

The Wrong Road

by M. R. Masani

I BELIEVE very strongly in the principles of genuine cooperation. But when we use these terms like cooperation, we have to be very clear as to what cooperation really is, and what it is not. True cooperation can take many forms. It can take the form of cooperative credit; it can take the form of multipurpose cooperatives which help the peasant who owns his own land to get good seed, borrow or loan a tractor, if necessary, to have fertilisers, to get credit for all these services. And he can also use the cooperative for selling his goods in the market. They can be separate or together. But the essence of genuine cooperation is that the peasant must own and cultivate his own land. Cooperation can only be between free men, not between serfs. Cooperation can be between men who say, 'This land is mine, I shall cultivate it with the members of my family, but for the sake of greater production and mutual assistance, I shall come together with others of my kind'. That is genuine cooperation, and I do not think any one can object to it or can dissent from it.

But there is another kind of cooperation, so-called, which is not cooperation at all, and that is collective farming of the Soviet-Chinese model. That collective farming, as Marshal Tito recently said about China, has nothing to do with Marxism or socialism. That system has been devised so that the greatest amount of surplus value or surplus grain can be squeezed out of the peasantry for the greater glory of the dictatorship, its military machine and for the forced process of industrialisation which is being erected on the backs of the groaning peasantry of Russia and China.

Now, it is in the light of this distinction that I would judge the policies which today go under the name of joint "cooperative" farming. In my view and the view of cooperators, the dividing line is this; if you allow a peasant to keep his land and his boundaries, if he farms it with his own hands and those of his family and hired labour, then he is member of a genuine cooperative; but if you uproot these boundaries, if you pool the land, if you create a big farm and call it a cooperative, it does not change anything, it is still collective farming minus the name. Now, in the light of this distinction, let us look at the Nagpur resolution.

"The future agrarian pattern", says the resolution,

"should be that of cooperative joint farming in which the land shall be pooled for joint cultivation, the farmers continuing to retain their property rights and getting a share from the common produce in proportion to their land. Further, those who actually work on the land; whether they own the land or not will get a share in proportion to the work put in by them on joint farms." "As a first step", says the resolution "prior to the institution of joint farming, service cooperatives should be organised throughout the country. This stage should be completed within a period of three years; even within this period, however, wherever possible and when generally agreed to by the farmers, joint cultivation may be started".

But what will these property rights mean? When the boundaries of the farm have been uprooted, when tractors and machines are running over that land which once was six or eight or ten or twenty farms, what will the right of property mean? It will mean a piece of paper, a scrap of paper given to the peasant to console him saying 'You once owned so many acres; your property is still intact.' This is the dodge that was tried and practised in China and in other communist countries. But, after a while, the question is raised 'Why should this man who is not working hard or not doing as much as the other fellow draw a larger share because he owned once some land?' In other words, you start by saying that the people in the farm will be remunerated partly in proportion to the land contributed, and partly in proportion to labour contributed. That is fair enough. But this can never last, because the functionless owner is no owner. His property actually has been taken away from him without telling him so, and he is being fobbed off with a scrap of paper which a future government will have no hesitation on equitable grounds in tearing up, because his utility to society ends on the day on which the farm ceases to be his.

The resolution passed at Nagpur, whether those who passed it are aware or not, is a resolution for collective farming of the Soviet-Chinese pattern and not for genuine cooperative farming.

What are the arguments for this measure? I am aware of three reasons. I shall mention them. The first is that production will increase. I am amazed that, in the face of all the facts from every country in the world, there should still be members of this Government who repeat this claim parrot-like. Collective farming, wherever tried, cooperative farming, wherever tried—of that pattern—has failed to increase production. On the contrary, production has invariably

gone down, whether it has been tried in a communist country or otherwise.

First of all, the assumption is that a bigger farm produces more. It is not true. Statistics of rice and wheat produced throughout the world show that countries which have small farms, like ours, produce more per acre than countries with big farms. Let me give an example of wheat and rice. The two countries with big farms in the world are the USA and USSR; both have relatively very low yields of wheat. The USA produces 12.2 quintals per hectare and the USSR 9.3. Now, compare against these two giant farming systems small farms. In the UK, with small farms, the figure is 28.5 quintals per hectare, in Denmark—smaller still—it is 34.4 quintals and in Japan—whose average holdings are smaller than ours—the figure is 22.6 quintals per hectare or twice as much as in the USA and 2½ times that in the USSR. Take rice. The USA produces 28.3 quintals per hectare and the USSR produces 25. Japan, again with smaller farms, produces 48.5 quintals per hectare—twice as much. Where, in the light of this, is any case at all for argument that production will increase under cooperative farming?

Countries which have tried collective or cooperative farming have always failed. The USSR, it is notorious, lags behind the rest of the world in production per acre and per man. Yugoslavia, which tried collective farming from 1948, gave it up in 1957. The Yugoslav Parliament passed a law on April 27, 1957, abandoning collective farming. It said that it had shown negative results—loss of interest by the peasants and decrease in production. Communist Poland, which also in its Stalinist phase, tried collectivisation, had to give it up. In Poland, 80 per cent of the collective farms and cooperatives have been liquidated in the last two or three years.

Cooperative or collective farming reduces employment. By pooling land, by bringing in methods of rationalisation or mechanisation, you reduce the need for labour. The one thing that cooperative farming can be expected to do—whatever else it does not—is to increase unemployment in the countryside. Cooperative farming is the last remedy to try when you want to put more men on the job. There is only one way to create more employment in the countryside, and that is the method that Mahatma Gandhi always

urged, the establishment of rural industries, the taking of industry to the countryside with electric power or without.

