

Towards A Communist Pattern?

IT is a strange irony of events that while India is pledged to follow a peaceful and democratic way to attain economic progress, the vital task of preparing the framework of her second Five Year Plan should be entrusted to a group of experts who have no regard for and no interest in the ideals and values of democracy. The fact, which was for a long time shrouded in mystery, has only recently become public thanks to Prof. Shenoy's warning at a meeting of the Indian Council of World Affairs in Ahmedabad and Prof. Ezekiel's article in the last issue of *Freedom First*.

The group of experts is that collected around him by Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, Director of the Indian Statistical Institute and the Statistical Adviser to the Government of India. The group consists of seven experts from Iron Curtain countries and a couple of fellow-travellers from other European countries, with the single exception of one who hails from a democratic country. The staff of assistants employed by the Institute also contains a number of communists and fellow-travellers, the most prominent amongst them being Mrs. Kalpana Joshi, the wife of Mr. P. C. Joshi, the one-time General Secretary of the Communist Party of India.

Not long ago, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan drew pointed attention to these facts. In an interview in Lucknow, he said: "The seven authors of Pandit Nehru's Second Five Year Plan are all men from behind the Iron Curtain." Jayaprakash is not in the habit of exaggerating, and indeed it is ascertained that the names of the members of this communist cell maintained by the Indian tax payer without his knowledge are Dr. M. I. Rubinstein (U.S.S.R.), Academician D. D. Degtyar (U.S.S.R.), Mr. Filiminov (U.S.S.R.), Mr. P. M. Moskvina (U.S.S.R.),

Mr. Timchevko (U.S.S.R.), Prof. I. Y. Pisarev (U.S.S.R.), Prof. Oscar Lange (Poland), Prof. Charles Bettelheim (France), Dr. R. M. Goodwin (England; originally from the U.S.A.) and Prof. Ragnar Frisch (Norway).

Mr. Jayaprakash was naturally disturbed by these facts and expressed his deep concern over the "highly centralised totalitarian kind of planning which Prime Minister Nehru is getting done by the experts of communist countries in the name of a socialistic pattern of society."

This 'highly centralised totalitarian kind of planning' is now slowly taking place behind closed doors. The first open onslaught of Prof. Mahalanobis and his experts launched in the name of a physical approach to planning did not succeed. It met with strong opposition from the Planning Commission and the economists. The Statistical Adviser to the Government of India therefore beat a strategic retreat and has now, it appears, presented his ideas in a modified and more acceptable garb.

The main characteristic of this modified plan is reported to be the primary importance accorded to the building up of heavy industries with a view to make the country self-sufficient in the matter of supply of producers' goods. This was the central feature of the first and subsequent Five Year Plans of Soviet Russia and it was this which led to the merciless exploitation of the people and the rise of the police State. Soviet Russia may perhaps have had some justification for adopting that course in the peculiar circumstances in which she found herself in the beginning of her career. But India, which is more fortunately situated and can avail herself of the help that is readily available from industrially advanced countries, need not blindly imitate what Russia did and thus pave the way for the eclipse of freedom and democracy.

Another important feature of the plan is said to be the decision to reserve the new production of consumer goods for hand and cottage industries and to prevent any further expansion of factory production in that sphere. The object of the decision is stated

to be the desire to solve the problem of unemployment. Whatever the object, the net result of the decision will be the smothering of free enterprise, a famine of consumer goods and the tying down of millions of workers to primitive and soul-deadening techniques. The plan also provides for the entry of the Government into many new spheres of activity. The obvious consequences will be rigid control of the Government over all economic activities and more and more of regimentation.

The central idea of the physical planning advocated by Prof. Mahalanobis and his experts is to take into account the physical resources available to the country and to utilise them in the most effective way for ensuring rapid industrialisation, which to them is synonymous with large-scale development of heavy industries. Effective utilisation needs direction of labour as well as resources which is not possible without a rigid control over the entire life of the community. Rapid industrialisation will also need a high rate of investment which is possible in a backward economy only through a further lowering of the living standards of the people. These economic compulsions will necessarily lead to the establishment of a totalitarian regime, for without such a regime it is not possible to direct labour and resources into planned channels and to coerce the people into submitting to a life of toil and hardship and misery.

Soviet Russia and other communist countries based their plans on this central idea. And the result has been the growing pauperisation of the people in spite of some spectacular advances secured in heavy and armament industries. It is now an established fact that though heavy and armament industries have made rapid strides in Soviet Russia, the standard of living of the Russian people continues to be as low as before. The craze for rapid industrialisation led to the collectivisation of agriculture which resulted in the killing, exile and starvation of millions of Russian peasants. Slave labour camps holding in servitude over ten million workers is another monstrous offspring of the same craze. And on the top sits the most oppressive police State that the world has ever seen directing the apparatus that runs the economy and keeps the people in check. What is happening in other communist countries is but a pale imitation of what has happened in Soviet Russia.

