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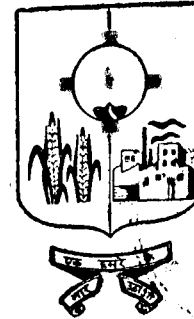
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Nagpur Conference

World Ideologies

Social Implications

Church and State

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BY

CYRIL G. CLUMP S.J.

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This Side and That 35489

Nagpur Conference

Among the many conferences which dotted the December calendar, one may be excused for singling out the All-India Catholic Lay-leaders Conference. It was the first of its kind, well attended (370 delegates), and also representative of the community: people from cities and villages, from North, South, East and West with a thin springling of foreign observers, with a few bishops and clerics, a few elders, a few youths and the vast majority in full-girthed maturity or in austere zest, workmen and peasants, professors and professionals, idealists and realists, bearded and clean-shaven, dressed in ancient or modern fashion: a motley crowd suggestive of India's complexities.

Essays and speeches at the general meetings or in the discussion-groups were uniformly good and informative; some of them will have the fate of appearing in "Social Action" and none will miss the fortune of being published in the General Report.

According to professionals of international meetings, the Nagpur conference was quite up to a fair standard of talent and goodwill. Critics behind the scenes regretted that the halls were too small, the programme overcrowded and the resolutions too many, etc. that it was to be held again and again. They will hear with pleasure that an All-India Committee of Lay-leaders had been formed, though, in all prudence, the place and date of their first meeting are not yet fixed.

The Great Question

The general problem was how to train leaders and mobilize their efforts to adjust the community to 1956 India. The various trends were analysed and tentative solutions drawn. In the crisis of her modernisation, India feels a pull in opposite directions: one implies a return to ancient ways, customs and ideology, an effort to study anew, reexamine and revalue ancient cultures and philosophies which were given due appreciation. According to a local wit, it might well happen that with a little more men and money, the Hindu systems of philosophy and types of cultures would be best preserved in Catholic monasteries and seminaries.

The opposite trend is a flight away from the ancient way of life; against one Chela of Shankara, Ramanuja and Vallabha, one could count hundreds or thousands of disciples of Hegel, Comte and Karl Marx. It was given a challenging expression in a recent address of Sardar K. M. Panikkar to the Visva Bharati University at Shantiniketan. "The doctrine of simple life which is presumed to encourage high thinking is but a worship of poverty.... At no time in India was

this preached as an ideal..... Even the *Saptarishis*, the supreme examples of renunciation, are described by Kalidasa as being clothed in gold and wearing sacred threads of pearls.... The idea that the Hindu religion supports the doctrine of simple living seems to me to be wholly untrue.

"In any case this doctrine of poverty is a false creed. It was no more than a vague escapism in the days of our national poverty, but today when the efforts of the nation are directed towards greater production of wealth and its better distribution so that everyone can have a richer life, this exaltation of poverty is something anti-social which the good sense of our people will, I am convinced, reject absolutely.

East and West

"On what is India's claim to spirituality greater than the rest of the world based? Is it on the grounds that her thinkers in the past devoted themselves to metaphysical enquiries more than to the better ordering of society or again on the grounds that greatness in the world was not measured by worldly achievement but by spiritual achievement? On either ground, it appears to me that the claim of India to be more spiritual than the rest of the world is no more than a self-deception.

"Other-worldliness and spiritual life are preached as much in the Sermon of the Mount as in our sacred books. If it is claimed that the difference is that the whole of Europe does not live up to its Christian ideals and India cherishes spiritual ideals, the argument is altogether misleading. Nowhere in fact is materialism so rampant as in India, nowhere has the

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struggle for advantage over others greater hold on the people than in India. In fact whatever scriptures might have preached and exceptional individuals practised, the hold of materialism in India has been as great as in other countries.

"If the argument in favour of our greater spirituality was that we showed honour and respect for those who have given up worldly advancement, surely this is equally true of the peoples of Europe. One has only to look at the imposing list of the saints in the Christian Church, the practice of spiritual discipline, to realise that such men and women are as much in honour in the West as in India.... What India represents today is the emergence of a new civilisation and not merely the continuation of the old one.... When India is taking giant steps forward, the malignant continuance of unreason, bigotry, and blind adherence to past notions, based on a perverted idea of an imaginary past, is a deadly enemy which each one of us has to fight in his own sphere."

Leaders. Ahead.

Such in a general way is the *mêlée* our leaders are facing in 1956. But as Dr. H. Mahtab, governor of Bombay said at the Utkal Convocation, "Leadership does not necessarily imply a large following. The qualities of leadership are effective thinking, ability to communicate thought, taking decisions after judging all relevant matters and resolutely giving effect to the decision."

May the Catholic leaders tackle their task with a stout heart and with Christian buoyancy.

A. L.

The All-India Catholic Lay Leaders' Conference

This Conference, the first of its kind to be so named, was held in Nagpur between the 14th and the 18th of December, 1955. It was outstanding in many respects from previous Conferences in which both the Clergy and the Laity have participated. For in this Conference, the Catholic Layman and Laywoman certainly showed the stuff they were made of and wore the mantle that has fallen on their shoulders with facility, grace, and pride. Another reason why this Conference will leave its mark on the history of the Catholic Church in India was the deep, underlying enthusiasm and the sense of urgency that characterised the attitudes of the various delegates who had gathered from the furthest corners of India. They felt that the Conference was a meeting ground where they could make contacts and work together as a team for the well-being of the Catholic Community in India. And since they all belonged to an already highly organised body that is the Catholic Church, there was little difficulty for them to meet together not as a disorganised mass but as distinct diocesan groups, with divergent yet similar problems, with various outlooks yet linked together by a common faith and practice. Like every other Catholic Conference this Lay Leaders' Conference was buoyed up by that Catholic spirit of unity, of Catholicity; no distinction of class or caste, no divergence of beliefs, but all one in Christ, a unity of mind and heart that fanned their enthusiasm to a greater and deeper intensity.

Publicity

But leaving aside perhaps more important issues, it was curious that the Lay Leaders' Conference should have received the publicity it aroused. The Press Conference that was summoned on the eve of the Conference was well attended and it was obvious that the reporters were intrigued by the possible political aspects of the Conference. The venue of the Conference being Nagpur in Madhya Pradesh, where the church has had to face severe difficulties, there was bound to be this suspicion that the Catholic Community had got together to do something about the matter. However it was strongly emphasised by the Organisers and the Conveners of the Conference that this was no political get together, but rather a meeting of Catholic Laity to see how they could play their role in the civic, the economic and the cultural life of modern India, and do their bit for the country's uplift and progress. But for this purpose, they had first to chalk out a programme based on the spiritual and social doctrine of the Church to which they belonged because they were already convinced that without such principles to guide them, all their work would be in vain. And though the press representatives may not have been completely convinced of what they were told, it is a fact that the Conference aroused deep interest all over the country and many of the daily papers gave the Inaugural Address and the resolutions a prominent place in their pages.

Quality and Temper

Besides such welcome publicity for extraneous reasons, the Conference was outstanding in the quality

and the temper of its lay delegates. Not all of them were old retired gentlefolk, who had gathered there to encourage the younger generation. On the contrary there were quite a few young men and women of every walk of life, students, trade unionists, lawyers, commercial agents, clerks, doctors, bankers, personnel officers, and others belonging to various grades of management, business, the professions, peasants and landowners from Chota Nagpur and Malabar. Many of them belonged to various associations like the Legion of Mary, the Sodality, the Young Christian Workers, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and other Catholic associations for lay people. Many of them were leaders in their own right. And though on the whole they represented but a cross section of the Catholic population in India, one could feel in them and through them the rich variety of talent and vigour and that sense of loyalty to the Church that marks out communities with centuries of Catholicism at their backs. Here was no feeble and timid stretching out of youthful arms towards its prized possessions, but the strong vigorous grasp of an adult profoundly aware of his heritage and eager to enjoy its fruits to the full.

