

offered abundant fare. But he has not stopped there. He has given us a glimpse of the Corporation's ambitious five-year plan. The target is to raise the yearly New Business procurement to Rs 1,000 crores in 1963 from the present level of Rs 435 crores or so. Towards this end, a number of new offices, including some in outlying regions, where life insurance is little known, are to be opened; the strength of the staff at all levels is being increased, and a beginning has already been made with schemes for training the staff. While this is good so far as it goes, one suspects that the aggregate Business in Force is not increasing to the extent it should; the amount of premature lapses in policies is still quite high. A proper assessment of this very important matter needs a detailed study of the reasons for such lapses. And looking to the ambitious five-year programme it has, the Corporation will have to watch carefully the quality of business it takes on its books, and not be satisfied with a host of short-lived proposals.

Uproar in Bengal Assembly

BENGAL'S patience has no doubt been sorely tried by the tragic incidents accompanying the food agitation. And so it was to be expected that there would be a display of bad temper when the State Assembly met for its 10-day session. The seven adjournment motions tabled for discussion were but a measure of the feelings roused particularly among Opposition members over the recent disturbances and the drastic measures taken by the police to deal with them. And when the motions came up for consideration, there was no reason to expect an attitude of sweet reasonableness in the House. But to say that is not by any means to overlook the ugly turn that proceedings in the Assembly took when the motions were being discussed and particularly when the Minister in charge of the Police was replying. It all started with one member flaunting a shoe in the face of another in the House, when the latter, taking up the challenge, called the former out to clinch the argument in the lobby. While these two were fighting with each other outside, pandemonium was let loose in the House with shoes flying freely in the air and a microphone stand hurtling over the heads of members, with bouts of table-

thumping and shouting aggravating this drama of legislators gone temporarily berserk. The Minister had to stop his speech and the Deputy Speaker, who was in the chair, had to leave the House. When members reassembled about half an hour later, it was only to hear a cacophony of allegations and counter-allegations regarding the initial responsibility for the unedifying scenes witnessed earlier in the House.

Verbal nominations and angry gesticulations are by no means new to our legislative bodies; and occasionally there have also been brief spells of commotion, interrupting the proceedings of the House. But the extent to which some members of the Bengal Assembly forgot themselves and the dignity of their office is almost without precedent in the country save perhaps in the troubled years preceding the advent of Independence. However exasperating the circumstances may be over brief periods of time, there is certainly no justification for resorting to scuttling and horseplay in what ought to be an august assembly of responsible people. Such ugly sights have become common enough on the streets of India, thanks to the glorification of 'direct action' by all and sundry. That legislators should have encouraged this trend by their inglorious action is nothing short of a tragedy.

'Fly Now, Pay Later'

A IR-INDIA International's gallant little 'Maharajah' has been going places and making himself conspicuous by asking everyone to fly with him' with a light heart. Now he is asking, with due modesty, his ever-widening and truly international circle of friends and admirers to fly with him on a light purse too. It is not often that a light purse makes for a light heart particularly in travel. But the little man has an ingenious plan. With characteristic shrewdness he has made friends with the people who have the money, the Bank of India to wit, and arranged to give his passengers all the money they require for a flight ticket to almost anywhere on the globe and then to dip into their pockets gently and slowly so that it does not hurt them a wee bit.

In other words, Air-India International, in co-operation with the Bank of India, has just announced

its 'fly now, pay later' scheme for the benefit of those who may like to fly but may not have the requisite cash in hand. According to the scheme, passengers are required to give only 20 per cent of the value of the ticket in down payment at the time of purchase. The balance, to be advanced to them by the Bank of India, is repayable in fifteen monthly instalments from the date of grant of the loan. Intending travellers may apply for this loan either to Air-India International, to the travel agencies approved by the IATA or direct to the Bank of India. It is the 'never never' system, of course, but nevertheless one that will give a fillip to air travel.

There are quite a few people in this country who, given the chance, would like to spend their holidays abroad instead of at home but who find the price of an air ticket beyond them. A system of deferred payment, as is now proposed, will undoubtedly be an inducement to most of them. The scheme will also help students and small business men. A similar scheme is already in operation in the United States (and perhaps elsewhere also) but, considering the usual conservatism of our banks and business houses, it is nothing short of revolutionary that it should be adopted here. Apparently, the little 'Maharajah' is a glutton for friends and is determined to show them his magic carpet. All the same, even the 'Maharajah' has to admit that this innovation at a time when Government is going all out to curtail foreign travel is a bit incongruous. Where is the fun in landing in Rome or Paris if you haven't got the liras or francs or even rupees for that matter!

Nehru's Goodwill Visit

PARADOXICAL though it may seem. Prime Minister Nehru's goodwill visit to Afghanistan and Iran received less publicity in the Indian daily Press— except, perhaps, during the concluding stages of the tour than the dismissal of the Attorney-General of Indonesia or an "angry young man's protest" against the H-Bomb. It would be hasty to conclude that this is a measure of public interest in the goodwill visits of our statesmen; for, it seems reasonable to assume that if the Prime Minister was setting out on a journey to the Soviet Union or the United States, instead of to Afghanistan, it would have made head-