Experts drawn from Iron Curtain countries and trained on communist lines could not but recommend a similar plan. They would not be communists, and in any case they would not be allowed to leave their countries and work here as experts, if they could not be relied upon to evolve for India a plan on orthodox communist lines. It is Prof. Charles Bettelheim of France, a well-known communist, who has formulated the plan for the experts in his working paper, bearing the title *Scheme of a Model of Reasoning for the Elaboration of the 2nd Five Year Plan of India*. The objective put forward by Prof. Bettelheim is very alluring. He proposes to double the national income and to solve the problem of unemployment in ten years. The objective is no doubt

very alluring and it is this objective that seems to have impressed the Prime Minister and won his sympathy for the plan.

The objective is, however, extremely deceptive. It is merely a paper promise dangled before the eyes of the Prime Minister and others. The working paper does not say how the plan will be financed. It is only in a communist State that it is not necessary to think of finance, for there both labour and capital can be conscripted. And promises can be easily made, for there will be nobody to demand fulfilment. Besides, the statistical machinery is always at hand to cook up statistics to deceive the gullible. Starting with the outrageously absurd statement that "in the Soviet Union, the national income has nearly quadrupled in the course of the first two Five Year Plans," Prof. Bettelheim goes on to call for a rate of investment of 10·8% for the second Five Year Plan and 15·3% in the course of the third Five Year Plan. This high rate of investment is not possible without coercing the people to accept serious cuts in their standards of life. Prof. Bettelheim also contemplates the public use of private profits, which will virtually amount to confiscation of private enterprises. He also visualises a system of balances which will be possible only on the basis of the strictest control of all economic activities.

This is a plan on the approved Soviet model. It can work only on the basis of social, political and economic conditions that obtain in Soviet Russia. It cannot work in a free society where the people demand and insist upon their freedom to choose their jobs, their freedom to use and consume the goods that they like and their freedom to criticise and change the Government.

Prof. Bettelheim's plan did not go through. It is reported, however, that many of the basic ideas of his plan have found their way into the draft of the 2nd Five Year Plan. The report may or may not be true. But there are certain other incontrovertible facts which give cause for grave anxiety. Prof.

(Continued on page 6)

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Sardar Panikkar—A Gifted Opportunist

by Guy J. Pauker

I CANNOT avoid the feeling that when Mr. K. M. Panikkar publishes a new book, he has hammered out a stepping stone rather than a statue. In the course of his career, books have been followed with impressive regularity by positions in public life of increasing importance, almost invariably in spheres of activity to which he had just devoted scholarly efforts. After a score of his available volumes have been examined he appears as a liberal conservative, with a constant interest in India's past and present and a solid respect for the British.

His writings during one period focused on the relations of Indian states with the central government. Several such publications with forewords by British and Indian dignitaries, paralleled his ascension to the position of Deputy Director of the Special Organisation of the Chamber of Princes, Secretary of the Chamber of Princes, and Secretary to the Indian Princes' delegation to the Round Table Conferences.

In the second decade of this rich and variegated career, Mr. Panikkar rose to be Foreign Minister of Patiala. This advance was marked by an appropriately eulogistic account of the Maharaja of Patiala's chancellorship of the Chamber of Princes. He also wrote in 1937 a lengthy biography of the Maharaja of Bikaner. Several years later Sardar Panikkar became Prime Minister of Bikaner.

Other books mark this interest in autocratic Indian rulers. One, recently reprinted, first published in 1930 is the revealing biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh, the founder of Kashmir State. Some salient comments are worth quoting. "Where his interests required, he did not hesitate to resort to tricks and stratagems which would in ordinary life be considered dishonourable. He was trained in a hard school where lying intrigue and treachery were all considered part and parcel of politics. He was undoubtedly an opportunist . . ."

Mr. Panikkar's admiration for Gulab Singh is consistent with his interpretation of ancient Hindu political theory, the Machiavellian character of which he once expounded in a series of lectures.

After the Eighth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, in December 1942, he was asked to write a study on the general problems of security and political and economic progress in Southeast Asia. His book advocated an Indo-British partnership based on a "non-racial conception of freedom." In 1953 Panikkar published *Asia and Western Dominance*, A Survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History 1498-1945. Most reviewers, in English-speaking countries at least, have so far been sharply critical of the book. Mr. Panikkar has been attacked for using dubious sources, for erratic references, for misspelling proper names. He has been accused of

misunderstanding the nature of Asian nationalism or of being anti-British.

But his book is much more interesting if one examines it as a purposive effort to write, or perhaps rewrite, history in accordance with the expectations of a certain Asian audience — namely those who have been too deeply moulded by the West, to cast away its heritage, but who are craving for a rationale which would make it easier to adjust to the power situation in Asia as they see it now. He probably wrote so as to comply with their role-expectations and to win the sanction of their approval.

Judging from his past performances, I would ascribe few of the author's sins of omission or commission either to ignorance or to emotional disturbance, but rather to deliberate selection, guided by the expectations of the public to which he addresses himself. Before India achieved Independence, Mr. Panikkar had studiously cultivated the hereditary potentates who governed almost a third of India's population. These 562 princes have since lost their ruling powers, but it is not unlikely that Mr. Panikkar is well on his way to finding a new audience in Asia's ambivalent intelligentsia.