General Statement

Most of the papers read at the Conference discussed the place and the role of the Catholic Laity in modern India after seven years of Independence. Their most pregnant ideas were summed up in the General Statement read out on the last day of the Conference. This statement explained the purpose of the Conference as the meeting ground for Catholic Lay Leaders to study and evolve solutions for the

problems facing the Catholic Community at the present time in the light of the Church's spiritual and social teaching. It emphasised the civic duties of Catholics in the new set-up of the country, where the Catholic Community is in a minority, but where the rights of the minorities have been guaranteed by the Constitution. It shows how though the idea of the Church as a distinct society has been accepted by the rulers of India, they have failed to grasp her significant role in moulding the social, civic and cultural institutions of the peoples among whom She lives. It encouraged the lay leader to face the challenge of his environment and emerge out of the '*ghetto mentality*' adopted so far by a majority of Catholics. It urges him to publicise the rich treasure of Catholic principle and doctrine such as the inherent dignity of the human person, the sanctity of marriage and the home, to take up the study of Indian literature and art so as to enrich them and make the Catholic spirit pervade every avenue and aspect of Indian culture. It closes with a final appeal to Catholics to dedicate themselves to serve their motherland and take a hand in every activity calculated to raise the standard of living of the people.

The Contributions

One was struck by the high standard and quality of the contributions at the Conference. While not all of them came up to the expectations of a critical audience, most of them were well received. On a level apart was the inaugural address by the Cardinal Archbishop of Bombay. It emphasised, like the sermon of the Archbishop of Bangalore, the claim of the Church

to be a perfect society, and the double loyalty of the Catholic to both the Church and the State. Loyalty to the Church does not exclude or weaken loyalty to the State. It rather strengthens civic and political loyalty because the Church imposes such loyalty in the name of God Himself. But the inaugural address went on to describe the present position of the Catholic Community in India and the opportunities for the lay apostle in serving Church and country for the well-being of both. It was the penury of priests that made the lay apostolate not a luxury for the few but a necessity for all, said His Eminence.

Among the other highlights of the Conference could be mentioned the speeches of Mr. Ruthnasamy and of Mr. Eric D'Costa. Mr. Ruthnasamy showed how in India the lay apostle is not only a necessity but an urgency, because of the paucity of priests to attend to the needs of the five million Catholics. He pointed out the vast field for the lay apostle to influence and christianise, the political, the civic, the social, the economic and the cultural. He pleaded for an organisation with full-time, fully-paid staff to organise and carry on the activities of the lay apostolate. Mr. Eric D'Costa of the Eastern Economist was critical of the neutralist policies of the Government, and urged Catholics to seek to raise the standard of living of the community by taking to industry and business. The intellectual preparation for the lay apostolate, said Fr. Extross, should be suited to modern needs, for which purpose a new apologetic for the layman should be prepared. On the other hand, said Fr. Lallemand, the clergy should give the laity many more opportunities for self-reliance and personal res-

pensibility than prevailed today. Both Professors Owers and Correia-Afonso described the layman's place in the Church and how through the transfiguration of his own life and through his words he should carry the Christian message into every sphere of rational existence.

The Catholic contribution to India's culture was a theme that aroused wonderment, satisfaction and controversy. While Mr. G. X. Francis tried to trace out the long historical influence of Christianity on India's social structure, Miss Naidu, speaking from personal experience, delighted her audience with her anecdotes of how the Catholic laywoman could win the hearts of the women of India to ethical norms, basically Christian, still treasured in the Indian tradition but which are now exposed to the destroying breath of a materialistic spirit that is quickly spreading throughout the country. But should not the Indian Catholic be as immersed in the traditional music, song, dance, painting and sculpture, modes of dress and manner of speech as the rest of his countrymen? Should he not shed his Western ways of living so as to identify himself completely with his Indian brethren and take his full share in evolving and moulding India's cultural traditions? To these questions there could be but one answer and that a decided affirmative, said Mr. Sounderaraj of Madras.

Finally, Professor Srinivasan warned his audience of the eternal vigilance required of a minority attempting to safeguard its rights and liberties, while Mr. I. Coutinho described the personal, institutional and international centres that should be erected for the training of the lay apostles.

Resolutions

Gathered at Nagpur, the Conference was perturbed by the unhealthy situation facing the Catholics in the practice and the propagation of their religious faith in those parts, and the increasingly difficult economic and social conditions of the Community in the rest of the country. The delegates felt grateful to Pandit Nehru for his unequivocal stand on the rights of religious minorities, but they requested the rulers of the land not to discriminate against Catholics belonging to the Scheduled, Backward and Tribal peoples merely because of their religion. They unanimously and enthusiastically encouraged the efforts of Mr. G. X. Francis, the Editor of the 'Enquiry', and eagerly assisted him with share capital for a private press of his own. There was a general feeling among the delegates that not enough use was being made of the press for publicising the Christian message in all its various aspects. It was therefore decided that the 'Enquiry' should receive wider support and enlarge its coverage to include problems and situations in which Catholics all over the country are involved. A Central Committee for the Lay Apostolate was formed with Mr. Ruthnasamy as President. Catholics were finally encouraged to prepare themselves to play a more significant part in the civic, economic, social and cultural life of the country, and the services of fulltime lay apostles were considered greatly desirable for this purpose.

Social Conference

Two years of experience in the field of social work, on parish and diocesan levels stood the delegates of this Conference in good stead, and rendered their participation all the more effective. Catholic social work

is slowly coming of age ; the interest in this type of apostolate has certainly been aroused and especially in the schools our students, both Catholic and non-Catholic, are being imbued with the social spirit in a practical, vivid way by the training they receive in social service both theoretical and practical. They are brought face to face with the social problem and made to put their hands as it were to achieve some kind of solution. This was abundantly clear from the reports of the various regional Directors of Catholic Social Work. The reading of the reports formed one of the most interesting sessions of the Conference, because it gave the delegates an inkling of the amount and the variety of social work turned out by Catholic agencies. The only drawback is that most of it is unknown or is often taken for granted.

But besides this account of Catholic social work, several urgent social issues were examined and discussed in the light of Catholic principle. The computation of what the living wage should be in India was a disputed question, said Fr. Victor. It was agreed however that the living wage was a family wage and a saving wage, and that it varied with the conditions prevailing in different parts of the country. The rights and duties of the employer and employee said Mr. Rasquinha ; were to be governed by the same principles of limited natural rights to be exercised with an eye to the common good. The relationship between the two parties, usually expressed in the wage contract, was to be so moulded as to result in a contract of partnership so that labour and capital could work together as a team of equal partners towards their own mutual benefit and the common

good. Indeed it was the duty of each Catholic, said Dr. Rao, whether workman, manager, supervisor, doctor, lawyer, nurse, housewife to set up professional standards in their own special profession.

There was a general need expressed for a thorough-going parochial, diocesan and regional set-up for social work. Fr. Mata described the social organisation of the parish. A central secretariat was also thought necessary to co-ordinate activities of the various groups and provide them with the necessary guidance and inspiration and even training. The question of training of Catholic social workers, both voluntary and professional, and the scope of Catholic social work was examined *ex professo* by Dr. W. Adiseshiah, Professor of Psychology, in the Delhi School of Social Work. Training was advocated especially for members of associations like the Legion of Mary and St. Vincent de Paul Societies and the Sodalities and the inmates of social work institutions like charitable dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages, etc. run by Catholic agencies.