Finally, it has been said that cooperative farming is a higher form of society, it is part of the socialist pattern. Let me say—and I would like anyone here to contradict me—that collectivisation is no part of democratic socialism in any part of free world. Let me quote what Mr. Aneurin Bevan said, warning this country against following the Chinese path of so-called cooperatives. On his last visit to Delhi, Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Left-wing leader of the British Labour Party, said:

“India cannot afford to make the mistake that Russia has committed, because she does not possess empty spaces which could be called upon to make up for the failures and mistakes in agriculture as in Russia. India has to bring about an economic revolution in harmony with the needs of the countryside. The application of the principles of collectivisation, mechanisation and centralised control has proved a failure in the field of agriculture in the Soviet Union. The whole countryside in Russia seethed with discontent. The number of cattle in Russia today is less than before the revolution. The Russian experience was being repeated in China and the Communist States of Eastern and Central Europe.” And he ended up by warning us against copying these methods though some of us seem to have neglected to listen to him.

Can voluntary methods bring about this result? I can only quote a man whose knowledge on this subject is unsurpassed in this country, Mr. Charan Singh, who has made a lifelong study of this. This is what he says:

“Human nature being what it is, even brothers of the same mother usually separate from one another after the head of the family, the father, has been removed by death or other cause. In the circumstances, it is Utopian to expect that an average householder will, all of a sudden, identify his interest with the interests of these hundreds of persons in the village or neighbourhood who were total strangers to his life before.”

There is only one way in which this kind of joint farming can be brought about and that is by coercion and violence.

Take another example. We know about the gramdan villages. In Koraput, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Mr. Jaya Prakash tried to ask the local people to cultivate them as a village and not to ask for distribution of the land. Mr. Jaya Prakash confessed to me that this experiment had ended in failure because the peasant does not want to farm village land jointly; he wants something of his own. He wants to farm his own land. That is part of human nature. We all want something of our own.

It seems to me that there are two alternatives with which we are faced. One is that an attempt will seriously be made to implement this programme of destroying peasant proprietorship after three years and to try to bring in collective farming. I do hope that such an attempt will not be made. But, if it is made

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Notes

Communist Machinations

AFTER hobnobbing with the Kremlin leaders for a time the Arab nationalists in Cairo have, to their great consternation, been driven to the realisation that the communist leaders in Moscow are no friends of Arab nationalism. The recent wordy duel between Moscow and Cairo has obviously marked the end of the honeymoon between the two in spite of Nasser's attempts to conceal the rift. Enraged at the arrest of the communists in the United Arab Republic, Khrushchev in his address to the recent Congress of the CPSU accused Nasser of being "reactionary" and "naïve" in lumping communists with "imperialists" "colonialists" and "zionists" and suppressing "progressives" (meaning communists) in the Arab countries in the name of a "spurious anti-communism". The tinge of implied threat in Mr. Khrushchev's speech was not lost on the Arab nationalists. They replied back charging Moscow of a gross violation of the principles of Panchashila. Mr. Khrushchev's pointedly expressed solicitude for Iraqi regime, his reference in equal terms to Colonel Nasser and Brigadier Kassem in the context of the open hostility between Baghdad and Cairo, his effort to remind Nasser of the inevitable "class-struggle" to follow in the wake of Arab freedom from "imperialism and colonialism" and that in this struggle the communists were the "progressive" vanguard, have been interpreted by Arab nationalists as Soviet Premier's subtle manoeuvre to divide the Arab world.

It is clear that while Cairo is disillusioned of Moscow, Baghdad is being increasingly drawn into the orbit of communist influence. Brigadier Kassem, who enjoys the support of Iraqi communists has allowed the peoples' court in Baghdad to inflict a death sentence on the pro-Nasser revolutionary leader, Colonel Aref. With the death sentence on Aref came the announcement of a comprehensive economic agreement between Iraq and the Soviet Union. The death sentence also marked the resignation of six Ministers, who were the members of the right-wing Istiql Party and the left-wing Baath Party, from the Iraqi Cabinet. These Ministers were known to be anti-communists and favouring closer links with the United Arab Republic.

Communist machinations have thus succeeded not only in disrupting the revolutionary movement in Iraq but in dividing the ranks of Arab nationalism in the whole of West Asia. It is necessary to sound a note of warning to Arab leaders that any reliance on Moscow for support would only result in estrangement between Arab countries for the simple reason that Moscow is convinced that Arab unity would be the greatest stumbling block to the spread of communism in West Asia and, therefore, would never permit the Arab countries to be united. The warning becomes

all the more necessary because some Arab leaders have the tendency of believing—a tendency betrayed in the recent statement of UAR's Vice-President, Mr. Abdul Latif Baghdady—that the relations between the Arab world and the Soviet Union are based on "complete frankness and mutual respect for each other's differing system". The naivety of such a belief becomes obvious when one remembers that Moscow never respects a differing social system; it only subverts and destroys it.

Situation In Burma

GENERAL Ne Win's resignation as the Prime Minister of Burma on the ground of his inability to carry out the mandate given to him in October last, when he was chosen as the Premier, that he should hold free and fair general elections before April, has threatened to throw Burma into a political turmoil. The General's resignation, in spite of the Army's support, is undoubtedly motivated by his deep democratic desire to conform to the wishes of the Parliament. Again, the General's Government, in view of the fact that it enjoyed the confidence of the Parliament, was not dictatorial in the strict sense of the term. The General still enjoys the support of the "Stable" group of AFPFL led by U Ba Swe which claims the backing of 140 members out of 250 members in Chamber of Deputies, U Nu and his "Clean" group of AFPFL, in spite of their recent hostility towards Ne Win, have decided to fall in line with their rival faction. In view of these facts it would be in the interests of the political stability of Burma that General Ne Win should continue in power for at least another six months or one year till there is an appropriate atmosphere to hold free elections. It is unfortunate that so far the General's efforts to bring about rapprochement between the "Clean" and "Stable" factions of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League have failed. But it is possible that in the next few months, both the factions of the AFPFL may see the wisdom of coming together in the best interests of the country. The record of General Ne Win's government has been good. Although he has failed so far to establish conditions in which free elections could be held, he has succeeded in introducing radical reform measures which have been enthusiastically welcomed by the Burmese people. He has succeeded also in toning up the efficiency of the administration and putting down corruption and black market. General Ne Win's failure to hold general elections within the time stipulated by the mandate does not indicate his incapacity to get things done. It is, on the other hand, a reflection on Burma's political life, vitiated as it is by opportunism, separatist tendencies and absence of law and order in some parts. It is true that General Ne Win's government is no substitute for a good democratic government. Yet till the conditions for free elections are created, it seems to be the only alternative. It would be, therefore, in the fitness of things that as demanded by General Ne Win, Burma's Constitution is so amended as to make it possible for

him to continue in office till it becomes possible to hold the elections.