Acts of barbarism such as bombarding Calicut after a number of Portuguese had been killed in a popular outbreak, or setting Moorish ships afire, are discussed in great detail, with the conclusion that part of the accepted creed of Europe's relations with Asia was that "the doctrines of international law did not apply outside Europe."

Later in his book, Mr. Panikkar tells in some detail the cheerless story of the opium trade. This is a fairly careful and accurate account, rather restrained in tone. But Western scholars have also related these facts in detail and, even more, the archives of Jardine, Matheson and Company are available at the Cambridge University Library for further study. No Orwellian Ministry of Truth (Department of Records) has touched them during the last century. What puts Mr. Panikkar so obviously in a special category of writers is precisely the striking contrast between his ability to handle his material in a scholarly fashion when he so wishes and his ludicrous treatment of, say, Russia's role in the Far East.

As Mr. Panikkar is not a Marxist he extricates himself from the delicate task of writing a chapter about the impact of the Russian Revolution on Asia by limiting his comments to a few cordial pages. The right to development of national minorities, proclaimed by Lenin and Stalin, "was indeed an explosive statement and all the nations of Asia, struggling for freedom heard it with a new hope." Soviet industrialization "gave to the peoples of Asia the hope of industrial regeneration and economic independence." The Russian Revolution also "undermined effectively" Western

intellectual domination and "quicken the pulse of the peoples of Asia." (Pp. 250-53)

For a somewhat more candid exposition of Mr. Panikkar's views on communism, one has to return to an earlier book, from his *period anglaise*, the already mentioned *The Future of South-East Asia*. At that time he recommended an Indo-British alliance to prevent India from being drawn into the Soviet orbit and "organised on the basis of Soviet republics." While noting that such an event "may not be considered unwholesome by many", Mr. Panikkar added: "The misery which will follow from such a violent reorganisation, the civil war which will inevitably accompany it, the destruction of the imposing edifice of an ancient culture, these, our impatient idealists consider but a small price to pay for the changes that India has been waiting for."

Mr. Panikkar uses the term "cultural aggression" repeatedly with reference to Christian missionaries. In a lengthy chapter on Christian missions, he makes it crystal clear that he considers "cultural aggression" more than a manifestation of individual or group missionary zeal. He sees in it a plot. "Under the cover of the clauses of the treaty of Tientsin... the United States and France were putting into effect a planned spiritual aggression, which in one case was meant to conquer China for Christ and American trade, and in the other case for the Catholic church and French political influence." (P. 173)

No effort is made by Mr. Panikkar to document this statement. In the light of the total record, it seems fair to assume that the major purpose of this chapter is to contribute to one of Communist China's

major propaganda efforts—that is, to saturate China's and probably Asia's intelligentsia with the notion of "American cultural aggression." One Indian journalist visited Tsinghua University in Peking in May 1952 and asked a student if textbooks had been changed since "the liberation." The answer was, "Yes, they were the instruments of American cultural aggression." (Frank Moraes, *Report on Mao's China*.) Another Indian journalist saw, in November 1951, an exhibition arranged by Nanking University: "Among the exhibits was the charter given to an American Mission permitting the founding of the University. This sought to prove that American 'imperialism' had planned to degrade the Chinese culture." (Raja Hutheesingh, *The Great Peace: An Asian's Candid Report on Red China*, New York, 1953, page 13).

Mr. Hutheesingh, who is Pandit Nehru's brother-in-law, gives us the key to Mr. Panikkar's book and personality. He reports that Mr. Nehru once said: "He will be Communist in Peking and a champion of freedom in Washington so long as it takes Mr. Panikkar somewhere." (Ibid.) Mr. Hutheesingh adds that in October 1951, after listening to Ambassador Panikkar's discourses on the achievements of the New Democracy, he found that all the Ambassador's "facts" were Chinese communist propaganda. Yet, Mr. Panikkar is clearly not a communist. In my judgment the image of the communist bloc that he composes in his book is the picture that he thinks "neutralist" Asian intellectuals want to see. For a gifted opportunist soothing the panic may unfold interesting new opportunities.

—Abridged from *World Politics*, October 1954.

TOWARDS A COMMUNIST PATTERN?—(Cont'd from p. 2)

Mahalanobis, the moving spirit behind the plan, is now to be treated as a *de facto* member of the Planning Commission. This peculiar arrangement is presumably in accordance with the learned Professor's own wishes, for it is understandable that he should not want to shoulder any legal responsibility and subject himself to the discipline of a parliamentary process in which he has no belief. He will shortly be joined there by another eminent academician whose political predilections are of the same variety. Dr. J.C. Ghosh, who it is reported will shortly resign his Vice-Chancellorship of Calcutta University to join the Planning Commission as a member, is known for his leftist sympathies. Before taking up his last job, he inaugurated on April 21 the second national conference of that notorious Communist Party front, the India-China Friendship Association. More ominous is the speech he recently delivered in Bangalore in which he talked of a conscious minority alone being interested in planning. Are we then in for days when a conscious minority will do all the thinking and the planning and impose its will upon the large majority?