Finally, co-operation of Catholics with the great movements of rural uplift like Community Development and the Co-operative Movement and with recognised bodies of social workers like the Bharat Sevak Samaj and the Indian Conference of Social Work was strongly emphasised by Mr. Thomas, Mr. J. C. Ryan and Mr. Pylee respectively. Marks Town on the model of the famous Boys Town of the United States was cited as an example of the results co-operation in public social work can yield. It was pointed out that the Catholic social worker possesses a marvellous spirit of sympathy and sacrifice and devotedness to the poor and the outcaste of society which is hard to find else-

where. And this is a great asset even for the trained and professional social worker.

Summing up, one can definitely assert that there is a growing awareness among Indian Catholics of their social duties and a deeper realisation of their sense of solidarity with their neighbours, both Catholic and non-Catholic, and the responsibilities which this implies. The discussions on the various papers were much more spirited and to the point; there was a clear-cut consciousness of precisely what was needed for an increase of social work. But at the same time the deficiencies and especially the absence of this urgent sense of at least seeking for a means to satisfy social needs was deeply deplored. The blame for the lack of such a necessary attitude was laid on the respective authorities and on the apathy of their subjects. On the other hand it was recognised that organised effort, based on clear-cut objectives to be achieved and therefore requiring a deep knowledge of the existing conditions, social, economic and cultural was absolutely essential.

In conclusion, one may say that the Nagpur Conference was a revelation to both the delegates and to their pastors. The Catholic Laity abundantly displayed the stuff it was made of and gave every reason for dispelling any doubt as to the strength and the tenacity of the Faith in the minds and hearts of the Indian Catholic Laity. With such a Laity the Church in India need have no fear for the future. But much still depends on how the Catholic lay leader responds to the call of the apostolate and prepares himself to shoulder the burden he is called to bear.

A. Fonseca

World Conflict

The present conflict, whether it be called 'cold war' or 'hot peace', is more universal than what were called 'world wars'; it is usually associated with the names of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.; it has reached every literate in all countries and is of deep interest to the common man under all latitudes. It is a duel at which no man can assist without feeling the tension at the deepest depths of his soul. Never before did history present a conflict so universal and so crucial. Were it to break out into violence, the war would be relentless and desperate. The conflict is partly due to the rivalry of two great nations which at about the same time reached the peak of their development and which are the only ones of sufficiently gigantic dimensions and strength to face world-problems. Throughout the discussions, and parleys about economic co-operation, political emancipation, international peace, at the U.N.O. Bandung or Geneva, a choice of ideologies dominates arguments and decisions, a choice centered on different views of man. In one view, man is figured out with body and soul, with a non-transferable destiny and inescapable responsibility, with needs and interests not reducible to mere matter; man is conceived as prior and superior to the community, reaching for a goal beyond and above mundane pursuits and achievements. In the alternative view, mass is visualized as made of, and encompassed within matter, with a nature, a culture, a civilisation inexorably conditioned and ultimately determined by the mode of economic production; intellectual pur-

suits, spiritual outlook, social system, in fact the whole of what is called the social superstructure is supposedly evolved out of the system of wealth production and consumption, which is called infrastructure; the individual, the person is posterior and subservient to, and absorbed into, the economic group of which he is merely a part, a unit within the mass.

On the other hand, if full facts are stated and a fuller understanding of the world conflict is sought for, one may say with Fr Bigo⁽¹⁾ that the clash of ideas and ideals is crystallized round one of their concrete embodiments, namely, the structure of society. What are those different structures which embody those warring ideals?

The Soviet Structure

When put in simple terms, the opposition appears slight enough unless one pays attention to its contents and implications. It may be put thus: Soviet Russia has abolished the individual right to undertake and to sell; the U. S. A. is bent on maintaining that right. That is all, but that is much.

In the USSR, and the same may be said about her satellites and partners to a variable extent, there is no room for private enterprise, there is no individual ownership of the means of production. Legislation has invalidated all direct contract between private capital and salaried labour. On that fundamental point the Soviet State became adamant since the beginning of the Five-Year Plans. By law there is and there may not be any privately salaried worker:

⁽¹⁾ *Action Populaire*, Sept. 1953.

the only wage-earners are employees of the collectivity; even those who are personal servants are state employees.

It is hardly worthwhile mentioning that there is legal ownership of consumption goods; Marxists, Leninists or Stalinists never talked of suppressing that type of private ownership. On the other hand the question may be asked about private ownership of certain means of production. In fact it does persist to a certain extent, and this undeniable fact rankles deep in Communist hearts. Though Stalin has been at pains to explain that the exceptions were not against pure Marxism, all his arguing was a confused piece of undiluted sophistry.

The main exception is the kolkhoze property, a type of private cooperative property. It does not imply full ownership of the land (since all land has been absolutely nationalised.) The land is however secured to the farms free of charge and in perpetuity. Nor is it private ownership of the machinery, which belongs to the State. But the kolkhoze group owns in its name some of the equipment and the produce of the farm. When that part of the produce, which the State requisitions at prices favourable to itself, has been surrendered, the remainder may be distributed between the kolkhoze members or sold on the market at prices which are flexible between margins fixed by the Five Year Plans. The exception is a small one, but on principle it is enormous. In a like manner, marketing is not free; the produce the kolkhoze is allowed to sell must be sold at prices fixed by the Government, but the amount available for sale is not fixed nor is the amount that can be bought; at any

rate so it is since the ration-decontrol. The only amount which is not submitted to state regulations is what a private member of the kolkhoze can spare on his restricted personal cultivation; for this produce prices are not fixed but only supervised and controlled.

Indeed, and this is a second exception to collectivisation, according to Art. 7 of the 1936 Constitution, "every household in a collective farm, in addition to its basic income from the common collective farm-enterprise, has for its personal use a small plot of household land and, as its personal property, a subsidiary husbandry on the plot, a dwelling house, livestock, poultry and minor agricultural implements -- in accordance with the rules of the artel". Again (Art. 9) "the law permits small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen based on their own labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others". Finally Art. 10 sanctions private ownership of incomes and savings from work, dwelling houses and subsidiary home enterprises, in articles of domestic economy, and use, and articles of personal use and convenience as well as the right to inherit personal property. These include Stalin prizes, government bonds and the like. Barring such small exceptions, private enterprise and free marketing have been abolished in Soviet Russia and her satellites and colonies.

The U. S. A. Structure

In contrast, the western democracies as they are called (and note that Japan is so much to the Far East as to be close to the Far West) do maintain private

enterprise and free marketing as a basic postulate of their economy, this in spite of all planning, in spite of the gradual increase in state control and interference. It is round this economic basis that we have the practical opposition between democratic and communist countries, between private capitalism and state capitalism. Russia is still at the stage of state capitalism, however much Mr. Molotov may have been rebuked for denying that Communism had not yet been initiated in Sovietland. What communism will be, is anybody's guess.

Why do democratic countries keep to private enterprise and Eastern Europe take to state collectivism? It will not do to argue that West Europe and America were dominated by the Western school of economic liberalism and East Europe by an Eastern school of thought. Marxism itself is a school of western thought; moreover one does not fancy that hard-headed western businessmen who have little regard for theories did build up and follow a philosophy. Nor is it satisfactory to argue that a liberal doctrine is more suitable to the Anglo-Saxon genius, and collectivism to the Slave mentality. This reminds one that a few years ago, plenty of ink and spittle was wasted to prove that communism could never be established in China because of the people's mentality, and that now an equal amount is spent to prove that Communism is most particularly suited to the Chinese soul. The genius of a nation is so delicate to analyse that it cannot be handled without consummate dexterity. On the other hand is there not something more definite and tangible than a theory or a national culture to explain the different choices of a social structure? Are there

not a set of geographical and historical factors which, at any rate partly, condition and favour a given choice?

