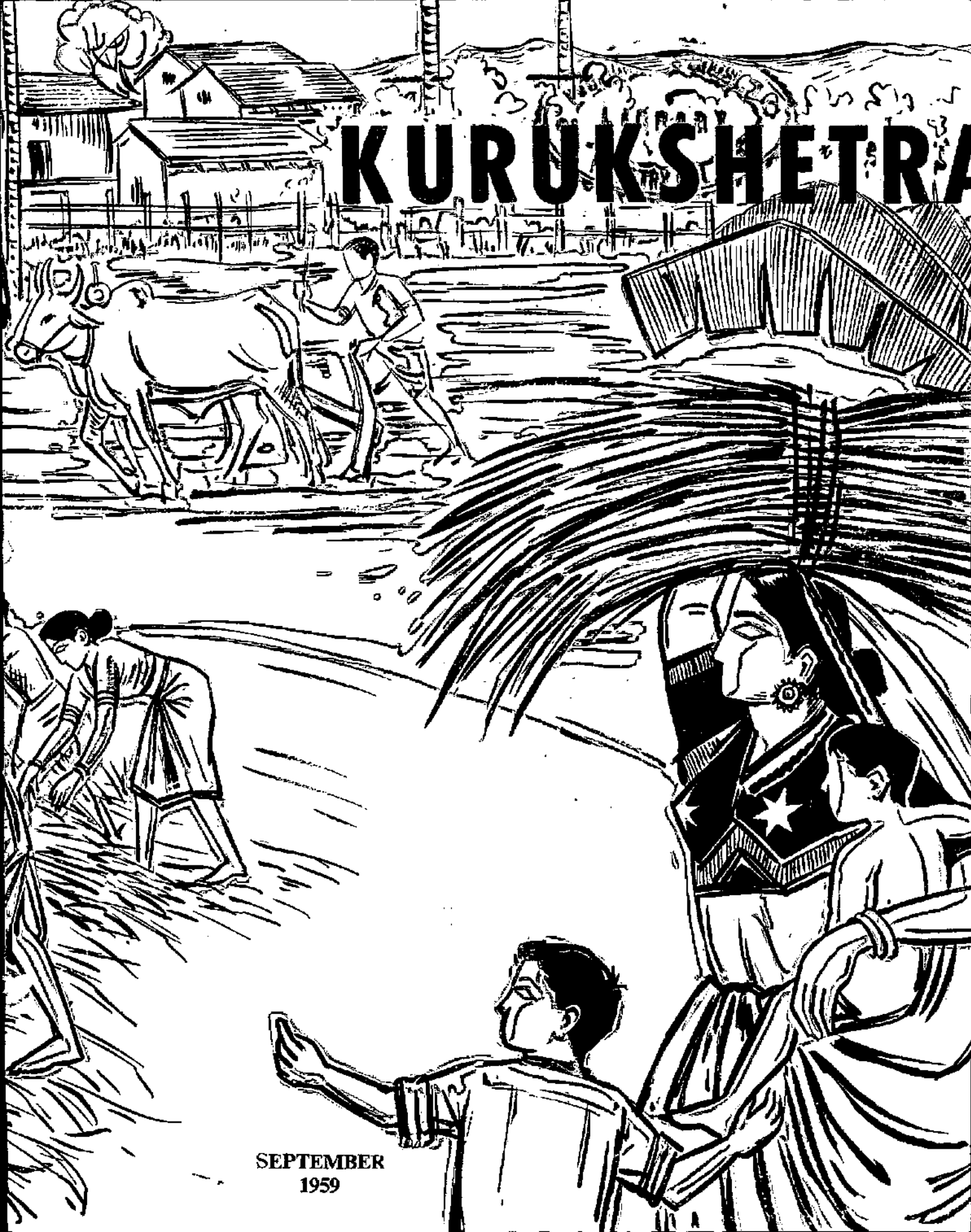


KURUKSHETRA



SEPTEMBER
1959

VALUABLE ADDITIONS TO YOUR LIBRARY

Moderately Priced & Attractively Produced

	Price Rs. nP.	Postage Rs. nP.
MAHATMA GANDHI—An Album with over 500 photographs	35·00	—
RUSSIAN-HINDI DICTIONARY — Equivalents of 40,000 Russian words in Hindi by W.R. Rishi	35·00	—
THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA—An Album with over 400 photographs	30·00	—
INDIA—A Souvenir Volume with 62 photographs, many in colour	25·00	—
KANGRA VALLEY PAINTING with over 40 colour plates	18·00	1·18
POWER ATLAS OF INDIA	15·00	1·60
KASHMIR—An Album with over 100 photographs	10·00	0·90
THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI—Vol. I & II		
De-luxe edition	8·50 each	0·95 each
Standard edition	5·50 each	0·95 each
Popular edition	3·00 each	0·50 each
SPEECHES OF PRESIDENT RAJENDRA PRASAD		
1st series (1950—52)	4·50	0·85
2nd series (1952—56)	4·50	0·85
OCCASIONAL SPEECHES & WRITINGS— by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan		
1st series		
De-luxe edition	6·00	1·00
Popular edition	3·75	0·75
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECHES		
Volume I (1946—49) Popular edition	6·50	1·20
Volume II (1949—53) Popular edition	5·50	1·20
Volume III (1953—57) Popular edition	6·50	1·20
De-luxe edition	9·50	1·95
NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS AND THEIR EFFECTS	7·50	0·85
2500 YEARS OF BUDDHISM	6·00	0·80
MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES—A Survey of over 80 museums in India	5·00	0·95
FACTS ABOUT INDIA	2·00	0·55
EIGHTEEN FIFTY-SEVEN by Dr. S. N. Sen	5·50	1·00
GANDHI IN CHAMPARAN by D. G. Tendulkar	1·50	0·20
1857—A PICTORIAL PRESENTATION	4·00	0·50
INDIA'S CONSTITUTION (Summary)	1·00	0·25
INDIAN DANCE	1·00	0·20

(Registration Charges extra)

Books worth Rs. 25·00 or above are sent post free

Available from leading booksellers or direct from :

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

POST BOX No. 2011, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8

1, Garstin Place, Calcutta-1

3, Prospect Chambers, 1st floor, Dadabhai Naoroji Road, Bombay-1

मजदूर



मजिल

KURUKSHETRA

AN OPEN FORUM ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bhadra-Asvina 1881

Vol. 7 September 1959 No. 12

CONTENTS

LETTERS	1
THERE IS NO SHORT CUT —Yudhishtar	5
EDITOR'S POST BOX	7
THE STORY OF TALLARI ASIGA —B. P. R. Vithal	9
A SUMMARY—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MYSORE CONFERENCE	13
SALPEWADI—THE PATH-BREAKER —J. S. Apte	19
WHO IS THE KEY FUNCTIONARY ? —Ghulam Hussain	22
RURAL INSURANCE IN RAJASTHAN —K. L. Baraya	24
BOOK REVIEW	25
POINTS-OF VIEW	27
THE PRESS ROUND-UP	29
CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN INDIA —Ashoka Mehta	32
NEED FOR REVIEW	33
COMMUNITY FORESTS —J. N. Sinha	34
PROGRAMME NOTES	36
THE LAST PAGE	37

Editor : D. RAGHAVAN

Asstt. Editor : M. K. RAO

Cover Design : ROMESH CHANDRA

Single copy : Rs. 0.35 ; 10 cent or 8 pence.

Annual Subscription : Rs. 4 ; 1 dollar or 7 shillings.

LETTERS

Promotion Vs Service

Sir,

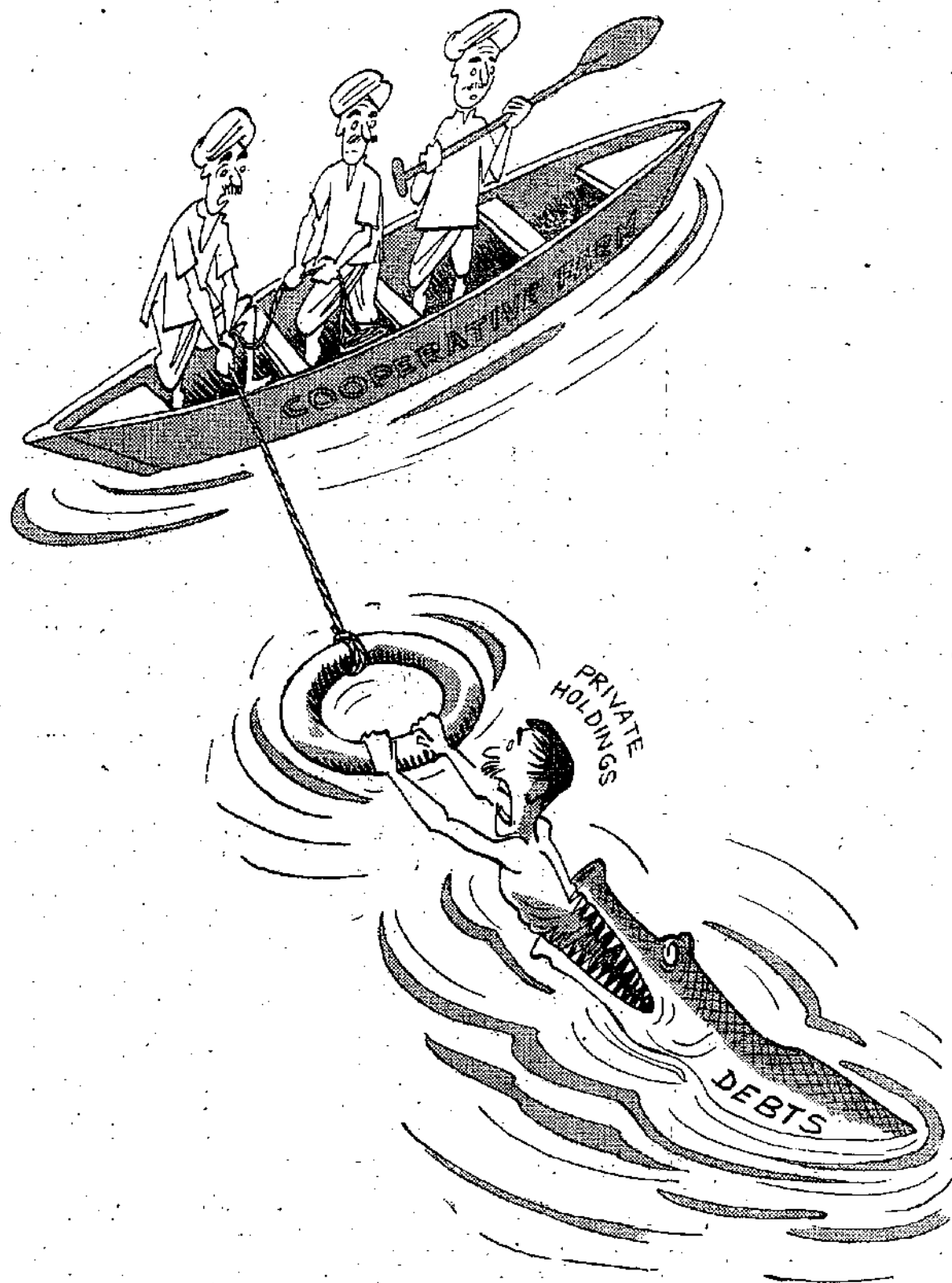
ON SHRI MALKANI'S article regarding future of the B.D.Os, I am afraid, Dr. Howard W. Beers has reacted to the other extreme. While Shri Malkani's proposal was to give the B.D.Os better prospect in service as a sort of incentive, Dr. Beers has gone just on the opposite direction and to an idealistic extreme. He has said "Why must the B.D.O. seek promotion? If he is useful where he is, he will be more useful there later. That is why let him remain there for all his full career, if appropriate, enjoying the satisfaction of accumulative success..." I can quite appreciate the idealism which Dr. Beers expects from the B.D.Os. Had it been possible to have a batch of 5,000 young men to be in charge of 5,000 blocks with the idealism of service, service to the down-trodden and the exploited, surely that would have been the best arrangement! But it is well nigh impossible to find such a batch of dedicated and devoted workers. Supposing we can find such a batch, even then the B.D.Os would have to be assured of a decent living for themselves as also for their families.

B.D.Os are expected to work in the rural areas where per capita annual income is only about Rs 150. If he lives in a style which is very far above the prevailing conditions of the rural people, he creates a wall between himself and the village people. Even the official uniform of the B.D.O.—which is pant, coat, hat and often necktie also—creates a barrier between him and the rural people. They consider him to be Hakim (official) and naturally they stand aloof from him except as supplicants for loans, reliefs etc. I can only wish if his uniform were suitably adapted to rural conditions, to bring him nearer to the rural people!

The C.D. and N.E.S. scheme is intended to put into practice Gandhiji's teachings for the resuscitation of the rural areas. He used to say that "real India lives in seven lakh villages and not in towns and cities." It will not be wrong to say that this idea of Community Development was taken up in pursuance of the teachings of Gandhiji. The idea of Community Development has dual purposes,—namely to make material improvements in the conditions of the rural people and to make spiritual and moral changes in their mind and outlook. To put up some social amenities e.g. roads, tube-wells, schools etc. is rather a secondary role. Primary importance may be given to the spiritual and moral regeneration of the rural people. So those, who will go to work in the rural areas, should have the idealism of serving them and not of working there as government officials, to be their masters and arbitrators of their destinies. To get their remuneration out of the achievements of B.D.Os' work and not so much in terms of money would have been the ideal thing for a community block administration. Dr. Beers suggested that instead of 'formal enhancement through administrative revision' the B.D.Os should be content with 'self-enhancement' through "more understanding of their job, more knowledge, more skill and better attitudes." He wants that instead of being power-conscious the B.D.O should be service-conscious and should mould his behaviour accordingly.

Under the present set-up it is not possible to get the requisite number of men to run 5,000 block administration as B.D.Os and VLWs, who will be inspired by service motive alone and would not hanker after further promotion and increment in salary. Dr. Beers has himself admitted—"the present system keeps every officer looking askance at other spots, 'bucking' for promotion, instead of keeping his full gaze at the job at hand". This

LIFE SAVERS



is true not only of the B.D.Os—but generally of all classes of people.

Now we have to accept that careerism is the normal feature and not the spirit of service. We may regret it; but it is the reality. Those who run some non-official social service institutions, know it to their cost. A young man is trained to do some work in a social service centre; within six months or one year he gets a job in some government office or in some private firm at a very much higher salary which the non-official organization cannot afford to pay. In this regard perhaps the international bodies are major offenders. They offer remunerations and emoluments at a scale much above the prevailing rate of the country. If that is the trend, it is no use being too idealistic. In my humble way I am connected with some non-official social service institutions. I know how difficult it is for us to get workers of requisite quality at the remunerations which a social service organization can afford to pay.

The B.D.O. should surely be enthused with the idea of service. But at the same time he should not be faced with a bleak prospect for himself and his family. He should know that in comparison with others equal with him in academic and intellectual equipment, he has not a worse prospect in life. Even with that assurance, if the B.D.O. and the VLW would really take to their jobs in a spirit of service, then the Block would present a much brighter face than they do now. They should not take their duty and work just as a matter of routine—somehow to earn their day's salary. The B.D.O. is the King-pin—not only of the Block—but of the entire nation-building schemes of work. At least he should be conscious of that and conscientiously discharge his duties.

14-7-59

New Delhi.

Yours etc.,

A. C. Guha, M.P.

Works Programme with a Difference

Sir,

THERE ARE certain items of earth work in the sector of Agriculture, Irrigation etc. which can be implemented largely by manual labour and require little capital investment. The

large unemployed labour force available in the countryside could effectively execute such works. But the application of available manpower to these items will depend mostly on the effectiveness of a village organisation to mobilise labour power. With the building up of village panchayats and cooperatives on sound administrative and financial principles, this organisational task has become relatively easy.

In the past, efforts were made to organise labour on a voluntary basis to execute works of public benefit like contour bunding etc. But since labour employed on such works did not derive any direct benefit from them, either monetary or otherwise; it remained indifferent to the job. Further, such works accounted for a certain exploitation of the unemployed for the benefit of the landed interest. As a consequence, many of the schemes tried on this basis did not succeed.

A way-out of this situation would, therefore, be to enable panchayats etc. to provide a positive inducement to labour for doing these works. This new approach will provide for payment of wages to the labour for doing land improvement works which, when executed, will ensure improvement in the land assets of the cultivators. The obvious advantage of this approach would be—(i) to increase the productivity of land owned by individual farmers; (ii) to provide employment to the landless unemployed.

The works programme of this nature should be linked with credit, the Government and the apex bank advancing a loan to the panchayat or the cooperative for the execution of the project. The loan received by the panchayat or the cooperative will serve as the pool out of which wages to the labour will be paid. This loan, being an advance towards the execution of a specific land improvement work, will be recovered from its beneficiaries. Since most of these projects will be productive schemes, any expenditure on them in the shape of loan will not very much add to the inflationary pressure either.

As a first step, the State Department and the Community Development Agency should draft an outline of a

few labour intensive projects which the village panchayats could undertake on the basis of loan advanced to them. The Technical Department should also estimate the costs and returns of these projects to establish that an investment in this regard would increase the aggregate output in terms of production. Unless the expenditure assumed by the prospective beneficiaries proves financially remunerative, they will not accept the project, for the profitability of such an outlay will be an index of the degree to which such plans will be acceptable and worth undertaking.

10-7-59

New Delhi.

Yours etc.,

H. U. Sain

“Mamool”

Sir,

AFTER GOING through your journal for the last 3/4 years one would notice the conspicuous absence of any reference to a subject of public importance which is given the maximum publicity in the daily press. I refer to the existence of corruption and the general prevalence of bribery in different sectors of administration. As Rajaji puts it significantly, “Democracy is running without riots and disturbances, and no one talks about the bribery that is almost openly indulged in”. In proof of this I have only to quote the following from *The Hindustan Times* (Delhi). “Councillors’ sustained attacks on the prevalence of corruption in a large scale in Delhi Corporation had some effect. . . . If anything, the size of bribes demanded had gone up after the Corporation came into existence”.

This age-old practice has in many cases earned the sanctity of tradition and is known by the word *mamool*. There is a danger that with the devolution of power to local self-governing bodies this practice will find maximum scope for activity. Our only hope is in the development of vigorous public opinion and closer scrutiny of official activity at the ground level. For let us not forget that the Panchayat will be more a bureaucratic body than a self-governing institution when it has to levy and collect taxes. If bureaucratisation is an inevitable evil, let us work for a higher standard of morals. For

to quote Rajaji again, "All plans can succeed if men are generally good and no plan can succeed if men are generally dishonest".

12-6-59

Juṇagadh.

Yours etc.,

Shivlal Kapadia.

Means and Ends

Sir,

DURING ONE of the tours of the block villages recently, I came across a Gram Sevak engaged in selling Ganja in a liquorshop. I found some of the villagers quite critical of the action of the Gram Sevak. On enquiry I learnt that the shopowner had to go out of the village on an urgent piece of personal work. He had requested the Gram Sevak to look after the shop and manage the sale during his absence, which the Gram Sevak in the true spirit of a "Sevak" had agreed to. Other villagers in the shop said tauntingly: "Sir, it matters very little, after all your Gram Sevak is a multi-purpose worker". When his conduct was questioned the Gram Sevak in defence said that the shopowner happened to be quite influential amongst the poorer sections of the villagers. By agreeing to the shopkeeper's request he had been able to keep him in good humour, and can utilize him in obtaining the cooperation of these poorer sections who are not at all enthusiastic about the Programme. Was the Gram Sevak right? Can an evil be used as a handle for a good cause? I am still undecided.

20-7-59

Yours etc.,

N. G. Gupta,
S.E.O.

Mahendragarh Block,
Distt. Surguja (M.P.).

(Our comment: Means are as important as ends.—Ed.)

As good as "Ambar"

Sir,

IT WOULD appear that at long last the Community Development Ministry has recognized the importance of popularizing the Cow-dung gas plants in our villages. I would say this is more urgent than the need for popularizing compost pits. Just as we encourage "Demonstration plots", we should instal at least one

gas plant in every block headquarter as a demonstration plant to start with.

