

Nagpur Disturbances

THAT the birth pangs of the Maharashtra State, which began with rioting and bloodshed on the streets of Bombay should end up with disturbances in distant Nagpur is unfortunate in the extreme. The discontent in Vidarbha or the fact that the separatist elements could muster this much of public support brings into sharp focus the sizable problem that Maharashtra will have to face in the next two years, in bringing about the emotional integration of this State. What is the actual strength of public feeling in Vidarbha in favour of a separate State is today largely a matter of guess and the answer to this question is bound to be biased one way or the other. It could not be answered without holding a plebiscite and even if a plebiscite were held in an atmosphere of tension and inflamed passion, its results would be open to question.

Altho that one can say for certain is that four of the districts of Vidarbha are solidly in favour of Maharashtra and it is only in the other four that there is difference of opinion. What the strength of the dissenting group is must at this stage be largely a matter of surmise. Another thing is clear. The small Hindi speaking minority of Vidarbha constituting about 10 per cent of population is definitely in favour of a separate Vidarbha. It is an influential minority and the events of the last few days show that it is capable of giving vent to its feelings in an unrestrained and embarrassing manner. That the Congress High Command had at one stage blessed or encouraged this separatist tendency made the situation a great deal worse.

In retrospect, therefore, the decision not to incorporate the Nagpur Pact in the Act by which Maharashtra was constituted into a separate State appears to have been unwise in the extreme. True, there is Chavan's verbal assurance but considering the undoubted capacity of the dissenters to foment unrest, this assurance should have been given the authority of statute. The agitation nonetheless is quite pointless, for Vidarbha has the right to choose at the time of the next election which is not so far off. The new State, therefore, has a two year lead to consolidate its position and win over the dissenters.

U S Financed DVC Power Plant

THE D V C was the first project financed by the World Bank which captured popular imagination. It was for years the symbol of New India in the making. It held the promise of simultaneous development on a number of fronts. Some of the purposes of this multi-purpose project have trailed off. Navigation, one of the multipurposes of the project, is still a long way off. Another, flood-control, the people of the valley and down south, were painfully reminded of, when the promised, or hoped for, protection failed in the hour of dire need. Neither has the irrigation part of the project been a conspicuous success. Hut power supply, especially the supply of thermal power, has come up in such a big way that it has nearly compensated for the disappointment OFI so many other fronts.

It is something of a paradox that a multi-purpose project based upon utilisation of water resources should eventually come to rest upon thermal power as its mainstay. The passage of time, the fantastic growth of demand for power and the valiant efforts which the DVC has been making to meet that demand has taken away the sting from that paradox. Thermal power, in a multi-purpose project, plays only a secondary role—it comes in as a balancing factor in the operation of its grid system. With the installation of its first power station at Bokaro, thermal power, far from playing a secondary role, came to occupy the central position in it. The addition of a fourth unit of 75 M W, as against 50 M W each of the first three, is now an old story. The fourth unit should be now under commercial operation.

In order to meet the critical power

supply situation now experienced in the Damodar Valley, energetic efforts are being made to complete the work on the Durgapur Thermal Power Station so that the first of the two units of 75 M W each could be brought into operation in early 1960-61, if not earlier. Arrangement is also being made to buy some power from the West Bengal Government Power Plant at Durgapur,

As the DVC will have to supply the railways for their electrification scheme for all the four sections: (i) Howrah Mogalsarai; (ii) Asansol — Tatanagar - Rourkella; (iii) Howrah-Kharagpur; and (iv) Sealdah Division of Eastern Railways; it is putting up a new thermal power station at Chandrapura, which is 200 miles from Calcutta, on the Comoh Daltonganj loop line, with two units of 125 M W each. In the DVC budget estimates for 1960-61, there was a provision for project estimate for the Chandrapura station for a single unit of 125 M W "as originally decided upon" as also for a second unit of the same capacity "under the instruction of the Government of India". It is now learnt that this station is going to be financed wholly from American assistance, with a loan of \$ 30 million (Rs 14.3 crores) from the Dollar Loan Fund to cover the cost of foreign exchange, while the balance of the cost of Rs 20.5 crores is to be met from P I, 480 rupee counterpart funds. The D L F loan will carry interest at 3½ per cent and will be repayable in 20 years.

From a show-piece of successful World Bank financed development which it was at one time, DVC thus makes a bold bid to be the pioneer in American financed development as the largest project so far to be financed exclusively from U S funds.

INDIA 1960**A Reference Annual**

This comprehensive Reference Volume which provides very handy and concise information on the diverse aspects of India's National Life and Culture, is now ready.

Send your orders now

Price Popular Edition Rs. 6.50

Deluxe edition Rs. 9.00

(Postage extra)

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

Old Secretariat, Delhi-6

DA 60/82