Historical Factors

By way of approach, let us along with Fr. Bigo, study two extreme cases: the USA and Siberia.

USA conditions admirably suited private enterprise. The wealth of the soil, and subsoil offered pioneers an ideal field for private enterprise: gold, coal, oil, etc., invited the successive rushes for new fields of endeavour. In the course of development, there was a good deal of waste in men and equipment, and at present efforts are made to work out what was at first given up as unprofitable. But in the beginning conditions of exploitation were most attractive to bold entrepreneurs. In course of time, the need was felt of combining various undertakings or enlarging the scale of production, so much so that legislation was passed to set limits to individual concerns and to prevent trusts and monopolies; but even so there was never question of doubting the basic principle of private initiative and responsibility. Hence we can witness in the USA gigantic industrial pyramids, which owing to their unity in command and in profits, dominate the business landscape and are found suitable to all possible types of modern organisation.

On the other hand, even in that land of private undertaking and free marketing, but for reasons which were largely political as well as economic, some projects called for a direct intervention of public authorities, the best known instance being the Tennessee Valley scheme. Nor should we ignore that, besides

legislative and executive controls (taxation, tariffs, interstate commerce regulations, etc.), the government of the USA is a large-scale entrepreneur and a competitor in the national economy. There is government competition in "air lines, bakeries, cemeteries, ship-building and operating, warehouse operating, etc. Some years ago, the Federal Reserve Board stated that government corporations and credit agencies held a total of 2.6 billion dollars invested in government securities, that they owned over 1.3 billion dollars worth of commodities, supplies and materials, as well as land, buildings and equipment valued at 3.2 billion dollars and 936 million dollars in cash. The Federal Reserve Board also noted that the national government was "the largest electric power producer, the largest insurer, the largest lender, the largest landlord, the largest tenant, the largest holder of timber and grazing land, the largest owner of grain, the largest warehouse operator, the largest ship-owner, the largest truck-fleet operator" (*Social Order*, May 1954.). It would be unreal to ignore that in the USA, and possibly still more in other democracies, there is a fair amount of collective ownership, and that this amount is likely to increase with the increase in the complexities of modern economy.

Yet in spite of all public assistance and interference which challenges the axiom of economic liberalism, the USA retains an economy which is essentially based on private ownership and undertaking, with a gradually fairer and fairer distribution of income and wealth.

On the other hand, let us consider the case of Siberia, an immense stretch of land full of mineral

resources, covered with endless forests and snow-bound plains. There private enterprise had never done anything or tried to do anything. For Russia, at the start of the New Economic Policy which succeeded the anarchic and disastrous honeymoon of Communism, the problem was to bring Siberian resources into man's use; the problem was made more acute by Russia's need and will to become a great power and to become so as early as possible. Russia was then urged on by the fear of foreign invasions or at least foreign competition; she felt she had to secure her defence, to command attention, to spread her influence and power over the world. Fear and ambition forced her to grow rich and powerful in a few years.

What resources were then available? There was no private capital at hand; all the capitalists of the Tsarist times had been exiled or liquidated; foreign capitalists who at the time of the Revolution had been summarily dispossessed were naturally shy of new investments. On the other hand, economic problems were of gigantic dimensions; coal fields and iron mines were separated by hundreds or thousands of miles and had to be connected; gold fields were buried in snowy deserts and had to be explored and exploited, deserts had to be irrigated by deviating towards the Caspian sea rivers naturally flowing towards the Arctic. All preconditions to large-scale development had to be prepared, one might say, almost immediately, unless the Marxist philosophers who were in command would be resigned to abandon their motherland and their Cause to the risk of penury or at best of slow development.

The State was the only pioneer available, the only capital owner, that could undertake the immense task ahead; thus Russia had to pass, suddenly as it were, from the artisan shop to the Combinat. Soviet leaders did not hesitate; dictatorship over the proletariat appeared the most efficient approach to solve the problem of getting rich and powerful as early as possible and the plan was moreover all-of-a-go with their philosophical principles. State capitalism and government dictatorship were decided on, with ruthless efficiency and remorseless obstinacy. The achievements are undeniable, and the cost in human values incalculable.

Temptation

Here one may pause and reflect that similar dreams and similar methods come up to the mind of peoples in countries that are underdeveloped. Take independent India. Her territory is fairly adequate, though rather relatively small, and her population sufficiently large for her to become a first class power. But her economic organisation on a modern scale was evidently beyond the reach of her handicraft and small-scale industries. Her government had deliberately renounced the Gandhian ideal of a village economy with its austere simplicity and nursed the ambition of making India into a powerful nation whose voice would count in the assizes of the world. What a temptation for adopting state capitalism or collectivism! Yet Indian leaders resisted the temptation, whatever may have been done by government to activate popular initiative and control development. India is firmly resolved to eschew dictatorship and collectivism, and to stand by the traditional principles of democracy.

Her choice of a way of life is a clear proof that geographical and economic factors are not decisive factors by themselves, and that the social structure is not at the mercy of material factors. Other factors are more important, which invite further study.

A. Lallemand

Some Implications of Social Work

On Definitions

Perhaps, it may be useful to consider one or two definitions of social work, though we should remember that hardly any two definitions agree. Mr. H. H. Stroup in his *Social Work*, says, it is "the art of bringing various resources to bear on individual, group and community needs by the application of a scientific method of helping people to help themselves." (page 1). E. B. Reuther in his *Handbook on Sociology* tells us, "Social work is an attempt to mediate the adjustments in individuals and groups in the existing social order, thereby reducing the amount of human misery and increasing personal and social efficiency". (page 222). Other definitions consider social work to be a method of "rehabilitating individuals" and still other definitions consider it to be a type of "social engineering" and "social uplift".

Whatever definition we may adopt, the whole idea of social work would seem to imply the uplift of

the destitute by furnishing them with all they need to live a sound and healthy social life. That is to say, it is an attempt to restore the individual to his or her rightful place in human society. Hence it would seem to be something more than mere temporal relief of those in distress. Indeed it is of not much use helping the pauper to continue in his state of pauperism! He must be helped to rise above this miserable condition and become a useful member of society. It should be clear, therefore, that social work cannot stop at merely doling out food and clothing. Something more is needed.

Social Work — The mental rehabilitation of the well-off.

Now, as we have seen above social work relies on "various resources" and "means" to accomplish its end and purpose. Obviously, therefore, these resources must come from those who are endowed with them — from the better-off sections of the community. And here it is important to remember that by "resources" is meant not only material wealth, but also, the riches of the mind and natural dispositions. Social work depends on this type of "wealth" to achieve its end. It follows, therefore, that social work implies, first of all, a mental rehabilitation of the wealthy. Or, put in other words, a realisation on the part of the wealthy of their social responsibility and obligation. It is these people, whether they be owners of big business, professional people, administrators or landlords who must be called to a careful discharge of their social duties.

Apart from the fact, that every individual is bound by his social obligations, is it not a sad truth that many of our present day social problems derive from

the action, conscious or unconscious, of the wealthy members of society? There is the landlord who exacts rents of Rs. 3, 5 or 6 from the miserable squatters, living in their tin and mud shacks on his waste-land! Does he ever bother to find out how these miserable people live? Is he concerned that their lives are a continual struggle against the demon of unemployment, disease, illiteracy and despair? Then, there is that mighty textile concern which pays its daily wage-earners the lordly sum of TWO PIES A YEAR as increment on their basic wage? A simple calculation will prove to you that it will take such workers over sixty years to draw a daily wage of even Rs. 2 as 3. And we know that in this country, the normal span of life of the working class is about twenty-seven years! Let us remember that all this is not fiction. These are facts.