It is necessary to standardise the equipment and make the process simpler. The Block Office should be able to get the simple machinery manufactured locally. The Panchayats can work up the large size gas plants, but it is equally necessary to develop the individual gas plants which can be managed by single households. The Cow-dung gas plant is the only answer to the problem of conserving the precious manure contained in the Cow-dung; for after giving the gas the dung can be used as a rich manure. We should give it as much importance as we do to the Ambar Charka.

22-6-59.

Pattancheru.

Yours etc.,

T. Narayanan.

Our Libraries

Sir,

THE ADVISORY Committee for Libraries, in its report recently submitted to the Government of India, have recommended far-reaching changes in the existing pattern of library service. It has suggested that the pattern should consist of a national library, State Central libraries, district libraries with children's wing attached to them, block libraries and panchayat libraries. Since the inception of the Community Development Programme, libraries as a part of the Social Education Programme, have made their appearance in the countryside. In some of the blocks, mobile libraries are being experimented. But despite all these efforts libraries in the countryside have not struck root even amongst those who can read and write. The cause is not difficult to find. These rural libraries are mostly stocked with government publications which are either too technical or propagandistic, with a sprinkling of mythologies, novels and biographies etc. No effort has been made to assess the requirements of villages.

I suggest we do something to encourage production of good literature before we expand the network of libraries.

13-7-59

Barielly.

Yours etc.,

T. S. Shukla.

Too Many Cooks

Sir,

PANCHAYATS, Co-operation and the Community Development programme have now been integrated into one whole. As a result at the Centre we have now the Ministry of Community Development & Co-operation, which looks to the Community Development programme, creation and functioning of such village institutions like Panchayats and the Co-operative Societies. But in the States they are all scattered. While Community Development is the charge of one Minister, that of the Panchayats is of another, and a third one looks after Co-operation.

You can well imagine the fate of the programme at the State level when so many heads are to be consulted and their concurrence obtained before the work could proceed. Why can't the States follow the pattern adopted at the Centre and have only one integrated Department charged with all these jobs? Or is it a case of "two heads are better than one"? In a few States, integration has taken place—on paper!

20-6-59

Jullundur

Yours etc.,

Roshan Lal

New Cadre

Sir,

THE RAJASTHAN Government, we learn is thinking of appointing persons of Rajasthan Administrative Service as B.D.Os. The reason, we are told, is to give an extension bias to our administrators. But the principle of rural extension hardly goes hand in hand with that of Administration. Besides what is the big idea of giving an extension bias to those who know pretty well that their ultimate sphere of activity is other than extension? Will it not be a costly experiment? For an uninterrupted and efficient extension service, I would suggest the creation of a separate cadre known as "Rajasthan Extension Cadre" and the B.D.Os be permanently drawn from it.

10-6-59

Gram Sevak Training Centre, Kotah (Rajasthan).

Your etc.,

K. M. Srivastava

Lecturer in Social Education & Extension.



THERE IS NO SHORT CUT

By YUDHISHTAR

This is the first of a series of articles Yudhishtar has agreed to contribute. An attempt will be made here to give a panoramic view of the programme as it is developing in the field—its hopes and its frustrations, its ideals and its actual output.—Editor.

THERE IS A Tamil Proverb that a tree laden with ripe fruit is often pelted with stones. I am afraid, the Community Development programme today is finding itself in a similar predicament. Way-farers are many. The orchard is open. And the fruits are tempting. Among the way-farers there are some who are authorised to do this random sampling but there are a few poachers among them. There is, therefore, nothing surprising that the programme of Community Development should have been attacked from many fronts. Perhaps in no other field of State activity has there been such persistent and close scrutiny of the day-to-day developments. Year after year the Programme Evaluation Organisation highlights its defects and shortcomings. The Parliament and the State Legislatures hold special debates. Newspaper editorials have never slackened their interest in discussing its techni-

ques and objectives, its performances and its frustrations. VIPs from all parts of the world have poured out their own suggestions. Starting essentially as an educational programme, where criticism is always welcomed, self-criticism is considered no less important in steering the programme clear of complacency. Some of the programme's persistent critics are to be found among the field workers themselves. This is, in my opinion, India's greatest contribution in the domain of a Government-sponsored programme of Community Development.

But to call this an *official* programme would amount to calling Calcutta "Government City" because it is the seat of the State Headquarters. It is true that Community Development, specially in rural areas, was recognised as an official responsibility with the inauguration of the programme on October 2, 1952. But it has been clear from the very beginning that the official machinery would only act as a catalytic agent, leaving the manage-

ment of community life to the non-official agencies concerned.

The programme started in 1952 with the B.D.O. as the pivot of Block activity. Soon he was assisted by a Block *Advisory* Committee. Then came the Block *Development* Committee whose decisions were no longer advisory. The Block Panchayat Samiti is now to be the hub of all activity, with the B.D.O. as the Chief Executive Officer. In a matter of seven years there comes the transfer of power from an officer appointed by the State Government to an elected body of the Panchayats. True, our Panchayats are not models of democratic functioning but with all their faults they have already begun taking over the programme. The logic of events is fast converting a Government-sponsored programme into a people's movement. A novel conduit pipe is being forged through which power can be devolved from the Secretariat desks at the State Headquarters to the Panchayat functionary in the village. On this count alone the programme could justify its existence.

PERSPECTIVE VIEW

Let us now take a perspective view of the programme—how it started, what it stood for and the nature of its working. It started as a corollary to our political freedom. It stood for economic and social justice to the 82 per cent of our people. It leaned heavily on the Constructive Programme of Gandhiji and sought to convert it into a State programme for the people. It had an ambitious ideal—to help in the change-over from a Police State to a Welfare State. It demanded of the officials a new purposive role in their functioning. It demanded of the people a new sense of community life. Its equipment was slender and its experience was negligible. It had to fall back on an ancient tradition of paternalism and had at the same time to forge new instruments of decentralised power.

It is true the programme had to contend with heavy weather since its inception. Its first two years were consumed in building up a huge scaffolding—training of staff, village surveys, huge paper work and

unspent monies. And yet when the Development Commissioners met in May, 1954 they decided to cover the whole country by the end of the second Five Year Plan. The Prime Minister called this "a very brave decision" and took it "that the men who came to this decision did so realistically and knowing fully the nature of the task".

SENSE OF ARRIVAL

There was a wave of optimism in the third year of the programme and the "sense of arrival" was very marked when Development workers met again next year in May, 1955. A lakh of villages had been covered and they felt that they had won the first round. But there were obvious gaps in the programme—in the field of cottage industries, local institutions, women's welfare and social relationships. Nor were the non-official agencies brought into the picture. Co-ordination between the official and the non-official agencies was yet to be worked out.

As the programme coverage increased, the inevitable system of checks and counter-checks and sanctions from above choked its arteries. Co-ordination became impossible in the absence of team-work. The hierarchy became unmanageable. This could only be checked by training the staff in a new methodology and orienting them with the team-work spirit. The workers at various levels were put through specially devised training schemes. The training programme for the Project workers became a major function of the planners. Coordinated work among thousands of workers spread all over the country created problems of a new magnitude.

TRAINING IN SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Indeed, instead of developing the community directly, the planners at first found themselves raising a vast army of paid workers. In 1952 the country did not have a band of trained workers; today we have. A large number of Training Centres for Gram Sevaks and other Extension officers had to be planned all over the country. Even the Instructors had to be found and trained. Proper curricula had to be worked

out. This was a role which only a revolutionary, political body would have dared to undertake. And it fell to the lot of the Ministry of Community Development to train these men and women of varying capacities and background in the new science of social engineering.

The status-consciousness among our Government servants—at least in the Community Development Blocks is a thing of past history. The white-collar labour still commands some respect in our countryside. But the Development staff has initiated a new tradition which has worried the local power-conscious politician. The Project worker who was out to involve the people has now involved himself. This may be cited as a major contribution which the programme has made to the body politic.

Why should uncovered villages be anxious to come under the programme? Why should members of the State Legislatures recommend blocks in their own constituency? Why should traditional village leaders fight shy of the programme at one stage and why are they now anxious to capture the seats of power in the Panchayat Samitis? Is all this a mere playing at politics? Is it only to get a little more money under the loans, a few more wells, schools or Community Centres? He would be a bold man who could say that our villagers are chasing a phantom. They are under no illusions as to what they want, and in a significant sense the programme has helped in making them aware of their newly gained political power.

FUNDAMENTAL AND ARMCHAIR

The charges against the working of the programme cover a wide field. Some of these are well-founded and relate to fundamentals; others relate to methodological and human imperfections and may be equally well-founded, though not fundamental. Still others are based on ignorance, pure and simple—from arm-chair critics who have never spent a single night in a village and whose knowledge is based on hearsay. Charges relating to fundamentals are: The programme has not developed the spirit of self-reliance among villagers.

It has not aroused mass enthusiasm. Its economic impact is negligible. Its social education programme is weak.

It has done little for cottage industries. It is temperamentally unsuited to function as a social organisation. These are listed only as samples. There may be many more. Let me analyse them to find out the truth.

It is true villagers have not developed a sudden tendency to become self-reliant as a result of the programme. The deep dent caused by centuries of neglect and apathy has to be filled in. In the first seven years of a programme like this, one cannot expect to change the entire national outlook. It is a safe bet that our villagers will continue to depend on Government help and assistance for a long time to come. This should not mean absence of self-reliance on the part of those who have successfully carried on without outside help for centuries against incessant foreign invasions and irresponsible foreign rule. One should not forget that the villagers have always been ready to do their part and it is not often that the Government had lagged behind in doing theirs. The road is a very long one. There is no short cut.

OTHER SIDE OF THE MEDAL

Mass enthusiasm has not been much in evidence. Shramdan is not too popular. But the villagers feel very disturbed that there should be a double standard—one for the towns and another for the countryside. Why should they get sentimental over a programme based on "matching grants" while the Government gives preferential treatment to the urban areas? Often villagers are saddened over the thought that electricity for production use is denied to them while it is easily available for every purpose in urban areas. Villagers may not be literate but they have a keen sense of social justice.

It is true that the economic impact of the programme has been negligible. But if one looks at the proportion of its budget to the total national budget, a little more charity in this assessment would be forthcoming. It will also be unfair to invest a programme of this nature with economic objectives. The agricultural bias of the programme has certainly led

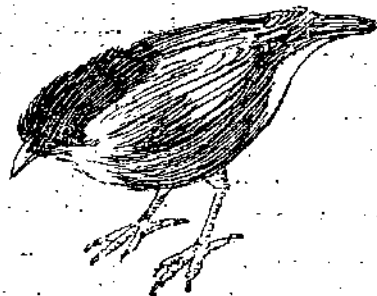
to improved farming practices as much in Block areas, as outside them. The programme has an essentially educational role to play. But in the field of social education it has not been able to do much. Many explanations are offered as to why this has been its weakest link: lack of trained men, magnitude of the population involved, confusion at the top and apathy on the ground. Whatever be the reasons, it is unfortunate that the educational role of the programme has been largely missed. The villagers need education—specially for their children and are prepared to pay for it. But the programme has done little to channelise the popular enthusiasm, except on the occasion of the Prime Minister's birthday. And incidentally education is not the sole responsibility of this programme alone. In the field of cottage industries, there has been too many Commissions, Committees, and Study Teams. Techniques developed in the laboratories have not been passed on to the ground. Planning at the national level has remained academic and problems of co-ordination and marketing have not been seriously tackled. But has the programme developed its own techniques of solving these problems? How much can it do when the subject is under the charge of another administrative Ministry?

One often forgets that a nation-wide programme of this nature calls for fully trained personnel at all levels. And it takes more time and energy to make the initial start in a country where most of the welfare work was left to individual charity and initiative. The idea of a Welfare State would make heavy demands on personnel and unless a large number of non-official bodies are ultimately prepared to take over the welfare aspect of the programme, the programme will have no future.

ORGANISATIONAL & HUMAN FACTORS

The methodological and human imperfections found in the programme have often been sought to be corrected by a well-planned system of Seminars and Study camps. Evaluation Studies have been instituted at all levels. Training Camps and

(Continued on page 8)



EDITOR'S POST BOX

Narayan Rao, Guntur (Andhra Pradesh): There are far too many Study Camps and Study Teams. Do we have to study so much at a time when urgent action is called for?

Answer: This grievance sounds quite reasonable. But are we working under actual war conditions when action is not necessarily preceded by detailed study? New policies of a fundamental nature cannot be put through without a proper understanding of the conditions in the field. So it is only natural that every action that we contemplate in the field of Community Development is preceded by detailed study; in many cases even when action is being taken, Study Teams and Seminars actively help in the process of action. Our programme is based on a vast interplay of human relationship and action is necessarily preceded and followed by Study Camps and Study Teams. Every step has to be checked and rechecked before the next step is taken. The techniques of Community Development programme have necessarily to be different from the processes of legal action or enforcement of customs regulations. The Camps and the Teams are the true laboratories in which new ideas are tested, to the extent possible. This does not mean that all Study Camps and Study Teams held under the programme are worthwhile or are properly planned and executed. There have been cases of duplication, unnecessary experiment and unimaginative planning. These are things which the Project workers have to guard against. A Study Camp should not be allowed to degenerate into a

tamasha. A Study Team should not be an excuse for administrative delay and inaction or for a *Bharat Darshan* tour.

Lal Singh, Jullundur (Punjab): Do you think the Jeep has been an unmixed blessing to Block activity?

Answer: Blessings are never unmixed. The Jeep has come in for a good deal of criticism as much from the Block staff as from the public. There is no denying the inestimable service it has done in opening up the windows of rural life to the outside world. It has also opened up to the VIPs—both foreign and Indian—a new vista of rural life humming with activity. It has helped the Block staff in executing its target according to schedule. It has brought to the farmers improved seeds, implements and pesticides when they needed them most. It has given the Block Development officer in charge of 100 villages the much needed breathing time for administrative coordination. And it has come to stay—despite its conscientious objectors. This is not to say that it has never been misused or abused by the Block staff. The criticism is not so much against the jeep itself as much against its misuse. Let us be clear about its intrinsic value. There can be no unmixed blessings in this world. When power is passed on from Block office to the Block Panchayat Samiti, things may improve as one expects more intensive public scrutiny of the day to day activity of the Block staff. Fundamental objection to the use of a fast-moving jeep in villages wedded to a bullock-cart economy appears to be based on sentimental grounds.

Hem Barua, Sylhet (Assam) : The Prime Minister has recently referred to the vital position occupied by the B.D.O. in the programme. Is anything done to improve his conditions of service and equip him better for dealing with the problems in the field?

Answer: Fortunately for the programme this key functionary is receiving the attention which his office deserves. State Governments are reviewing his position continuously in order to make him more useful to the programme. Rajasthan has decided to post IAS officers starting their career as B.D.Os in the first instance. In almost all the States, the B.D.O. has a gazetted rank. He is helped by nearly a dozen Extension officers in some States. Very shortly, he will become the Chief Executive officer of the statutory, self-governing institution, the Block Panchayat Samiti. His conditions of service are as good as can be expected under the present circumstances in the country. But the more important question is if he has lived up to the expectations. Does he consider himself as an administrative boss and a local officer or has he realised his functions as the head of a team of social Engineers in charge of 60,000 human beings? Does he get the proper training for the special work he has to do in the field? Is

he seriously interested in the problem of human relationships and in improving the lot of the people he has directly to deal with? Is he a serious student of social welfare or is he only hankering after new jobs and promotions? The question of improving his service conditions is tied up with all this.

G. S. Borkar, Sholapur (Bombay) : Is not the Zila Parishad, as envisaged in the scheme of Democratic Decentralisation a "wasteful decoration or a source of great mischief"?

Answer: District administrations in this country have a past history and proved their usefulness in their own time. We are now setting up Block administrations which will ultimately grow to their full stature. The gap between the Block and the State Headquarters is too wide and cannot remain unfilled. The Zila Parishad as at present contemplated will have more supervisory powers than executive functions. Their power for mischief, if any, is sought to be met by investing the Block Panchayat Samiti with large powers of administration in its own area.

T. Mariappa, Mandya (Mysore) : Is not the present Panchayat too poorly equipped to bear the burden of new res-

possibilities sought to be thrust on it under the new scheme of 'Democratic Decentralisation'?

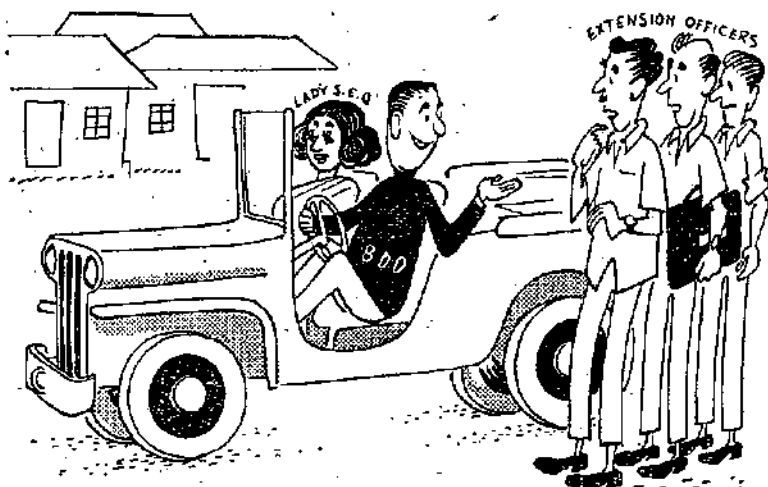
Answer: While the present position of the Panchayat is financially weak and administratively unsatisfactory, the impact of the Block Panchayat Samiti on its budget and its working will have a whole-some effect. Not only powers of taxation will be vested in them but substantial contributions from the land revenue will be allotted to the Panchayat for carrying on their day-to-day activities. Already there are quite a few Panchayats which have a record of service and administrative efficiency and in the new set-up there will be a special drive for making every panchayat more self-reliant and efficient.

There is no short cut

(Continued from page 7)

Orientation courses have been multiplied. The programme has to race against time in order to show results. Fulfilment of targets has become an occupational disease. The human mind has failed to catch up with the tempo of development activity, as planned on paper. There has been an understandable gap between loud-mouthed declamations and the movement in the field. There has been lack of imagination and initiative at various levels, though the blueprint was quite clear and positive. No organisation dealing with millions of human beings and trying to bring about a new order out of age-old traditions can possibly present an unimpeachable record of perfection. No programme of an equal magnitude covering a multiplicity of subjects has ever been tried in recorded history. And yet no other programme which started with so slender equipment had been able to put in the field in the course of seven years as many men trained in social engineering as the programme of Community Development. It has done all this in the hope and with the faith that ultimately its responsibilities will be taken over by the people themselves. I shall talk about these new responsibilities of the people who are already coming to the programme in my next article.

JEEPOCRACY



Can't you get into the back seat?

He entered into many statistics as a number but he entered into nobody's calculations, except as a constant to be multiplied by the prevailing daily wage rate to give the cost of labour. Yes; his was the cost of labour, not its dignity.



The Story of Tallari Asiga

*The Story of those Who serve, Who stand
and Who wait*

(PART TWO)
B.P.R. VITHAL

(Continued from our last issue)

"So NARASIMHA REDDY, what do you think of this Community Development?" I asked.

"Well sir", hesitated Narasimha Reddy, "It's a lot of fuss about nothing much."

"How can you say that?" I retorted with genuine surprise, "Are you not yourself a member of the Block

Advisory Committee and decide practically every thing? How then can you of all persons say that it doesn't amount to much? Narasimha Reddy was obviously taken aback with my vehemence. He had perhaps expected me to like the criticism of the Programme like so many other distinguished persons not directly connected with this work. They all

seemed to usually appreciate Narasimha Reddy's opening gambit of much ado about nothing; they all generally grinned in response and murmured that this fussing and this exhibitionism was what was wrong with the Programme. If only everyone connected with it were more humble, more humdrum, and talked less of missionary zeal and dedication. But my reaction was new to Narasimha Reddy. So he gently backed up and said "Well I didn't mean it that way. I am on the Committee and we are generally consulted. But you know, Sir, the officials' way of doing things; they try to bamboozle us with long reports in strange languages and cleverly manoeuvre all discussion to agreement with whatever they have already decided. Of course a few of us do get done what we are personally interested in. But the scheme itself is so rigid that every time we say something the B.D.O. quotes some rule against us. These officials are always the same, Sir. There is so much red-tape; and it increases from day to day. In your days atleast we could represent to some officer, and he would immediately decide something. Now no officer decides anything unless his clerk writes for him on the file."