Population Problem

THE discussions that took place at the sixth International Conference on Planned Parenthood which was recently held in New Delhi have served to attract attention to the seriousness of the population problem that faces the country. The most telling warning was given by the eminent British scientist, Sir Julian Huxley. He characterised the rate at which the population was growing in the country as "explosive." He said, "India's failure to solve the problem would mean political and social disaster for the country." He advised that in all future Plans measures aiming at reducing fertility should be given an extremely high priority, and pointed out that expenditure on population control measures would be one of the most profitable forms of investment.

The Prime Minister who inaugurated the Conference also spoke about the seriousness of the problem and declared that the Government had accepted the necessity of population control and were keen on securing it. Speaking a couple of days later, the Health Minister announced that the Central and State Governments would make available facilities for surgical operation for birth control to those who required them in areas where there were health centres or medical institutes. These are welcome declarations and it is to be hoped that they will be implemented with the necessary speed and vigour.

Side by side, efforts must be made to discover safe and inexpensive contraceptives and to make them available to the people as a whole. It will be highly desirable if a few top scientists will take upon themselves this task and devote their time and energy to the discovery and perfection of contraceptives that can be used by the people easily and inexpensively. The Government must make it possible for them to undertake this work by making adequate grants and providing laboratory and other facilities. Any amount spent on this work will be, as pointed out by Sir Julian Huxley, a profitable investment.

It is also necessary to launch an effective propaganda campaign to make people aware of the necessity of population control and to inform them of the methods that can be adopted to secure it. A certain amount of propaganda is also necessary amongst medical men in order that they may carry the message to the people and help them to practise birth control. If all these measures are taken simultaneously and energetically it is still possible to tackle the problem. It should be realised, however, that time is fast running out and after a few more years a stage will be reached when nothing that is done will prove effective.

Rift In Andhra

THE rift in the ranks of Congress Legislative Party in Andhra as a result of which several rebel Congressmen have joined the opposition, has come as

a shock to all democratic minded Indians, especially because the dissident Congressmen there might unwillingly, if not deliberately, lend themselves to be exploited by the communists for the consolidation of their own party in the State. This is clear from the fact that Mr. Basava Punniiah, Secretary of the National Council of the Communist Party of India as well as of the Executive Committee of the Andhra Pradesh Council, has welcomed the decision of the Congress rebels to quit the organisation, on the ground that this move would help strengthen "democratic forces both inside and outside the Andhra Pradesh Legislature." The meaning of "democratic forces" in communist terminology is obvious: 'democracy' to communists always means communist dictatorship. Communists are trying to consolidate their forces in Andhra with a view to coming to power in the State in the next General Elections—they hope that the next State after Kerala to fall a victim to communist subversion will be Andhra. Although Dr. Chenna Reddy and his colleagues may not align themselves with the communists, it is possible that in the context of the peculiar situation prevailing in Andhra they may be made instrument in the communist manipulation to undermine the political stability of the State and to serve the interest of their own Party. It would be, therefore, wise on the part of Dr. Chenna Reddy and his colleagues in the Democratic Front, to be so careful in their policies as well as alignments as not to give a handle to the communists to exploit the situation in their favour. It is unfortunate that the rift in the ranks of Congressmen in Andhra was allowed to develop. Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, the Chief Minister and the leaders of the all-India organisation could, with a little foresight on their part, have averted the rift. It should be clearly understood that a rift in the ranks of democratic parties always helps the communists to consolidate their strength.

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The Lesson Of Pasternak

By Ignazio Silone

THE GREAT STORM around Boris Pasternak has now abated. Now we can put into perspective some of the things revealed by it.

What, above all, is the true significance of the protests that have been voiced in all parts of the world against the grave threats and persecution to which Pasternak has been subjected in Russia? These protests, in my view, constitute the most fitting reply to the abject rationalizations which the poet himself was forced to submit in rejecting the Nobel Prize for Literature. The first reason given by Pasternak for his rejection referred, as we know, to the particular psychology of the national society to which he belongs and which, realistically, he must take into account. But the intense emotion and the rising storm of protest engendered throughout the civilized world by this episode demonstrate that there exists, at least potentially, a society larger than the national society to which Pasternak, as a man and as a consummate artist, fully belongs.

All of us knew, in discussing the Pasternak affair, that we were not arbitrarily interfering in the internal affairs of a foreign country. Pasternak is our colleague; he belongs to us as much as to the Russians; he is part of what Goethe called *Weltliteratur*. The boundaryless society of artists and free men felt outraged and wounded by the ignoble behavior of the Soviet cultural bureaucracy. We had the right and the duty to intervene. Pasternak unexpectedly gave a name and a face to the cause of the freedom of art. With him our dignity and our honor as writers were at stake. Now the simple fact that a novel has been the center of the world's attention for a couple of weeks must impress upon us the importance which true art can still assume in the life of the people.

After Budapest, after Warsaw, we now have *Doctor Zhivago*. Anyone who, in the future, speaks of the role of the intellectuals in our time will not be able to ignore these fundamental events. In this sense, the Pasternak case has served as a touchstone which no Western literary circles can refuse to recognize. The cowardice, the ambiguity, the subtle distinctions, the hypocritical evasions of "equi-distance" ("on the one hand, it is true that Soviet bureaucracy... but on the other hand, it is undeniable that Western political speculation...") have again laid bare the *malaise* which still afflicts many writers when they are confronted with the need to assume a responsibility that endangers their tranquility. This is a lesson to keep in mind.

