru into the final stage of true proletarian dictatorship which is to usher in the communist society) can then be achieved. War and revolution are closely allied.

Before the Russian Revolution of 1917, Lenin had called for a conversion of the Tsarist imperialist war into a civil war.

He defined the method more closely during the Revolution and used the idea of revolutionary defeatism for the purpose.

The Kerensky Government lost popularity for trying to carry the war forward as an ally of the Western Powers against the Kaiser. Lenin cashed in on this by urging the doctrine of revolutionary defeat! He signed the Brest-Litvsk Treaty surrendering vast provinces of Russia and allowed or sanctioned the demobilisation of the defeated armies of the Tsar.

So Stalin wrote: "The Bolsheviks maintained that the lesser evil for the people would be the military defeat of the tsarist government in the imperialist war, for this would facilitate the victory of the people over tsardom.... Lenin said that the policy of working for the defeat of one's own imperialist government must be pursued not only by the Russian revolutionaries but by the revolutionary parties of the working class in all the belligerent countries."

This doctrine still stands with the stress on the direction for all working class communist parties to work for the defeat of their own imperialist or bourgeois democratic governments. We can therefore reasonably expect this ideological "refinement" to be brought forth to justify the treasonable defence by the Indian communists of the enemy aggression. It will stupefy their national conscience. The public have to counteract such attitudes and reinforce the duty of the public to safeguard national independence and democracy.

Without Comment

DELAY IN DELIVERY OF SOVIET GENERATORS

Unexpected delays in the delivery of power generators and other equipment from the Soviet Union are causing serious concern to the Union Government, it is learnt.

A high-level review of the delivery schedules undertaken last month is stated to have revealed that of the 19 units of 50,000 kW each ordered from the USSR as part of the Third Plan, only eight or nine may be commissioned by the end of the period. The rest may begin production a year or even 18 months later.

This will cause a shortfall of nearly 500,000 kW and further aggravate the power supply problem in the country.

The procurement of these units is linked with Soviet loans and trade agreements. A team of senior engineers visited Russia recently to discuss the delivery programme with the manufacturers.

An inter-ministerial meeting was held here on Saturday to discuss the implications of the engineers' report. It was felt that if the manufacturers were unable to accelerate supplies, the Union Government may be requested to take up the issue at the highest level.

— *Statesman*, May 9.

FOREIGN STOOGES?

Rather belatedly, the February number of "The Democratic Journalist", the magazine published in Prague of the International Organisation of Journalists, dropped through our letter box the other day. From it we learned that in India here is a "dangerous concentration of the Press—especially that written in English—in the hands of a few groups or individuals, who usually represent foreign rather than national interests." We further learned that "it is essential that those elements of Indian journalism should be supported which are fighting against imperialism and dependence on foreign powers."

Frankly, we were perturbed as we scurried off to discover the names of our foreign share-holders whom we had never known to have existed. Then we reflected with relief that we had a tolerable record of fighting imperialism. British, French, Dutch, Belgian Portuguese and—we were about to add—Chinese. And at that we stopped dead. We had been about to accuse a member of the socialist camp of imperialism. A ludicrous idea, we said to ourselves, as we read, a page further on, that in Germany "one part of the Press is constantly banned although in that country official circles speak daily about freedom and democracy, assuming perhaps that a lie constantly repeated, may, in the end, be taken for the truth" in Western

Germany; of course, you understand. Who ever would suggest it might be true in any other part of Germany? Not "The Democratic Journalist" any way.

—*Indian Express*, May 16.

INDIAN HURT IN CHINESE FIRING

A member of the Indian police personnel guarding the Chinese trade agency in Kalimpong was injured recently as a result of firing from inside the agency, according to reports reaching here from Kalimpong.

The local authorities lodged a strong protest with the Chinese and pointed out that they should not any more indulge in this sort of activity, the reports added.

