

for a wage policy? First, the most important hurdle to jump is that of convincing the workers that partnership rather than exploitation is the main objective of such a policy. The working people, living on long and deep memories, would require nothing short of positive action on the part of the Government as proof of their sincerity. Thus if a policy of flexible wage restraint is to be advocated, as is generally believed from recent Government statements, then some action towards controlling profits, even if it means ploughing back profits to subsidise price reductions, must also be made. If workers are to be induced to accept a policy of wage restraint, it must be only on the basis that it is part of a general policy of restraint on profits and prices.

Secondly, the extent of Governmental control and influence must only be indirect and general. Indeed it would be folly for the Govern-

ment to attempt any detailed and compulsory wage control. All that is necessary is that the Government should indicate the changes desirable in the total wage bill, and in special circumstances, in the present position of particular groups or industries. This line of approach has already been advocated by a number of trade unions as well as the TUG. Any direct onslaught by the Government would in fact upset the traditional pattern of wage negotiations and create hostility and bitterness on both sides. This, above all things, should be avoided.

In general, total wages and salaries paid as part of aggregate consumer expenditure must in some manner or form be related to Government expenditure and expenditure on capital investment. If such a relation can be estimated in advance for purposes of financial and budgetary policy, then appropriate guidance and advice could be

given to both trade, unions and employers on the extent of increases or decreases desirable for purposes of realising that financial policy.

Thus the problem of formulating an appropriate wage policy is by no means insuperable. In some wages the present time is not so favourable for initiating such a policy. The winter round of wage claims is already being discussed around the arbitrators' table, and the Union leaders have not as yet recovered from the shock of the defeat of TUC last year. But in other ways it is favourable. Greater numbers of people are beginning to realise the issues at stake and dangers inherent in the current inflationary pressure on wages and prices. If a move is made by the Government, and if it is made in concert with positive measures to control profits and prices, there is no doubt that attempts at stability, so long sought after, will evoke response.

### Book Review

## The Population of India and Pakistan

By Kingsley Davis. *Princeton University Press, 1951.* Prepared under the editorial sponsorship of the Office of the Population Research, Princeton University. Pages xvi + 263.

Reviewed by G. P. Kapur

MR KINGSLEY DAVIS'S book is an admirable piece of work on the population problem of the Indian sub-continent. It is a comprehensive, ambitious and thoughtful book. It explores and analyses every phase of the population problem of the Indian sub-continent. It claims, and not without justification, to be an approach to the analysis of social organisation and social change in the area considered. "It is meant to be a contribution to the sociology and economics, as well as to the demography of India and Pakistan". (p. 3)

Mr Davis is a sociologist at heart. He does not consider the population phenomena in isolation, but in a wide social perspective. To him, modern India is a "split personality, divided and yet somehow not divided between states and provinces, races and castes, religions and localities. It is a sick region, poor and conflictful and ready to fly apart". (p. 16). He does not want to lose the threads of its past his-

tory and tries to comprehend its present and future in the same span of thought. He follows his historical narrative of India's demography with a background of her geography, economic evolution and social structure. In order to examine the Indian problems in an international setting, he draws upon his rich knowledge of the demographic situation in all parts of the world.

The dominant themes of the book are;

(a) In the two thousand years that intervened between the ancient and modern periods, India's population could not have grown rapidly; it must have remained virtually stationary. The trend of its growth could at best have been sporadic, the usual course being a gradual growth for a short time followed by an abrupt decline.

(b) The twenty-year period from 1921 to 1941 was the first time in India's known history that she experienced rapid growth during

two successive decades. The population of both India and Pakistan is now growing at a high rate of 1.2 per cent per annum.

(c) Chiefly due to elimination of war and banditry and control of famines and epidemics, mortality in India has been declining especially since 1921, and it is possible to reduce it still further, although "a continued low death rate without a modern economy and a civilized fertility is inconceivable". (P. 61)

(d) Indian fertility is high, though not the highest in the world, or the maximum allowed by biology. However, its trend suggests that it will not decline soon.

(e) "If we look candidly at the probable future, we must admit that the demographic situation in Pakistan and India will get worse before it gets better. Also, it will get better later than it would, if the two Governments successfully carried through a comprehensive population policy. The main stumbling block to attempting such a comprehensive policy is birth control; yet if the benefits of civilization are to come increasingly to the people of this region, the birth rate must be brought down. The current discrepancy between the birth and death rate, which is causing the rapid population growth, is in a sense artificial. The demographic account will have to be balanced sometime." (p. 291)

The author believes that the improvements in mortality have been affected with a minimum change in the Hindu and Muslim social organisations. Fertility had been controlled in the past to a considerable degree by indirect institutional, non-deliberate customs such as taboo on widow remarriage, but, under western influence, this control is apt to be largely mitigated.