The Pasternak case has also enabled us to see more clearly the present status of cultural life in the Soviet Empire. We already knew that the "thaw" was a short-lived one. We knew that the cultural institutions, the publishing houses, the writers and artists associations, the editorial offices of the reviews remained unchanged, with the same directors who had been placed

there by Zhdanov. But we never could have predicted that the insolence of these gentlemen could take this form, which, to us, appears mad. To be sure, even now we are not in favour of a rupture of cultural relations with Russia; we remain, now as always, partisans of a free circulation of men and ideas. But we shall not easily forget the names of the Soviet men of letters who promoted the shameful campaign against Pasternak and who led the Moscow Writers Union to request that the Government deprive Pasternak of the right to work and live in Russia. We must wait for one of these gentlemen to appear at some international conference in Venice, Rome, Zurich, or Paris, to ask him to account for his ignominy. Of course, shameful attitudes have been taken by other writers, recently and in the distant past. But the literary history of no country knows a more degrading spectacle than that of an assembly of 800 writers condemning a novel without having read it. Not even the Spanish Inquisition, in its darkest period, descended to such depths of violence and stupidity.

It would seem that certain Russian writers, including some famous ones, did not join in the general outcry against Pasternak. We must hope that more will be known about this, and soon. But the question that arises is this: Taking into account the conformism of the Writers Union, is it conceivable that it could have been convened, and that it could have taken these mad decisions, without an explicit order from the supreme political authorities? No, this is unthinkable. How, therefore, can we explain the fact that these decisions were not implemented? The apparent repentance, it appears to me, was dictated by the information which had in the meantime been received by Khrushchev on the internal and international repercussions of the scandal. He must have noticed that the Zhdanovists of the Soviet culture apparatus had forced his hand, and he offered Pasternak the possibility of an accommodation.

Pasternak's letter to Khrushchev was rather disappointing to many admirers of *Doctor Zhivago*. But who can judge? We must exercise our imagination to conjure up the lynch atmosphere to which Pasternak was exposed during a period of some ten days. To be sure, it is an embarrassing letter. Fully five times, despite the brevity of the letter, Pasternak repeats that his statement was written freely, without violence, without blackmail, without suggestions from others. "I have not been subjected to threats or to constraint," we read... "Nothing can force me to act against my conscience..." "I have given up the prize without constraint by anyone." And so on. Would this not seem too much for a free man in an atmosphere of serenity? The letter is based upon a glorification of Pasternak's native soil which ominous-

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SOVIET CRIMINAL LAW

THE Supreme Soviet of the USSR has approved a series of statutes designed to tidy up the framework of Soviet penal law. The statutes were published in *Pravda* on December 26. Two of the measures—the *Principles of Criminal Legislation* and the *Principles of Criminal Procedure*—had been reproduced in draft form in Soviet legal journals last June with the object of stimulating a professional discussion.

The new "principles" are to serve, subject to local modifications, as the basis for the new series of Criminal and Procedure Codes to be drawn up in the 15 Union Republics. They incorporate the results of the actions taken since 1953 against the extra-judicial procedures of the police apparatus. Thus, Soviet law now prescribes that no one may be sentenced except by a regular court; the accused is not compelled to prove his innocence; the burden of proof lies with the prosecution; recourse to appeal is facilitated, and stricter limits are fixed for holding people on suspicion and keeping the accused under arrest while the preliminary investigations proceed.

At the same time, no change has been made in the main forms of punishment. Death by shooting is prescribed for treason, espionage, sabotage, terrorism, banditry, murder in aggravating circumstances, and for other serious offences in wartime or under martial law which remain to be specified. Banishment from the normal place of residence (*vysylka*) accompanied by an interdict on residing in certain other specific areas, and deportation to a specified distant area (*ssylka*) are preserved as standard punishments.

The maximum term of imprisonment is reduced from 25 years to 15. But a more severe system of remission for good conduct and exemplary work has been introduced than has recently been in force. From now on, no adult prisoner can qualify for a remission of sentence until he has served at least half his sentence; for the more serious offences, the minimum is raised to two-thirds of the original term; and recidivists can earn no remission. More emphasis is placed on the confinement of serious offenders and recidivists in closed prisons. Other prisoners would serve their term in "corrective labour colonies", but the principles leave open the question whether offenders are normally to be imprisoned within the area in which they reside or transferred to "corrective labour" establishments elsewhere in the USSR.

One step forward must be noted. The age of criminal responsibility, which could be as low as 12, has been raised to 16, except for the more serious crimes, where it remains at 14. Juveniles are to be confined in special corrective labour colonies for young offenders. Those below the age of 18 (and pregnant women) may not be sentenced to death or deportation.

Besides the retention of the death penalty and deportation, the new principles include other features that must have disappointed the hopes of some Soviet lawyers. Thus, although the prosecution is now

obliged to adduce concrete evidence, the concept of the presumption of innocence has not been incorporated into the principles; it has been expressly rejected as an "obsolete dogma of bourgeois jurisprudence". Equally, while Vyshinsky's notion that the accused's confession is the "queen of proofs" has been discarded, confessions are admitted as evidence and witnesses are not protected against self-incrimination. The accused, although he has the "right to be defended", is given access to a defence counsel (unless he is a minor or incapacitated) only when the preliminary investigation has been completed and the prosecution's case is ready. While this provision is an improvement upon previous practice, the accused can still be kept under arrest and interrogated for months (up to nine months in an extreme case) before having access to legal advice.

The crux of Soviet criminal legislation, however, is its attitude to political offences, and it is significant that the special section on "crimes against the State" was not published in advance for discussion. The new *Law on criminal responsibility for State crimes* simplifies the provisions of the notorious articles 58 and 59 of the RSFSR Criminal Code (and the corresponding articles in the republican codes) and introduces some innovations. The death penalty is maintained for treason in its various forms. Apart from defection to the enemy, espionage, betrayal of State secrets, treason is also committed by fleeing from the USSR or refusing to return to it from abroad. Terrorism, sabotage and banditry are also capital crimes. Other penalties (up to 10-15 years) are prescribed for "wrecking," anti-Soviet propaganda (including the dissemination of "slandorous rumours" and banned literature) and "mass disorders".

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ly recalls the notorious sentiment of *Blut und Boden*, in sharp contrast with the internationalist tradition of the founders of Russian Communism almost all of whom knew exile, and with the work of Pasternak himself. Nobody leaves his own country with a light heart, but if need be, one can in fact emigrate. Before being Italian, German, Russian, one is a man.