Another significant pointer is the scheme adumbrated by Prof. V. K. R. V. Rao (a co-Vice-President, along with Prof. Mahalanobis, of the communist-

inspired and controlled Indo-Soviet Cultural Society) of a National Labour Force. To begin with, it is to consist of one million persons. Its strength will be raised to two million during the period of the Second Plan. It will work, according to Prof. Rao, under 'semi-military discipline' and will be utilised for constructional activities of various kinds, such as road making, bridge building and irrigation. When there is plenty of available labour in the country for any amount of constructional activity there is no point in building up a Labour Force unless the idea is to conscript labour and make it work at any rate and at any place that may be decided by the State. Is this the shadow cast ahead of forced labour camps? The question is legitimate, for Prof. Rao's appreciation of communist China and its methods is not unknown.

It is in this context that one must view the recent amendments made to the Constitution and realise their serious implications. The amendments have taken the quantum of compensation altogether out of the purview of the Courts. When moving for reference of the Constitution Amendment Bill to the Select Committee on 15th March, the Prime Minister had himself rejected the suggestion that all matters of compensation should be made non-justiciable. According to the P.T.I. news report published in the

Hindustan Times, Mr. Nehru had then said that this course had been deliberately rejected by the Cabinet after careful thought. "I will tell you", he said, "that when we were discussing this matter, one of our colleagues suggested a very simple amendment to the Constitution to solve the whole problem. This amendment was very brief and not as long as I have placed before you in this amending Bill. The suggestion of our colleague was that we should say that whatever property was taken over by the State, the question as to what compensation should be paid for it should be left to be decided by Parliament and the Assemblies and no court should interfere in this at all. Well, this was a very simple procedure. It meant that the courts should not at all interfere in whatever Parliament did in regard to compensation." The Prime Minister then said he would like to tell the members that if that suggestion of his colleague had been accepted, then the courts would have been completely kept out. "This could have been done," continued Mr. Nehru, "but in that case the Fundamental Right in this regard relating to property would have been completely nullified. The Government could do this, but we did not think it proper to go so far." Yet, this is precisely what was done a few days later in the Select Committee with the Prime Minister in the chair, and there can be no question but that Fundamental Right to property which was enshrined in the Constitution has thus been destroyed.

The right to own property is as much a Fundamental Right as the rights to freedom of speech, association or assembly. None of these rights is an absolute right. All rights are subject to certain reasonable limitations. If those limitations are overstepped and rights are infringed, citizens must have the right of going to the courts to assert them. That is the essence of the Rule of Law. It is obnoxious to make an exception in the case of the right of property. The exception may harm a few of the rich, but it may also harm a large number of the not-so-rich. If a totalitarian plan of the type recommended by Prof. Mahalanobis and his experts is adopted, the amendments will enable the State to do what it likes with private property and subordinate all processes of production to the dictates of bureaucrats.

The picture is not, however, all dark. Some relief is provided by the declarations that the Prime Minister makes from time to time. Recently in New Delhi he made a very forthright speech on the unique experiment that India is trying "to achieve economic prosperity without abandoning democratic institutions." He said "that India would not sacrifice democratic institutions at the altar of economic progress," and added that "in the long run, economic prosperity based on a denial of human freedom and dignity could not carry a country very far." He deprecated the progress that Russia had achieved as it was achieved "at the cost of the freedom of the individual." The uniqueness of the Indian experiment lay in the fact, he said, that economic progress was being achieved "under a democratic set-up." These are heartening declarations and they inspire the hope that

India may not after all be dragged along the road that Russia and China have travelled.

The danger lies in impatience. Progress along democratic lines, indeed any genuine progress, is bound to be slow, though it is always far more permanent, far more rapid and far more satisfactory. The progress achieved by India under the first Five Year Plan is of a very high order. And yet there is no dearth of communist propagandists and their dupes who decry the achievement and laud to the skies the progress that Russia and China are supposed to have achieved under their totalitarian regimes. The stories of that progress are on many occasions sheer dishonest propaganda and yet curiously enough they find a lot of credence in quarters which decide the policies of the nation.

The craze for rapid industrialisation with a view to outstrip the industrial might of other countries and the desire, very common amongst bureaucrats and planners, to order the life of the community according to a set pattern are other factors which may drive us headlong towards the highly centralised totalitarian kind of planning suggested by Prof. Mahalanobis and his experts, and in that headlong drive the Prime Minister may not remember too long the noble sentiments expressed by him. The Prime Minister's declarations may give us some hope, but it will be unrealistic to ignore the grave danger represented by the dark activities of communist and near-communist statisticians and econometricians who have an uncanny way of finding easy access to his ear and mind.

