Bhakra-Nangal

WHERE great construction works bring to the service of man the melting snows of the Himalayas and the rain waters that run to waste or spell death and destruction in untamed floods—these are the places of modern man’s workshop. Pandit Nehru saw this homage to the spirit of man in the masses of steel and concrete that turned the waters of the Sutlej through the Nangal hydel channel into the Bhakra canals to water the thirsty lands of Punjab, Pepsu and Rajputana. Knowledge, disciplined work and organisation can make the Indus river system serve adequately not only the two Punjabs but the whole of West Pakistan and the North West of India. But the waters of the Sutlej which are now successfully dammed at Nangal to feed what is to develop into the largest network of irrigation channels in the world, running to a total length of 2980 miles, happen also to be the waters of contention between India and Pakistan. The destruction that untamed water can wrought is not therefore confined to the destruction of lands and dwellings. Rivers may destroy people if they are not tamed, tamed by technology, disciplined work and organisation, but tamed also by knowledge and chastened by goodwill.

The completion of the Nangal project ahead of scheduled time and the release of water from it for helping cultivation has been hailed as a bid by Punjab to regain its position as the granary of India. The inauguration of the Bhakra-Nangal project happens to synchronise with the lifting of last remaining control of foodgrains. Wheat has already been de-controlled and coarse grain before that. The control on rice also goes today. So there is some truth in this contention, in that the completion of the multipurpose projects enable the country to face the future with a new confidence. But to look upon the opening of the Nangal Dam as a bid by Punjab to regain its lost position as the granary of India would be to belittle all that the Bhakra-Nangal project holds in store not only far Punjab but for the whole of North Western India. For it is only a step forward; much more is yet to come. Even all the potentialities for irrigation will not be realised until the Bhakra reservoir is completed. The generation of power that is to follow by stages with the progress of the project has only made a token beginning. The slope of the canal from the Nangal Dam will enable power to be generated from two installations of which only one has been erected up till now. Like the canal system that Bhakra-Nangal will feed, the power supply will extend far beyond Punjab,—to Delhi, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh and Rajputana. The high transmission network has already reached up to Delhi and in due course the power supply will be large enough not only to light every small town but also perhaps to change the face of the land and make the North West hum with industrial activity. Punjab is used to irrigation and wants more of it; but utilisation of power is a problem that remains to be planned and properly organised.

The river valley projects are the hard core of the Five-Year Plan. There is natural rejoicing that one of them could be completed before the scheduled time and special reason for gratification in that Indian Engineers should be able to put their experience to such fruitful use.
(C) fincas vacionales. large estates taken over from Germans during the World War II. Now for " to expropriate " substitute " acquisition with payment of due compensation " — and that seems to have been the idea since some compensation was offered—and in the cate-
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vestment land let out on any of the systems of share cropping, and there is little difference between what President Guzman tried to do and what his opposite numbers are trying to do in many countries of South-East Asia.

Justice Douglas of the US Supreme Court once presented the problem of land, reform in Asian countries as and of "negotiating with the tiger for its skin". This picturesque metaphor, however, is more appropriate for the Western hemisphere for landed interests in South-East Asia cannot hit back on their own as they seem to be able to do in Latin America. To cut a long story short, Britain had sent battleships to British Guiana; the US did nothing of the sort, it believes in private enterprise. The United Fruit Co knows how to take care of itself. The US merely supplied arms to the neighbouring states, refused to supply any to Guatemala and politely requested permission from Britain, France and others to search their ships to see if they were carrying any arms to Guatemala on the alleged ground that Guatemala had received an arms shipment from Poland! Manchester Guardian alone had the courage to speak out that it was no violation of international law for any country to get arms from another, except when it was declared a belligerent. New York Times felt embarrassed that troops should march into Guatemala from across the borders into that poor and unhappy state which may have an elected government but had nothing like "our Senate Committees" to ventilate the grievances of its people. One should hopefully look out, therefore for the more enlightened section of the American press to make sure that the new government which comes into power with the blessings and active connivance of the Organisation of American States extends these blessings of democracy to the unfortunate people of Guatemala. The press of the free world has not said that it is happy to douse this chapter bearing that hope in mind nor has Justice Douglas bothered to suggest how best Guatemalans should negotiate with the tiger for its skin, without calling upon themselves divine wrath once again.

Those who are genuinely perplexed should draw what little comfort they can from the State Department's action against the United Fruit Co. Et in Brute? This spearhead of private enterprise which had been struggling all these years to develop the under-developed country of Guatemala has been hauled up, after President Guzman had thrown in the sponge, for an inquisition under the anti-trust legislation. This is the American way to harmonise private enterprise with social welfare. To them that have shall be given: from those that have not, shall be taken away.