"So would you like non-officials to be given this job or for the officers to be placed under some local non-officials' body as the Government seems to be thinking now?"

"That would be jumping from the frying pan to the fire, Sir. The democracy business taken too seriously is turning the heads of people. The village servants these days sometimes refuse to carry the papers of the Patwari. That is what democracy has taught us. If we give power to non-official bodies at these local levels there will be only factions and quarrels and no work will ever be done."

"Then what exactly do you suggest? You do not seem to be satisfied with anything?"

"The first thing, Sir, is that we must restore our people's faith in our religion and our ancient institutions. Democracy at this level should not be elective but of the old type based on age and respect. That is the

Panchayat we require. Of course we rich people also must begin to take interest in the Village and the poorer sections. Government must help in this. But Government aid should be utilised to strengthen the ancient leadership in the village and not to corrode it, and encourage up-start leaders as is being done now. This appealing for cooperation is being overdone, Sir. If a good thing is to be done it should be done by the officials. There may be a non-official body for the District but not lower than that. Our ancient Dharma must be restored in the village, Sir. This education is also all wrong. It gives wrong ideas to the villagers. Gandhiji was right in this matter. We must equip the villager to do his own craft better and not produce a clerk out of him. All these clubs and this Social education, this is all wrong, Sir. Why do we require these new fangled foreign ideas? We must revive our own Bhajan Mandalis, Bhagwatham, Burra-Kathas etc. Our ancient values, religion, philosophy, Dharma these should be propogated in as many ways as possible."

"So you don't want democracy for your villagers at all."

"Not that, Sir; it will come in its own time with more education. Today when we cannot yet satisfy all their needs where is the point in making them aware of their needs? The Block scheme is good, Sir. But it must concentrate only on giving loans and Veterinary aid, medical aid and advice regarding agriculture. All the other officers are a waste of money."

"So you would say all this time money has only been wasted?"

"No Sir, I wouldn't say that. We have a school, a road, a Maternity home and a Veterinary Hospital now. The Officers now all visit us and we don't have to go to Taluqa for every little thing. This has all been good work. The officers also are changing their attitude towards us. But this social education and these fashionable women workers, this is all unnecessary, Sir. That money also should be spent on Agriculture."

"All is well, Sir and everything is going finely," said Chandra Reddy.

But I knew him too well to accept this as his final verdict on the matter. This was what he always said to all officials: He disliked conversation with officials. Why invite trouble? The officer was always in a hurry and adverse reply would mean that he would have to investigate into the matter. That meant time, which the officer didn't have, and in any case the Officer was always helpless to do anything himself on the spot, no matter how big he was. He was part of a machinery; the verdict was of the machine; even he could not help it. The wheel of Juggernath was as much a victim as the victim himself. So why disturb consciences? Let us part as friends. So Chandra Reddy always said "All was well." He did not of course add as the Patwari would have done that "All was well with your blessings." Any bit of flattery disgusted him. So he wouldn't say how all was well, though, in his own mind, he would always add the proviso that all was well by God's grace. I knew that you could never have a straight conversation with Chandra Reddy. You could only cross examine him and draw your own inferences. But I had hoped that now that I had come only as a visitor, Chandra Reddy would be different. But I was wrong, Chandra Reddy made no distinction between an official in Office and out of Office. In fact he made no such distinction about officers as such at all. He judged whether you were of the "Establishment" and if you were, whether you were an official, an M.P. or a Congressman, he put on his reserve. His reaction to the "Establishment" was always one of withdrawal.

But after sometime I did gain Chandra Reddy's confidence. "Yes, Sir," he said "Ramachandrapur has changed. People are better off, mainly due to higher agricultural prices. Government has changed; it has become more amenable though no less bureaucratic. From being a rigid non-reacting bureaucracy, it has become a flexible reacting bureaucracy. It is still a bullock-cart and the bullocks are the same slow ones but we have a rope through their noses and we do hold that rope. Life has become easier for some of us. Our children have a decent building

in which to study and our wives have maternity aid nearby. Even our cattle get better aid here in the village itself than they ever did before. Some of us are doing better agriculture. There are now ten oil pumps in this village alone and Narasimha Reddy has purchased a tractor." It was a long catalogue of good things, but I was uneasy for Chandra Reddy's tone was sad and he had that distant misty look in his eyes which showed that his deep pessimism has not been dispelled. "But why do you look so unenthusiastic if all this is true?" I asked.

"Yes, Sir, it is all true. And yet I am still not enthusiastic. That is the fell disease of our country today; many things happen and yet they don't enthuse anyone except good hearted distinguished visitors like you. You see some of us are having an easier time; some of us are even getting more prosperous. But the village remains the same as ever. You follow what I mean? Oh! of course I know the School, the road etc., are there. But even they, whom do they serve? Not all the village. The road serves those who have enough produce to despatch by lorry, the school serves those whose children can afford to go to the School. For the rest how has the village changed? And it is these rest that were always our problem. We, we would have prospered any way with these prices. But they? And this we and they has come into our village. You know Aga Reddy Sir, well he was so huge always and so hale and hearty; he was even putting on a paunch. Then one day he was suddenly sent to the Sanatorium. He had T.B. It seems deep inside him, somewhere, some part had not shared in his body's health. Are we getting like that, Sir? I wonder you see all this scheme helps the farmer. If you have land and are farming it you can these days do better farming and earn more. But what about those who have nothing. That is our problem, Sir. Money breeds but if you don't have two coins to begin with, how can it breed?"

"Cooperatives? Yes Sir, it is one answer. But many things require to change before it can solve the problem fully. According to our rules we

can only give to those who already have, who are those whose need is not the greatest. And as for co-operation in other things how can it succeed so long as a man's own property competes with it. For our Society to prosper the Bania must go first. It's starting from the wrong end to imagine that we must grow and dislodge him. So for farming too; a man always likes to possess one thing fully rather than many things jointly. Possession and Cooperation can never go together.

"Yes Sir. Much good is being done. But the good itself is doing some harm for it is such good that only some who are already well off can avail of it and so it is leading to discontent in many more than those in whom it is creating satisfaction. Some people are enthused for some time. But always for a limited purpose for the school, for the Maternity Centre. But the village itself is not being enthused as a whole for any purpose. This is bad, Sir. This is not a silent revolution, this is very noisy social service. Our leadership we have none. Narasimha Reddy is our leader in all official records. He derives influence from his leadership not leadership from his influence. These block people always ask us, what is your problem? What is our problem? I tell you Sir, that man there, that Tallari Asiga, that is our problem?"

* * * *

Standing is an index of social status. Tallari Asiga had to stand all the time because there was no one else in whose presence he could sit. He, his father, his father's father, for many generations they had to stand, so that standing had become second nature for him. He had a long bamboo stick which he rested at an angle twined one arm round it and inclined against it so that the stick and his body made two sides of a triangle. In this posture he could release one of his legs from its load and rest it. Thus alternating from side to side he managed to stand for any length of time. In that pose he was like a horse which periodically unlocked one of its legs by turns and rested. He was like the horse in many respects. Not a thorough bred horse but a buggy horse; beast of

burden, so often driven that it was forgotten that it was not part of the cart but a living animal. Aptly enough, our measure of working power was horse-power. The horse was only a machine of locomotive power, no more. So was Asiga. He entered into many statistics as a number but he entered into nobody's calculations, except as a constant to be multiplied by the prevailing daily wage rate to give the cost of labour. Yes; his was the cost of labour not its dignity.

Asiga did not know how old he was. Nor could any one say; not even medical science perhaps, for his body had suffered ravages in a few years that other bodies would have perished with. Now he was one with the nature around him; like the earth under his feet. He was scorched in the sun, quenched and eroded in the rains and blown about in the wind. As he reclined on his stick, and watched, he never thought; he only saw. His reflection was always a mirror reflection; he merely reflected events; never reflected upon them. Life to him was a succession of impressions; never a casual chain. He never questioned anything; he merely accepted its existence. He was an existentialist par excellence. He never worried. He was married. Children were born because that was nature. Some died; that was nature. His wife and his children, these were his only possessions. He hired all these and himself too. On this they lived. Yes; he had not entered into any one's calculations. Like fungi and alga, he was on the border line of life. His society put him outside human existence itself.

Now the mightiest in the land were thinking of this man. They suddenly discovered that he was the largest of the figures in their balance sheets. He could not be ignored.

"But what is to be done, Sir?" asked Chandra Reddy. "This block programme is too small to think of him by itself. Our Gram Sevak tried. The entire team of District Experts tried. What could they offer him? Poultry and pigs. How would he feed them; he himself ate what others considered to be chicken feed or hog feed. Labour cooperatives? Where is the labour—a few buildings, a few Centres? They were in thou-

sands; how much work would they require? That was the problem. Work, work to be found? This the Block Programme alone could not do. Yet there is a way perhaps, Sir. Work breeds work; wealth breeds wealth. What is required is a little wealth and a little work and then it would go on. My Society, that gives me some hope, Sir. If we could give more loans through our Society to these persons, asking them what work they could do with it and not how much property they already had, then we could start these people on something, Sir. That will roll on by itself. Our Block people, they will give loans hereafter on the basis of purpose and not property. That is the only way. Risk? What is risk. Sir? A rich man defalcates because he has other money in which he can mix up this money. But Asiga? Where will he defalcate? Don't you see his dress has no pockets. He can at best eat it up. But isn't that what we want him to do, eat? The trouble is our officers have been dealing for so long with us Chandra Reddys and Komati Baliahs that they have no idea of Asiga's mind at all. To him money is only what work gives and food and cloth is what money buys—and some toddy perhaps. What would he default or defalcate for? Giving him money is like putting fertiliser in the field. Where will it go? Even if rains come down it will soak into the earth itself. There is nowhere else for it to go.

"This is where the future lies Sir, and the hope. Narasimha Reddy and his like do not realise this yet; they still think in terms of our prosperity being the village's prosperity. But our leaders—know it all and they will see that this realisation dawns on all. Meanwhile one must be patient; after all our local leaders require Narasimha Reddy's influence and money and so it is natural that they will not do anything that in their view would reduce either. But that is the mistake. Ultimately if they act with courage, they will have thousands of Asigas with them, with their little but abiding influence and power on their side instead of these few unsteady Narasimha Reddys. So it is in our interest also if the more unfortunate of our villagers prosper. Some of our officers explained in the beginning Sir,

that the purpose of this Block was to bring about this understanding. But they fell into trouble. So they don't say that any more. But some Ministers still say it when they come here. But Capital is so far away from here."

So this was the changing face of Ramchandrapur. How well I had known Ramchandrapur, that brown spot of tiled roofs and mud huts on the green carpet of paddy fields. You could not approach it then during the Monsoons and till Deepavali when the crops were harvested, because all round the village there had been cultivation. You sat in the dilapidated Chauwdi in the rear Verandha of which the School would be functioning. The same Narasimha Reddy and Chandra Reddy came out to meet you; the same Patel and Patwari, and quite a few villagers. They had much to say in those days also but most of it about land disputes and revenue assessments.

Today I had driven in the jeep straight to the Chauwdi over a road whose alignment had been absolutely straight from the PWD road to the Chauwdi. It had not yet been completed of course but all that had been done had been the work of the villagers, and the road was straight because no considerations of cost or compensation arose; wherever the road lay the land had to be surrendered. That had been decided by the old man and Chandra Reddy. In place of the Chauwdi there was a neat little Community Hall in one room of which was a reading room, in another a Ladies section and in the third the office of the Panchayat. The School had a separate building for itself and so had the Cooperative Society. There was a two room maternity Centre with a Midwife and a maternity kit from the U.S.A.—more modern than the equipment in many cities. One could see pedigree poultry running about the village. For all this villagers had paid. A lorry was standing down the street loaded with chillies and turmeric. The villagers that gathered did not speak of assessment rates only but of some demands of theirs or the other. There was grumbling, no doubt, but much of it

was against some of them alone, who were not doing enough to enable the village to benefit from some scheme or the other of Government.

Yes; much had changed. Yet what was the reason for Chandra Reddy's gloom? The Community Development Programme imagined the village to be an entity, a Community. But it looked as if it was not so. Much that had happened had benefited a certain section but not all. There had been individual prosperity but no collective development. The individual approach of the Extension worker to the farmer's problems, the approach of individual planning and involvement, worked only where the individual was already at a certain stage of development. For the rest individual solutions to problems would not work. It was only collective action that could help them. They had no individual grievance against any individuals that the rule of law and the Courts of law could redress or the wisdom of the Extension worker solve. The roots of their troubles lay in the Social order itself and nothing but collective action to change that order could really help them. In his own way Chandra Reddy had realised this and, because of his realisation, he felt helpless.

In the old days, the ruling class had its representatives but it had no roots as such, in the village. The entire village had been ruled over including the old man. The role of Narasimha Reddy was merely to pay homage to the Ruler, albeit like Ulysses had the dubious privilege of being eaten last by Cyclops, Narasimha Reddy had the privilege of doing homage first. Today the position had changed. Those who ruled had their roots in the village in Narasimha Reddy. That was the significance of democracy here. Not that the people made the ruler but that ruler was one among them. This had strange effects. For one thing the awe of the state was going, for if our Narasimha Reddy was among the immortals the immortals could not be very formidable.

This may be a healthy democratic sign, but its first effects were to corrode that invisible awe for the State power which had knit society

together and kept it within bounds more than any armed force. Secondly, so long as this power was located outside the village, the village was united at least in its juxtaposition as a whole to this power. When Narasimha Reddy did homage to the representative of an outside, alien and authoritative regime, he by that very act became a symbol of the village and leadership vested in him. Today the focus of power was in the village, in Narasimha Reddy himself, so that a polarisation took place within the village, with Narasimha Reddy at one end and most others at the other, which threatened to split the village. Many reflected this phenomena by saying that democracy was disrupting the village.

There were social and economic problems arising out of deep distortions in the social and economic order. Could one particular scheme like the Community Development Scheme alone remedy these? Could the techniques of sociology and social education cure basic injustice of the social order any more than psychiatry could cure a brain tumour? Or like hypnosis, would they only make the pain bearable while the disease itself raced to its fatal end? Yes. The Community Development Programme had failed in so far as its aims had been beyond its limited purview and had been the basic failings of society itself. It had succeeded in respect of those more modest aims which would more realistically fall within its sphere. It had succeeded as an Extension programme and as an aided self-help amenities programme. It had failed to be a revolution, silent or otherwise. Its present Cooperative role was on the other hand, different; this was an attack at the basis of the social order. In this it could be a revolution. But it had to enlist men like Chandra Reddy and throw overboard men like Narasimha Reddy. Only then could it really succeed. But could it do so? Because the man to be thrown overboard was the present Captain himself. Would it not be mutiny then? Yet how could you bring about basic changes without basic changes?

(Concluded)

A SUMMARY

Recommendations of the Mysore Conference

We give below important extracts from the main recommendations and conclusions of the National Conference on Community Development which was held at Mysore between July 23 and July 28, 1959.

Community Organisations

(i) PANCHAYAT, CO-OPERATIVE AND SCHOOL—ROLES AND RELATIONSHIP

FOR DEVELOPMENT of village community, local institutions must be developed and strengthened, namely the Panchayat, the Cooperative and the School, along with associate organisations like Mahila Mandals, Youth Mandals, etc. The Panchayat should function as a unit of Local Government and help people to organise themselves economically, socially and culturally. It should also take a promotional interest in cooperatives and utilise the school for social and cultural development. Cooperatives can further production programmes which are essentially economic. Procuring adequate and timely supplies, arranging credit, storage, processing and marketing of produce, etc. can best be attended to by cooperatives. The village school should be linked with the community for cultural and social development.

(ii) ASSOCIATE ORGANISATIONS

There is need for encouraging formation of Associate Organisations on a voluntary basis. More emphasis should be on formation of Youth Mandals and Mahila Mandals which form distinct social groups in the village community. Professional Associations, such as Farmers' Unions, should be encouraged only to deal with specific problems relating to their occupation.

(iii) PANCHAYAT—ITS NEW ROLE

New role of Panchayats in the context of Community Development. Being responsible for total development of the village, Panchayats

should undertake planned productive programmes, both of agriculture and cottage industries. To this end, they should organise procurement of supplies and arrange credit through the cooperative organisations. It will, however, not be the responsibility of the panchayat to supervise credit extended through cooperatives.

This should be the responsibility of the cooperative. To create fuller employment, Panchayats should educate people in new techniques of production. Panchayat should consider itself responsible for building up and maintenance of social services and creating such conditions in the village that the villager does not normally have to go outside the village to seek redress of his grievances. Panchayats should devote particular attention to rebuild the ideal of customary obligations.

Some of the steps to be taken by State Governments to strengthen panchayats.

Village Panchayat should be adopted as the single agency by all the Departments to approach villagers for implementation of the programmes. State Governments should direct the Departments accordingly. It will also be the responsibility of Departments to educate the panchayats suitably to discharge their role properly in respect of their respective programmes.

To make panchayats really effective, their financial resources will have to be strengthened in all possible ways, e.g., allocating increasing percentage of land revenue, increasing the sphere of local taxation, routing all grants-in-aid to the people and their

voluntary organisations through panchayats, granting loans to panchayats for capital works which would be of long-term benefit to the community and vesting more and more community assets in the panchayats. Panchayats have, on the other hand, the responsibility to ensure that

(i) any part of the financial resources obtained from the State is not applied as the "People's share" while executing schemes on matching basis;

(ii) the resources should not be spent away in wage payments for customary obligations and services which the villagers are expected to render to the community free of cost;

(iii) use of resources should not result in retarding the spirit of self-help and mutual aid; and

(iv) they should maintain and improve the community assets vested in them by the State and also, through community effort, raise new community assets, such as village forests, village tanks, etc. and augment their own resources.

Progressive delegation of administrative powers and authority to panchayats and training of personnel at all levels should be arranged by the State Governments.

General consideration of the report of the Working Group on Panchayats

The Report of the Working Group on Panchayats was approved, subject to the following:—

(1) Regarding the freedom to the village panchayat for framing and passing its own budget, it is recom-

recommended that the panchayat budget should be considered to consist of two parts :—

- (i) Part I dealing with functions which the Panchayat performs as a unit of Local Government.
- (ii) Part II dealing with functions which the panchayat performs in respect of departmental programmes from funds channeled through Block Development Committee or higher formation of Local Government.

Guide rules may be prepared to give a broad framework within which panchayats should have, for Part I of the budget, full freedom in light of its own priorities. For Part II of the budget, the approval of the authority assigning funds should be obtained. This is suggested because any kind of direct control would curb the initiative of panchayats and retard their healthy development. A safeguard in the form of guide rules for framing their budgets should serve the purpose. Besides, a comprehensive programme of education of both officials and non-officials connected with panchayats will also help in creating the necessary understanding. The Extension Officer for Panchayats at the block level will also have the particular duty to help the newly formed panchayats in preparing their budgets.



YUVAK MANDAL—ITS PROMOTION

RECOGNISING the vital role that rural youth can and should play in national development and the community development programmes, the Central and State Governments should encourage the formation of Yuvak Mandals in all villages in the C.D. Blocks.

There should be two separate organisations, viz., (a) a Bal Mandal for children in the age group of 6 to 12 years, and (b) a Yuvak Mandal for youth in the age group, 13 to 25 years, in every village.

Bal Mandals may include both boys and girls, but where Mahila Mandals have taken the initiative for the formation of Balika Mandals, girls may have a separate organisation of their own.

Officer at State level in charge of Youth programmes

At the State-level, there should be a Director for guiding, assisting, co-ordinating and evaluating youth activities in every State.