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'Literature And Belief'

by Yatim Ghaznavi

THE major problem which faces the creative writer in the twentieth century is the erosion of the imaginative soil. It is this more than anything that has caused the death of the contemporary novel. Joyce and Lawrence not only saw this but in their writings put down a solid road-block in the way of the traditional novelist with a signpost annexed: 'No further advance down this road.'

The erosion has spread more widely than most people are aware. It has been a common charge against the Believer that the area where his supernatural faith can still relevantly operate has shrunk to absurdly insignificant dimensions; the rest of the land has been taken over and exploited by other firms—the natural sciences, psychology, anthropology etc.

Even if the charge is true, it is not only the man of religion who feels—or is told he ought to feel—this shrinkage. It was not wholly in light-hearted mood that a young philosopher remarked recently: "Philosophy was once conceived as the study of Reality, but was displaced by the application of empirical methods in the physical sciences; it was also conceived..... as the *a priori* study of Mind..... or Knowledge, but is being gradually but firmly replaced by the application of empirical methods of psychology, it is now generally conceived as the *a priori* study of language....."

The shrinkage of imaginative terrain is more obvious, however, when we consider the invasions of psychology. Perhaps it is the critics who have suffered most. In the realm of the visual arts, for instance, there has been a tendency to assessment of painting from a pragmatic, social point of view; as merely a form of occupational therapy. Sir Herbert Read is doubtless not to blame if the theme of his *Education Through Art* has led to an over-emphasis upon this aspect. We would not be thought to decry the interesting and sometimes very moving exhibitions of paintings by sub-normal children, epileptics, psychotics etc. Of course art is therapeutic. So is prayer. But a painting looked at or executed *solely* for the sake of coping with a manic depressive mood is not likely to be very good painting; any more than a prayer offered *merely* to escape "spiritual" aridity is likely to effect its end, whatever that may suppose to be. And literary-criticism from a psycho-analytical point of view is even more barren.

When we are given (as we have been from time to time) a detailed and technical examination of the psychology of *Hamlet* (man and play) we may perhaps be getting something useful; we may be getting

professional confirmation for what we know instinctively, all along: that Shakespeare was, among other things, a brilliant 'psychologist.' But if it is thereby suggested that this is to be the touchstone of Shakespeare's genius, then we see that psychology has intruded beyond its own sphere. Indeed, what the psycho-analytical critic usually does not realize is that a play like *Hamlet*, which provides him with such excellent material for his own technique, may often be a worse play the better its psychology is done; precisely because a great drama must be more than an accurate case-history.

One does not need to agree with all the contentions of Professor E. E. Stoll and the other exponent of Shakespearean 'conventions' to maintain this.

THIS erosion of the imaginative soil has its particular consequences for the man of belief. Beyond the 'agony of belief' of Dostoevsky there could only be either the advance on the one hand to aggressive unbelief or militant faith, or on the other hand to eclectic humanism which abandons the belief-unbelief debate as profitless.

Faced with the embarrassing success of therapy, which exorcizes mystery and genius in its triumphal progress, the man of religion, as much as the artist, may understandably feel himself threatened—a caste-away upon a sand dune with water rising.

What I have called the erosion of the imaginative soil has affected the self-consciously Catholic writers like Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh in a further sense: they are incapable of full-blooded doubt. What, in fact, one is most conscious of in them is a deficiency of that creative scepticism which was described by Donne: "Would you know of truth? Doubt, and then you will enquire....."

Fr. Jarrett-Kerr* points out a parallel deficiency in those who have rejected belief. The petulance with which, for instance, Fr. Jarrett-Kerr reminds us, Joyce once dismissed the suggestion that his daughter might return to the faith he had abandoned has left its marks on much of the *Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man* and some of *Ulysses*.

On both sides, the rejectors and the enthusiastic acceptors, one feels that the genuine agony of belief or disbelief has passed them by. As Kafka would have it: "Whoever has faith cannot define it, and whoever has none can only give a definition which lies under the shadow of grace withheld. The man of faith cannot speak and the man of no faith ought not to speak. And in fact the prophets always talk of the levers of faith and never of faith alone....."

Il faut beaucoup d'espace pour que la vie commence . . .

* *Studies in Literature and Belief* by Martin Jarrett-Kerr C R, Rockliff, 1954, pp. 203.

Reviews

Soviet Policy in the Far East

by Max Beloff, Oxford University Press, New York,
Price \$ 4.00.

THE book needs no better introduction than that its author is Max Beloff, an authority on Far Eastern affairs who combines scholarship with readability. Written in a lucid narrative style, it presents an objective account of the development of Soviet policies in East and South East Asia from Yalta to San Francisco. And in the process the book takes the reader through the whole gamut of events in-between. The painstaking documentation adds weight to the narrative.

The author begins by making clear his basic approach to the subject. "Neither in purpose nor in method," he writes in the Introduction, "are Soviet policies anywhere, and least of all in the Far East, identical with those of the Tsarist regime. There have been moments when it has suited the Soviet Government to claim the heritage of the Tsars,.... But the differences are greater than similarities." Then he goes on to provide the clue to the understanding of Soviet policy in the Far East: "The fulcrum of power of Soviet policy in the whole area can only be understood in relation to this often overlooked fact."