Finally, the references in Pasternak's letter to the circumstances through which *Doctor Zhivago* came to be published are not truthful. And the publisher, Feltrinelli, has done well to refrain from setting the record straight—for how, after all, can one engage in polemics with a prisoner? But we may be permitted, through an association of ideas, to recall an episode from the period of the great Stalinist trials: A defendant, forced to confess that he had met Trotsky's son in a Copenhagen hotel, gave a fictitious name—so that from the falseness of this detail, the falseness of the entire testimony could be deduced abroad.

Alas, in these days, Pasternak was so deafened by the hysterical shrieking of the Moscow writers that he failed to perceive that, because of the alert sounded by international opinion, he was stronger than his adversaries. But *Doctor Zhivago* will survive all polemics; this is the revenge of which no dictatorship can deprive the poet.

What's Happening In China?

By Harry Goldberg

I WONDER if the free world has realized fully, as yet, the grave threat to it posed by the most recent developments inside Communist China. After some initial resistance, which was handled with characteristic communist repression, the "communeization" of China's half a billion peasants is well on the road to completion, if official claims can be believed.

The communists' "New China" news agency claimed recently that 90 per cent of the over 100,000,000 peasant families had already been herded into the new communes. Even discounting somewhat, as one must, official claims out of Communist China, there can be no doubt that this latest regimentation programme has made enormous strides.

The programme was tentatively launched in April of last year. By August 30, only 30 per cent of the peasants were claimed to have entered the new communes. By this time, however, precious few peasants in Communist China remain outside the communes.

The programme was launched because the organization of the previous peasant cooperatives (collectives) did not give Mao Tse-tung and his clique that degree of control desired—which was total. From the organizational point of view they now have that. Further, it enables the rulers of Communist China to control the agricultural output more completely.

Under the old farm collective system, whenever there was a particularly large crop the farmers benefited somewhat through sharing what was left after the State had collected its share. In the communes however, wages have been restored and the workers will be limited to fixed incomes.

The wage system, further, will be used as a form of social pressure—as a club, in fact—for it will be administered, it has been said, on the basis of "to each according to his labour and political attitude." The threat contained here is crystal clear.

But the commune system goes far beyond the more total control merely on the agricultural front. The communes, in addition, will be charged with wiping out the last remnants of private property in production, will develop local industry and trade, will dig roads, ditches, canals, etc., and, finally, will train all physically able men in military duties.

The new communes, much vaster in scope and function than the old peasant collectives, have been formed from the merger of the latter in the various provinces. To date it is claimed that over 24,000 of them exist, with the number of peasant families in each of them ranging from 2,000 to 20,000.

They are organized on military lines. *Jenmin Jihpao* ("The People's Daily") of October 1 declared:

"In the people's communes labour is organized along military lines and things are done the way battle duties are carried out, and the people live collectively."

It goes without saying, of course, that Communist Party members hold the key directive positions in these communes.

That this is no euphemism but the stark truth can be seen from the regulations which govern a full-fledged commune, as reported recently by Tillman Durdin, the able Far East expert of the *New York Times*, in his very fine coverage of the "communeization" process:

"Under the regulations for a full-fledged commune peasant households merge their farm collectives into an organization that takes over all collective property as well as the small plots, tools, livestock and fowls the peasants have been permitted to keep individually up to now. Instead of splitting up the income of the collective as heretofore, the peasants go on a fixed wage system.

"Family and individual household living virtually disappears. The commune members eat in central mess halls and live in communal housing. Nurseries take care of their children and the women do full-time work in the fields along with the men.

"All means of production and all labour belong to the commune. It not only farms the large area under its control but builds and manages industries, handles trade and banking, and runs schools, irrigation systems, hospitals, posts and the telegraph.

"The managements of the township and the commune become one and the same. The organization is along military lines, and the communes arm and incorporate able-bodied persons into the militia.

"Wages can be cut or bonuses given in accordance with the work enthusiasm of the members. Labour groups can be shifted from farm to factory or to distant construction projects whenever the commune directors will.

"The communes will be under tight Communist Party rule and operate within the framework of overall policies and plans laid down in Peiping."

Why was the seemingly sudden shift from farm collectives to these more all-embracing communes decided on by the leaders of Communist China? Aside from the more absolute organizational control it allows—which is always in order for a totalitarian regime—the answer would seem to lie in the obsession for rapid industrialization.

That Communist China has made substantial industrial strides recently is undoubted. But the ambitious productive norms announced for the near future—especially in heavy industry—have the most knowledgeable experts in the field shaking their heads skeptically.

There seems, for instance, to be a severe transport crisis. There is a marked inability to move to points where they are needed the added goods that

have been created with the increase in industrial production.

Even more serious than the transportation crisis is the great strain that is apparent in the effort to raise steel production to the norm announced, over 10,000,000 metric tons—double (in one year, no less!) last year's output. Ambition here seems to be way ahead of possible realization.

It is for this basic reason, therefore, that the leaders of Communist China are attempting the complete mobilization of their huge manpower surplus to make up for their great lack not only of modern machinery but, more often than not, of any machinery at all except of the most primitive kind. Po I-po, Chairman of the State Economic Board, has claimed that about 100,000,000 people have been working at steel production alone, with most of the effort being concentrated on producing pig iron at 350,000 hastily constructed primitive blast furnaces all over Communist China.

Tens of millions of women, further, have been "freed" from their household tasks to become part of the labour battalions that are digging the ditches, canals, roads, etc., with these battalions in veritable military formation and under military discipline.

Nothing is allowed to stand in the way of this total regimentation effort, neither human considerations nor respect for the traditional values of Chinese civilization.

The family, which for centuries has been the respected, almost hallowed, unit of social organization, around which has revolved much of the basic rules of ethical behaviour, is swiftly crumbling into a mere museum piece. Individual homes are being rapidly eliminated; its members live in communal houses; mothers work full time and children are left in nurseries.

Aged members of the family, heretofore held in special veneration, are being sent to old-age homes, where they must grow their own food and, more often than not, are completely separated from their relatives.