Ten pilot blocks should be taken in each State for intensive youth work so that the experience gained can be applied for further development and expansion of rural youth programmes.



TRAINING of non-officials

(i) Sarpanches and Up-Sarpanches

RECOGNISING the new role and the responsibility of Panchayats for all-round development of their village communities and their areas consistent with resources, existing and potential, the Conference fully appreciated the importance of training Sarpanches and Up-Sarpanches in order to enable them to discharge their new functions effectively.

The Conference favoured the view that the period of training may be limited to 5 to 7 days. Long duration training was considered impracticable not only on grounds of finance and the difficulty of Sarpanches and Up-Sarpanches remaining away from their homes for long periods but also because it would take at least 3 to 4 years to cover the total number in the first round.

As regards responsibility for the organisation and conduct of the Training Camps, the Conference felt that the Block Samiti should be primarily in charge of the Training programme. A Functional Sub-Committee could be appointed by the Block Samiti for this purpose, if necessary. The officials at all levels,

particularly at the Block Level should assist in the formulation and the implementation of the programme.

As regards the responsibility for the over-all plan, the Conference expressed the view that the plan should be drawn up by the Panchayat Samiti under the general supervision of Zila Parishad. The District Collector should be in over-all charge of this programme until the Block Samities and Zila Parishads were constituted.

The organisational details of the camps, viz., selection of venue, messing arrangements, use of audio-visual aids, lay out of demonstrations, shramdan, etc. will be similar to the Gram Sahayaks' Camps as stated in the Manual on Village Leaders' Training Camps.

The question of payment of some honorarium or allowance to the trainees during the period of training was also discussed. It was felt that it would not be possible to keep the trainees in the camps continuously for 6-7 days unless free meals were arranged in a common kitchen. The Conference was, therefore, of the opinion that Re. 1 per head per day should be allowed from the Block Budget for this purpose.

It was emphasised that the training should be of a seminar type, involving discussions and brief talks rather than lectures by the Extension staff. It was also felt that the camps to be organised for this purpose should be called "Study Camps" instead of "Training Camps" as the word "training" may not be congenial to many Sarpanches and Up-Sarpanches.

(ii) Gram Lakshmis, Gram Kakis, etc.

The Conference approved the Scheme for the training of village women to work as Gram Lakshmis or Gram Kakis with a view to make the domestic life of village women happier and enable them to develop their skill and resources and use them to better purposes and to augment their income. The Conference recommended that the training period should not be more than one month. In addition, the following suggestions were also made :—

(1) If it was not possible in any State or in any part of the State to persuade women workers to come for one month's training, the training may be divided into three stages of 10 days' duration each.

(2) The initial training of one month should be followed by refresher courses of three to five days on the pattern of Gram Sahayaks' Training Camps.

(iii) GRAM SAHAYAKS—PRO-GRAMME FOR 1959-60

The Conference did not agree with the proposal that the next year's training programme for Gram Sahayaks should be limited to subjects of Panchayat and Cooperation only. It was observed that this stage had not yet been reached when it could be said that Gram Sahayaks' Training Camps in agricultural groups were no longer necessary. At the same time, it was realised that in view of the growing importance of Panchayats and Cooperation, training camps were also required for these subjects. The Conference was, therefore, of the opinion that the subjects of Cooperation and the new role of Panchayats should be included along with the agricultural group and camps conducted accordingly during the year 1959-60 also.

(iv) GRAM SAHAYAKS—HIGHER TRAINING FACILITIES

The Conference approved the suggestion regarding higher training facilities for selected Gram Sahayaks who have done good agricultural extension work in their villages. It was, however, felt that the target of giving higher training to 5% of Gram Sahayaks was very high and it should be reduced to 1 or 2% for the present.

The Conference considered the question of higher training for members of Block Samities, who will have to work in functional sub-committees. They felt that a Scheme on the lines proposed for Gram Sahayaks should be adopted for such members of Block Samities as desired to have a higher training. A combined training for Gram Sahayaks and members of Block Samities

was not considered feasible as the subjects and syllabus for members of the Block Samities will have to be different from those proposed for Gram Sahayaks.

(v) NON-SERVICEMEN

The Conference accepted the need for the training of non-officials. As regards the setting up of advisory bodies, it was felt that after the constitution of Block Samities and Zila Parishads, it would be inappropriate to set up separate advisory bodies at Block levels and district-levels. Until these bodies were constituted, a sub-committee of the existing Block Development Committee would function as an advisory body for this purpose at the block level. The Block Samities and Zila Parishads would set up a training sub-committee to be in charge of the training programme for non-officials. The Conference approved the following suggestions:—

(a) **Composition of Central-level body:** An advisory body may be formed at the Centre mainly out of the members of the Informal Consultative Committee. It would be, in a sense, the training sub-committee of the Informal Consultative Committee. Minister for Community Development and Cooperation would be the Chairman of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee would advise the Ministry on the approach, policy and broad pattern of the training.

(b) **Composition of State-level body:** A Committee may be formed at the State-level with the Minister in charge of Community Development or Panchayats acting as Chairman. The members may be so chosen that there is one representative from each district. Part of the membership may be found from the Informal Consultative Committee at the State-level. The other may be either chosen from the M.L.As. of other districts or Presidents of representative bodies like the District Boards or Zila Parishads, as the case may be. Some representatives of District Cooperative Unions may also prove helpful, particularly in planning the programme for cooperative education.

A village-level body was not considered necessary, because the training

for non-officials would have to be organised for the Block as a whole and not for individual villages. The selection of trainees from villages could, however, be entrusted to the village panchayats which could entrust this to an appropriate sub-committee, if necessary.

TRAINING of officials

SOME IMPORTANT problems relating to reorganised training.

(a) Securing experienced and well qualified staff for the various training institutions.

The Conference recommended:—

(i) that free medical facilities for the staff and their families, transport facilities for their children's education and rent free quarters should be granted; and

(ii) that State Governments should cooperate with the Ministry of Community Development & Cooperation by giving them panels of names of suitable officers and that the panels might include names of officers to whom selection as Instructors would be a promotion and provide sufficient inducement to accept the posts. Such panels of names should be prepared for training institutions both of the Central and State Governments by the Coordination Committee on training in each State.

The conference felt that the above recommendations should apply not only to the Orientation Training Centres but also to the integrated training centres for Gram Sevaks and all other training institutions connected with the C.D. Programme.

(b) Ensuring that the institutions run to their full capacity.

(i) **Orientation Training Centres.**—The consensus of opinion was that the State Governments found it difficult to utilise the full quota allotted to them on account of the fact that they have no training reserve and therefore

It was recommended that each State should create a training reserve of 10% for each category in order to ensure that at least up to 10% of the total strength of each category could be deputed for training at a time. The training capacity of the existing institutions should also be adjusted accordingly.

As regards the additional cost on account of the creation of training reserve, the Conference recommended that it should be shared equally by the Centre and the State Governments. Each State should indicate to the Ministries of Community Development and Cooperation and Food and Agriculture, the number of seats required for each course under each category according to the phased programme communicated by the Ministries.

(ii) **Social Education Organisers Training Centres.**—The Conference felt that if 10% reserve is created in each State for the S.E.Os, also, the State Governments should be able to recruit candidates in advance and keep them ready for being deputed for training. The entire quota of seats allotted to the States could thus be utilised fully.

Association of State Development Commissioners with the coordination and supervision of training programme of officials.

It was recommended that the State Coordination Committee on Training should meet at least once a quarter and should send copies of their proceedings to the Central Ministries concerned.

In addition to the functions already entrusted to it the Committee might attend to the following:—

- (i) Staffing of the training institutions with competent personnel;
- (ii) Visiting individually or as a team the various training institutions in the State;
- (iii) Arranging talks at the institutions by experienced officers and non-officials on specific subjects;

- (iv) Providing amenities and adequate training facilities; and
- (v) Providing official assistance to non-official organisations undertaking the training of non-officials.



ZONAL SAMMELANS *of officials and non-officials*

THE CONFERENCE made the following recommendations:—

- (i) That instead of Zonal Sammelans, State-wise Sammelans may be held whenever the Prime Minister happens to visit a particular State; but in the case of Union Territories and other States which the Prime Minister might not be able to visit within a reasonable time such Territories and States might be invited to participate in the Sammelans held in the neighbouring States.
- (ii) That Block Development Officers, Extension Officers, Gram Sevaks, higher level officials and non-officials, as many as can conveniently participate, may be invited to attend the Sammelans.
- (iii) The Sammelan may be addressed by the Prime Minister on the first day. On the 2nd & 3rd day the participants will discuss amongst themselves the following topics:—
 - (a) Agricultural production.
 - (b) Democratic Decentralization with special reference to Panchayats.
 - (c) Cooperation.
 - (d) Norms for judging people's participation in the Community Development Programme.

No detailed agenda need be drawn up nor notes circulated, but there should be a specific programme for each day.

- (iv) The expenditure on these seminars will be met by the Ministry of Community Development & Cooperation on the same lines as was done in regard to Regional Seminars organised by the Ministry in the past. The State Governments will, however, bear the expenditure on account of travelling allowance to their officials attending the Seminar.



AGRICULTURE *task of co-ops. and panchayats*

THE GRAM PANCHAYAT and the Primary Cooperative Society should call a meeting of the Village to prepare agriculture plans. The Agricultural and Cooperative Extension Officers, having ascertained the available resources of seeds, fertilisers, agricultural credit, funds for soil conservation etc. should attend this meeting. At this meeting the village should fix the list of improved agricultural practices which are suited to the village and prepare an estimate of the area to be covered by each approved practice. A list of new methods and techniques which the village would like to have demonstrated should also be prepared along with the number of demonstrations, their venue and timing.

A programme for training Gram Sahayaks of the village and organising youth clubs and farmers' clubs should also be prepared for the year. Five to ten leaders should be designated to guide their assigned followers in adopting better methods of cultivation and preparing family production plans, they should also supervise the use of credit. The Cooperative Society should arrange to train the designated leaders in the

methods of preparing plans and get the family agricultural credit.

The two Extension Officers mentioned above should assist the Panchayat in drawing up a two or three year land improvement programme covering contour bunding, levelling, terracing, reclamation, drainage, construction of tanks, wells and other minor irrigation works, and afforestation of village lands. For each type of work the annual target should be indicated and specific organisers designated by the Panchayat for organising and supervising the work. The Block staff should undertake to prepare the required plans and estimates by a stipulated date. Such plans should be prepared in at least one village in each V.L.W.'s circle during 1960-61 and all the villages in the V.L.W.'s circle may be covered in three to five years.

The Panchayat should designate farmers who would induce other farmers and supervise their programme for improving the fertility of the soil by green manuring, composting, use of silt and other locally available resources. The responsibility for achieving the agricultural targets of the village will, thus remain with the Panchayats.

The Panchayat should appoint an agricultural sub-committee which would meet periodically to review the progress of day-to-day implementation of the village agricultural production plans. The representatives of Cooperative Societies should be on this committee so that arrangements for short and medium-term agricultural credit, supplies of seeds, fertilisers and plant protection materials, including implements, and arrangements for marketing are made according to the needs of the village. The financial responsibility for loans advanced to individuals and its recovery will solely be with the Cooperative Society.

The Panchayat may be consulted about the land-development schemes to be sanctioned in the village for execution by individual farmers. It should be the responsibility of the Gram Panchayat to procure the required labour, disburse payments and supervise the work connected

with the land development and land improvement schemes financed directly by the Government, and not through the individuals or the Cooperative Society. Schemes financed through the Cooperative Society would be supervised by the Cooperative Society. All programmes for afforestation or improvement of the pastures of the village will be entrusted to the Gram Panchayats and the income will be utilized on land development projects. The Gram Panchayat will be the village planning authority in respect of village agricultural plans and the Cooperative Society the financing, supplying and marketing agency. The role of the extension staff is to stimulate the farmers through the Panchayats and Cooperatives to mobilise for increased agricultural production.

V.L.W. AND THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION PROGRAMME.

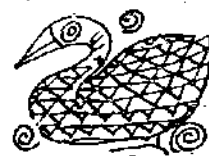
To enable the Village Level Worker to concentrate on the field of agricultural production his job chart may be revised. The revised job chart could appropriately begin by stressing the village level worker's primary role in regard to: (1) agriculture including minor irrigation, (2) animal husbandry, (3) certain aspects of cooperation for example assisting agricultural production, and (4) assisting panchayats in discharging their duties in respect of the fields mentioned above.

In respect of other items of the development programme his duties may be reduced in scope and defined in greater detail, for example under health and rural sanitation he may be mainly concerned with the provision of a protected water supply.

In order to ensure that definite stress is given to agriculture and the maximum time is used on agricultural production work, the State Department of Agriculture should draw up a detailed programme of work from season to season and month to month for being executed by the village level workers. The V.L.W. should be required to devote his first attention to the agricultural production programme; and it should be the duty of the Block Development Officer and the Block Development

Committee to see that the programme drawn up by the department of Agriculture is strictly followed. Such periods as are not covered by this time table may be utilised by the V.L.W. for other rural development activities. It would be desirable to define certain duties which the village level worker should not be required to perform, for example Rural Life Insurance, Small Savings Campaign, Collection and handling of cash etc.

The association of the V.L.Ws in census and elections including both general elections and local panchayat elections was not considered desirable and should therefore be avoided.



ANIMAL

HUSBANDRY

THE CONFERENCE endorsed the recommendation of the Balwantrai Mehta Study Team that the improvement of live stock (cattle, sheep, goats, poultry etc.); as also inland fisheries should form a part of the functions of the Panchayats. It was, however, felt that the entrustment of the programme to the Panchayats, in its entirety, need not necessarily be made obligatory to start with; the reason being that for the fulfilment of this responsibility, it was necessary:—

- (i) to educate the Panchayats in the various aspects of the programme, and
- (ii) to re-inforce the financial position of the Panchayats and Cooperatives by providing adequate monetary assistance.

Wherever lands are set apart for the village common grazing grounds, steps should be taken to impart training to the members of the Panchayats for their improvement and management, including the application of suitable fertilizers and introduction of rotational grazing.

Every effort should be made for demonstrating fodder cultivation and for intensifying the distribution of planting materials of improved grasses and fodders. Provision should also be made for intensive cultivation of fodders wherever it is possible and to encourage individual enthusiastic farmers to grow fodders. If the seed production programme is not impaired, a portion of the primary seed production farms can be utilised for production of green fodder seeds.

To avoid wastage of fodders the panchayats should undertake the responsibility of assessing the requirements of chaff cutters and arranging for their supplies from out of the provision that is made available to them for implementing the agricultural production programme.

The panchayats should take active interest in the planting of fodder trees in all waste lands, field bunds etc. during special occasions like Vanamahotsayas, seedlings for this purpose being supplied by the Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forest departments.



POULTRY

The conference recommended that the development of poultry, on the lines indicated below, may with advantage be undertaken through the agency of the cooperative.

Replacement of Desai Cocks

Removal of Desai cocks on or before a target date every year and the introduction of required number of improved cocks in their place on exchange or subsidised basis, the programme being concentrated in areas earmarked for intensive development of poultry.

Poultry Units

Establishment of poultry units with improved birds by Young Farmers or Youth Clubs, Mahila Mandals, landless people and Harijans with loans provided by the department and/or cooperatives.



FISHERIES

Ownership of fishery rights

The Conference agreed that while the fishery rights for small ponds and tanks in the jurisdiction of the village should vest in the panchayats concerned, those of the river stretches should be managed by the Government Agencies.

Stocking and exploitation

As regards the exploitation of fisheries by the Panchayats, the Conference accepted the view that organisations like fishery cooperatives or groups of fishermen should be preferred to individual contractors in leasing the fishery rights of village ponds and tanks. Loans for improvement of village ponds and tanks and for stocking them should be given to the Panchayats. Wherever a Panchayat does not carry out fisheries development on approved lines, the State Government may withdraw the powers delegated to the Panchayat in regard to the management of fishery rights.

COOPERATIVES

The conference recommended that the functions of cooperatives in the field of Animal Husbandry might be in the following directions:—

- (a) Providing credit facilities for purchase of improved live stock, feeds and fodder, purchase of fish seed and equipment etc.
- (b) Stocking and sale, at fair prices, of live stock feeds and equipment, including fishing-gear, yarn, hooks, improved shears and other equipment.
- (c) Organising marketing facilities for live stock and live stock products, including milk, eggs, poultry, wool and fish. Such an organisation should provide, for their proper collection, grading, storage, transportation and distribution.

MINOR IRRIGATION & LAND IMPROVEMENT

role of panchayats and cooperatives

PANCHAYATS and Cooperatives should as far as possible be entrusted with execution of all new works, which involve only cartwork and simple masonry work up to a limit of Rs. 25,000, in each case. This monetary limit may be subject to minor local variations by the State Governments.

(i) The Cooperatives of Beneficiaries working under village Panchayats should maintain all local irrigation works not requiring technical skill of a high order.

(ii) These bodies should be given technical assistance by the block staff or the State P.W.D. in charge of these works.

(iii) In the event of default of proper maintenance of these works by Panchayats the Government should be empowered to get the necessary repairs and maintenance carried out by the State Departments concerned and recover the costs from the defaulters.

(iv) To ensure proper maintenance, the Departments should prescribe standards and specifications for the guidance of local organisations.

(v) All such works should be periodically visited by Government agencies so that necessary measures may be taken when and where any tendency towards deterioration is noticed. For this purpose an inventory of minor irrigation works should be prepared on a prescribed proforma and maintained by the village Panchayat concerned.

OPTIMUM USE OF WATER

(a) **Water Courses and field channels:** Construction authorities should be responsible for the construction of channels or water-courses at Government cost up to outlet heads or blocks of a suitable size to be prescribed by the State Government. Beyond this point, while the

(Continued on page 35)

SALPEWADI

the path-breaker

J. S. APTE

(Here is the story of a village which has arrived at a better way of life through its own efforts. Let us not forget this was one of the "untouched villages" which have not been brought territorially under our programme. And yet it could find the men and the organisation to take it to a new way of life. We are sure there are villages which can teach lesson in Community Development to most of us who are actively engaged on the job.—Editor).

IN A BEAUTIFUL mountain valley in the plateau of the Deccan inhabited by some 270 families of sturdy Maharashtra peasantry, an eventful social experiment has been under way during the past six years. It is an experiment in "applied sociology". Under the guidance of social scientists and social leaders, a "backward" rural population has been stirred to break away from the traditions of centuries and raise itself to a more abundant life. The way in which this has been accomplished makes the experiment significant for millions of people all over India.

The experimenters were fully alive that the villages here as elsewhere are held back by the traditional prejudices and fetters of the Indian village community. They had to face many problems: the problem of persuading the people to accept the innovations, the probable nature of response, the problem of giving help without making them dependent—for mere benevolence all too often defeats its basic purpose by destroying a people's self-reliance. These considerations prompted the direction to be given to this experiment.

The originator of the project was Shri Mouni Vidyapeeth. The Shramdan Shibir enlisted the help of the villagers, the officials and the strangers. The problems of Salpewadi were, more or less, symbolic of any typical Indian village. The reconstruction planners first had a proper agricultural survey map made. Then they had a plan. This plan was first presented to a meeting of the villagers and their leaders. The partici-

pating villagers, and as time passed by it was the entire village, were required to carry out a project all their own. They were encouraged to express their opinions. Indeed, discussion sessions were a major part in the carrying out of this reconstruction plan.

Salpewadi, a village in the Chudargad Taluka of Kolhapur District, only six years back, was a good random sample of an Indian village before 1953—without an approach road, without a school. Of course there was no shop, nor a cooperative society.

In 1952 Shri Mouni Vidyapeeth, a rural university interested in matters beyond mere rural education was established at Gargoti, the Taluka Centre of the Bhudargad Taluka. The objective of the Vidyapeeth was to spread rural education through reconstruction and aimed at rural reconstruction through rural education. The Vidyapeeth decided to start development activities in selected villages nearby. Salpewadi is one such selected village. The main considerations that led to the selection of the village were:

- (1) Its distance from the rural university which is but one mile.
- (2) Its being more backward than even an average village, which gave it a priority claim.
- (3) Nearly one half of the population belonged to segregated untouchables. This meant, an excellent place for field work with

regard to removal of untouchability.

