

ral in effect than the licensing policy currently in operation.

All that can be said at present is that the Government are likely to fix higher monetary ceilings over a wide range of essential goods, the term "essential goods" being interpreted rather generously so as to include a large variety of goods consumed by the small consumer. It had been suggested in certain quarters that in the situation created by the stock-piling activities of Western Powers, the Government should free as many of the essential raw materials from licensing restrictions as possible! The official view, it appears, does not favour an omnibus OGL as it is felt that the retention of licensing helps to keep some sort of supervision over the volume and nature of actual imports, besides reducing speculation. The issue of liberal import permits, however, does not automatically mean larger imports as it has been found in actual practice that many importers do not fully utilize, their quotas. A suggestion has been made in this connection that the Government should explore the possibility of applying a scheme of penalties to unutilized quotas.

While there may be some scope for revision as far as the import policy is concerned, it is not clear what changes Government could effect in their export policy in the near future. There are, however, rumours that they are anxious to restrict exports as much as they can without inducing any serious balance of payments difficulties with a view to augmenting the available supplies of goods internally. Though in the context of an inflationary situation like the present, restriction of exports is as relevant as liberalisation of imports, it needs to be pointed out that such curbs as the Government could put in the former direction have already been imposed. Cotton textiles, oilseeds and hides and skins are the principal export commodities in the case of which large overseas off-take has been at the expense of domestic consumption. With the possible exception of oilseeds the exports of all these commodities have already been subjected to restrictions. Other exports such as jute goods and tea do not generate inflation in the sense of denuding the country of essential supplies. Indirectly perhaps they do—by increasing the pressure of increased money incomes on the available supply of goods, but physical limitation of exports is no remedy in their case.

From South India

Planning Machinery for Madras

THE planning machinery in the State of Madras has been re-organised. There will be a Board, a Committee and a Cabinet Subcommittee, functioning at the State level, and a Board and a Committee functioning at the District level. The constitution of the planning machinery at the village and taluk levels will be taken up after the District and State Planning Boards are formed.

The State planning Board, with the Chief Minister as its Chairman, will consist of all the Ministers, 10 members of the Legislature, 13 persons from amongst economists, scientists, engineers, doctors, industrialists, representatives of agricultural labour and business interests.

The State Planning Committee will prepare and scrutinise the material for the drawing up of a composite plan for the State and lay it before the State Planning Board and the Government for consideration. The Committee will suggest priorities for the various phases of the plan and the agency to be entrusted with its execution. In the District, the District Planning Board and District Planning Committee will be constituted with the District Collector as the Chairman. The District Committee will be responsible for preparing material for the formulation of the District Plan by the District Planning Board.

Though Madras leads in the field of co-operation, there are certain aspects to which public attention has to be drawn. Mr Ryam, Registrar of Co-operative Societies, pointed out that the success of the movement and its popularity had given rise to an unfortunate impression that every form of economic activity could be undertaken on a co-operative basis. "I have had for instance" he said, "dealers in yarn coming to me for a co-operative society for the purchase and sale of yarn. While co-operation helps consumers of yarn (handloom weavers) to purchase yarn to satisfy their needs, it cannot help dealers in yarn to make profit at the expense of the handloom weaver." Co-operation sought to eliminate the middle men, not to retain him. Landowners also had asked him for land colonisation societies, not for settling on the land and cultivate it

but so that field labour could be employed by the society for tilling the land for the benefit of the landholder! Co-operation was not intended to encourage absentee landlordism or help landlords at the expense of tenants. Only the agriculturist who cultivated his land, he pointed out, could be a member of a co-operative land colonisation society.

* * *

Full details are now available of the co-operative spinning mill at Guntakal, mention of which has already been made in these columns. The Madras Government have exempted the mill from the provisions of the Co-operative Societies Act to the extent necessary to enable the Madras Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society and the Primary Weavers Co-operative Societies, which would become members of the mill, to have and exercise as many votes as they hold shares in the mill. Fifty-one per cent of the shares should be taken up by the Provincial Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society and the balance by the Primary societies. Detailed provisions for the directorate have all been made. The mill will produce only such kinds of yarn as are required by the Provincial Co-operative Society. With 11,000 spindles, the mill is expected to produce 700 bales of yarn per month.

In Travancore-Cochin, the Government had constituted a cottage industries committee with Dr P. J. Thomas, late Financial Adviser to the Government of India as Chairman, the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and an M.L.A. as members and the Deputy Registrar as the Secretary. Thirty investigators helped the committee in its survey work. An interim report has been prepared and the final report is awaited.