Let us be clear, it is the wealthy of this type who need mental rehabilitation, and it is the first duty of social work to bring this about. Such people should be shown how they should, at least, act with justice towards their fellowmen! Of course, in most countries these obligations are brought within a legal framework. What are our Factory Acts and the Minimum Wage Act if not a means to bring about more respect for the demands of social justice? That which these wealthy people refuse to do out of a sense of duty is forced upon them by the rigour of the law. Of course, no one is so naive as to believe that such legislation will establish a regime of social justice! Hence, there is still need, and urgent need, for the social worker to bring about a mental rehabilitation among the more wealthy sections of the community.

As we have seen this mental rehabilitation concerns not only the use of one's wealth, but also the use of one's intellectual, moral and physical abilities. How many of us who are gifted are ready to share this "wealth" with our needy brothers? How many of us are ready to use the powers of our mind and body so that those less gifted may also increase their intellectual and physical stature. If social work is to succeed at all, surely it demands the zeal and devotion of those who are prepared to sacrifice their own pleasures and, may be interests, so as to work for the poor and destitute? In fact, you will often find people who are ready to part with their material wealth for the succour of the needy, but will never give up their time to bring to these unfortunates the touch of personal human kindness.

That this task of the mental rehabilitation of the wealthy is not easy no one will deny. But then, it is useless to pretend that social work can accomplish anything lasting and secure unless this task is undertaken. "Empty your pockets and your consciences" said Abbe Pierre while awakening the conscience of wealthy Parisians for his rag-pickers. Perhaps, this humble priest would be the first to deny that he was a "scientific" or "professional" social worker, but he produced results because he knew, from hard experience, that social work is meaningless unless it helps bring the more fortunate members of society to the rescue of their unfortunate brothers.

Social Work — the material rehabilitation of the destitute

There is a widespread and perhaps, incorrect idea that social work consists merely in doling out food

and clothing to the destitutes of society. And so, everyone who has some "gift" to be made to the misfits of our society are led to believe that they are engaged in social work! While such assistance is, indeed, essential for the well-being of the down-and-out members of society, it does not go deep enough to eradicate social ills. In fact, such activity tends to fall short of the true end and purpose of social work. If we remember that social work, properly so called, aims at the complete uplift and rehabilitation of the destitute members of our society, and not at keeping them in their condition of pauperism, then it is not hard to understand that the continual giving of material aid without any further interest in these people, would tend both to keeping them in their miserable condition and making of them lifelong mendicants. There is nothing more damaging to human respect than when the individual resigns himself to begging alms; and once the begging mentality is established, it needs a long hard struggle before the individual re-establishes his self-respect and determines to help himself.

There is no one who would doubt the zeal, devotion and self-sacrifice shown by so many so called social workers, social organisations and social leagues when they undertake the cleaning of village roads, drains and tanks. But here again, this assistance to the village people does not go far enough, if the village people are not associated with this work, and made to realise that they must carry on the good work now started. As one kindly farmer put it: "When the cleaning squad returns to the college, everything returns to its former dirty condition!"

Hence the material rehabilitation of the destitute can never be an end in itself. It is necessary of course, precisely because man must have a minimum of material well-being before his superior faculties can go into action. And this is one of the serious difficulties met with in social work. How far and in what manner must this material rehabilitation be undertaken without "spoling" the individual and sinking him deeper in destitution?

Social Work — the mental rehabilitation of the destitute.

The answer to the above question is that the material rehabilitation of the unfortunate members of society must, at the same time, be accompanied by their mental rehabilitation. That this is not easy no one will deny; that it is essential all will agree. In fact, it is a common experience of all social workers that the destitute have built up certain attitudes and patterns of conduct suited to their miserable conditions, and therefore, if these conditions are to be improved, there must at the same time be a change in their attitudes and patterns of behaviour.

While it is true that many a social problem is the outcome of injustice and lack of charity on the part of the better off members of the community, it is no less true that such problems are the result of certain habits and ways of living of the less fortunate individuals. Thus, while unemployment is a serious evil, the "unemployment mentality" which results from the condition of being unemployed is still more serious! It is a common place that a man who has been long unemployed soon begins to suffer from

frustration and loses all interest in work. Then, again, slums are bad enough, but the "slum mentality" is a still greater evil. And perhaps the worst sufferers of this mentality are the children! Who is the social worker who has not met this mentality among the little ones of our slums? Denied every satisfaction from their earliest years, they build up defensive attitudes and take to every anti-social vice!

This is why modern social work seeks the aid of such sciences as psychology, pathology, psychiatry and social medicine when treating social maladjustments. This is why again, no social worker looks for short-term results. "It will take fifty years" said a zealous Social Organizer in a Community Development Block, "before these people learn and are willing to change their old way of life!" And that may be said of social work whether in rural or urban areas. Hence, the urgency of the problem and the demand to start work here and now, so that these unfortunate members of society may realise that they also have a contribution to make towards the welfare of mankind.

In conclusion, therefore, it may be stated that Social Work implies a threefold action: the mental rehabilitation of the well-off; the material rehabilitation of the needy, and the mental rehabilitation of the destitute. It is in this way that social work may root out anti-social habits or anti-social conditions, and help to establish a society in which justice and charity brings prosperity to all.

C. C. Clump

Documentation

35489

CRISIS OF STATE AND CITIZENSHIP

(Letter of Pope Pius XII to the President of the
Semaines Sociales)

..... Yours has been a magnificent task, carried on with perseverance despite the profound upheaval of two world wars that for some time interrupted your labours

So many threats weigh upon society! So many errors are trying to undermine its foundations! So many mirages seduce the best people! And today, as yesterday, the Semaines Sociales, firm in doctrine, courageous in research, fraternal in the collaboration of all, must be for Catholics and their various movements a living crossroads where experiences meet, convictions take form and programmes of action materialize in the light of substantial discussion.

A Present-Day Problem

Such in particular, We wish to think will be the present session of Remes. The theme alone "Crisis of Power: Crisis of Citizenship", proves that you are not afraid of treating a grave and difficult question which all observers agree is a present-day problem.

In broaching this subject, made still more complex by the play of partisan passions and particular interests, the leaders of the Semaines Sociales will have at heart the affirmation of their thought on the Christian principles relative to civil power, so often affirmed by the Roman Pontiffs, especially Leo XIII. Indeed, anyone not having a clear notion of it, runs the risk of leaving himself open to abuse by a completely specious presentation of the new problems posed by the modern State.

The Mission of the State

The mission of the State, is to control, aid and direct the private and individual activities of national life so that they converge harmoniously towards the common good. That good can neither be defined according to arbitrary ideas nor

can it accept for its standard primarily the material prosperity of society but rather it should be defined according to the harmonious development and the natural perfection of man. It is for this perfection that society is designed by the Creator as a means.'

In a word, the true notion of the state is that of an organism, based on the moral order of the world. And the first task of Catholic teaching is to dispel those errors -- in particular, of juridical positivism -- which tend to break the eminently moral bond joining the state to individual and social life by disengaging power from its essential dependence upon God.

Only this sovereign order can be the foundation of 'the true and effective authority' of the state, the imperative need of which we pointed out in Our last Christmas radio message. On this common basis, the person, the state, the public authority, with their respective rights and duties, are indissolubly bound. 'The dignity of man is the dignity deriving from its sharing in the authority of God'. In virtue of this intimate connection, the state could not violate the just freedoms of the human person without disturbing its own proper authority. And, inversely, for the individual to abuse his own personal freedom in contempt of this responsibility towards the general good is to ruin his own dignity.

Thus, if people deplore a civic crisis, they should first of all consider the fidelity of both the individual and the state to the essential requirements of political morality. Even when certain circumstances make the exercise of power more difficult in our days, one should not be afraid to denounce this spiritual and moral bankruptcy. In a large measure a crisis of power is a crisis of citizenship -- that is, when all is said and done, a crisis of man.