Family members often work in different places, and the younger ones are being sent to distant provinces. Ancestral graveyards are being razed and remains of the dead are moved to common pits, dug deep so that the earth above them can be cultivated. But enough!

This, then, is the new communeization system. It is complete regimentation of every aspect of life and living.

Soviet Russia never had anything approaching it; the Kremlin leaders never dared to go so far. But Mao Tse-tung has dared. It is both monstrous and frightening. Even the Communists in the European satellite countries, especially in East Germany, it is reported, have looked at this image of their own future and are uneasy.

Let there be no doubt about one thing. This totally regimented slave society inside China is no end in itself for the communist masters of the country. They are looking beyond their own borders. The consolidation of their control based upon the harnessing to their totalitarian chariot wheel of the limitless manpower of China gives them the lever to thrust out into

the international arena. The society which they are moulding inside China is for them a piece of merchandise for export.

Let us have no illusions about this. Communism by its very nature is dynamic, aggressive, *expansive*. The Chinese communists themselves have made this clear repeatedly in their own pronouncements, and one of the most melancholy phenomena of our age is the refusal of so many good-hearted people to believe it.

For outside consumption, especially in the neutralist countries of Asia, Peiping will pretend to adhere to the five principles of peaceful co-existence and mutual non-interference adopted by the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference held at Bandung in which Red China participated.

But such pretended belief in the principles of non-interference didn't prevent Communist China's rape of Tibet nor its heaping abuse upon Nehru when he protested this forceful taking over of a country which interfered with nobody and had been let alone for so long a time.

Red China's real belief about neutralism was indicated long ago, in 1940, when Mao Tse-tung said:

"In the world from now on, neutrality is only a term for deceiving people."

If it be protested that this was long before the Bandung Conference and that Mao Tse-tung has since changed his line, let me quote for such naive souls from the *Chinese Youth Journal* of August 8, 1957, written more than two years after the conference:

"There is definitely no such thing as the transcendental Third Course. In the domain of politics and ideology it is either the easterly wind getting the upper hand over the westerly wind or vice versa. Peaceful co-existence and mutual non-interference are impossible" (emphasis added.)

If the free world willfully remains complacent in refusing to recognize these as the *real* intentions of the Chinese communists, it will merely be hastening its own doom.

—Condensed from *American Federationist*

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Communists And The Arab World

Is the communist line in the Arab world undergoing a change? Are the communists deciding in favour of more active reliance on Communist Parties rather than alliance with and support to nationalist leaders and movements? The recent attacks on President Nasser of Egypt and encouragement to communist elements in Iraq and Syria make it necessary to raise and answer these questions.

Moscow Radio reported President Nasser's action against the Communists briefly and without comment. But, as in the case of the Communist counter-attack on Mr. Nehru, President Nasser, too, was soon subjected to indirect Soviet fire. With Mr. Nehru the counter-attack took the form of an article in the *World Marxist Review*: President Nasser was attacked by the Italian and French Communist Parties—in *Unità* of December 31 and *L'Humanité* of January 19.

The main point of *Unità's* leading article (entitled "A split in the Arab Liberation Movement?") was that unless President Nasser was prepared to give a more "Socialist course" to the movement of Arab unity, he would lose his leadership of the Arab world. As the Syrian communists had proved themselves consistently anti-imperialist, wrote *Unità*, Nasser's aim must have been to break up the Iraqi united front by discrediting the communists there. Nasser had made the mistake of inciting Colonel Aref to press for Iraq's merger with Egypt on the basis of the United Arab Republic's Constitution, though in Iraq (unlike Egypt) the Communist Party had played an active part in the revolution. Nasser's gravest error, in fact, was his conviction that Arab unity should be the "exclusive work of the leading group of the Egyptian bourgeoisie". The article then set Nasser's course as follows:

"He (Nasser) did not understand that the victory of the revolutionary movement in Iraq created objective conditions for the unification of the Arab nations by a process more advanced than that followed by Egypt and Syria...that the moment had come in which the unification of the Arab world could only move ahead if it followed the democratic and Socialist course...that the only way for Cairo to preserve the leadership of this movement was to remain in the forefront under the new circumstances".

L'Humanité's article, by a member of the French Party Central Committee, Leon Feix, was even more emphatic in its defence of the Communist Parties in the Middle East. "Perhaps Nasser hopes to strengthen the unity of the Arabs by moving against the Communists. But will he not achieve exactly the opposite?" President Nasser has also been attacked by the Moroccan and Algerian communists, and by Aidit, General Secretary of the Indonesian Communist Party.

These articles were clearly intended as indirect

reminders to Nasser that he cannot count on unqualified Soviet support. They should be read in conjunction with the discussion in communist (though not Soviet) publications about the national bourgeoisie. It is now claimed that the national bourgeoisie is unfit to lead the national liberation struggle because, on the one hand, it tends to compromise with the imperialists and, on the other, to take the path of anti-communism.

It may be recalled that in September 1953, the Soviet Union embarked on a policy of friendship with the "national bourgeois" leaders of neutral states in Asia and the Middle East, supported by offers of technical and economic aid. These were given irrespective of the attitude of the "national bourgeois" leaders to communism. Subsequently, Soviet scholars and ideologists were told to re-appraise the rôle of the national bourgeoisie. The Marxist view that the national liberation struggle could be victorious only under the leadership of the proletariat had been understood too literally, it was then asserted, since in India, Burma, Indonesia and Egypt independence had been achieved under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie.

This line has now been reversed, at least in directives to the international communist movement, which has been reminded of the underlying Soviet purpose of "taking over" a nationalist movement and imposing a communist character upon it. It is less clear what effect this change of line will have on Soviet policies.

Soviet investment in the "bourgeois nationalism" of Asia and the Middle East has paid good dividends, and there has been no hint in official pronouncements of any change in the policies adopted in 1953. Mr. Khrushchev sent cordial New Year greetings to Nasser, Qasim and Nehru, and a special message to Nasser expressing his satisfaction at the recently-signed protocols on trade and Soviet aid. But the Soviet leaders may be thinking in terms of the growing influence of communism in Iraq, and this would open tempting prospects for them. A Soviet delegation of "experts on economic and technical co-operation" is visiting Baghdad to discuss the possibility of Soviet aid to that country.