Considerable space has been devoted to a discussion of the problems of density and the pressure of population. The evidence of agricultural pressure on land is furnished in clear and unequivocal terms, "The average agricultural holding is small. Pasture land is over-grazed. Few forests are left. Rural housing is extremely inadequate. Excess labour is backed up and wasted. Rural indebtedness is burdensome. - And most lamentable of all the competition for bare sustenance is very grim even in the richest food-growing areas. There should be a surplus of the means of subsistence, but there is none" (p. 22).

Elaborate chapters appear on migration, urbanization, differential fertility, social organisation, literacy and religion, but those engaging the keenest attention are the two pertaining to agriculture and industry. Rural density, says the author, "has made agriculture an insecure basis for further industrialization. Some of the old obstacles

to industrialization continue in attenuated form, while population growth has become a Frankenstein" (p. 220). He concludes that "ideally, in order to maximize real income, the population policy of Pakistan and India would include at least three measures—a programme of strategic emigration, a sustained and vigorous birth control campaign, and a scheme of rapid industrialization—because no one of these complex measures can substitute for the others or promise the maximum effect if pursued alone" (p. 230). Of these suggested measures rapid industrialization is deemed as having the best chance of being pushed through.

The book is lucid and straight forward. Excluding the specifically statistical sections, it is easily understandable. It is strewn with maps and illustrative diagrams, is amply documented and gives the evidence of a wide range of reading. It is not conventional or dogmatic. Conclusions are drawn by weighing the results of almost every possible line of argument. Although at particular points we begin to part company with Mr Davis, yet we cannot contest his main analysis. There is seemingly a shade of insolence and tenacity in his criticism of caste demography. He not only seems to exaggerate the influence of caste, but also believes that it is adopting itself to new conditions, and would therefore stay with us for a long

time to come. 'No observer who has carefully studied the recent social trends in India would agree with this observation.

The author has grappled with a vast mass of statistical data, has distilled it with remarkable profundity of logic, and has made new computations and estimates on the basis of this data. But his new statistical computations, e.g., his gross and net re productivity rates, child-woman ratio, etc., for the most part, a chasm between darkness and light. The casual reader may struggle in vain to discover the magnitudes of the probable errors in them.

### The Chemical Industry ( Correction )

A few words were inadvertently left out from the review on The Chemical Industry, appearing in the issue of November 24, 1951. The second sentence in the first paragraph, col. 2, page. 1153, of that issue should read as under:

"The pharmaceutical segment, or the derivative wing of the industry, had an earlier start, while the basic or heavy chemical industry, which is more complex and difficult to establish, did not receive any impetus for its growth till nearly the onset of the second world war

## The Socialist Party

H. T. Parekh

1. *We Build for Socialism*, (6 as.);
2. *How We Live*, (6 as.);
3. *Capital Levy*, (6 as.);
4. *You and the Vote*, (4 as.);
5. *Food for All*, (4 as.);
6. *Nationalisation*, (4 as.);
7. *Controls: End or Mend?* (4 as.);
8. *Reforms in Agriculture*, (4 as.);
9. *Social Mobility*, (4 as.); and
10. *Gold Diggers*, (4 as.);

Socialist Party Office, National House, Apollo Bunder, Bombay.)

THE Socialist Party's election campaign is gathering momentum as the date of election is drawing near. The drive and vigour with which the campaign is being carried on is best illustrated by the above publications which have been brought out since July this year, when the Party adopted

its platform now published as a pamphlet: *We Build for Socialism*. For the wealth of colours with which the booklets are published, for the pictorial presentation, for the tables they contain and for the handy size and low prices, the Party is entitled to high praise. One can offer one's congratulations

to the Party for its efforts without necessarily agreeing with several of the panaceas suggested in these booklets. It is to be hoped that these booklets will be translated in principal Indian languages.

In *We Build for Socialism*, the Party has, for the first time, come out with its policy. The ideas are clear-cut, and the exposition devoid of all jargon, is forceful because of its simplicity and balanced character. The Party has fortunately placed its emphasis on agriculture in all its aspects, and 15 out of 55 pages are devoted to our rural problems. The proposal for organizing Land Volunteers and a Food Army is now a definite plank in the Party programme. Abolition of Zamindari is now generally accepted, but the Party has gone a stage further by holding that no peasant family will be allowed to possess more than 30 acres of land, and proprietors possessing more than thirty acres,