Moreover, is this not confirmed by daily experience? If it is true that in a democratic state, civic life imposes stiff demands on the moral maturity of each citizen, one should not fear to recognize that many citizens, even some who call themselves Christians, share the blame for society's present confusion. There are facts that demand a definite remedy.

To cite only the more notable ones, there is the lack of interest in the public affairs that shows itself, among other ways, by failure to vote, with resulting grave consequences. There are financial frauds that have repercussions on the moral life, the social and economic equilibrium of the country. There is the sterile criticism of authority and self-centred defence of privileges in contempt of the general interest.

Catholics Must Set Example

In the necessary reaction to this state of affairs, the Catholic must set an example. For far from there being any conflict between loyalty to the Church and devotion to the interest and well-being of the people and the state, between these two kinds of duties, which a true Christian must ever keep in mind, there exists an intimate union and perfect harmony. Is this not what the Prince of the Apostles taught when he said: 'Be subject to every human creature for God's sake. . . . for such is the will of God?'

But individual lack of self consciousness quickly becomes collective. And the setting up of powerful and active interest groups is, perhaps, the most serious aspect of the crisis that you are analysing. Whether it is a question of management organisations or workers' unions, of economic trusts, of professional or social groups -- some of which directly serve the state -- these organisations have acquired a power that allows them to exert great influence on the government and the life of the nation. At grips with these collective forces, often anonymous, and which at times for one reason or another go beyond the borders of the country, as well as the limits of their competence, the democratic state -- the outgrowth of the liberal norms of the nineteenth century -- finds it difficult to manage the tasks that each day become more vast and more complex.

Disinterested Service Required

Without doubt, the teaching of the Church recommends the existence in the nation of intermediary groups which co-ordinate professional interests and make easier for the

state the management of its affairs. And yet, 'certain organisations, in order to protect the interests of their own members, no longer appeal to the laws of justice and the common good, but depend on the organised numbers of their followers and the weakness of their opponents, who do not happen to be well organized, or who always strive to subordinate the use of force to the laws of justice and the common good. How then can such organisations dare to flatter themselves that they are promoting the cause of civil peace?' The same Christian sense of disinterested service, of respect of the obligations of justice and charity, is still required here. And if the responsible persons of these organisations are unable to enlarge their horizons to the perspectives of the nation, if they cannot, out of loyal recognition of what is just, sacrifice their prestige and perchance their immediate advantage, they are keeping the country in a harmful state of tension, they are paralysing the exercise of political power and in the end are compromising the liberty of the very one they pretend to serve.

And thus, to protect the liberty of the citizen and at the same time serve the common good by active co-operation of all the living forces of the nation, the public powers must exercise their activity with firmness and independence. They must do it with a clear vision of their mission and its limits: they must do it with that appreciation of their own obligations, with that objectivity, impartiality, loyalty, generosity and integrity without which a democratic government would find it hard to command the respect and the support of the better section of the people.'

Dangers of Statism

Moreover, the fidelity of those who govern according to this ideal will be the best safeguard against the double temptation that lies in wait for them in the increasing extent of their task: the temptation to weakness, which would make them abdicate under the combined pressure of men and events, and the opposite temptation of statism, by which

public powers would substitute themselves unduly for the private initiative in order to exercise direct rule over the social economy and other branches of human activity.

Now, if today one cannot deny the state a right that liberalism denied it, it is equally true that the state's task is not essentially the direct assumption of the economic, cultural and social functions that belong to other spheres. Its task is rather to secure the real independence of its authority so that it can give a just part of the responsibility to each one who represents an effective and lawful power in the country, without peril to its own mission of co-ordinating and orientating all efforts towards the one higher common good. And even if, in order to bring about a better integration of certain intermediary groups in the national community, it is said to be opportune to summon them to closer and more organic collaboration with the public powers, this question would be susceptible of becoming the object of a new and prudent research.

And yet, we wish to repeat in closing that reflection on the institutions and research on the level of political structures *should* never make one lose sight of the moral roots of the whole crisis of citizenship. For far too long juridical sense has been corrupted by the private interests of individuals, classes, groups and movements. The juridical order must once again feel itself bound to the moral order. And please God that he who commands as well as he who obeys will from now on have before his eyes only obedience to the eternal laws of truth and justice!

The leaders of the *Semaines Sociales* will not bring the grave demands of civic duty into relief without at the same time stressing the supernatural force that must be received from God in order to remain faithful to it. Men of the Government bearing grave responsibilities, private organizations charged with vast collective interests, simple citizens justly anxious to serve the general good — to all these is directed the warning of the Psalmist: 'Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it'

RAILWAY WORKERS

(An address to the Railway workers of Rome)

Still vivid in Our mind is the memory of the great day, whose significance will become ever clearer in the eyes not only of Christians, but also of the enemies of Christianity.

On the first of May of this year, when we beheld 150,000 workers, men and women, in St. Peter's Square, all eager to affirm their belief in Jesus Christ and their complete trust in the Church, the thought came to Us that surely something new was in the air, something clear and palpable for all that gathering. Indeed, something had happened. The world of those who more than any others need defence — both juridically and socially — until they gained greater awareness of their dignity as men and saw many of their rights gradually come to be recognized, — was none the less the victim of a cunning activity on the part of men eager to cause divisions, to deceive the worker with false promises, pledged to draw them away from the practice of their faith, may even to destroy it.

To-day, there are not lacking signs of a constantly improving state of affairs. This, though it does not justify a slaking of effort, and still less a halting of it, does however bring hope that better times are in store for the working classes. Hence, as We celebrated Mass this morning, while reading in the Gospel how the people crowded around Christ to hear the word of God, our confidence grew stronger that such a scene symbolized the times which are coming, and that the day should not be long delayed when, with error overcome and the clearly defined Christian solution of the social problem revealed in its fulness, it will be possible to inaugurate a true return of the ranks of labour to Christ Jesus, the only Master and Saviour....

Co-operation between workers

Still, if — at the sight of your great group — We joyfully greet this renewal of the Christian working world, that does not lessen Our anxious care. For the Christian working world, life of one nation is part of the Mystical Body of Christ, and

wherever the enemy moves to the attack, he strikes the whole Body. This awareness of the common danger to Christian Italy should strengthen your determination to co-operate with all men of good will in combating the spirit of disunion and hatred among sections of the Italian people.

Certainly no group may abuse this readiness and good will on your part. No true Christian can find fault if you unite in strong organizations to defend your rights — while remaining aware of your duties — and to arrive at an improvement in your conditions of life. On the contrary, precisely because the harmonious action of all groups in the State is a Christian duty, no individual citizen ought to become a victim of the arbitrary act of tyranny of others. You are, therefore, acting fully in conformity with the Church's social teaching when, by all means morally permissible you vindicate your just rights.

We said, "by all means morally permissible." It is unnecessary to remind you that acts of violence, which damage the liberty and the goods of others, are not even contemplated by true Christians. When, therefore, they use the power of their organizations to win recognition for their rights, it is essential that, in the first place, they use the means suitable for the negotiation of a peaceful settlement. Then, in particular, there must be taken into consideration whether the results being aimed at are in reasonable proportion to the damage which would result from the use of force. That adds special weight to the responsibility of a class of workers such as yours, Christian railwaymen, because your work — as We have said — has a vital part to play in the economy of the whole nation.