In the long-term Soviet interests would be better served by a weak and divided Arab world exposed to communist penetration than by a strong unified Arab State. For this reason the Soviet Union may have decided for the time being to give covert encouragement to those groups in Iraq which are working against a merger with Egypt and to those in Syria which advocate closer ties with Iraq.

In the more general context, Soviet friendship with "national bourgeois leaders" in Asia and the Middle East may no longer preclude a more active support for the Communist Parties.

Review

India Wins Freedom

By Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Published by Orient Longmans; Price: Rs. 12.50.

Maulana Azad has told in *India Wins Freedom*, the story of the last ten years of the national movement before it succeeded in winning its cherished goal of independence. It is a story as he saw it, for most of it consists of what he thought, said or did. It is but natural, as the book is essentially an autobiography of the Maulana. As an autobiography it is, however, a disappointing performance as it is only a bald record of his public activities. As a record it is superficial as it fails to give even a glimpse of the powerful social forces which were shaping the events of those days.

The story begins with the beginning of the war in Europe and ends with the partition of the country and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. There are two short chapters at the beginning which tell about the childhood and the youth of the Maulana and his early association with the Congress. There is an epilogue at the end which restates his views on the partition and the problems arising out of it. These chapters were to be later elaborated into volumes one and three of the autobiography. Death prevented him from writing those volumes and the world will not now know what he had to say about the early and the later part of his life. The latter would have been particularly valuable as the Maulana was occupying during that period an important position in the Government and also in the Congress organisation.

The curious part of the story told by the Maulana is the revelation that, during that period of approximately six years when he was occupying the position of the presidentship of the Congress and the later three years when he continued to be a member of its Working Committee, he differed with the prevailing policy of the organisation on every vital issue. His views on the issue of the war were diametrically different from those of Gandhiji and his followers in the Working Committee. The Maulana was for support to the war and war efforts if the freedom of the country was recognised. He did not like the individual satyagraha movement started by Gandhiji. He had his doubts also about the desirability of launching the "Quit India" movement which was later started by Gandhiji when Japan was knocking at the eastern gates of India.

During the discussions that later took place between the Congress and the British Government the views and the estimates of the Maulana invariably differed from those of the organisation which he was heading. He was for the acceptance of the Wavel proposals which were elaborated at the Simla Conference. Later he was for the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. He has expressed his regret at several places that the Plan was not accepted.

The Maulana was also opposed to the Congress decision to accept the Mountbatten Plan which offered

independence on the basis of the division of the country. One wonders why he continued occupying the presidentship and later remaining a member of the Working Committee when on all these vital issues he could not carry the Congress with him. Would it not have been more honourable to resign those positions, place his point of view before the people and the rank and file of the Congress and try to educate them? Some others like the late Mr. M. N. Roy and Mr. Rajagopalachari followed that course. They lost their popularity, but they contributed far more to the political education of the people.

The views of Maulana Azad on the partitioning of the country and the creation of Pakistan are those of an ordinary nationalist. The geographical unity of the country was to him far more important than the termination of foreign rule. He was prepared to postpone the attainment of independence rather than give in to the demand of the Muslim League. Pt. Nehru may have been wrong in not allowing the Muslim League two seats in the U.P. Congress Ministry in 1937, but the rise of the League cannot be attributed to that one factor. The narrow and orthodox social outlook of the nationalist movement and the totalitarian claims of the Congress were mainly responsible for the growth of the League's influence. As a nationalist Muslim, Maulana Azad's thinking was governed by some pre-conceived notions. He could not therefore see and appreciate the force of the rival nationalist movement that grew under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah.

Maulana Azad has not been fair to his colleagues. He has mentioned some mistakes that, according to him, were committed by Pt. Nehru. For Pt. Nehru, however, he had a warm and deep regard. But the same thing cannot be said about his other colleagues. He is most unfair to Sardar Patel. He suggests that he was a communalist. He holds him partly responsible for the assassination of Gandhiji. He accuses him of not doing his best to put down the riots that developed in Delhi in the wake of the disturbances in the Punjab. This is not the place to examine these allegations. But one cannot but say that the Maulana was not well-advised to make such wild charges against a colleague who, being dead, was not in a position to defend himself. At another place the Maulana has stated that Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad were "entirely the creation of Gandhiji". Neither would regard the statement as an insult, but his suggestion that they had, apart from the support of Gandhiji, no following or place in the country's public life is untrue and unwarranted. The description is more applicable to the Maulana himself. The eminent position that he came to occupy in the Congress and the political life was due entirely to the blessings of Gandhiji. He had no other support in the country.

The book deals only with the political activities of Maulana Azad. But he was also an eminent man of letters and a keen observer of men and events. In the course of his long and varied life he came across thou-

(Continued on page 11)

THE WRONG ROAD — Continued from page 2

it can only be by threats, by coercion, and I do not hesitate to say that if a serious attempt is made, it will unfortunately lead to civil war and bloodshed and the death of thousands of people in this country. I think anyone who thinks he can persuade the peasants of India to give up their lands and become landless serfs again for a super-zamindari in Delhi or the State capital is living in a fool's paradise.

The Prime Minister, talking at Baoli on the 10th of February, is reported to have said:

"Those who tell you that cooperative farming amounts to some sort of confiscation of land are trying to cheat you..."

I wish he had not used this uncharitable remark about people as diverse as Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan, Shri K.M. Munshi and many others who have said that. For instance, Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan has said in Banaras only four days ago that cooperative farming in today's context means creating "pupets in the hands of officials," thus depriving the peasants of their volition and land. It is not good to say of these patriotic sons of the soil that they are cheating the people. Whatever the motives may be, whatever they may be thinking they will be doing, the people who are really misleading the country are those who say that this Nagpur pattern of joint cooperative farming will not take the land away from the peasants.