Of special significance to the Indian reader is his observation on colonialism which will bear quoting at length. With a sense of frustration bordering on despair, the author comments: "Indeed in resisting the spread of Communism in post-war Asia the Western Powers have been continually handicapped by the widespread belief that they were building up an artificial Communist bogey in order to have an excuse for continuing or reimposing colonial rule. An understanding of the element of "colonialism" inherent in the Soviet system itself and in the relations between the Soviet Union and its satellites is still far from being widely appreciated." Here is something for our foreign policy makers to ponder over.

In the closing chapter of his book, Max Beloff gives his conclusions which are as dispassionate and unbiassed as his presentation of factual detail and as unimpeachable. Who can quarrel with him when he says, for instance, that "the extension of the actual area of Sovietization has resulted, with the partial exception of Manchuria, rather from the weakness of the opposition to it than from positive contributions of strength from the Soviet Union," that "the most novel and disturbing feature of the whole story from the point of view of the non-Communist world was the apparent ability of the Soviet Union to fight its Asiatic struggles almost entirely by proxy," that the Soviet-Chinese unity despite its nuances is not a passing phase and that "those who expected some kind of Chinese Titoism to develop.... overlooked the fact that the Russians had presumably learned from their experience with Yugoslavia!"

Soviet Policy in the Far East is a "must" for students of international affairs, leader-writers and politicians alike. For it is a standard work on the subject that can also be used as a book of reference.

AZIZ MADNI

The Ford Foundation and Foundation Supported Activities in India.

The Ford Foundation, New Delhi, 1955, pp. 106.

AMONG the various foreign aids - technical economic and financial - we have been receiving from abroad since independence, the Ford Foundation has been in the forefront in the high adventure of furthering the welfare of our masses.

At the time the Foundation came to the country in the autumn of 1951, the most crucial problem facing the Government of India was that of hunger, vast areas of the country having been in the grip of drought and resultant famines. Huge imports of urgently needed food were placing an alarming drain upon our foreign exchange resources - resources that were needed with almost equal urgency for the internal economic development which could raise living standards and provide more employment opportunities.

The Foundation therefore rightly felt that any long term planning for India's social, economic and human advancement must start with an intensive effort to improve the condition in India, the Foundation devoted virtually the whole of the grant to support such country-wide programme.

The Foundation, it may be noted, does not operate on any specific yearly budget in India, but gives assistance to varied programmes, carefully selected, as consultations with the Government indicates their need and desirability. One wishes though that instead of operating at 'official' level only, the Foundation would take cognisance of existing private agencies, and render them supplementary assistance in their efforts to expedite the change in the Indian rural scene. It is encouraging to note that the programmes recommended by the Government of India for Foundation assistance are basic to the country's development and these are very likely to be continued after the grants from the Foundation have been expanded.

R.H.

A Handful of Blackberries

By Ignazio Silone, Translated by Darina Silone, Jonathan Cape. 12/6.

"IT has become a party of persecutors" says Rocco, the hero of this book, speaking of the communist party. Having once belonged to the party, believed in it, and worked for it, he cannot help speaking and thinking about it even after he has left. Perhaps that could also be true of Silone himself? Perhaps no one who has once belonged to the Communist Party and then become "disenchanted" with it can remain indifferent to it.

This present novel is set in the Italian countryside,
(Continued on p. 10)

Letters to the Editor

Dr. Kalidās Nag and S. R. Roy's Poems

Dear Sir:

Reviewing Sochi Raut Roy's "The Boatman Boy and Other Poems" in your issue of April, N. E. twits Dr. Kalidas Nag for indulging in "vaporous outpourings" on the quality of Mr. Roy's poetry, and remarks that such comment is critically poor.

Dr. Nag is known in Bengal (and, one hopes, outside) chiefly as an historian and publicist. I believe his greatest contribution to literary work in India and abroad lies in his generous propaganda for little-known, semi-known, and unknown creative writers. He is not, nor, as far as I know, does he pretend to be a literary critic.

I hope you will publish this letter to correct any erroneous impression that might result from a quick reading of N. E.'s remarks, especially since Dr. Nag has personally told me that introducing a new writer was his main aim in writing a foreword to Mr. Roy's poems.

Calcutta 19 April 1955

P. LAL

Democratic Education

Dear Sir:

The main drawback with most of democratic organisations is that while engaged in criticising communist activities they miss the main work of educating the Indian people in the principles of democracy. I am glad that the ICCF is trying its best to protect cultural freedom, but I am afraid that the problem of educating the illiterate Indians in the ideals of democracy, is beyond its scope. I believe that for the healthy growth of democracy the education of illiterate Indians must go hand in hand with the attack on communists.

While communists have crept into many fields of activity through various camouflaged groups and organisations like the India-China Friendship Association, Indo-Soviet Cultural Society and Peace Council, no active step has been taken by democrats for the spread of democratic ideals. While the Indian market is flooded with cheap publications of the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, and others, no step has yet been taken by democrats to popularise speeches and views of great democrats like Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and others.