Dangers of a Materialistic Outlook

There is yet another danger. Even you — as so many workers who are not with you — might restrict your attention, your anxieties your subsequent contract, to the problems of material life. There is in you another life — God's own life, — infused into your soul on the day of your baptism. To lose this life, to neglect it, not to be engaged in preserving the state of sanctifying grace, and to be satisfied with the thought,

for example, that one is always faithful to Christian political principles, would be inadequate and could lead to a dangerous state of illusion. The truth is that you ought, before all else, to be in your deepest convictions true Christians. Attachment to Christian political principles is then a natural consequence which comes almost automatically. But some do not hesitate to believe and say that it is impossible — nay, that men ought not — to think of the soul so long as they have not suitably provided for the material needs of the body.

Are We, perhaps, to take as the meaning of the eternal words of Jesus Christ: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" This saying inspired and sustained the martyrs of the Church in its infancy, and the same teaching is still being given — by their shining example — by the confessors of the Faith in those lands where men would wish to destroy God, and this being impossible, where they torture the bodies of those who remain faithful to Him.

Material life, yes. But Jesus Christ, when teaching us to pray, made us ask for our daily bread after having asked that the will of the Heavenly Father may be done. On the other hand, He Himself has undertaken to give the other things in plenty to all those who seek first the Kingdom of God and its justice.

We entreat you beloved children, protect yourselves against the poisonous leaven of the modern pharisees: social action, yes, and in due season, with the fullest possible union and determination; but not action based on hatred, or that which, caring only for the material life, ignores or denies what is more excellent, the worth of the soul. It is of the utmost importance to the Church, for instance, to see the settlement of the social problem, but certainly not in such a manner that, at the same time, souls go to their ruin.

Separated Brethren

A final word, beloved children, before I bless you and let you go.

It is certainly good to rejoice at the advantages already gained, and it is reasonable to consider, as one takes pleasure in it that it is a substantial victory: and the more so that, in the winning of it, you have not wished evil to any one, and are striving to contribute to the good of all. But it is also true that no one who, having put his hand to the plough, looks back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Reflect, dear children, on how many are still outside your ranks. You are certainly here in large numbers; others, on service, have had to be content to be present in spirit. But there are, too, those who, though able, were unwilling to come. Deceived by a malicious propaganda, they still believe, — and how mistaken they are! — that the Church, which loves them so tenderly, wishes to obstruct them in their progress to a just improvement of their lot, and they fear to approach the Church; they fear to leave those who, on the contrary, cannot truly wish their good if they destroy in them peace with God, if they turn love into hatred, turn action, at once appropriate and just, for the defence of one's own rights into a bitter struggle.

To these separated brethren, speak with the strength of your conviction and your example. Tell them that separation from Jesus Christ means only uneasiness and sadness, even though there may be material goods in plenty. Give them courage: Jesus Christ, Who worked miracles so that crowds which followed Him should not remain without their necessary sustenance, would not have them go in want of bread.

Thus may the grace of God and the goodwill of you all, and of the other Christian workers scattered over all Italy, hasten the coming of the day in which Jesus Christ will reign in your hearts and in the world.

Social Survey

Rural Credit

During the second Five-Year Plan period India will have a well-organised rural credit, marketing and warehousing scheme which will cost many crores of rupees and will benefit farmers, small scale and cottage industries. Credit marketing and warehousing cooperatives will be established in all districts of the country financed by both the Central and State Governments and operated by the Reserve Bank. The scheme is receiving the final touches and will be soon inaugurated.

Over a dozen training establishments are busy preparing personnel to run the various types of cooperatives.

The Madras Government has approved a scheme to start about a dozen agricultural credit and marketing societies in certain selected areas of the State. The Societies will make available to farmers long and short term loans, develop marketing facilities and build godowns and generally help farmers to produce more and to obtain for them better returns.

The credit cooperatives will help not only agriculturalists but also all those who are engaged in small scale and cottage industries. This scheme if successfully operated will go a long way in raising the standard of living of our rural population and also to solve to some extent the problem of unemployment.

Social Welfare

It is proposed to spend about Rs. 25 crores for social welfare work during the second Five-Year Plan period. The people are expected to contribute a sum of Rs. 5 crores. A large number of Gram Sevaks, Midwives, and other social workers will be trained to work exclusively in the rural areas. In every one of 330 districts of the country there will be four national projects in operation. Special committees will be established to run these projects.

In Bihar the Government has decided to set up two sugar mills on a cooperative basis. The Government will make a grant of Rs. 10 lakhs towards the establishment of the mills

and an equal amount will be contributed by the cultivators on a cooperative basis.

Village Panchayats

The Bombay Government proposes to establish village panchayats in every village of the State. For this purpose a Bill will be soon introduced in the Assembly to amend the existing law. The amended law will enable villages which have a population of less than 2000 to have panchayats. All those who are on the State electoral list will be allowed to vote, the qualification of property and tax will be abolished and the panchayats will be given certain additional powers, as recommended by the Planning Commission. Improvement of agriculture will be an obligatory duty while the making of a survey will be a discretionary duty only. Two other duties which are likely to be made obligatory will be the organisation of voluntary labour corps for the working of community projects and assisting in the implementation of land reform schemes.

Some Labour Statistics

In 1955 there were 405 cotton mills in India. Bombay leads with 180 and Madras comes second with 82. In July 1955, the mills had under their employment 753,379 workers.

In August 1955 in 219 training centres operated by Government 11,647 persons were receiving technical and vocational training. Of this number 478 were women trainees.

According to statistics supplied by the Chief Inspector of Mines the average weekly earnings of underground miners for August 1955 were Rs. 14—8—2 in the Jharia, and Rs. 12—11—8 in the Raniganj areas.

In August, 1955, 70 labour disputes were in progress and another 101 were started. 82,843 workers were involved and a total of 347,016 man-days were lost. But both as regards the number of disputes and the loss of man-days the month under consideration showed a distinct improvement over the previous month. Most of the disputes were of short duration; only four lasted for more than 30 days.

Employees' State Insurance Scheme

It has been decided to make a beginning at a few selected centres to make the benefits of the Employees' State Insurance scheme available to the families of insured workers. The plan is to make this a general rule gradually as facilities increase. A scheme of this magnitude and of an entirely novel nature will take time to function with all-round satisfaction. One of the complaints is that the present facilities are woefully inadequate. Efforts are made to improve the operation of the scheme and also to introduce it in every industrial area.

Prizes for Workers

The Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore, has introduced a novel system with a view to promote greater participation of workers in the production programme. Under this system prizes are awarded to workers for submitting suggestions to improve the quality or outturn of manufactured items. The suggestions made by the workers are scrutinised by a Suggestions Committee especially set up for the purpose. Awards are made on the recommendation of this committee.

During 1954, 98 suggestions for improvement methods of manufacture were made by workers. 24 of these which were adopted by the management proved useful in expanding production programmes of the factory. Prizes have been awarded to 15 out of the 24 suggestions, while suitable prizes are being considered for the remaining nine. While prizes hitherto offered ranged from Rs. 5 to 25, the success of the system has led the management to introduce more prizes ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 100. There is great enthusiasm among workers. This is surely a very praiseworthy venture in employer-employee cooperation for mutual benefit.

Industrial Cooperatives

The Central Social Welfare Board in consultation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has drawn up a scheme for the expansion of the urban welfare projects. Under the scheme, industrial co-operatives which can be operated on a cottage basis, at least in some parts of their operation, are to be launched all over the country. They are intended to provide part-time employment to the women-folk of the middle

class, mostly at their residences, in order to augment their family income.

The All-India scheme has been drawn up after studying the working of a pilot project which has been working in Karol Bagh, Delhi. Under this project, a cooperative match factory is being run in which the process of making matches has been divided into several stages and those that lend themselves to handling on a cottage industry basis are being provided to women workers at their homes. Nearly 450 women from middle class families are working in this factory. Their average emoluments range between As. 14 to Re. 1/- per day for the work in the factory and between Re. 1 to Rs. 1/12/- when they work at home. The higher earnings at home are accounted for by the larger spare time that a housewife can devote to extra work if she is permitted to do so at home than when she has to leave the house and go to work in the factory premises. The marketing arrangements are looked after by a managing committee appointed by the Central Social Welfare Board.