The Vidyapeeth obviously did not aim at bringing about a total transformation of the village life. Its main and practicable objective was to divert the current of village-life into new channels and vitalize it. It concentrated exclusively on what could be achieved. The Vidyapeeth chalked out a suitable programme. A suitable alteration of the course of the rivulet that divided the village and the village temple and which was the cause of much waste of cultivable land was the first step. To the organisers, one step at a time was enough, so work began with recovery of fallow lands.

To implement this project, the Vidyapeeth decided to organise a three weeks camp of 60 students in Salpewadi. This was a unique thing in the history of Salpewadi. The spontaneous comment of the villagers was: "None ever came to our village, not even a minor Government official turned up here to inquire about our difficulties. And now it was a centre of pilgrimage for not only villagers around but for Government officials too!"

News of Shramdan work commenced by Vidyapeeth students spread to the surrounding villages. It was an inspiring news and the people, students, teachers and all participated in the work with a new-born vigour and a healthy competition to give one's best was observable. The Government officials did not stay behind. Even the Taluka Mamaladar and the Dy. Superintendent of Police with their subordinates took an active share in this project. What a pleasant surprise to the villagers to see the khaki-clad policemen lifting the baskets of stones and earth! A dam for the rivulet 46' in length, 70' in breadth and 70' in height was constructed solely by Shramdan of Salpewadi villagers and others. To divert the course of the stream, a big trench 200' in length, 72' in breadth and 5' depth was dug. This Shramdan-work created an unprecedented enthusiasm in Salpewadi and the villagers firmly determined to undertake many development activities under the leadership and

guidance of the Vidyapeeth. It is a rule of nature that a century-old fallow land gives a bumper crop when brought under cultivation. This rule seemed to be true also with regard to human talent and capacity to work and the unused strength and talent for work of the villagers rose to great heights.

A common experience in rural welfare work is that the semi-developed and partially reformed villages seem unable to render proper and full cooperation in village-development programmes. Either the extremely backward villages or those fully conscious of what constitutes betterment and their genuine interest are best fitted for village-uplift movement. Salpewadi comes under the former category.

The barrier across the rivulet, joined the temple and the village and the land previously under the stream-water (now directed in a different course) was brought under cultivation. The outstanding success of the first item of the reconstruction programme encouraged them to hope for a school. They began seriously to think of having a school for their village. But collecting funds for a school-building in the village itself was not an easy task. So an aided school was founded in the building of the temple by a suitable extension.

Today this is a single-teacher school which has 44 children. Courses are limited to the first four standards. There are only 5-6 girls students. The villagers have decided to construct a well-equipped modern school building on a nearby plot. The boys and girls will enrol in increasing numbers with the erection of the proposed school-building.

Salpewadi village is situated on a hill which is geologically exceptional, being of white stone. Everyone of the stone is huge. This renders the roads in Salpewadi uneven. In this village of 39 families there are 143 land-holders! One can well imagine the extent of the sub-division and fragmentation of land. No one in Salpewadi is an owner of more than five acres. The standard of living was hardly above the level of bare

subsistence. The workers of the Extension Department of Shree Mouni Vidyapeeth decided to free the villagers from the clutches of the money-lender. With this in view, a multi-purpose cooperative society was founded in the year 1953-54. Today its capital is Rs. 24,000 and 72 villagers from Salpewadi and the Harijan colony are members of the society. The loan advance to these 72 members amounts to Rs. 18,000. The share-capital itself has exceeded Rs. 5,000. Now the villagers have to resort to the moneylender but rarely.

The more urgent need, even more urgent than money, in any village is grain. In the rainy season especially, the grain-stock of a farmer gets exhausted and he has to starve. Helplessly the farmer rushes to the moneylender and takes a loan of grain at any rate of interest and somehow manages to live. But at the time of repayment of the loan, the return wrenches his heart. This vicious circle of loan, interest, heavy repayment has been the experience of generations of farmers and they have lost all hope of coming out of the mesh. The awakened farmers of Salpewadi made a firm determination to get out of this rut. Hence the grain-bank. The capital of this grain-bank is 52 maunds and none in the village has been driven to the *sawkar* for a loan at an exorbitant rate of interest.

The position of the village—its being on the top of a hill—helps to keep the village clean. The roads are washed clean during rains. Additionally, the continuous and persistent efforts of the Vidyapeeth-workers have been instrumental in making the villagers pay particular attention to the cleanliness at home and in public. The way the women-folk clean the front of their houses and decorate them with designs in chalk-powder indicates the fact that Salpewadi has reached one stage of a total transformation of the village towards a new culture. No wonder this village obtained recognition as a model village—getting the first prize of Rs. 200 awarded to the model village in Kolhapur District for the year 1953-54. And in the

following year it won still another prize of Rs. 200 for the tree-planting work.

Water scarcity is a common rural problem in this part of the country. Salpewadi, which has an annual rainfall of 50"—60" also felt the scarcity of pure water. Formerly, its residents utilized the muddy water of a small pond. Realising the importance of clean water supply, the villagers had a pucca well constructed with the help of the Local Board with a water-drawer. The village is now free from the guinea-worm disease. The Harijans would certainly have been permitted to use this well, but they live rather far off. So at the other end of the hill, another well was constructed by the side of the Harijan colony.

As the century-old stagnancy was rapidly replaced by directed activity, a thirst for learning grew, a quest for understanding increased. How large is the world outside our village? Are there similar and better experiments carried out elsewhere? Could we in any way benefit from their experience? Such questions were in the atmosphere. Naturally enough, they created the desire to learn from books. Thus an adult-literacy class was established. A good number of adults—mostly men—in the village is literate and they have developed a taste for reading books and newspapers. The Vidyapeeth has opened a library for these neo-literates.

Lectures on self-help, cooperation, elimination of destructive competition etc., alone are generally futile in bringing about a psychological change in villagers. Hence the lessons of self-help and cooperation were driven home through actual practice. The cooperative society and the grain-bank were the media of instruction. The villagers imbibed the techniques of cooperative method and the extent of actual advantage through actual practice. There is an eighty-acre grazing land nearby which, previously was auctioned annually. Some rich capitalist, either from the village or outside, would bid for it almost at any price and later when the need for fodder was acute would charge an

exorbitant price. The villagers bid for the land through their society and owned it cooperatively and distributed parts thereof to the members of the society. No lecture on the value of cooperation could be so convincing. Nor was any needed now!

Experience is taking the villagers of Salpewadi to further progress. They repaired the village-roads, constructed approach-roads, filled the compost-pits. They practised the Japanese method of cultivating paddy. Planting of fruit-trees was also one of their many activities. Still a sense of dissatisfaction was lurking in their minds. They had no common meeting-place. They had a rather small temple far away from the village. There was no *chawadi*, no gymnasium in the village. The co-operation society and the grain-bank had no premises of their own. A casual visitor to or a guest of the village was subjected to great inconvenience.

And so they determined to construct a *gram-mandir*, a community centre and after persistent effort of two years, they got it. In this community centre worth Rs. 5,000 are located a gymnasium, a guest-house and a commodious chamber for the cooperative society and the grain-bank. They intend to have a first floor for the building and the foundation and walls of the building have been planned with this purpose in view.

The total expenditure for the construction of the building was Rs. 2,500 and an equal amount was

expended by the villagers themselves in the form of *Shramdan*. The two cash prizes won by the village were also used towards the expenses of the construction of the building. Furthermore, the villagers have planned to save a part of the amount—Rs. 5,000 which the Government would be contributing for the *gopuri* types of latrines by *shramdan* and to divert it towards the expenses of extending this building. Any one who would know what an awakened village can actually achieve should visit Salpewadi and observe the work of this community centre.

Soon after the establishment of the community centre, the villagers had another plan—the important task of constructing *gopuri* type of latrines. In India, the economic utilisation of human excreta has never been considered; much less practised. Contact with China and other countries theoretically convinces the educated classes of the utility but it does not seem to have had any impact on the minds of the villagers. But plenty and use of Chinese type of compost are inter-linked.

The people have decided to construct 25 *gopuri* type latrines—one latrine for 20 persons. When these latrines will be properly and regularly used, adequate quantity of compost will be available for the village-lands—and will fetch about Rs. 15,000 as the annual income! The success of the following two contemplated plans is merely a matter of time:—

- (1) The construction of a circular road around the village

so that all the small streets of the village would converge.

- (2) The construction of 1½ mile road from Gargoti to Pushpanagar.

“An individual should seek salvation for himself by himself” says Lord Krishna in the *Bhagvat Gita*. The principle of self-salvation is equally applicable to a group, to a community and to a society. The people of Salpewadi realized this right from the beginning and they did not spare themselves in the task of village-development. Fortunately, for them in Shri Ramchandra Balwant Desai alias Ramaji Patil and Shri Ramchandra Balwant Jhore, they have the greatest of assets and un-failing source of inspiration. Both hail from the same village. With un-bounded zeal, sense of service and utter sacrifice, they have worked and are working ceaselessly for the cause of the uplift of the village—a cause they have made their own. They are the torch-bearers of missionary zeal for the cause of Salpewadi.

Perhaps the biggest single lesson the awakening of Salpewadi has demonstrated is that, even while working against heavy odds, with sufficient understanding of both its limitations and its potentialities, it is possible to accomplish basic social changes without a staggering budget or swarms of personnel. The Salpewadi experiment, and what a grand experiment it is, has decisively proved that in the field of social reform, understanding may be a far more important tool than money or power.



WHO IS THE KEY FUNCTIONARY?

GHULAM HUSSAIN

Principal, Orientation Training Centre, Bakshi-Ka-Talab

WHILE NO BODY would like to minimise the importance of the role of the Block Development Officer, to me it seems to be of little consequence to say that he is the key functionary of the Welfare State or that he is more important than the Collector or any other Officer. In the Community Development Programme, the honour of being a Key functionary has been bestowed almost on all the categories of workers. The V.L.W. has for long been regarded as the most important official because he is the person who comes in face-to-face contact with the villagers and has to bear the brunt of the whole programme. The recent report of the Committee for Evaluation and on Public Participation, appointed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh remarks: "At the level of the village it is the Gram Sewak who plays the key role in the entire programme of Community Development", and adds "it is the V.L.W. who is the closest of all to the people and it is upon him that the success of the programme primarily depends."

KING-PIN

The Collector has already earned the title of the King-pin of the Development Programme. The latest trend is to emphasise the importance of technical departments as their representatives play the key role in the whole programme; for if they were not to supply the knowledge of science and technology, what would be there to carry to the people through the Extension Programme. This way of thinking, in my opinion, only tends to present the real situation in an exaggerated manner.

Administration is a highly intricate and complex affair in which no one functionary can be regarded as the Key or the King-pin. However, capable, hardworking and fired with missionary zeal a Collector, a B.D.O. or a V.L.W. may be, he cannot play

his role correctly unless the approach of so many other workers, both at higher and lower levels, is proper.

It is, therefore, high time that our emphasis shifted from individual workers to the system as a whole. Just as we are trying to develop collective responsibility and leadership in the village community, we should try to develop the same approach to the administrative machinery. At the Block Level, particularly, our efforts should be towards ensuring the collective responsibility of the team as a whole consisting of V.L.W., A.D.Os, and the B.D.O. Every worker must be allowed to feel that he shares the responsibility for the success of the Community Development Programme with other co-workers. This will help in ensuring better administrative co-ordination and in creating the interest of the workers in the totality of the programme, irrespective of the sphere which is their special concern.

PRIMARY ROLE

The primary role of the B.D.O. lies in proper coordination and execution of the various development programmes in the Block. To succeed in this task, his knowledge of various departmental policies and programmes should be up-to-date, and he should possess the qualities of inspiring his co-workers and providing leadership in an ample measure. Obviously, this role can be played only by a man of more than average calibre. Such a person cannot be drawn to the post unless the terms and conditions of service are attractive enough and prospects of promotion are fairly bright. There is, therefore, a lot of force in the plea of Shri Malkani that the B.D.O. should have a permanent position and a promising career before him. This question has already received attention of the Ministry of Community Development and the State Governments, but it is high time

that the decision is finalized and steps are taken early to implement it.

Another very relevant issue raised by Shri Malkani is about the source from which the B.D.Os. should be recruited. He seems to be in favour of recruiting 50% of B.D.Os from amongst graduates of Social Sciences through the Public Service Commission. The rest may come from the various Departments. After staying in the Community Development Programmes for a few years, they will go back to their parent Departments, carrying something of the new outlook with them which would, in turn, influence the outlook of those Departments. Some State Governments seem to have decided that there should be no direct recruitment to this post which may be filled up only by promoting the A.D.Os or Extension Officers. The Govind Sahai Committee appointed by the Uttar Pradesh Government to study the N.E.S. & Community Development Programmes has welcomed the latter decision. I am more inclined to agree with Shri Malkani's views. Direct recruitments to the post of Block Development Officers will naturally attract better and brighter young men, with good educational background and having a fresh outlook towards life and its problems. The same candidate may not be sufficiently enthused to apply for the post of A.D.Os or Extension Officers. So far as the prospects of A.D.Os are concerned, there are enough opportunities for them if 50% of the posts of B.D.Os are filled up from amongst them and they are also eligible for promotion in their respective technical departments.

PROMOTION

Regarding the avenues of promotion for the Block Development Officers I may suggest the following:—

1. Those of them having technical qualifications may get promotion in their concerned departments.
2. They may also be eligible for promotion as District Planning Officer, Deputy and Assistant Development Commissioners and so on.
3. A certain percentage of them may be eligible for promotion to the State Civil Service on the basis of

their service record, aptitude and capability which may be judged by the Public Service Commission after interviewing the candidates recommended by the Development Commissioner. This will have two great advantages. (a) There will be a constant incentive for doing good work, and (b) The officers who get into the State Civil Service having worked as B.D.Os will be able to influence their new Department considerably by importing the new ideas imbibed as a result of intimate contact with the people during their tenure as B.D.Os.

There is yet one more suggestion that I wish to offer in this connection. The Junior I.A.S. & P.C.S. officers should also be appointed to work as B.D.O. for at least 2 years before they are given higher charges at the Sub-Divisional or District Levels. This will not only lead to their proper orientation, but will also help them in proper appreciation of the rural problems. (*We understand that a proposal on these lines is being seriously considered by the Government of Rajasthan—Ed.*) The status of the B.D.Os will also be considerably enhanced which is so essential for building up his self-confidence and initiative.

Shri Malkani's remark that there is no reason why we should shirk the responsibility for creating a separate Development service, is in my opinion, of great significance and deserves serious thought. I think with the recruitment of VLWs and fresh B.D.Os the first step in creating this service has already been taken and there is no point in hesitating to take the other subsequent steps which logically follow. We are already faced with the problem of providing further avenues of promotion to the B.D.Os. The decision taken in this regard will, I am sure, lead to the establishment of this welfare and development service.

Before I close, I wish to draw attention towards another important point which is vitally connected with the issue under consideration. What should be the position of the Collector vis-a-vis the Community Development Programme? The generally accepted opinion is that it is

essential for the success of this programme to enlist the support of this senior administrator at the District Level, who enjoys a high status and prestige and is expected to possess a good measure of initiative and drive. The attempt so far has been to make the Community Development Programme look important because the Collector has been made personally responsible for it. I beg to differ from this way of thinking. I think that for want of any other regular administrative machinery spread into the rural areas, within the District there was no alternative but to have the programme looked after by the Collector and his revenue staff in the beginning. But once it has been decided to have the Block as a unit of welfare administration, just as the Tehsil and Thana are units of revenue and police administrations, there is no need for mixing up the revenue and development functions.

LAW AND ORDER

In their enthusiasm for banishing poverty from the country, through the Development schemes, people at times forget that there are other spheres of administration which are no less important—e.g., the collection of Revenue and Taxes and maintenance of Law and Order. Peace and tranquility are the pre-requisites of the economic, social and cultural development of the people. There will be no incentive and climate for doing work and earning more, if the common man feels insecure of his life and property. Similarly, land being the dearest to the farmer, it is necessary that land records are maintained properly. The prompt collection of revenue and taxes, are equally important for the running of the State. It will, therefore be highly improper, to minimize the importance of Revenue and Police administrations.

I think the Collector should not be made to divert his attention from his important law and order and revenue duties. He would have played his part in the welfare State, if he ensured peace and tranquility, maintained the revenue records correctly and collected the revenue and taxes promptly. The responsibility for the welfare and development adminis-

tration should be entrusted to a separate officer at the district level, having the same status as that of a Collector. He may be drawn from the Administrative Services as well as from the Development Departments. Whatever designation is given to him—it may be District Development Officer, his main role would be to coordinate the working of all the connected Departments and to personally supervise the implementation of the Community Development Programmes. The posts of the Collector and District Development Officer being of the same status, an officer may work in a Distt. as the Collector and go to another as the District Development Officer. If the officers of other departments also get a chance to work as District Development Officers, there will be no ground for any feeling of frustration, as exist at present among them, on the ground that the key posts in the Development Administration are always being monopolised by the administrative officers.

This is, in my opinion, the only sound arrangement. It is not proper to combine the regulatory and extension functions in one functionary. The same officer, who has at times to take coercive measures in collection of revenue and taxes, or unpleasant steps for maintaining law and order, cannot at another moment, play the role of an extension worker. The two functions can certainly be combined for the sake of coordination and in the interest of economy at the level of the Commissioner, who is almost completely detached with the day-to-day administrative functions.





RURAL INSURANCE IN RAJASTHAN

K. L. BARAYA

THE LIFE INSURANCE in rural areas has obvious benefits. It not only inculcates the habits of saving but also insures the risk on the lives of the villagers and makes more funds available for the execution of the Plan. With this in view, an effort was made in Rajasthan at individual level in certain blocks to get villagers insured. It was decided with the help of the Zonal Manager, Life Insurance Corporation that a nominee of the Panchayat would be made an Agent of the Corporation for bringing insurance business. This person would give an irrevocable authority to the Corporation that all commission, bonuses and other amount becoming due to him would be paid to the panchayat. The panchayat would retain three-fourth of this amount with itself and pay one-fourth to the person for doing the work. The Life Insurance Corporation also agreed to appoint whole time field officers to act as Extension Officer (Insurance). They were to sit in the office of the Block Development Officer. Their tour programme and casual leave were to be sanctioned by the Branch Manager but only on the recommendation of the Block Development Officer. This ensured a sort of administrative control over them. These officers were made eligible to use the jeep as also for the allotment of staff quarters like any other Extension Officer.

The scheme was started from 1st September, 1958. In the first instance, six whole time field officers only were appointed and a target of rupees one lakh per month, was fixed for each of them. It was, however, soon realised that the work could be taken up on a more extensive scale and the Divisional Mana-

ger was approached to appoint some of the existing field officers as part time workers in the neighbouring blocks. This was agreed to and another fourteen blocks were thus taken up. A drive was launched and, in a period of five to six weeks, business worth one hundred and forty lakhs was assured from the Block areas and 5,000 policies were issued.

Encouraged by the results, the Corporation is now ready to post more whole time field officers in the Block areas and the scheme has been extended still further. The Corporation used to get a total business of about rupees ten crores from the Urban areas of Rajasthan in previous years. It is proposed to aim at securing a business of rupees ten crores per annum from rural areas alone during the next year.

This is a very important step in strengthening the panchayats financially. If we secure a business of ten crores, the annual premium would be about rupees forty lakhs. The Agents are entitled to a commission ranging from 25 to 30% on the first year's premium. This sum of Rs. 10 or 14 lakhs would be paid to the Panchayats as the first year's commission and a sum of Rs. 2 lakhs per annum for twenty-five years as commission on renewals. This is by itself a very substantial amount if we consider the present resources of these panchayats. This is to be utilised for the benefit of the community and will by itself work as an incentive to public spirited people, including panches and others for securing more business. The work is, thus expected to make good progress.