All this boils down to the fact that the average Indian must be made democracy-conscious as against allowing him to be made China-conscious, Russia-conscious or communist-conscious. For this, we will have to muster our strength, and place before the Indian people the results of the tremendous

progress democratic nations have made with a democratic set up. The average Indian must be taught the importance of keeping his country's democratic set up intact and, if possible, to improve on it. He must be made conscious that he belongs to the world's largest democratic nation and hence has the great responsibility of keeping intact the democratic institutions.

Hence, I suggest an organisation called 'The Friends of Democratic Nations' be formed and through that we may, with the help of various friendly organisations in India and abroad, make available to the people all such material as would guide them in building up India as a great democratic country.

Should this organisation expand and become an international one, it would also provide an effective medium for propagating abroad the progress India has made in various fields. Hence this would be an effective medium of exchanging views and know-how, in a peoples' level.

I am glad that our friends have come fresh from Rangoon fired with an enthusiasm for expanding and multiplying their activities in India. In fact, as stated by a spokesman of the Congress for Cultural Freedom they would endeavour to evolve and popularise a truly democratic ideology far superior to the ideology of communism. An organisation like the one I suggest may be of great use in that connection.

Bombay 8th April 1955.

L. R. RADHAKRISHNAN

A HANDFUL OF BLACKBERRIES—(Cont'd from p. 9)

among the peasants and the villages. The story itself is loosely woven but it gives, one feels, an excellent description of the country and its people, and the relations of the people with the local communist group.

Rocco is a young engineer who has been an ardent party worker. His influence brings into the party the girl he is in love with, a young Jewish refugee called Stella. Later, when he realizes that his beloved party is now become a "party of persecutors" he decides to break away from it. Stella, however, stays on, she is "questioned" by the party bosses about Rocco's activities and ideas. The way in which her replies are twisted to make them an indictment of Rocco are truly horrifying. She nearly loses her reason and her life with the shock. However, she is saved by a priest, a school friend of Rocco's, and lives to rejoin Rocco and share his persecution by the party.

No book written by Ignazio Silone could fail to be impressive. The English translation sometimes reads a little staccato, and of course the novel form has been used as a means to convey his ideas. But his ideas are so well worth conveying that the vehicle becomes of secondary importance. No matter which vehicle he had chosen, Silone could have been sure of an audience of devoted listeners.

LAEQ FUTEHALLY

Justice U Chan Htoon In Bombay

JUSTICE U CHAN HTOON, Judge of the Supreme Court of Burma and one of the leaders of the Buddhist World, paid on the invitation of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom a four-day visit to Bombay. He was on his way back from Ceylon where he was invited to attend the annual exposition of the Holy Tooth of Buddha.

During his stay which lasted from 31st March to 4th April, Justice U Chan Htoon addressed a meeting of the members of the ICCF, a meeting of Buddhist workers and scholars and paid a visit to the Elephanta caves and Buddhist temples. He also spoke at a reception held in his honour by Mr. Prabhakar Padhye, Asian Representative of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

In his talks the Judge generally dwelt on the revival of Buddhism in Burma, Thailand and Ceylon and its role in fighting the threat of communism and the materialistic selfish tendencies born of the war. For instance, he stated, in Burma in 1949, it was a fashion to call oneself a communist; but now even communists tried to deny that they were communists. This miraculous change he attributed to the revival of Buddhism. He stated with a certain amount of pride that the Union Government of Burma united by an Act of Parliament the existing Buddhist bodies and created the Buddha Sasana Council of which he was the Hon. General Secretary. He described how the atmosphere in Thailand and Ceylon which was once one of supreme indifference towards the great ancient religion was now throbbing with animated interest in the tenets and festivals of Buddhism, and he described how enthusiastic preparations were going on in both the countries for the celebration of the 2,500th birthday of Lord Buddha.

Addressing the Buddhist scholars in the office of the Indian Committee, Justice U Chan Htoon pointed out how the message of Buddhism transcends the plane on which some of the current criticisms against Buddha and Buddhism were, which criticisms, he was careful to point out, ought to be considered by authoritative Buddhist scholars. Expounding the contemporary relevance of the doctrine he pointed out that Buddhism teaches that both too much of misery and too much of material opulence were bad.

Speaking at the reception which was attended by members of the consular corps, principals of local colleges, a Judge of the High Court, a Presidency Magistrate, leading lawyers, some corporators and a number of friends of the movement for Cultural Freedom, Justice U Chan Htoon, who was the Chairman of the Host Committee of the Conference on Cultural Freedom in Asia recently held in Rangoon, described the effects of the Conference on the intelligentsia of Burma. He said: "When the Conference met in Rangoon there was a certain amount of confusion and a certain amount of befogging because of

the visits of the Chinese Prime Minister to Burma and of the Burmese Prime Minister to China and the mutual glorification associated with the visits, and also because of the visit of the Chinese cultural delegation—some of the intellectuals had started thinking that they were not only neutral in foreign policy but also neutral about communism. The Conference brought home to them that State neutrality was different from individual neutralism. The Conference was successful in making it clear to the people that while State neutrality may be necessary, individuals should have no inhibition in choosing good from evil. The Conference made it clear that individuals must not and cannot suspend judgement on vital issues confronting them. The Conference, he said, had also done tremendous service to the people of Burma in that it laid down certain principles which were bound to save them from the great danger of complacency and mental "ostrichism" which were just creeping in before the Conference met in Rangoon.