THE PALMYRA TREE

Since Prohibition had come to stay, efforts at rehabilitation of the tappers and others thrown out of work are continuing apace. Hyderabad, however, was not having prohibition, said Mr V. B. Raju, Minister for Cottage Industries, as the mainstay of its finance was the excise duty, which contributed Rs. 11 crores to the exchequer.

Mr Raju, who was inaugurating the Third All-India Bulmyra Workers' Conference at Sarvail, in Nalgonda District, referred to the five-year plan for the organisation of craftsmen through the promotion of 1,000 co-operatives. He said that the Federation of Industrial Co-operatives, with a capital of Rs. 50 lakhs, would strive to supply industrial raw materials and help the marketing of finished goods.

There are twelve lakhs of palmyra trees in Hyderabad and eighty lakhs of date palms. The making of gur from palmyra is new to the State. The Government have provided Rs. 50,000 for running five palmyra palm-gur 'manufacture centres, 50 per cent of the non-recurring expenditure being borne by the Central Government. Three centres have already been opened. Before they introduced total prohibition in Hyderabad, they should find ways and means to provide alternative employment for thousands of toddy tappers and their dependents.

Nalgonda is the sore spot in the body politic of that State and the presence of Acharya Vinobha Bhave in the villages of the District during his walking tour is having good effect. He told a meeting of Telangana villagers at Chandupatta, in Nalgonda district, that by giving away 3,500 acres of land for distribution among the landless, Nalgonda had set an example worthy of being followed by other parts of India.

Acharya Bhave is on a mission to convince the Communists that they had adopted a wrong path. The lesson that he was teaching them, he tells the villagers is more important than those taught to them earlier by the Communists. "If you remember this lesson of mine and act according to it, peace will be established and the communist problem will vanish. Besides this, now, every one has got to exercise his right of franchise." If the Communists in Hyderabad declared that their present policy was wrong, they could also participate in the ensuing general elections, he said.

The redistribution of land among the landless poor that he has been preaching is largely a *fait accompli*. He is blessing what has already been accomplished by methods not strictly Gandhian. There are about 14 to 15 lakhs of people in Nalgonda district. If 14,000 to 15,000 acres of land are given away to them, 14,000 to 15,000 individuals

would get their livelihood; Such distribution would help to remove the state of restlessness and establish peace.

* * *

Weavers' demonstrations continue in Madras city. So do the arrests by the police. Demonstrators are some times removed in police vans and dropped far away from the outskirts of the city, sometimes 20 to 30 miles away, and left without food or water. This came in for condemnation at a meeting of a weavers at Saidapet. How far such actions contribute to the solution of the problem, the authorities are not obviously inclined to take into consideration.

* * *

A two-day symposium on the "Development of Food Industries" was held at the Central Food Technological Research Institute in Mysore, under the Chairmanship of Mr T. Mariappa, Food Minister.

A live-man Committee was appointed to draft a practical scheme which could be implemented in one, two, or three years by Governments to develop food industries in the country. The Scheme will be submitted to the Central Planning Commission for early consideration.

The quinquennial livestock census for the Madras State is on. The census will include the enumeration of poultry, agricultural implements and machinery, besides livestock. The enumeration will be

done by the village officers and the work is expected to end by May 31. Arrangements have also been made to have a check on the work of the village officers, by Tahsildars, Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, Agricultural Demonstrators, Gramasevakas, Rural Welfare Officers, Municipal Commissioners and Assistant Panchayat Officers. A census of tractors at present employed in agriculture will also be undertaken concurrently with the census of livestock. This is because the World Bank has to be satisfied that the Government of India are utilising the loan taken from them for the purpose for which it was granted.

* * *

The Government of Madras have set up a Committee to examine the provisions of the Madras District Boards Act and to make recommendations regarding the reforms required in the administration of District Boards and for improving their resources so as to make these bodies efficient organs of local administration. Sri K. Kuttikrishna Meelion, former Advocate-General, will be the Chairman.

The Chamber of District Boards had suggested that a Committee might be appointed to go into the question of finances, sphere of work and functions of District Boards and suggest ways and means for enlarging their powers and improving their finances. But consequent on the change brought about by the Madras Village Panchayat Act,



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Power Splinters and Egocentres (M.J.G.)

1950, the question of reorganising the administration of District Boards has assumed greater importance. Hence the appointment of this Committee.

The West Coast Industrialists Association, Calicut, have offered a prize of Rs. 500 to the best essayist on "An economic Scheme for the West Coast to accelerate its agricultural and industrial production."

A deputation consisting of the Secretary of the Association, Rao Bahadur M. Vaidyanathan and Mr W. C. Aaron President of the Malabar Power Loom Factory Owners Association recently met the Minister of Industries to explain the position of yarn supply to power loom factories in Malabar. These factories had been getting 200 lbs. of yarn per loom per month till October 1950 when the quota was reduced to 150 lbs.