The following three main difficulties, however, seem to be there:

(1) Under the existing law only individuals can be made Agents of the Corporation. A statutory body like a panchayat cannot become an Agent. This is likely to create complications in the long run, because the person who is nominated as the Agent may later on refuse to get his agency renewed when his connections with the panchayat are severed with the result that panchayat may cease to get commission on renewals. This matter has been taken up with the Corporation for being settled temporarily in another way, but the permanent solution seems to be to amend the legislation so as to make the panchayats and cooperatives eligible to be appointed as Agents. Then there would be no difficulty and the panchayat would receive all such amounts.

(2) In areas, where public enthusiasm for getting oneself insured has been generated by this method, private agents, other than the nominees of the panchayat, will enter the field and would offer rebate on first year's premium, to the prospective insured i.e. client, which in many cases would be quite substantial. Although such offer is illegal, in practice it has been found that it is difficult to stop this.

(3) It is necessary to have a whole time agency to regularly collect the premiums and otherwise advise the policy holders. Such an agency should be near the policy holders and the panchayat would, therefore, be the best suited for this purpose. For this it must have some capable whole-time Secretary who could also undertake this work. A scheme under which a whole time Secretary could be appointed for each panchayat is under consideration. In this scheme the Secretary of the panchayat would also be the Secretary of the local Cooperative Society. He could also work as departmental Post Master and undertake the work of Life Insurance and Small Savings on behalf of the panchayat which shall be the Agent for this purpose. Such a person could be given something like 60 to 70 rupees per month. His academic qualifications can be

(Continued on page 31)

RURAL SOCIOLOGY

RURAL SOCIETY IN INDIA by DR. A. R. DESAI, Department of Sociology, University of Bombay. Published by the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics, Bombay in January 1959. Pages 440, Price Rs. 20/-.

THE STUDY of Rural Sociology in really indigenous Indian Context is perhaps of a recent importance. None so far attempted such a study on systematic and scientific lines, although the importance and need of it was always felt by thinkers and Social Engineers. The present thought provoking work of our young Sociologist Dr. Desai, to some extent fulfils the longfelt demand of the reading public and scholars. He seems to have given a pioneering lead in furtherance of studies in Indian Rural Sociology and ably argues that the findings of such studies should be made the basis of all Social and Economic Planning in this country. We must commend the timely initiative taken by the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics in encouraging an Indian Scholar to produce such a work.

Although the book emerges basically from an early work of the author "An Introduction to Rural Sociology in India" published under the same banner in 1953, this revised and enlarged edition is altogether a new attempt in dealing with this complex subject in a simple way. Also the scope and content of the present work have been very much changed.

The volume is divided into two parts. In part I, which is spread over 16 chapters, the author outlines the approach to study the different facets of Rural Society and forcefully pleads for an imperative and urgent requirement of deriving the rural reconstruction programme from a strict sociological analysis of the actual conditions and tendencies of the existing rural society. He has succeeded in sounding a warning to the national policy makers of today that the social forces at work within the countryside must be closely evaluated before consciously attempting to accelerate the processes of social

change. Science of medicine is indispensable for a medical practitioner, likewise, rural sociology should play a decisive role in the work of a social engineer.

In the light of the recent restatement of national policy of rural reconstruction in India, the topics only hitherto touched by the author need close consideration. The book does not intend to present the picture of our rural society in a comprehensive manner, it only sketches a sober landscape of our social structure which influences the daily routine of life and behaviour pattern of millions of men in the remotest corners of the country.

In part II of the volume the writer compiles the most valuable readings from various studies on Indian Rural Sociological problems and thereby perhaps provides basic though preliminary literature on rural sociology. This part is divided into ten sections each comprising a number of readings. The collection is arranged with a sequence depicting a pattern indicating the tendencies of development of Indian Rural Society. The readings composed are very selective and mostly written by Indian authors, who are born, brought up and educated with the same folds of the society about which they write.

Perhaps, the C.D. movement which essentially is a people's movement has come to stay in this country. Analysing C.D. Projects sociologically, the author profusely quotes the observations of various committees such as COPP, PEO and individual scholars who evaluated C.D. Programme. By reading this section it appears that the author speaks of his own reservations on the fundamentals of the philosophy underlying this movement. He would have

wished the scholar and committees to evaluate the validity of the basic assumptions about the village communities in India, the extent of their sense of belongingness to the community, and the commonness of interests under conflicting backgrounds of different classes. According to him the very name is deceptive. In his opinion, sociologically, Community Development is becoming harmful in the sense that the power and control flows from top to bottom, making it a hierarchically bureaucratic organisation.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to conclude that the contents of the books have a direct bearing on the past and future performance of the C.D. Workers. Hence it should be considered as a "must" reading for them.

—Anil C. Shah

Many Hungers

GEOGRAPHY OF HUNGER by JOSUE DE CASTRO with a Foreword by LORD BOYD ORR published by Victor Gollancz Ltd.

THIS BOOK, though first published in 1952 deserves to be read and re-read many times over for the large number of fundamental truths which the author has highlighted. Perhaps hunger will always be with us. The author is unconventional enough not to be satisfied with theories of overpopulation and the suggested remedy of birth control. "The road to world survival" he writes, "does not lie in the neo-Malthusian prescriptions to eliminate surplus people, nor in birth control, but in the effort to make everybody on the face of the earth productive. Hunger and misery are not caused by the presence of too many people in the world, but rather, by having few to produce and many to feed."

De Castro, who is an accepted authority on problem of food, has something specific to say about India. According to him, "misery exists in India neither because the nation is over-run with people nor because her soil is saturated. The true causes have to do with inadequate exploitation of resources, both natural and human." The author

describes a variety of hungers and calls them "a man-made plague." He cites hunger as the main cause of over-population. He argues that once the problem of hunger is solved, the problem of over-population will not arise. He attributes the degradation of colonial peoples to an extremely defective diet combined with an over-dose of alcoholic drinks. He explains the gaiety of the French as being due to their abundant and well-balanced diet.

He accuses the existence of colonial systems in the world for breeding hunger areas. "Only by freeing themselves from the colonial system" he writes, "these hunger areas develop enough production to live on. They can do this not only by diversifying production, but also by setting a fair price for raw materials, and by working them up locally... The problem cannot be solved by increasing individual productivity alone, and so expanding the production of certain products. The article produced must be valued in keeping with the needs of the producers. This means that the prices of raw materials cannot forever be set on the basis of profit margins, through the play of competition for industrial products. They must be related to the cost of basic local necessities in the groups producing raw materials."

This is a highly stimulating book which should be read by everyone interested in the problem of food—and that of hunger.

— D.R.

Food

FERTILISERS FOR MORE FOOD
by K. C. PANT Published by the Hindustan Times Ltd., New Delhi.

AMIDST THE ceaseless array of agricultural sermons heard in our country in recent days, when every speaker attempts to outwit the other by pulling out his own new master-key to India's increased agricultural production, Mr. Pant's small booklet on fertilisers has come out as a welcome relief, with its contents of what may be termed a "balanced view" of the country's fertiliser problem. In this small booklet, the author has condensed much useful material and information and has made several

observations which are worthy of note by those charged with the responsibility of the country's agricultural advancement. It is time that every one in the country realised that "it would be no exaggeration to say that the capacity of indigenous food production to keep pace with this rising demand (for more food) will set the pace of India's economic progress."

The author has presented informative charts and tables from other countries to show how agricultural yield is inevitably related to the consumption of fertilisers—a fact which our agricultural authorities (scientists included) either refuse to recognise or prefer to ignore. In 1957-58 India imported foodgrains to the value of Rs. 167 crores. During the same period the import of fertilisers amounted to the value of about Rs. 7 crores. "The import of large quantities of fertiliser imposes a heavy strain on India's meagre resources. But where the choice lies between importing food or fertiliser, the latter is more economical. It is cheaper to buy fertiliser abroad and use it for securing an increase in internal food production than to buy the additional quantity of foodgrains". No one can dispute or challenge the above observations of the author. It has become the fashion of the day to correlate every negative attitude of the Government to a shortage in foreign exchange. But surely, if we can spend Rs. 167 crores in a year for import of foodgrains, we can afford to spend much more than Rs. 7 crores on the import of essential fertilisers to wipe off our food deficit costing Rs. 167 crores. In that process, our saving of foreign exchange will be sizeable, but does any one care to look the problem that way?

Mr. Pant has included a useful and impartial discussion on organic fertilisers, in the booklet. This would serve as a partial answer to our country's 'green manure wizards', who seek to solve the national food crisis through preachings on the virtues of soil organic matter. Mr. Pant has dealt with this problem in its proper perspective, which deserves the attention of the Planning Commission.

The booklet contains a short summary of the world fertiliser industry, a brief discussion of fertiliser input and-crop output, useful notes on nitrogenous, phosphatic and potassic fertilisers and the potential value of compound and mixed fertilisers in agriculture.

There are a few minor errors (such as, for example, the figures relating to the production and consumption of potassic fertilisers in India) and some slightly incorrect statements (such as "the hydrogen in the water combines with carbon dioxide to form raw plant foods"). As these are very minor, further examples are not cited, but it is hoped that the author will rectify such minor errors and incorrect statements in the next edition.

We commend the booklet to every one concerned with, or interested in, the subject of more food through more fertilisers.

—Dr. C. K. N. NAIR

Chief Agronomist, The Fertiliser Association of India, New Delhi.

High Class Hindus

THE TWICE BORN by G. MORRIS CARSTAIRS. With a preface by MARGARET MEAD published by the Hogarth Press, London.

THIS IS ONE of the most fascinating books on sociological conditions in India. It is a study of a community of high class Hindus in Rajasthan and gives a graphic account of village personalities—young, old, high, low, man, woman and child. The author was born in India and had spent his childhood in Rajasthan. When in 1949, he returned to this country for two years, he was not visiting a strange culture. The wealth of detail which goes to make the life histories of certain characters provides the basis for his analysis of personality-formation in which historical, sociological and psycho-analytic concepts each play a part. It is an extremely readable book for those who wish to make a serious study of sociological conditions in this country. It is a book which the more serious among our Project workers would not like to miss.

—D.R.

POINTS OF VIEW

Compiled by the Editor

THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE

DR. V. K. R. V. RAO

I WOULD support small cooperatives with not more than a hundred members. If the cooperative is bigish in size involving a whole village or more than 1,000 members, bureaucracy, politics and bullies will have their play in its working. Such a cooperative is to be opposed. But the small cooperative is a "must" today and in evaluating it, the problem of rural economy should be viewed from an economic angle and not an ideological angle.

I would rule out the big holders buying out the small holders as distribution of ownership is essential for restoring the self-respect and dignity of the villagers who measure status and prestige by the ownership of land. The only alternative is cooperative consolidation of holdings as then only the holding will become credit-worthy and will lend itself to proper utilisation through scientific cultivation.

The case for cooperative consolidation of holdings is strong and those who talk of regimentation, totalitarianism, freedom of the farmer and decentralisation, are talking moonshine, as they ignore a very important problem in the development of the rural economy. The other important problem that can be solved through cooperative farming is rural underemployment. A large number of labourers are employed for the season and to that extent, not only unemployed or underemployed but receive less remuneration. In practice, with small holdings, these labourers could not be released for other work. Under cooperative farming, the pattern could be reorganised to utilise some of the labourers for creating community consumption or capital assets, like roads in the villages.

Cooperative farming will help make rural savings corporate as in the case of joint stock companies in the urban areas. Urban or foreign aid

can not solve the appalling problem of 32 crores of people depending on unscientifically cultivated land. Better savings and greater investment in the rural areas by the rural people alone can better the rural economy.

A cooperative, like a joint stock company, will detain some percentage of the profits for re-investment in land and can distribute the rest of the income as profits. If left to the shareholders alone, most probably none of the joint stock companies in the urban areas can have spelled progress of industry.

It is wrong to identify the cooperative farm with the village panchayat or the entire village community. While one cooperative society can serve the whole village for the purposes of marketing and purchase, small cooperatives will help avoid regimentation and bureaucracy.—
(Based on an address delivered to the teachers and students of Thiagaraj group of colleges at Madurai).

SHARING OF PROSPERITY

C. D. Deshmukh

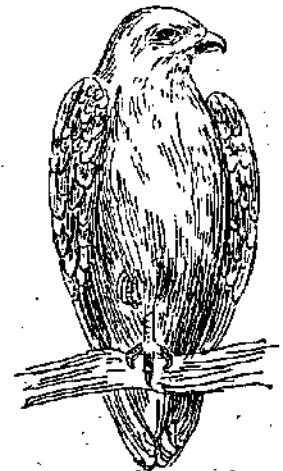
THE MAJORITY of the countries in the world today are either undeveloped or underdeveloped. The affluent countries are in a minority. The affluent countries can spare only a small portion of their national income to the rest.

It is not possible to impose an egalitarian government. There is the problem of selfishness of man. It is one of the difficulties in the Sarvodaya way. Another difficulty is that the incidence of good intentions is not as large as it should be. Further, good intentions are not combined with good ability. It however, does not mean that the efforts to promote Sarvodaya way of thinking should be given up. In that event the original evil of selfishness would only be aggravated.

India is almost the poorest country in the world. The stepping up of the national income is the task which the country has undertaken following the advent of freedom. The idea of planned development and formulated plans has therefore been adopted. Proper planning is possible only if accurate statistics were available. With that object in view the Central Statistics office—a committee for compilation of national income and a machinery for conducting an annual and continuous sample survey has been set up.

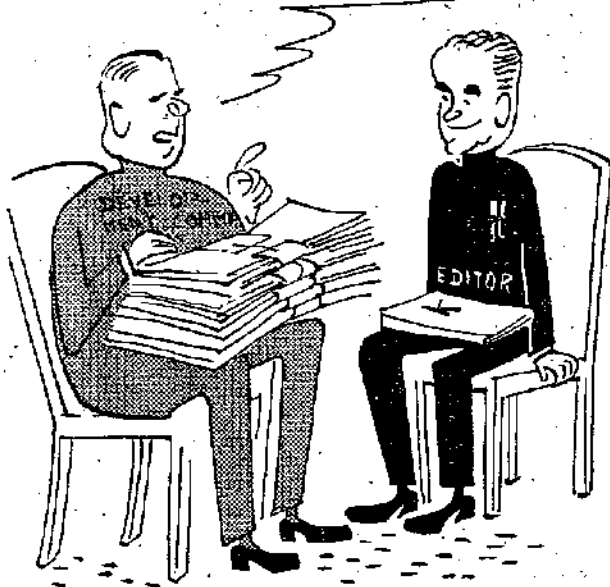
As a result of the sample inquiry conducted it has been discovered that there are 20 to 25 million unemployed people in the country. The second Five Year Plan fixed a target of providing employment to ten million people and improving the national income by five per cent. If the increase in population was taken into consideration, the problem of providing employment to all unemployed and underemployed would still be terrific.

Our Government has correctly decided to establish a socialist Welfare State. It means reducing disparity in wealth among the people. The purpose of taxation is to achieve this end. The affluent would be enabled to contribute for promoting the prosperity of others. The wide disparities in national income in different areas in the country should also be reduced so that the prosperity might be shared by all. (From an inaugural address delivered at a Seminar organised by the Andhra Pradesh Sarvodaya Mandal).



"EDITOR REGRETS"

SORRY, I CAN'T SPARE YOU MORE THAN A MINUTE - I HAVE TO ATTEND TO A NUMBER OF V.V.I.Ps



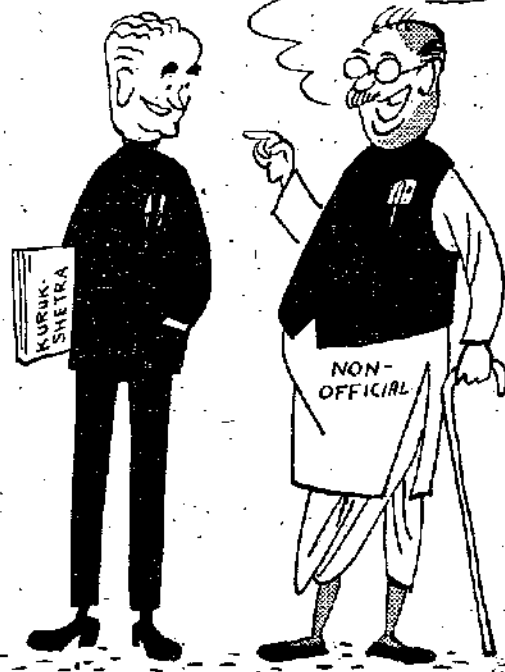
SIR, CAN'T YOU PUT MY NAME ON YOUR FREE MAILING LIST? MY SON IS TAKING THE I.A.S. EXAMINATION THIS YEAR



SIR, I AM PASSING YOUR JOURNAL TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI WHO IS NOW RUNNING THE BLOCK



WHY DON'T YOU CONVERT KURUKSHETRA FROM A QUARTERLY INTO A MONTHLY?



(Based on the Editor's recent Tour Notes)



THE PRESS ROUND-UP

THE DECCAN HERALD (Bangalore), writing on "Cooperation", says that the problem of training a large number of workers to man the service cooperatives claims the highest priority. It is doubtful, it adds, whether this could be achieved merely by introducing the subject of cooperation in the syllabi of secondary schools. In view of the urgency of the problem, it is desirable that a new institutional frame-work should be evolved to train up a sufficient number of persons to run village cooperatives. To enable the coming into being of these new cooperatives, according to the paper, many States will have to pass the necessary legislation within the time-limit of April 1960.

THE NATIONAL HERALD (Lucknow), writing under the heading "Cooperation and Socialism", says that cooperative farms became possible in Yugoslavia only after economic relationships within them were placed on a sound basis. In India it should mean that cooperative farming should not lead to domination by the rich peasants of the farm and other agencies of cooperation. There was cooperation even in Czarist Russia, adds the paper, but the kind of service cooperatives which existed then served only the landlord and the rich peasants; after the revolu-

tion, the approach was socialist and then the content of cooperation changed considerably. The Soviet theory is that the character of cooperation is determined by the social system itself, and it applies equally well to Indian conditions. If parties like the Swatantra Party have no objection to service cooperatives, it is not only because they think that they will not mean socialism but because they think that these cooperatives will serve class interests well and strengthen the factors against socialism. The strength of cooperative farming, apart from the difficulty of using compulsion, will lie in its voluntariness; but the large majority of the peasants will find its advantages easily if they feel that not only the standards of living will rise, but that their social relationships will be transformed. The general social interest in the development of productive forces, according to the paper, demands cooperative farming, but it will also become the economic concern of the farmer, if he begins to see its advantages. There is as much likelihood of the farmer demanding the incentives of cooperative farming as of his waiting to join cooperative farms voluntarily.

THE NAGPUR TIMES (Nagpur), is critical of Dr. Katiya's suggestion that

cooperatives should be formed on the usual basis of cash capital rather than land. The merit of Farming Cooperatives would seem to lie in cooperative effort by all those who love cultivation primarily for its own sake and secondarily for the sake of subsistence. If money is made the basis of Farming Cooperatives, the very spirit behind the idea may disappear.

THE EASTERN TIMES (Cuttack), writing on Cooperatives in Orissa, says that the existing Societies in the State suffer from many disabilities, the absence of irrigation facilities being the main hurdle. In some cases the Societies have not started functioning as no settlers have yet joined them. In certain other cases, non-availability of land stands in the way of the proper functioning of the Societies. The villagers, the paper adds, should be educated about the usefulness of such societies. They must know what it means to them. They must also know what is a service cooperative society, how it is formed and how it is managed. And they must know what are the benefits they would derive from such societies. What is needed is an intensive propaganda in the villages explaining the creed of cooperation "Each for all and all for each."

THE AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA (Calcutta), holds that if the cooperative movement has so far made little progress in West Bengal the chief reason for it is neither the Bengalee's individualistic tendency, nor his apathy to manual work, as it is due to other reasons, including cumbersome and unworkable State legislation governing the cooperative societies. Bureaucratisation and cooperation, adds the paper, cannot go well together. Whatever might be the past achievements, or their more conspicuous absence, the cooperative movement, not only in West Bengal, but all over India, applying to agriculture, has "assumed a new urgency and national importance as a bold bid to solve the country's food problem."