The report said that the incident took place over a month ago when someone inside the Chinese trade agency was found firing in the direction of the police line above a hillock overlooking the agency building.

—*Times of India*, May 10

CHINESE NATIONALS IN INDIA

Two hundred and seventy-eight Chinese nationals, including 54 minors were at present residing in Delhi, the Minister of State for Home Affairs said in the Lok Sabha. The figures exclude holders of diplomatic passports.

Asked whether the Government proposed to restrict the movements of these Chinese nationals, the Minister replied that for the present the restrictions imposed on foreigners under the Foreigners Act of 1946 and the Registration of Foreigners Act of 1939 were considered adequate.

Five of the Chinese nationals in Delhi had been asked to leave the country for anti-Indian activities during 1961 and 1962. Three had left under their own arrangements, one had to be deported and the case of the fifth was under considerations he added.

—*Hindustan Times*, May 10

MISCHIEVOUS WORK BY CHINESE EMBASSY

The Government of India has taken a serious view of the mischievous propaganda being carried on by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi challenging the territorial integrity of India.

It has lodged a protest against the publication in the Embassy's periodical, "China Today" of material questioning the country's territorial limits and has decided to confiscate all copies of the issue in question.

"China Today" of May 5 has published, besides the text of the Chinese Note of April 30, 1962, accusing India of intrusion into Chinese territory, some one-sided extracts from the year-old officials' report giving a completely misleading picture of the Sino-Indian border dispute.

Some of the sub-headings under which the extracts have been published are derogatory to Indian sentiment.

Under India's criminal law, anyone challenging the

territorial integrity of the country is liable to prosecution.

The propriety of the Chinese Embassy publishing material of this nature in New Delhi was questioned in the Rajya Sabha today by the Jan Sangh leader, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee.

In response to a notice of motion for papers given by him, the Minister of States for External Affairs, Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, explained that, normally, there would be no objection to the Chinese Embassy publishing its government's statements "but publication of this kind of extracts, etc., giving a one-sided version stands on a different footing." Hence the Home Ministry was issuing orders to confiscate all copies of the number.

Mr. Vajpayee then asked why action should not be taken against the New Age Printing Press, which brings out communist publications, for printing the current issue of "China Today."

Mrs. Menon said that the Government was considering this matter too.

—*Times of India*, May 19.

BONUSES IN RUSSIA ORDER OF THE DAY

Wage payment policy in Russia is at present almost the exact opposite of the basic Communist theory that payment or reward should be according to need and that each should produce the best according to his ability.

Bonuses and pay incentives are, on the contrary, the order of the day and supposed to be applied more intensively to agriculture to make this core of the Soviet economy more productive. The incentives are paid, whenever possible, on a piecework basis. This, coupled with pressure to fulfil or over-fulfil planned production quotas has, in both agriculture and industry, often led to the sacrifice of quality for quantity.

Where piecework payment is impossible, bonuses are awarded for cutting costs or for improving quality.

Even with increased pay and bonuses most Russian workers will earn less than the equivalent of Rs 350 a month but, since wives generally work too, family income may be nearer Rs 600 a month. Whether incentives to further earnings for more work will be attractive after this point remains to be proved.

—*Statesman*, May 20.

IN RUSSIA TODAY MORE AND MORE EXECUTIONS

Soviet executioners have been busier in the past year than they had been Stalin's day.

Some 200 sentences of death by shooting were carried out in a year, according to a Western survey

of the Soviet press. Death sentences now cover a variety of economic as well as criminal offenses.

The recent history of capital punishment in Russia:

1947: Death sentence "abolished."

1950: Death sentence revived for crimes of treason and espionage.

1954: Death penalty extended to cover murder.

1958: Extended again to cover "terrorism and banditry."

1961: Extended to cover forgery, pilfering of State property, currency speculation and counterfeiting.

1962: Extended again to cover bribery, assault on a policeman and rape.

