

Of course, the suggestion needs following up. The Russian leader has made a proposal which at this stage is tantalisingly cryptic. At best, he has placed an ideal before the world: he has given no indication of how the goal is to be approached. Too many of the questions arising from his proposal remain unanswered perhaps the most pressing among these being that of international inspection. Would the Soviet Union, for instance, be willing to lift its iron curtain completely and make it possible for all and sundry to see that Russia was keeping no armies, manufacturing no arms? The endless wrangling on the question of nuclear inspection gives scant hope of such open-handedness. Nevertheless, if Mr Khrushchev were really not willing to lower the iron curtain to some extent, would he make so revolutionary a proposal?

When Mr Khrushchev and President Eisenhower sit down this week-end at Camp David to get down to brass tacks, they are likely to discover that in an important sense the disarmament proposal is premature. It is like

putting the cart before the horse, the horse representing the issues which provoke armament. Unless the causes behind armament are removed, it is absurd to imagine that disarmament can start. The reasons to fight must vanish before the means of fighting can voluntarily be given up. Perhaps Mr Khrushchev has an equally dramatic proposal to make in this matter. Perhaps he will show so much cordiality and conciliation at the meeting at Camp David that important adjustments of minor but irritating disputes will become practical. Conjecture is futile at this stage; but it needs to be said that all the cordiality and conciliation necessary cannot be expected to be Mr Khrushchev's responsibility alone: the American statesmen must be prepared to make corresponding concessions; and with the shadows of de Gaulle and Adenauer lurking behind the scenes, this may not be easy.

So far, however, the visit has been thoroughly worthwhile. Above all else, it has demonstrated the fact that the Russian leader is real-

ly serious in his mission of peace. On quite a few occasions during the visit he has been treated with discourtesy and rudeness, and though normally he is hardly the man to put up with insults, he has overcome his impulse to pack up and leave, and has continued with the tour. Perhaps the discourtesies to which he was subjected at Los Angeles and elsewhere were intended to be a demonstration of the freedom a citizen enjoys in America; in fact, it was a demonstration of shocking bad manners. The Russian Premier is Mr Eisenhower's guest, and any discourtesy shown to the guest embraces the host. In very recent memory, Mr Khrushchev has cancelled visits to a number of countries because of advance indications of rudeness; he could have done the same in America. Not only has he refrained from doing so, but has been at special pains to let no word of it reach his people in Russia, who have been consistently assured that he was receiving a hero's welcome in the United States. It is hardly likely that he would have done all this if he did not mean business.

## *Cliches and Dogmas*

WHEN the Planning Sub-Committee of the Congress reports on the social and economic objectives of the Third Plan, one naturally expects a great deal. The Sub-Committee has, after all, direct contact with the people as well as the Government of the country, and this ought to enable it to give a concrete picture of the extent to which the Second Plan has either failed or succeeded in realising the basic objectives and targets. And what is more important, it should be possible for it to indicate clearly the directions find magnitude of the further effort necessary, so that Government as well as the people could get sufficient guidance in framing their policies as well as directing their efforts.

The Report of the Congress Planning Sub-Committee, however, has succeeded in neither of these two purposes. On the Second Plan, it repeats what has been contained in the various documents of the Planning Commission. It does not give any illuminating analysis of the reasons for the failure in increasing either food output or employment at an adequate rate. These are the

two fields in which politicians, if they have the requisite contact with the people, can tell the technicians there is inadequate response from the masses to the policies of the Government. Either the Congress party has failed to keep in touch with the people or its Sub-Committee has thought it sufficient to repeat in a vulgarised form what has been said about these matters by the various Government bodies. One is no wiser about the past for reading the Sub-Committee's report.

The social and economic objectives suggested for the Third Plan, are (1.) to take the country a significant step forward to its goal of a socialist society (2) to accord high priority to the development of basic and capital goods industries, (3) to step up agricultural output to an adequate extent, (4) to ensure the maximum possible employment, (5) to provide a national minimum of social services to the rural population and (6) to provide for a correct regional balance in our development.

These are all very good objectives, and as the Prime Minister said

while inaugurating the Ooty Seminar, "...if you put down the objectives broadly, nobody here and very few people outside will disagree with the broader objectives ...The differences come in as to what exactly we should do in the practical approach and what priorities we are to give". And on this all-important question of assigning politically feasible priorities for the guidance of the technical planners, the Congress sub-committee has nothing to say, in spite of the explicit admonition from the Prime Minister.