A further reduction was subsequently made. The present supply is at a maximum rate of 100 lbs. only. It was explained that a minimum requirement of yarn of a particular count is necessary to run a power loom unit at even 50 per cent efficiency. The Association promised to furnish the Minister with data on this question, which the Minister and the Director of Controlled Commodities have promised to consider.

EXPORT OF TILE FROM WEST COAST

The West Coast Industrialist Association considered the question of extending the services of the Swadeshi Steamship Co. of Tuticorin to the west coast and have agreed to offer their co-operation on certain conditions. The main consideration is the availability of the freight service to the far eastern countries to carry tiles from Beypore and Mangalore. Export of tiles from West Coast has been in vogue for a long time past and West Coast produced tiles have always had an excellent market in Africa and Persian Gulf.

The Association decided to ask the Madras Government to clarify the position about the collection of Inter-State Sales Tax which, the Governmental India had already pointed out, was against the provision of Clause 286(1) of the Constitution Act. While Bombay has abolished it with retrospective effect from January 26, 1950, Madras, it is pointed out, is still hesitating. The Association has objected to the imposition of sales tax on Canteen

If statistics were taken of the political parties in India, and the Economics and Statistics departments of mammoth concerns like the Tatas, Birlas, Levers could well find it worth doing and providing employment to some white-collared gentry in readiness for a hunger march, - the formidable list that would be available would fill at least one issue of *The Economic Weekly*, 'especially if the names of the leaders of each party also received honourable mention.

More remarkable is the fact that of all these parties, the only party that has no compunction to acknowledge its rightist origin is the Hindu Mahasabha. If the Fourth Party—phoenix of the Muslim League—still persists somewhere in India, it would be yet another party in, or rather, on the right. Yet another party is the one in power, and it should rest content with this definition, primarily because it is confident, and the rest too sullenly admit, that it is going to remain the party in power. Besides, it does not as yet seem to have made up its mind what to call itself in this right-left phraseology. Its position is just between the two stools of the right and the left, trying to emulate that legendary female figure of History and be all things to all men. But for these two or three parties of respectability, the remaining parties all claim to be hundred and one per cent Leftists.

Taking in retrospect our school days, it will be remembered that in our studies of geography, in the elementary class, we were taught four directions—north, south, east and west. As our knowledge advanced, we came to hear of other points of the compass such as north-east, north-west, south-east, south-west, and at later stages, there were further divisions of the compass which we had to con-

As advanced students of politics, as one flatters oneself are all the readers of this dissertation, these should not rest content with just the two broad divisions of political parties in India or elsewhere into the Rightists and the Leftists. The divisions should be somewhat as follows: Right Rightists, Rightists, Left Rightists, No Man's Land or

sales in factories and to increasing the licence fees for boilers in factories.

the barren polar regions of Politics, Right Leftists, Leftists, and Left Leftists. The very erudite and exacting may make even further divisions of the political mariner's compass, but for present purposes, with the help of only these directions charted, one may set fair sail in the ocean of Indian politics. As has been seen, the Rightist parties are so few and far between in this country that they may be called middle of the road, fair and square Rightists. The Congress, as the ruling party, torn between its rightist and leftist elements and never knowing its mind from one moment to another, may be dubbed the polar No Man's Land, where all sense of direction is lost. Now starts the levianathan struggle of classifying the Leftist parties. Here of course, the Socialists, with their creed of democratic socialism may be termed the Right Leftists, whom, of course the other "Leftists would call names as wrong Leftists, but that is a point not yet marked on the compass, and so may be considered as a hit below the belt. At the other end, the Communists invariably lay the claim, even when supporting British Imperialism against the Indian struggle for Independence in a people's war that was not of the people's making, to be Left Leftists. Their enemies number one, the Socialists of course retort by calling them reactionaries, which is one more point not yet appearing on the political compass, unless it is synonymous with Right Rightists. As extremes often meet on the physical as well as the political plane, it is possible that, like the dividing line between stark lunacy and genius, that between Right Rightism and Left Leftism is also often very thin!

Be that as it may, it is between these two ends of the Left that are to be found in the omnibus appellation Left, all the jetsam and flotsam of muddled ideologies and disgruntled leadership expectant. These may variously be the Bolshevik Party of India, the Forward Communists, the Revolutionary Communists, the Upward Communists (not yet so christened), the Upgrade Socialists (also as yet an unclassified class, though in the absence of any claims to patent rights, the dissident Socialist Group may well adopt this label). There are also the Socialist Unity Centre, the Kisan Sabha, the Workers and Pea-