—*U.S. News & World Report*, May 7.

(PANCHAYATI RAJ — Cont'd. from page 2)

An attempt can also be made in another direction. The attempt should be to avoid elections altogether, particularly at the village level. There is no reason why a village panchayat cannot be formed through common consent or through consensus. The attempt should be at unanimity. Mr. Jayaprakash has recommended this method in his writings on this problem. Left to themselves the villagers will not find it difficult to pick out the right people from amongst themselves to work on their behalf in the Village Panchayat. If there are more of such willing and competent persons, they can be asked to undertake the work by rotation. In extreme cases, the choice can be determined even by drawing lots. In case a wrong man is chosen, the villagers can replace him the following year. The system can be also followed in elections to Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads. Political parties interested in the proper functioning of Panchayati Raj can help villagers in finding out the best people in their localities to act as their representatives. The villagers will welcome such advice, provided it is disinterested. It will be disinterested if there is no attempt on the part of parties to enter the contest and win seats. In our country we have come to attach too much importance to elections. We regard it as the only method for the constitution of organisations. It should be remembered, however, that they can be also formed through common consent or by consensus. It will be desirable to emphasise this point in the case of Village Panchayats and perhaps also other institution of the Panchayati Raj. It will be then possible to take all the rural people together on the path towards development and progress. The bitterness and the divisions that are generated many a time by elections can be then avoided to a very large extent.

Panchayati Raj is a step in the right direction. There are no doubt dangers on the way. But there is also the possibility that it may awaken the people out of their age-old slumber and enable them to work in a cooperative manner for progress and prosperity. It is in that hope that all right-thinking persons will welcome its inauguration and wish it success.

With Many Voices

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

"Despite the curses against his name, Stalin still lives in the social and spiritual foundations of Soviet society."

—Milovan Djilas in *Conversations with Stalin* quoted in *Time Magazine*, May 25.

We have to be wary of Mir Kassims and Mir Jaffars amidst us.

—Krishna Menon, *Hindustan Times*, May 23

If democracy is not dissent, then how can it be defined?

—Edward R. Murrow to Annual Conference of the Relations Society of America.

✓ If Communism is proclaimed where there is, say, one pair of pants per ten persons, and these pants are divided equally into ten parts, we shall all be going without pants. We reject such pants-less Communism.

—Khrushchev, *Time Magazine*, May 4.

A private industry operating in the national interest might be described as good as a nationalised undertaking. . . . As a matter of fact, to me the public and private sector in India have very little meaning.

—Dr. B. C. Roy, Chief Minister, West Bengal, *Statesman*, May 11.

The Government wanted to convert India into "Hindia".
Mr. K. Manoharan quoted in *Hindustan Times*, May 1.

Fellow travellers are well known. They are not members of the Communist Party, but otherwise they are Communists who have no courage to call themselves Communists. Fellow-wanderers are very good people who are idealistic and who try to see good in everything. But they are not able to understand the subtleties of the working of the evil ways of Communists and they get caught. They are the people who are utilized by Communist friends most and they (fellow-wanderers) never realize they are utilized. . . . We have got such people (fellow-wanderers) in many parties, including my own.

—Mr. Morarji Desai, Indian Finance Minister, *Thought*, May 19.

Your Party has the right to demand any service of you but not to dishonour you.

—Tawney's remark when Ramsay MacDonald offered him a peerage quoted in *New Statesman*, April 13.

When will Mr. Nehru and his henchmen who dutifully echo his economic and political incantations realise that they are at least three decades behind the times and that they do not lead the vanguard of thinking but bring in the rear? This is proved by the fact that their only supporters today are the equally confused Indian communists who have mortgaged their minds alternatively to Moscow and Peking except when in pre-independence days, their consciences, such as they were and are, remained in the custody, under safe lock and key, of the dictatorial Mr. Palme Dutt.

—Frank Moraes, *Indian Express*, May 28.

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