JUANTAR (Bengali, Calcutta), says that it is unfortunate that too much talk, and very little action, is forthcoming from the leaders. There have been repeated enquiries into the

working of the cooperative movement and the basic defects are quite well-known. Instead of removing these defects, the leaders are repeating their age-old theories regarding obstacles in the way of successful cooperative movement. The question of credit to the agriculturists through the cooperative organisations, for instance, has not been taken up seriously, even though the leaders cry hoarse regarding the unfair practices of the moneylenders.

ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA (Bengali, Calcutta), says that, although cooperative societies have a useful role in the production and distribution system in India, not much has been done so far to form multi-purpose societies which could work efficiently.

AKALI PATRIKA (Punjabi, Jullundur), says that Government has not yet given any clear outline of the scheme of cooperative farming. The criticism made against this scheme, therefore, is also "none too clear." When we approached the Cooperative Department to further clarify the position, the paper adds, local newsmen were taken to a cooperative farming society in village Mundh, about 12 miles from Jullundur. They went round the field, and arrived at the conclusion that no individual farmer can compete with the cooperative system of farming in the matter of agricultural production. Referring to the objection that cooperative farming will lead to unemployment in the villages, the paper says that enquiry in this regard revealed not only that none of the peasants working on the land before had gone out of employment, but also that, because of the variety of crops they were growing, more labour was in demand. This involved importing labour from outside. The paper suggests to the Punjab Government that cooperative farms, such as the one at Mundh, should also be shown to people in general, so as to remove their misconceptions and draw them into the scheme.

AJIT (Punjabi, Jullundur), regrets that opposition to cooperative farming is increasing. Those who are in the forefront of this opposition, it says, are either the big Zamindars

who are doing so for their own personal ends, or their agents. The paper feels that every progressive person should work hard in order to falsify the baseless propaganda carried on by reactionary Jagirdars.

VIR BHARAT (Urdu, Jullundur), says that, despite opposition to cooperative farming, service cooperatives are taking shape in the Punjab. There are nearly 16,750 cooperative societies in the State, most of them being credit societies. Two thousand societies, it adds, distribute fertilizers and improved seeds. If these societies begin to supply agricultural implements and machinery, insecticides etc. they will become service cooperatives. The existence of 262 cooperative farming societies in the State, according to the paper, shows that cooperative farming has started in our State on a limited scale, even before the stipulated period of three years has expired.

BHARAT (Hindi, Allahabad), deplores the present controversy regarding the utility and propriety of cooperative farming and feels that the work should start in right earnest and no time be wasted in arguments. The progress of cultivation and food production according to the paper, is of vital importance and delay might prove harmful.

THE DECCAN HERALD (Bangalore), publishes an article "Cooperation: Decline and Fall" by Shri J. M. Lobo Prabhu, who says that opposition to cooperative farming is growing due to "apprehensions that the lands of the members will be communised and grain State-traded at prices that suit the Government". Rural credit societies, he says, have failed miserably and hardly 5% of the amount borrowed is utilised by the members for production and the rest for socio-religious expenditure and paying of old debts, etc. He suggests that panchayats should enforce proper "agricultural discipline". The basis of cooperation, according to him, should shift from money to means. "Cooperation must help him to a pattern for living which will provide incentives for his material and moral change." He feels that "loans and subsidy in the form of building material, which can be cooperatively produced, can

set up a wave of constructions, as in towns, in which personal contributions will be increasingly forthcoming, as it is a common human desire to find self-expression in one's own house. He says that while it will be difficult to root out the evil of moneylenders, it should be possible to register them with the panchayats to avoid the existing malpractices. It is, therefore, necessary to think of cooperation not as a formula but as an instrument to canalise, on one hand, the efforts of the people and, on the other, the results for their gratification as common human beings."

THE SEARCHLIGHT (Patna), publishes an article on "Rural Development" by Shri B. G. Rao, who stresses the need for avoiding any rigidity of pattern, centralisation of direction and excessive dependence on authority. He suggests that service cooperatives should not merely be a complement of the credit society, but also assume the functions of the credit society. Inter-weaving of credit services and marketing, he says, is essential for the successful operation of the cooperatives. Another important aspect which is to be kept in mind is the role of panchayat in furthering the cause of cooperation. Agricultural production can be increased only if the panchayats and cooperative societies work in unison, and for this the services of Gram Sevaks will have to be utilised. He also favours the large-sized cooperatives for the effective functioning of these institutions, and says that, to limit the service cooperative to a village is to handicap it with a perpetual dependence upon the State for its very existence.

THE HINDU (Madras), publishes an article captioned "New Cooperative Policy Examined" by "a correspondent", who doubts if the new policy of providing supplementary credit linked with production plans will succeed. The full implications of this unorthodox method of providing finance, he says, was not adequately realised before the policy changes were effected. Exaggerated emphasis has been placed on credit alone. In the absence of adequate supply of improved seeds, manures, fertilizers, implements and other basic

agricultural necessities, provision of large amounts of credit by loan, according to him, will not only not attain the objective but also create new problems. To ensure prompt recovery of loans, he stresses the importance of developing marketing in conjunction with credit, and the need for providing efficient supervision and other means of checks by the Central Bank etc.

THE COMMERCE (Bombay), publishes an article on "Progress of Large Cooperatives" by Shri. B. V. Rao, who says that the main hurdle at the initial stages will be the resistance from the peasants who are generally reluctant to associate themselves with any institution if Government policies are weak and indefinite. He favours large-sized cooperatives and states that the main ingredients for the success, namely the village level worker, the cooperative and the panchayat require a far higher level of organisational efficiency and competence and sense of responsibility than is normally witnessed now. He also doubts the success of the proposed pilot schemes for providing a supplementary line of credit and feels that this "will not only affect the normal process of building up owned funds of the societies, but will also promote increasing dependence on the supplementary line of credit. Such a development, he adds, will, obviously, disturb the normal functioning of the Central and apex banks" also. The Credit Unions, according to him, should also undertake other functions, such as supply of seeds and fertilizers, etc. until the necessary conditions are created for establishing smaller societies.

THE CAPITAL (Calcutta), publishes an article on the working of cooperatives by a correspondent, who feels that the proposed expansion by itself "would do little to strengthen the movement, and there will be repetitions of the sorry tale of functional inefficiency and organisational debility which now characterise co-operation in this country". He suggests that due importance should be given to the method to tackle the problems and repayment of the loans and also to see that the loans are mainly utilised for the agricultural production alone. The best

remedy to the present ills, according to him, is to make use of the cooperative as a centre for promoting cooperative education and the democratic way of life among the villagers. Loans advanced by cooperatives, either to agriculturists, artisans, businessmen or others, should be strictly related to the productive purposes, for which they are to be used. A hopeful feature of the situation, according to the writer, is that emphasis is being laid on co-

operative reorganisation schemes which accord a proper place to intensive campaigns by trained non-official workers to educate the people in cooperative ideals, principles and practices *pari passu* with efforts to vitalise badly and inefficiently run societies. This, he says, is being done as an integral part of the campaign for converting credit cooperatives into service cooperatives and to use the latter as multi-purpose agencies.

RURAL INSURANCE IN RAJASTHAN

(Continued from page 24)

of middle standard. The Postal Department may pay Rs. 20/- to the panchayat for each extra departmental post office. The Life Insurance Corporation could also contribute Rs. 20/- per month towards the salary of this official. The panchayat would, therefore, have to pay only Rs. 25/- per month from its budget. The Secretary so appointed would secure Life Insurance business, work as an Agent on behalf of the panchayat for Small Savings and be entitled to one and a quarter per cent commission on all such investments. One fourth of the commission on account of Life Insurance business will be paid to the Secretary (towards his salary) and the remaining three-fourths credited to the funds of the panchayat. This would enable the panchayat to finance the pay of the Secretary entirely out of the commission received by it.

This scheme has additional advantages, Secretary of the panchayat would be connected with Post Office and, therefore, when he works as an Agent for small savings, he would be able to promptly encash the small savings certificates. The complaints in the extra Departmental Post Office would also be reduced as the people

could readily go to him and get their grievances redressed. He would be a link between the panchayat and cooperative society. His sphere of work would be limited to 300 to 500 families and it would make it possible for him to collect the premium and remit it to the Banks for Life Insurance Corporation.

The block staff, except for the Block Development Officer, do not have to devote much time to secure life insurance. Clear instructions were issued to ensure that the Village Level Worker is not asked to devote his time to this work as otherwise his role as Extension Worker would be greatly impaired. The Block Development Officers with the assistance of the Panchayat Extension Officers and Social Education Organisers have been able to locate suitable persons to work on behalf of the Panchayats.

The Life Insurance business has, also thrown open additional avenues of promotion to the Village Level Workers. Some Village Level Workers have already been selected as Field Officers (Extension Officers Insurance) by the Life Insurance Corporation.



CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN INDIA

ASHOKA MEHTA

A MAJOR controversy is raging in this country on cooperative farming. As often happens in political disputes, the contesting points of view tend to be exaggerated and the large area of agreement tends to be lost sight of.

The sudden upsurge of interest in cooperatives is due to the general realization that agricultural expansion is crucial to economic development.

The poverty of Indian agriculture is well known. There is a simultaneous need to increase yields as well as incomes from land. The Community Development Projects have achieved something, but the urgency and extensiveness of the task requires something bigger still, something that involves the interest and effort of every agriculturist. Hence the unanimity on service cooperatives.

It is not fully realized that service cooperatives embracing 60 million peasant households over half a million villages, of which 380,000 have a population of fewer than 500 each, will demand an organizational effort never attempted before.

The cooperative movement in India is of more than 50 years' standing. In some places its growth and achievements have been noteworthy, but in the country as a whole the structure is weak, lacking roots, and therefore sans vigour.

EDUCATION

It is necessary to have a vast programme of education in cooperatives. All over the world sound cooperatives have needed the cocoon of folk-education. The educational programme in India, in schools and colleges, will have to be suitably reoriented. Teachers, particularly at the village level, will have to be

given some insight into, and understanding of, cooperatives. The right ethos in the villages is all-important. To involve millions even in service cooperatives is to change their traditional outlook and pattern of behaviour. Joining a cooperative can never be a passive act; it is an act of participation. And informed participation demands the opening of a new dimension in one's personality, as we know from our own experience.

The apparent unanimity on service cooperatives covers many future dissensions. As we approach concrete tasks the unanimity will be seen to be fragile, as has already happened on the question of revision of the cooperative laws.

In the utilization of cultivable waste where harsh words are being bandied, there is scope for understanding. Where ceilings on holdings are imposed and enforced, some lands will become surplus. While some people would like them to be distributed among landless agriculturists, majority opinion realizes that the provision of tiny farms without the necessary resources for cultivation will not lead to rehabilitation of the landless, nor arrest a possible fall in production. The surplus lands might well be turned into cooperatives—that is, the lands should be offered only to those who agree to cooperative cultivation, a proposition that even Shri M. R. Masani, as he told me, does not dispute.

WASTE LAND

In the utilization of cultivable waste land, the case for cooperative cultivation is stronger. There are 80 to 90 million acres of such land, of which 40 million can be brought under the plough. But in either case there will have to be a substantial initial investment of capital,

and a considerable waiting, i.e., gestation period. It may also be necessary to use tractors to make the lands cultivable. All this would be beyond the capacity of landless agriculturists; the community would have to undertake the responsibilities, and would find it easier to do the work through cooperatives.

THE FOUR TYPES

The criticism as to pooling of holdings deserves fuller consideration. There are different types, or stages, of cooperative farming. In type I, there usually exists no common property. The collective character of this type consists merely in the common execution of certain farm operations, such as sowing, harvesting or threshing. Income is derived from the labour, implements, and draught animals furnished by each member.

In type II, there is common cultivation, the boundaries being ploughed over. Land ownership is still recognized, the peasant receiving land rent; draught animals and implements remain private property and can be lent for money to the cooperatives.

In type III all land, livestock and implements belong to the common pool. The final output is cooperative property. The major part of income is derived from manual work, which is measured in the labour-days put in a minor part, proportionate to the individual share of land contributed, is received as rent. In addition, compensation payments are made for the value of livestock, implements, etc. The title deeds of the lands contributed are retained.

In type IV all income is derived from work and pooling is carried to the logical conclusion.

In the first type there is no pooling of land; in other types the element of cooperative ownership rises by stages. It should be open to farmers to organize cooperative farms of any type and to travel up or down the scale. Only experience can show which type suits which region or crop or conditions. (Extracts from an article published in *The Statesman*.)

NEED FOR REVIEW

THE PROJECTED countrywide expansion of the co-operative movement is not possible without completely changing the spirit and form of the present co-operative structure. Yet State Governments have undertaken no review of the working of co-operative departments and have given no hint of freeing co-operative institutions from the control of registrars. The co-operative movement is no longer a system of business; it is not merely a means of economic organization; it is to be an integral part of a new social and economic structure. The people are now learning with a sense of surprise that, instead of going in the right direction, the co-operative movement has been, even after freedom, going in the wrong direction. There have been many strictures on the retarded progress of co-operation but they have resulted only in a sense of helplessness. The Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee, in its report in 1949, said that during the two decades since the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture made its report, the co-operative movement had made little progress in tackling the problems of peasant life and that it had not attained the momentum of a popular movement because of bureaucratic control and rigidity of administration. The Rural Credit Survey, sponsored by the Reserve Bank, said in 1954 that the place occupied by co-operative credit in the rural finance of the country was very insignificant, that the primary society satisfied none of the requisites of either co-operation or sound credit, that the classwise distribution of finance was preponderantly in favour of large cultivators, that on the fifty-year record of co-operative credit agencies in the country, they must be pronounced a failure. In 1957, the Government secured the services of Sir Malcolm Darling to review the working of the co-operative movement, and he expressed his surprise that "it is proposed to add an imposing new storey—for co-ope-

rative manufacturing, marketing or processing—to a structure nowhere very strong and in some States deplorably weak; and to do this without any systematic strengthening of its foundations". The situation has not improved, and it is widely known, Co-operative statistics have been lies.

"It is not generally realized that the number of co-operative societies in India exceeds that of any other country in the world: India has 104,000 societies, Germany 52,000, France 35,000, the USA 31,000. The co-operative movement in India is not, therefore, a curious sideline which only enthusiasts follow, but an element of importance in the national life," wrote Mr. Strickland, a member of the Indian Civil Service, in an article he contributed to a 1938 publication on Indian social and economic problems meant for ICS probationers. It was a proud and hopeful statement by one who worked in the co-operative department of the Punjab Government, but very wrong in substance. Mr. Strickland was taking a merely departmental view in the spirit of registrars of co-operative societies. The registrars were endowed with many responsibilities and powers, on the basis of the recommendations of the McLagan Committee of 1915, but both the breed of registrars and their working have deteriorated. Darling found that officers from outside the department were appointed registrars, joint or deputy registrars without even a day's training; "in the case of the registrar, the policy is, I venture to say, inexcusable considering the weight of authority against it. . . It is now generally accepted that all concerned with the working of the co-operative movement must be fully trained in the principles and practice of co-operation. This naturally applies with special force to registrars. Yet it is still the rule rather than the exception for registrars to be appointed without any training at all. Uttar

Pradesh, West Bengal, Bombay, Orissa, Kerala and Bihar are all examples of this." Darling added:

"I found many disposed to regard the targets under the plan as aims to be achieved at all costs. It was almost as if they thought the peasants have been made for the targets and not the targets for the peasants. This is a tendency very much to be guarded against at all levels, if the new structure is to be built on sound lines".

It is surprising that State Governments have made no preparations for overhauling co-operative departments and for restoring people's confidence in the co-operative movement. There is much sense in the demand made by the Indian Co-operative Union that the role of the co-operative departments should be reviewed and that societies which are following co-operative principles and working well and those showing reasonable promise should be separated from those which are dead and beyond redemption. The great need is, of course, to redefine the role of the administration in relation to co-operative institutions and to adopt a new co-operative law. The present law, in spite of the amendments it has undergone, is basically the 1912 Act, which was an improved version of the 1904 Act, largely modelled on the old English Friendly Societies Act; the tendency has been towards authoritarianism. Rules framed under the present Act provide for all kinds of interference which do not allow co-operative societies democratic status or internal autonomy. Non-statutory interference should be eliminated. There are other suggestions, for the appointment of a co-operative grants commission and of co-operative development boards, for the institution of an audit service which would remove departmental intrusion, and for provisions for better management of societies, which deserve consideration. Any expansion of the co-operative movement should be on the basis of frank acknowledgement of the grave defects in present working. Ministers and departmental heads should rise above their set-up (COURTESY: *National Herald*.)

COMMUNITY FORESTS

association vs transfer

J. N. SINHA

Conservator of Forest, Bihar

A FOREST is an unlocked property spread over the landscape, and for its conservation the active cooperation of the local population is a prime condition. This is specially so in respect of a Community Forest—that is to say, a forest between or in the vicinity of villages.

The local people are allowed, by virtue of recorded rights, to take from the annual coupes, free of charge, as much forest produce as they may need for their personal consumption, and rarely does sufficient remain for sale even to recover the expenses of management. Thus it is the "locals" whom the Community Forest chiefly serves. Yet, in the given conditions of management wholly by Government, there exists little feeling of "belonging" among the local people who, suspecting and resenting controls, perpetually try to outwit the protective staff. The result is that Community Forests, in Bihar as elsewhere, are not being protected as well as they might be. Embarrassing complaints, chiefly arising from misunderstanding and suspicion, are heard from time to time; nor are the lower forest staff beyond the reach of temptation. The only logical course appears to be to associate the local people with management of Community Forests: this would create a sense of joint ownership, responsibility and affection.

NOT TRANSFER

The forests are not being given away to the panchayats; the latter are only being associated with management. Put another way, it is not giving away the forest but taking in the panchayats. The Forest Department will continue with its administration and overall responsibility. Scientific management will also continue and working plans will operate without compromise. Only in

the protection and improvement of the forest will help be secured from the panchayat by effecting a psychological reorientation. Said a mukhiya (headman) of a panchayat: "We would rather put up with shortage of poles than steal, for how can we steal our own property?" Government revenue will not suffer; rather is there a likelihood of an increase because of more economical use of forest produce by right-holders, and the consequent surplus left over for sale. The cost of management will also decrease eventually. The set-up ensures that erring panchayats will not have opportunities for destruction of forests. The remoter of these—grouped under the term Commercial or National Forests—will continue, as now to be managed independently by the Forest Department.

The subject was introduced at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Board of Forestry at Mussoorie in September 1958. The Board recommended circulation of the experiences gained in Bihar and Madras for guidance and such action as the different States might deem fit.

The case for Community Forests has unfortunately been prejudiced by continual and unfair citing—out of context—of something done long ago in Madras and the results thereof. In Madras, in the twenties, sizeable parts of reserved forests were virtually alienated and handed over to uncontrolled, almost amorphous, bodies called panchayats. In those days there were no statutory Gram Panchayats as we now know them, and the forests were simply handed over to panchayats to use as they pleased. The destruction of forests was inevitable. But in Bihar we are not handing over forests to Gram Panchayats, only associating them

with management, with all the necessary controls and safeguards.

BASIC POINTS

The scheme is based on three elementary points. (a) Those who chiefly derive benefit from the forests should have a share in their protection and management also. (b) Due conservation of forests is possible only if the local people regard them as their own property and actively help in protection. (c) When every other activity in the locality is eventually to be in the charge of panchayats, according to the concept of the Panchayat Raj Act, how can forests be excluded?

Forest management in association with Panchayats is already having a tonic effect in the zones of experiment. Once the people begin to feel that a forest is their own, even though under the overall control of the Government, and that the benefits of conservation or the evils of destruction will chiefly be theirs, they may certainly be expected to take an active interest in protection. When a forest guard patrols with the village volunteer force of the gram panchayat, there is smaller chance of public complaints against him, and the false allegations common today will not be given credence, for the guard will not be acting alone, as now.