The ruling party has set its feet on the wrong road, wrong from the point of view of public morality, wrong from the point of view of a free society and also, if I may say so, wrong from the point of view of self-interest. It is wrong from the point of view of self-interest because for the sake of a minority, a majority is sought to be penalised. The National Sample Survey of 1954-55 came to the conclusion that there were 66 million households owning land with five members per household, while there were 15 million households not owning land at all—about 20 per cent of those with land. *Indian Agriculture In Brief*, published by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1957, gives these figures. Those who are self-employed in agriculture are 53.7 per cent of the population. The big majority of people living in the villages do own some land. They love that land, small as it may be, as they love their baby, even if it is a little infant. They do not think that their land is worthless because it is small.

The real duty to the peasant today lies in giving water to the cultivator. We have not got enough irrigation facilities. Give them better fertilisers; give them seed and teach them how to cultivate their lands better than they have been used to do through ages. This is the way in which Japan and other countries shot forward in the production of wheat and rice. Instead of doing that, we are drawing the red herring of collective farming across the track and diverting attention from our gigantic tasks. Even if it is never carried out, it will divert attention from constructive pursuits and will take class war into the villages set-

ting the landless against the landed and small-landed against the big-landed. Gandhiji used to say: "We of the cities will do everything for the peasant except get off his back." This formula of joint cooperative farming is invented by urban, doctrinaire people who have very little to do with them and is another attempt in a roundabout way to keep on the backs of our peasantry.

(Continued from page 10)

sands of men and witnessed or participated in hundreds of events. The impressions these left on his sensitive mind would have been an invaluable part of his autobiography. One searches in vain for such an expression of his personality. *India Wins Freedom* scrupulously avoids giving any such glimpse into the mind of the Maulana. The book thereby becomes only a not-too lively record of political events of a recent past.

V. B. K.

Not In Our Stars

By A. D. Gorwala, Published by Jaico Publishing House; Price: Rs. 3.

Mr. Gorwala is well-known in the country as an able administrator. He is equally well-known as a fearless publicist. During the last five years or so he has written extensively on current topics in a number of newspapers. Some of those articles are collected together in this book of over three hundred pages.

Mr. Gorwala has written on several topics ranging from population control and simple living to problems of foreign policy and dangers of communist infiltration. Articles dealing with each topic are grouped together in separate chapters which makes reading easy.

As a convinced democrat, Mr. Gorwala has subjected to a searching examination those policies and actions of the Government which result in strengthening totalitarian tendencies. He is particularly critical of the foreign policy of the Government which, though ostensibly neutral and non-aligned, leans many a time towards Soviet Russia and China. His criticism is both cogent and bold.

A democracy can survive and grow only on the basis of a free and fearless discussion of all public affairs. It is the task of the press to initiate and facilitate such discussion. The press in our country has not been playing that role very creditably. It is to a large extent conformist. Even Mr. Gorwala did not always find it easy to secure publicity for his articles. A regular column contributed by him to an eminent journal was suddenly stopped because his writing was frowned upon by persons in authority. That, in spite of all these difficulties, he continued to write is an eloquent testimony to his sense of public duty and his courage of conviction. Our democracy will secure a surer footing if we get a few more of such disinterested and courageous critics of public affairs. Mr. Gorwala has rendered a distinct service to the cause of democracy by bringing together in book form his seathered writings on issues which still continue to agitate the public mind.

N. M. K.

With Many Voices

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

—Tennyson.

One of the dangers to young democracy in India is the feeling on the part of the citizens to break the laws if they consider them unjust.

—Justice Sinha, *Bombay Chronicle* February 14

If we have been able to get aid it is because we are not committed to the political ideology of any of the countries.

—G. B. Pant, Home Minister, *Times of India*,
February 18

There are some leaders of uncommitted countries to whom communism is a word difficult to pronounce.

—Nikita Khrushchev, *Current*, February 18.

If we want to bring about any revolutionary social change through state power, we shall have to accept dictatorship.

—Jayaprakash Narayan, *Bhoodan*, February 11.

It was at the instance of Shri V. K. Krishna Menon that the Avadi session (of the Congress) defined its ideal of socialism.

—K. K. Shah, *Bharat Jyoti*, February 15

STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF FREEDOM FIRST

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I know Jawaharlal often listened to his (Krishna Menon's) advice. I did not feel very happy about this, as I felt that Krishna Menon often gave him wrong advice. Sardar Patel and I did not always see eye to eye, but we agreed in our judgement about him.

—Maulana Azad in *India Wins Freedom*.

Marx described religion as the opium of the masses. Are we developing a new form of opium for the masses? Perhaps, the masses always need opium to be forgetful of their true condition.

—S. D. in *Bhoodan*, February 11.

If I and my followers stayed long in power, it might corrupt us. I am afraid of that.

—Gen. Ne Win, Prime Minister of Burma,
Indian Express, February 17.

I wish the U.S. would make some distinction between those who sit on the fence and its committed allies. The people in Pakistan cannot see why the nations that follow neutralism get the assistance. Why must neutralism give them more dividends?

—Mohammed Ali, Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S., *Indian Express*, February 17.

Our people are homogeneous on one issue namely love of land as possession and the family as the nucleus of life.

—Pothan Joseph, *Mysindia*, February, 15

While Nehru's intellect may sometimes be tricky his instinct is often sound, especially when he is face to face with hard realities. To a man of his culture and faith, Socialism is an extension of democracy, not strangulation of democracy.

—Thought February 7.

Theoretically, it will soon be possible for a lucky Cambodian pedestrian, who has been knocked down by a Polish steam locomotive, travelling to a port constructed by the French on a railway line built by the Chinese, to be rushed in an East German ambulance, driven by a Japanese-trained chauffeur and fuelled by American petrol, along a highway built by the Americans, to a modern hospital erected by the Russians and staffed by nurses, using Czech medical equipment, who have been educated under the Colombo plan.

—*Economist*, London, February, 14.

Krishna Menon in the Cabinet holding the extremely important Defence Ministry; Mrs. Indira Gandhi at the head of the widespread and powerful Congress party machine. Never have the times been more propitious for the communists.

—A. D. Gorwala, *Bombay Chronicle*, February 19.