The All-India scheme now drawn up aims to extend industrial co-operatives on the pattern of the Delhi Match Factory to other parts of the country and include within their ambit tailoring, embroidery and preservation of food and the making of garments, baskets, note-books and pencils, cups and saucers, toys and matches.

Co-operative match factories are proposed to be started in Poona, Vijayawada and Chandigarh. At Hyderabad a factory has already been started. Details for starting an industrial co-operative on squashes and fruits preservation industry at PEPSU are being worked out. Under the scheme the co-operatives will receive assistance by way of grants and loans from the Central Government. The Central loans will bear an interest of 2½%. The rest of the funds required will be contributed by the State Governments or by the parties concerned. (Labour Gazette)

Elephants

Uttar Pradesh, which is faced with a steep rise in its elephant population, estimated at more 1500, is trying to enrol them in the land army. With the disappearance of

zamindars the prices have fallen considerably; a good elephant can be bought now for as little as Rs. 2000.

According to present calculations based on experiments an elephant can plough about five acres a day at an average cost of Rs. 16/- per day, as against a tractor's performance of 10 to 12 acres a day at a cost of Rs. 50 to 60 per day. There are some difficulties however. The elephant not being so docile as the unperturable buffalo, takes offence easily and shows it too. It works by fits and starts and seems to be anxious to get through a bad job quickly. The new harness which has been evolved after much experimentation weighs nearly 30 maunds and is very cumbersome adding little to the dignity of this noble beast. The elephant too seems to know this. As the older elephants have been strongly objecting to the new duties imposed upon them the Government is trying to train young ones.

Coir Industry

In keeping with Government's policy of encouraging cottage and small scale industries, schemes costing about Rs. 23 lakhs for the development of coir industry in Malabar and South Kanara districts on a co-operative basis are to be taken up under the Second Five-Year Plan.

Railways

The Planning Commission's decision to cut down by nearly 500 crores the estimates of the Railway Ministry for the Second Five-Year Plan has caused much concern in the country. Though during 1953-'55 the Indian Railways introduced 488 new trains and extended the runs of another 304, — Over-crowding in almost every train throughout the country has become a chronic affair. New passenger coaches are continuously commissioned but as old coaches have to be taken out, the situation does not improve very much. The population has increased and so is the habit of travelling. There is also the problem of goods traffic. Both the line capacity and the wagon position is causing much concern. In the Second Plan period traffic will increase considerably. If the Railway has to abandon some of its plans the whole second Five-Year Plan will suffer.

The Railway Minister is frequently announcing new amenities for the travelling public. The latest is a promise to run a fully air-conditioned train with accommodation for First and Third class passengers. Judging from letters in newspapers it would appear that the announcement has not roused much interest as what the public wants right now is not air-conditioned comfort but a place inside the compartment, if not to sit, at least to stand. In many trains passengers are obliged to hang precariously from window bars or, in some parts, even ride on roofs.

Ploughing

Recent experiments have shown that the normal depth of ploughing of four to six inches is sufficient for the preparation of the field for sowing crops. Experiments with maize and wheat were conducted to find out what the best frequency of ploughing should be. For maize best results obtained with two ploughings followed by three hoeings. For wheat, when three, six, nine and twelve ploughings for seed-bed preparation were tried, best results were obtained from plots that received nine ploughings. Farm experts say that the normal depth of ploughing as is obtained by bullock drawn implements is the most practicable depth for seed-bed work. They feel that inversion of soil is more important than deeper ploughing. Just enough cultivation to keep down weeds and to maintain the soil in a condition that can absorb and hold water is ideal. Timely and not frequent cultivation should be the rule on the farm. (Eastern Economist)

Malthus

According to the report of the Food and Agricultural Organization for 1953-'54 the world food supplies have risen faster than the world population. The farmers have increased their output by 3 per cent while the net increase in mouths is only 1½ per cent. Production in other fields also has risen above the pre-war level. In 1953-'54 we produced in India 11.4 million tons more of food than in 1949-'50. The five-year target of another 7.6 million tons has been exceeded by 3.8 million tons during the third year of the Plan. This has reduced considerably our imports saving over Rs. 130 crores in foreign exchange. With the commissioning of new irri-

gation and power projects, the bringing under cultivation of ever more tracts of fertile land, the use of fertilizers, the supply of improved varieties of seed, our food supply is on the increase. There is even talk of limited exports of certain agricultural products.

All this goes to show that the dark prophecies of Malthus and his modern disciples are, to put it mildly, a bit exaggerated. If only our family planners would curb their diseased imagination a bit and concentrate more on constructive work they would benefit the human race more than by propagating their dangerous fads. It is true that in some countries there is a surplus of food and that people are literally overfed while in most countries in the East most people are definitely underfed. This is not because there are too many mouths to feed but simply because these people have not exploited to the full the resources nature has placed at their disposal. With the coming of independence there has been tremendous amount of activity in these countries to increase food supplies and they are succeeding beyond the wildest expectations of many. More people mean more workers and more workers mean more producers of essential commodities and not children only as our Malthusians would have us to believe.

New Bills

The Transport Ministry has introduced two Bills in the Lok Sabha which seek to amend the Motor Vehicles Act. One of them proposes to make it obligatory for conductors in motor vehicles to obtain a regular licence from a licensing authority. The candidate will have to satisfy the said authority that he possesses the requisite qualities as stated in the law.

The other Bill is to improve the lot of workers employed in the road transport business. This is a well conceived and liberal piece of legislation and will be welcomed by all who have the welfare of workers at heart. Both the Bills are likely to be taken up during the next session of parliament.

An unofficial Bill seeking to amend the *Mines Act*, 1952 was recently introduced in Parliament. In the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill it has been stated

that as the work in mines is very hazardous and dangerous it is necessary that adequate leave should be given to mine workers for recuperation and recreation. The Bill therefore proposes to amend section 51 of the Act to provide for the grant of 30 days' leave on full pay or wages to every employee on completion of twelve months' continuous service.

At present the workers in factories are paid for overtime work at the rate of twice their ordinary rate of wages while in mines this rate is applicable only to underground workers. For other workers in mines, the Mines Act provides for payment at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ times their ordinary rate of wages. The Bill seeks to amend section 33 of the Mines Act so as to prescribe a uniform rate for all categories of workers as in the case of factory workers i.e., payment of twice the ordinary rates of wages.

"Raja" Man Singh

Twenty seven years after he had launched himself into a career of murder, arson and loot the notorious dacoit chief Man Singh has met his death at the hands of a Gorkha rifleman. For years he has kept the combined police forces of Madhya Bharat, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan on tenterhooks and cost the exchequer over a crore of rupees. He has been responsible for at least 185 murders and countless dacoities. He seemed to have special fascination for the blood of policemen. After the death of his son at the hands of the pursuing police he had embarked on a fresh wave of murder and loot.

Thanks to the special force of policemen employed in the extermination of this pest of dacoits the country is slowly being rid of them. Though Man Singh and some of his well known colleagues have been exterminated there are quite a few still left. The way the campaign is conducted at present gives us every reason to hope that the last of them will be accounted for in the not/distant future.

Delinquent Children

In India the problem is very much accentuated by the woeful lack of proper and expert child guidance clinics and homes for the care of wayward children. Some of the

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1. To spread the social teachings of the Catholic Church.
2. To provide theoretical and practical training for social workers.
3. To serve as a centre of information about social work.

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