There are a couple of points worth mentioning. (1) The panchayats are generally supposed not to have acquired a due sense of responsibility, so that to entrust forests to them is risky. (2) There is a belief that the existing state of Community Forest conservation is fully satisfactory—a supposition not supported by facts. The answers to these are as follows. (1) It is true that the scheme will have teething troubles. For this reason guarded steps are being taken after experiment. The results so far achieved belie the forebodings. (2) It must be recognized that a Community Forest cannot be adequately protected in isolation from the local population. Mere increase in the number of protective staff will not achieve the aim, for the lower executives themselves may

prove a problem and, instead of plugging the leak, we may—considering the temptations of intense demand and easy money—only by creating new points of leakage.

An experiment was launched on May 24, 1958, in respect of forests covered by eleven panchayats (eight in Ranchi district and three in the bordering Palamau district). The area of Community Forests covered is 37.5 square miles. For the purposes of the experiment the legal position has not been altered or new financial commitments entered into. The overall management remains, as before, in the hands of the Forest Department, which is still answerable for the safety of the forest. In every panchayat a forest committee, with a subcommittee in each constituent village, has been formed.

The job of the such committee is to form and supervise patrol (Van Raksha Dal) and generally take protective measures. Each patrol party is made up of six to eight villagers, and there is one party for each day of the week. The patrol party with the forest guard keeps watch even by night. Cutters who could elude the lone forest guard—or intimidate or bribe him—cannot do so with the patrolling party. The forest guard still sends up forest offence cases to the Divisional Forest Officer through the beat officer and range officer, and the power to compound offences or prosecute offenders rests as before with the DFO.

DIFFERENCE

But the difference is that now cases go through the panchayat, who ascertain the facts and record recommendations. Normally the DFO accepts their advice. This ensures that nobody will have grounds for complaint against the forest staff of harassment, also, there will be a feeling among the people of partnership in management. Special vigilance is being maintained by posting a gazetted officer to the experimental zone; he goes from forest to forest organising forest sub-committees, solving local problems, and seeing that the people are gradually trained

in forest conservation. If at any time any of the panchayats is found intractable, the entire management of the forest will be returned to the Forest Department. The Government has taken up amendment of the Panchayat Raj Act, by which legal powers will be conferred upon gram panchayats in matters of forest management.

The experiment initiated in 1958 has yielded encouraging results which cannot escape even the casual visitor. There is an atmosphere of sober enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility among the people, who have themselves established small plantations in bare patches of forest. The panchayats are determined that no-

body shall take from the common pool more than he strictly needs, with the result that a surplus is now left for sale where previously none existed. This is being sold through Forest Co-operative Societies instead of through contractors, and thus the local people gain financially. Encouraged by the results of the first experiment, eleven more panchayats in the Simdega Sub-Division of Ranchi District, accounting for a forest area of 38.2 sq miles, have now become associated with forest management. More and more panchayats are wanting to come in, but cautious steps are being taken. Eventually, however, it is hoped, it will be possible to cover all the Community Forests in Bihar.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MYSORE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 18)

survey and alignment of field channels would be the responsibility of the Construction Authorities, their excavation and maintenance must be carried out by the beneficiaries, organised as far as possible in co-operatives. In case of default the State Government should have power to construct these field channels and recover the cost thereof from the beneficiaries as arrears of land revenue.

These recommendations apply to all irrigation works, whether major, medium or minor.

FINANCIAL POWERS TO LEVY CESS

In order to ensure the availability of adequate funds with the Panchayats for carrying out proper maintenance

of minor irrigation works entrusted to them and also to give them a psychological feeling that the works belong to them and it is their responsibility to maintain them, they should be empowered to levy a suitable cess and/or water rate and to collect all other miscellaneous revenues, such as from fisheries, plantation, lease of land, etc., from these works. In cases where the Government already charge an irrigation cess, a suitable proportion thereof should be transferred to the Panchayats for this purpose. Where the cess collected or the resources of the Panchayats are inadequate for the proper maintenance of an irrigation work the State Government should pay an adequate subsidy for the purpose. (To be continued).



PROGRAMME NOTES

PILOT PROJECTS FOR INDUSTRIES

A NINE-MAN Study Team has been set up to study the working, achievements and drawbacks of the 26 pilot projects for industries, which were set up by the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation in conjunction with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in different States and Union Territories. The Team will assess and recommend experiences suitable for application or multiplication in the development of village and small-scale industries in the Blocks.

The pilot projects, which have now worked for about three years, were set up to act as a laboratory for controlled observation and to find possible solutions to the problems in the field, particularly those arising out of competition from mechanised consumer goods industries. The operation of the projects was expected also to indicate the pattern of industrial extension service for the development and rural industries.

The Study Team has divided itself into three groups which will visit selected projects in different parts of the country during August and September and analyse the causes of bottlenecks holding up the programme and the causes of any failures, and recommend measures required to be taken by the Central and State Governments to accelerate the development of village and small-scale industries in the Blocks.

The terms of reference of the Team include consideration of the methodology of industrial potential survey for a Block; the development of marketing; training, required for rural artisans; coordination between the various departments and non-official bodies; and the development of suitable agencies, like industrial cooperative societies, in the development of village and small-scale industries.

The Study Team will also consider the minimum industries programme for a Block and the role of pan-

chayats, Block Samitis and other local official bodies in the development of industries therein, and recommend indicators for calling reports on the industries programme in the Blocks.

COOPERATION

THE CONFERENCE of State Ministers of Cooperation held at Mysore in July, 1959, considered various important questions concerning implementation of the new cooperative policy. In particular, the Conference devoted considerable attention to the question of provision of adequate finance to members of cooperative societies and in that context recommended that an Expert Committee should go into the whole question including review of the existing procedures for fixing credit limits of primary societies and Central Banks, strengthening the capital structure of the societies etc. There was general agreement that during the current year, a programme of revitalising 20,000 societies and organising 20,000 new societies could be taken up. There was general agreement on the functions of service cooperatives. Measures necessary for building up and strengthening of non-official associations and for eradicating maladministration and inefficiency in the Co-operative institutions at all levels were generally agreed to. The Conference also agreed on a broad time schedule for action in the States and the Centre.

IFAP CONFERENCE

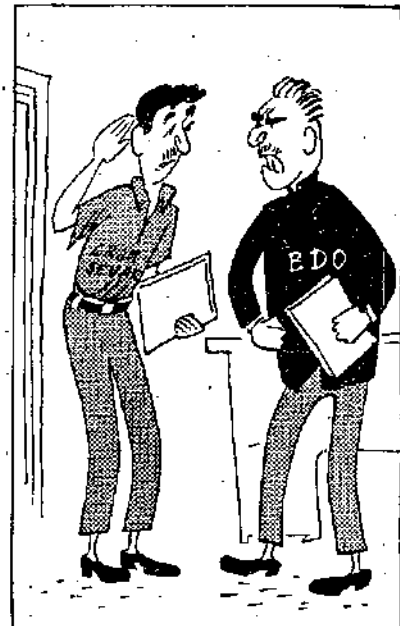
DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD, President of India will inaugurate the Eleventh General Conference of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers which is scheduled to be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi from November 27, 1959 to December 5, 1959. The IFAP is the World Federation of Farm Organisations representing over 35 million farm families.

The invitation to hold the Eleventh Conference in India was extended to

the IFAP by the delegation of the Bharat Krishak Samaj (Farmers' Forum, India) at its Tenth Conference held at Brussels during October 1958.

Representatives of member farm organizations from the following countries are expected to attend the Conference: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, West Germany, Ghana, Greece, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Luxemburg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Sweden, Switzerland, U.K., U.S.A. and Yugoslavia. Observers from various international organizations like the F.A.O., I.L.O., E.E.C., G.A.T.T., C.E.C., International Wheat Council, International Peasant Union, International Dairy Federation, International Cooperative Alliance, International Chamber of Commerce, Confederation Internationale des Ingenieurs et Techniciens de l'Agriculture and Confederation Internationale due Credit Agricolo are expected to attend the IFAP Conference.

MODERN PROVERBS



A salaam in time saves many a Gram Sevak

THE LAST PAGE

A LOT OF confusion exists as to whether Cooperation is a means of business or an instrument of social justice. To a simple mind it would appear to be both. But when Co-operators and Administrators foregather, this becomes a bone of contention. And no one seems to get wiser at the end of the discussion.

Indian Cooperation, after 60 years of its working, is still in an embryonic state. Learned books have been written on the subject, volumes of statistics have been collected. Discussions are endless about the mechanics and dialectics of its working. Today the State has taken a definite and vital role in sponsoring the movement. It has a huge programme for educating and training non-official workers at all levels. Member education is to be intensively carried out.

Eternal vigilance is the price of an efficient Cooperative. And vigilance does not consist of official control. In fact public vigilance is the opposite number of official control. To the extent that the former is in evidence, the latter recedes into the background.

Official control had so far been necessary in this country for a number of reasons. Cooperation grew out of the utter poverty and helplessness of our peasants. It was not a movement on the crest of a wave of prosperity as it was in the case of Western countries. Poor people with nothing to pool together cannot create a Cooperative out of nothing. People just do not do things by themselves if they are left to themselves. A certain amount of initial help and guidance has always been necessary in nurturing institutions to their full growth. There is a strong case for State participation in the share capital of the primary societies.

A lot has been said about democratising the Cooperative movement. This means different things to different people who use this slogan of 'democratisation.' There is everything to be said for complete freedom from Government red-tape but one should not exchange it for the Cooperative

red-tape. And Cooperative red-tape can be twice as deadly as the Government red-tape. Here again, public vigilance is essential if the Cooperatives are to survive. But such vigilance must be based on a proper understanding of the Cooperative principles. It is indeed a sad commentary on the movement that after 60 years of its working in this country the villager is still as ignorant of the concept and mechanics of Cooperation as when the movement began. Registrars of Cooperation are just not the people for educating public opinion in this matter however much they may be interested in spreading the message. The responsibility will essentially be that of the non-officials who have ultimately to run the cooperatives.

Till now the class composition of the Cooperative structure has been weighted in favour of the "better-off section" in the village, leaving the landless labour, the tenant and the artisan to shift for themselves. Even cases have been known of well-to-do persons using the Cooperative money for lending to the poorer sections at fanciful rates of interest. Also the Cooperative credit provided to agriculturists has not always been used for the declared purpose.

There are large sections of the so-called non-credit-worthy population which are denied the benefits of Cooperation. Even the credit-worthy has not been fully covered. A large number of Cooperatives had to be closed down because of over-dues, misappropriations and lack of experience. All these defects are sought to be corrected by simplifying the Cooperative law, providing proper education to the Secretary, office-bearers and members, and arranging for better audit and supervision. A great deal remains to be done in co-ordinating its activities, integrating its procedures and planning a nation-wide campaign of Cooperative education. Unless this is done and the ground is well-prepared, the message of Cooperation cannot be carried to the doors of the unprivileged sections of the community.

In a land rich with the tradition of the Joint Family system, Cooperation should find a fertile soil. Why then doesn't it grow luxuriantly? We can have Cooperative Societies for large-scale irrigation and land reclamation projects, education, housing, medical relief and a host of other subjects dear to the heart of the peasant. Will the Panchayats which are now coming into their own infuse a new vitality into the Cooperative institutions by functioning through them in their economic and constructional activity?

Cooperation is no longer a matter of convenience. It is a matter of life and death to our villagers. Every process of their agricultural activity can be speeded up, rationalised and integrated through Service Cooperatives. There is a vast field for marketing Cooperatives which can eliminate the middleman.

But are we doing enough to educate the people in the philosophy and technique of this new movement? Unless every Gram Sevak and Block Development officer can directly plan Cooperative units in his own area and educate the people, the programme of Community Development itself will have worked in vain. Community Development has now come to be recognised as the life-breath of Cooperation. The one cannot live without the other and it is time that our Project workers understand this clearly before they can transmit this knowledge to our villagers.

D.R.



Just out

THE TWELFTH YEAR

A handy volume giving in a nut shell—the progress made by the country in political, economic and social fields during the Twelfth Year of Independence. A must for libraries and all interested in the development of the country.

Pages 315

Price Rs. 1.50
Postage Extra

Available from all leading booksellers or direct from :

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

Post Box 2011, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8
1, Garstin Place, Calcutta-1
3, Prospect Chambers, 1st floor, Dadabhai Naoroji Road, Bombay-1

OUR POPULAR PAMPHLETS ON SECOND PLAN

	Price	Postage
Our Second Five Year Plan (Popular summary)	0.35	0.15
The Second Five Year Plan of the Indian Union 1956-61: A Pictorial Presentation Popular edition.	2.00	0.50
The Second Five Year Plan— Questions and Answers	0.40	0.15

(Registration charges extra)

*All orders to accompany advance payment by
crossed Postal Order*

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

Post Box 2011, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8
1, Garstin Place, Calcutta-1
3, Prospect Chambers, 1st floor, Dadabhai Naoroji
Road, Bombay-1

RAMTIRTH BRAHMI OIL



Special No. 1
Registered

Hair & Brain
Tonic, and Useful
for Eyes, Memory
& Sound Sleep. It
is prepared scienti-
fically with many
precious ingre-
dients. Available
everywhere. Price:
Big bottle—Rs. 4/-;
Small Rs. 2/-.

YOGIC ASANA CHART

To be healthy & to keep fit, ask for our
attractive "Asana Chart" showing different
Yogic Asanas, which will be sent on receipt of
M.O. for Rs. 2.50 including postage.

UMESH YOGA DARSHAN (First Part)

In four languages—English, Hindi, Gujarati
& Marathi—is also available here. Price Rs. 15/-
plus postage Rs. 2/- extra. No V.P.P. sent.

Shri Ramtirth Yogashram

DADAR (Central Railway), BOMBAY-14.
Phone: 62899

This is the fourth of a series of six advertisements

The Story of Coir

THE HUSK GETS A BEATING

Arab writers of the 11th Century A. D. have mentioned of the extensive use of COIR as ships' cables, fenders and rigging. Marco Polo, too, tells us of the use of Coir yarn in the building of ships in the Persian gulf

After its baptismal bath (retting) in brackish water, the soaked coconut husk is put into the hands of women for the next process—operation mallet!

They place the husk on a piece of wood or stone and proceed to beat it thoroughly with a mallet. The beating has its effect! The fibre gets separated from the pith, and it is then threshed, dried and willowed.

And out emerges the Coir Fibre, cleansed, resilient and of the colour of burnished gold. It is then sorted and graded; the longest variety is spun into yarn. The coarser and thicker fibre is used for making brushes and brooms. The residual waste serves as stuffing for mattresses and upholstery.

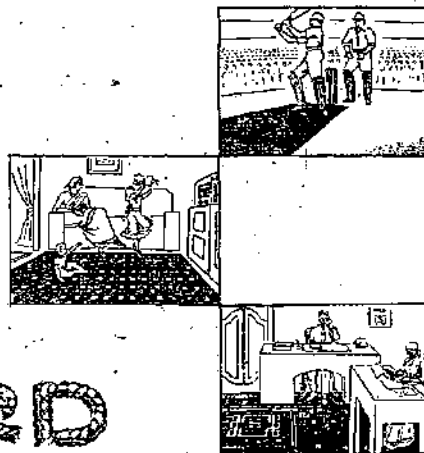
The Coir Industry produces 130,000 tons of Coir Fibre. Barring a small quantity of 600 tons exported, the balance quantity is spun into yarn, providing employment for a considerable section of our population.



Out of India's total production of 330 crores of coconuts, the Coir Industry uses 162 crores husks, to produce 130,000 tons of coir and coir products and swells the national income by Rs. 11 crores. Over 500,000 families, mostly women, find employment in this indigenous industry.

The Coir Board has been set up by the Govt. of India to serve the Coir Industry in the organised production, marketing and standardisation of its products.

Inexpensive COIR MATS, MATTINGS & CARPETS add colour and comfort to your home and office.



COIR BOARD

(Govt. of India) - Ernakulam.

SHOWROOMS & SALES DEPOTS at :

16-A, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi - Phone : 26988 • 1/155, Mount Road, Madras-2 - Phone : 85787.

Kastur Nivas, French Road, Bombay-7 - Phone : 74053 • 5, Stadium House, Churchgate, Bombay.

1-A, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore-1.

The end of the world

'THAT,' thought the hare, 'must surely be the Earth crumbling to pieces.' He had heard the thud of a fruit falling on dry leaves. 'I must run to save my life,' he mused.

He ran so fast that a deer, grazing in the fields, asked him, 'Why all this haste, brother?'

'Don't you know that the Earth is falling apart?' panted the hare. 'Save yourself! Follow me!'

The deer raced after him. And soon they were joined by a buffalo, a wild ox, a rhinoceros, a tiger, an elephant and even a lion.

In fact, the whole animal world followed them in a great procession.

They thundered on for miles and miles—until they were tired. Then the elephant began to wonder why there were no more signs of the Earth's collapse. So he asked the tiger: 'Brother Tiger, are you sure that the Earth is breaking up?'

The tiger stopped. 'Well, so the rhinoceros informs me,' he said.

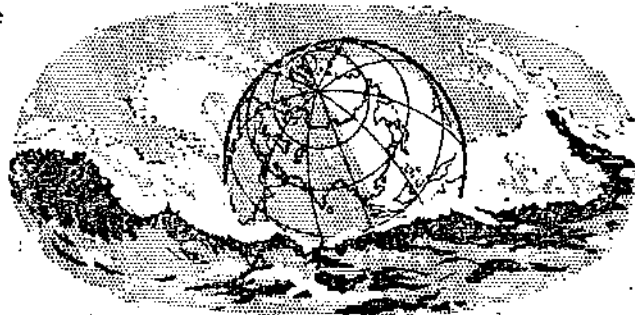
'I'm not sure,' cried the rhinoceros, 'Only the wild ox tells me so.'

The wild ox bellowed: 'Don't blame me! I only repeat what the buffalo said.'

The buffalo pointed to the deer, and the deer mumbled: 'The hare started the story.'

The elephant trumpeted for the hare and asked: 'Well, Mr. Hare, who told you that the Earth was collapsing?'

'Nobody need tell me,' said the hare importantly. 'I knew as soon as I heard a sound like a thud. I thought it was certainly the end of the world.'



'You thought so,' laughed the elephant. And all the other animals went off, roaring with laughter.

MORAL of the story: Never listen to rumours when the facts are available and known. Consider DALDA. What are the true facts? It is an all-purpose cooking medium, made from pure vegetable oils—according to strict Government specifications.

For extra nourishment, 700⁰ International Units of Vitamin A are added to every ounce plus 56 International Units of Vitamin D. Millions of housewives cook with DALDA Vanaspati because they know it is more than a cooking medium—that it's a *food!*

NOW BETTER & BRIGHTER

AKASHVANI

(Programme Weekly of All India Radio)

INDISPENSABLE FOR EVERY
HOME WITH A RADIO

Lest you miss the broadcast you love

Order your copy today

Per Copy: Annual Subscription

25 nP.

Rs. 9-75

AKASHVANI

(Formerly: The Indian Listener)

AKASHVANI BHAVAN

PARLIAMENT STREET

NEW DELHI

TRAVEL WITH

TRAVELLER IN INDIA

(ENGLISH MONTHLY)

*For fascinating glimpses of the
Wonderful Land*

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Rs. 6, 14sh, or \$ 2.00

Post Free

Available from all leading booksellers and
news-agents or direct from :

The Publications Division

POST BOX No. 2011, DELHI-8

India 1959—A Reference Annual

Useful to all, this comprehensive volume includes authentic

information on diverse aspects of India's

national life and culture

SEND YOUR ORDER AT ONCE

	Price	Postage
Paper Bound	Rs. 6.50	0.85
Board Bound	Rs. 9.00	1.10

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

Post Box No. 2011, Old Secretariat, Delhi-8

1, Garstin Place, Calcutta-1

3, Prospect Chambers, 1st floor, Dadabhai Naoroji Road, Bombay-1

REGD. No. D. 414



Published by the Director, Publications Division, P. B. No. 2011, Delhi-8 and Printed by the Manager, Govt. of India Press, Faridabad.