The objectives suggested are all, of course, very desirable ones; but the problem of planning arises because we really cannot have all that we consider desirable. The Sub-Committee does not seem to be aware that these are conflicting objectives. The task of the Planning Sub-Committee, properly understood, should have been to suggest in concrete terms the extent to which it wants the various objectives to be realised. The task of the technical planners would have been easier if the desired as well as feasible combination of interme-

diate targets for achieving these objectives had been suggested by the Planning Sub-Committee.

Even more than the objectives, it was on the technique of energising large masses of people in the implementation of the programme that the Congress Sub-Committee was expected to give a lead. But it shows no insight into the response or lack of it on the part of the people to the objectives and policies of Government. The Committee, for example, has given a high priority to increasing agricultural and particularly food output. If adequate food resources are so very necessary not only in the terms of providing a basic necessity of life but also for accelerating the pace of development, why have the measures that have been taken so far failed, and what changes in methods or attitudes are necessary? What about the under-utilisation of irrigation facilities? Further, are the arrangements regarding the supply of seeds, fertilisers, credit etc. adequate; if not, why? Is the land system such as to act as a disincentive to any effort by peasants to increase food output? If so, in what concrete way is it to be modified? On these questions, the Committee has thrown little light.

Again, the Committee puts great emphasis on the use of idle labour for creating capital assets. What purpose is served by merely indicating the different assets which can be created by the utilisation of idle man-power? This truism has been known to India since Gandhiji wrote his 'Hind Swaraj' in the first decade of this century. Of interest are the steps taken so far and the additional steps that should be taken to utilise it for development. What is it that is lacking in the present approach? If it is a question of sound organisation, what are the organisational changes necessary? On these questions, too, the Sub-Committee is resolutely silent.

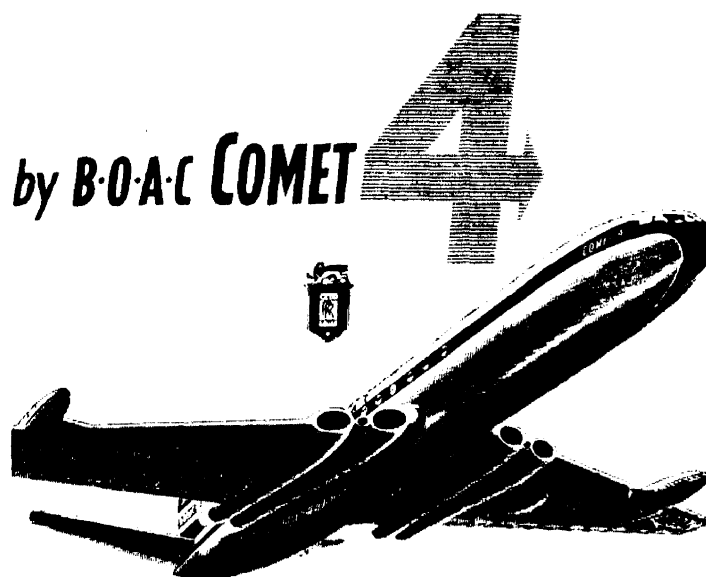
The rest of the Report of the Sub-Committee is a hodge-podge of what is contained in the various documents of the Planning Commission and the National Development Council. Of course, the Sub-Committee is original in one respect, and that is with regard to the discussion on the content of socialism. The establishment of a socialist pattern of society, according to the Sub-committee, is a question of changing

the motivation and sublimating egoistical impulses and working for nobler causes and objects of life'. The Sub-Committee thus has added a new spiritual dimension to the definition of socialism. This surely is a contribution worthy of the inheritors of the ancient spiritual traditions of this country.

If the Congress Planning Sub-Committee's report is full of worn-out cliches, the document of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry on the Third Plan is a collection of dogmas about the role of the private sector and the futility of 'public enterprise'. It is a plea for more industrial investment in the private sector and reduction of taxes. The Federation, however, shows no awareness of the investment pattern so far or of the required inter-relationships between the various sectors of the

economy. The investment priorities suggested by the Federation are completely arbitrary and have no relevance to the needs and requirements of economic development in India. The private sector investment in the Third Plan could well be Rs 4500 crores; that is a separate question. But the indication of how best to allocate this is not based on any appreciation of the existing investment pattern.

Like the Congress Planning Sub-Committee, the Federation could be of help in formulating the Third Plan, if it brought to bear its specialised knowledge and experience on the problems of the Third Plan. But again like the Congress Planning Committee, it prefers to bypass the essentials. There is safety in such a policy; to take any clear-cut position today could well become a source of embarrassment tomorrow.



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