Justice U Chan Htoon was accompanied on his visit by his wife and daughter.

C. C. F. NEWS

The Italian Association for Cultural Freedom convened its annual membership meeting on March 27, at the offices of the Secretariat of the Association in Rome.

In addition to administrative reports, members of the Association listened to a report by Marco Pannella on "The Role of Student Organizations," and a joint report on "Cultural Problems in Southern Italy" by Francesco Campagna and Beniamino Finocchiaro.

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An exhibition comprising works by 44 young painters from Belgium, England, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Switzerland and the United States is being sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom as part of its programme of activities for 1955. The young painters whose works will be shown represent recent and significant artistic trends. The 168 works selected will be exhibited successively in Rome, Brussels and Paris.

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The Committee for Cultural Freedom which was established in Hamburg after the Conference on "Science and Freedom" in July 1953, has since been carrying on a programme of lectures and discussions concerned with the most significant problems of today. The latest in the series of lectures by leading personalities in the realms of literature, science and politics was given in February by Professor Siegfried Landshut on the subject of "Karl Marx in our Time."

With Many Voices

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

—Tennyson.

Indonesia today is in the position of Czechoslovakia six months before Jan Masaryk's suicide.

—Sal Tas in the *New Leader*, March 28, 1955.

Passenger fares in the Soviet Union for providing sitting accommodation as in third class trains in India were ten times that in India.

—Mr. Lal Bahadur Sastri, in Parliament, March 2, 1955.

The similarity between the Peace Council and the Government of India was like that between lime and butter.

—Mr. C. Subramaniam, Madras Finance Minister quoted in the *Pioneer*, March 15, 1955.

The bus which the West is now accused of having missed during Mr. Malenkov's reign had no driver.

—*The Economist* (London), March 19, 1955.

The Congress by hastily digging a grave for capitalism is unconsciously presiding at its own obsequies. Its present tactics are designed, albeit unwittingly, to bring to power the very people, the communists, whom it now strives to keep out. In politics, as in most things, haste makes waste.

—Onlooker in the *Times of India* March 31, 1955.

The political and administrative pattern of Viet Minh is more or less a carbon copy of the Chinese communist set-up.

—Mr. G. K. Reddy in the *Times of India*, March 30, 1955.

High-level legs under high-level tables may still lead to very low-level results.

—Jan Sevak in the *Current*, March 30, 1955.

My chief enemy is communism, but the Punjab Congress is my immediate enemy.

—Master Tara Singh, the *Current*, March 30, 1955.

INDIAN COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM

148, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
BOMBAY 1.

Please enrol me as a member of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom. I remit the annual membership fee of Rs. 3/- by.....

Name :

Address :

Date : Signature

The recent transfer by India to China of the postal, telegraphs, and public telephone services and rest houses as well as their equipment which India operated in the Tibet Region of China has provided eloquent proof of the validity of the five principles of peaceful co-existence.

—Editorial from *People's Daily*, Peking, April 4, 1955.

No one in India has Rs. 64 dinners, so there is no point in fiddling with the tax system in the hope of stopping them. They do however have Rs. 64 dinners in Moscow and Belgrade, and if anyone in those places presumes to object, he eats no more dinners of any sort.

—*Ditcher's Diary* in Capital, April 7, 1955.

The "new look" (in Moscow) is now the look that failed.

—Eugene Lyons in the *New Leader*, April 11, 1955.

Yalta has shown that the 'big' men of the 'big' nations make 'big' mistakes.

—Mr. Salvador de Madariaga in *Thought* April 9, 1955.

Let us not leave compensation to the vagaries of crackpot politicians and mountebanks.

—Mr. Frank Anthony, the *Times of India*, April 12, 1955.

Sir, I am appealing to the Prime Minister: 'Don't play into the hands of the Communists.'

—Mr. N. C. Chatterjee, the *Times of India*, April 12, 1955.

The Prime Minister said that nobody in his senses would expropriate the poor. My difficulty is that there are too many people without proper senses who are in power.

—Mr. Jaipal Singh, M.P., in the *Times of India* April 12, 1955.

Prof. Mahalanobis embodies in his person the mixed economy. He belongs both to the public and to the private sectors.

—the *Eastern Economist* April 22, 1955.

Mr. Nehru rejected the Ceylonese Premier's assertion that the Eastern European Governments were satellites of the Soviet Union. He said: "These are sovereign nations in the United Nations. How can we consider them colonial territories? We have diplomatic relations with them."

—A report in the *Times of India*, April 23, 1955.