

### Employment—Revolving and Sediment

THREE is a difference between 'revolving' employment called for by a multipurpose project during the period of its construction and the 'sediment' of permanent employment that is left behind when the project is completed. This the employees of the Damodar Valley Corporation have learned to their cost; in fact, they are feeling it in their bones, having been served with mass notices of termination of jobs. As many as 16 thousand employees of the DVC face unemployment at the moment. In a circular, the DVC stated that employment under the Corporation falls under three categories (1) permanent, (2) those who are employed for a specific assignment and (3) contract labour. Of course the permanent ones will continue but what is the Corporation to do with those who have completed the job for which they were employed or with labour employed on the construction project which has been completed? The assurance given on the floor of the Parliament by the Planning Minister Shri Gulzarilal Nanda that none of the DVC employees would be thrown off his job appears, in the circumstances, to have been premature or unwise.

This matter of revolving and

sediment of permanent employment, however, needs to be looked into more closely. The Bokharo Thermal Plant is a model of labour saving perfection. Everything is automatic and a handful of people are enough to run the plant. So are the other installations of the project. Once construction is over, the tide of employment recedes. But surely it is expected to devise successive ways of employment elsewhere, not too far from the valley? The Planning Commission must be having some research programme on hand to study the multiplier effects of investment in multi-purpose projects. The results of such research, whatever they are, should be publicised forthwith, if only to console the 16 thousand who are agitating that Nandaji should keep his word!

### Esteemed Speaker

IN the course of her apprenticeship in parliamentary government, India has produced eminent presiding authorities, no matter whether they be called speakers or presidents. The late Shri G.V. Mavalankar was not the first of them, nor, let us hope, the last of the illustrious order. Yet Shri Mavalankar had a distinction all his own. He was not content to be just a competent speaker. He strove to put the very institution of speakership on a sound and

abiding basis, set up conventions and precedents which should be useful for a long time to come and what is more, protect and strengthen the delicate plant of parliamentary democracy which we are tending with so little care.

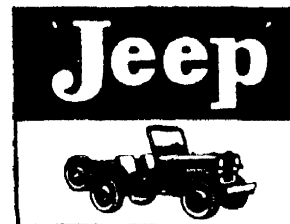
It was a self-chosen mission, which found expression not only in the distinguished role he played as free India's first speaker in the Lok Sabha, but also in the periodical conferences of speakers of state legislatures from all over India which he used to convene and guide and the strict code of public utterance and demeanour that he set for himself. In other words, he enlarged the conception of speakership to include functions which, though by no means obligatory, were nevertheless vital to the growth of parliamentary government in the incipient stage. Thus he was guardian not only of the rights of the House over which he presided, but, in a sense, of other such institutions as well.

Lending a grace and dignity to the high office of speaker, he was at pains to protect it against any danger, whether from within or without. Indeed, he was more concerned about the conduct of the presiding authority himself, be it in any deliberative body anywhere in the country; for he rightly felt that public regard for the office would depend more on the utterances and actions of the occupant

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than *on* any other factor. Temptations have not been few for presiding officers to get involved in controversies in the unsettling changes that have followed freedom; but however strongly Shri Mavalankar might have felt on issues raging in the country from time to time, he would not give the least public indication of it. *lest* the prestige of his office should suffer. For a man who was closely associated with active politics, this was no small act of self-denial.

### **Sense in Language**

IT was perhaps as much the disarming humility and sweet reasonableness of Shri B. G. Kher as the practical need of a medium for inter-State communication that has made the task of the Official Language Commission, which he heads, easier. Shri Kher said last week that contrary to what might have been expected, the Commission had encountered little opposition so far in the course of its tour in the country; and as if in confirmation of it has come the report that the Madras Government has agreed to the adoption of Hindi as the official language. Madras had, not without justification, been more than a little hesitant in the matter. The preponderance of English in that State and the advantages that it had given the people were not to be lightly overlooked. Moreover, Hindi differs so radically from the regional languages of the South, that hostility to it was natural, which the over-zealous protagonists of the national language did nothing to minimise. There was also the very human reluctance to learn a new language with which the South had little in common and the attendant doubt whether Southerners would be able to learn it well enough to face competition with others. These factors combined to lend some force to the anti-Hindi agitation which mere logic could not counter not appeals to patriotism charm away.

That the agitation is still alive is evident from the accusations of Partiality for Hindi that were hurled at Government on the floor of the Madras Assembly last week and the angry outbursts of some members that Hindi was more alien to Tamils than English. Whether opposition to Hindi will flare up again in the wake of the Government announcement on the subject remains to be seen. There are, no

doubt, certain reservations accompanying the decision in the shape of suggestions made to the Commission to give due importance to English and adjust the process of change-over to the mood of the South. These suggestions are believed to have been favourably received by the Commission. Whether this is really the case or not can be known only when the final report is out. Meanwhile, the State Government can certainly claim credit for its confident handling of the matter in the face of opposition as also for the decision taken by it not to go back on the constitutional provision in respect of Hindi. The Commission would do well to take this fact into account in making its recommendations, and that not so much as a concession to the South or any other part of the country, but as a positive contribution to the ultimate success of the very mission it is engaged in. In the recent linguistic upheaval, Hindi did not come out as a supreme unifying force; and it has yet to be something more than a convenience. The chances of its playing its destined role ought not, therefore, to be vitiated by excessive zeal, haste or lack of a *sense* of proportion.

### **Cyprus**

COLONIALISM is not the only issue involved in the ugly situation in Cyprus. Military considerations complicate the problem. One of the major mistakes of the second Attlee government was to prolong the dispute between Britain and Egypt. Insistence on the occupation of the Suez Canal zone was even then a blunder, as Britain had decided long ago to fortify Cyprus as an air base. This was the main reason why the Churchill government, thought it prudent to settle the dispute with Egypt by evacuating the Canal Zone. It is the military aspect of the Cyprus problem which explains the present British policy to Cyprus.

Revolt against Sir Anthony Eden is spreading. His party's crusade against him stems mainly from the Eden government's internal economic policy. But the deterioration in Britain's position in west Asia has fanned the flame of the party's revolt against Sir Anthony. His Cyprus policy has the support of the "Suez group" of conservatives. But if has been the main target of criticism of the Opposition. When the trouble started, Britain bluntly denied the right of self-government to

Cyprus. This was followed by the abortive London Conference. To hold Cyprus as a military base, a soldier was appointed as Governor. After months of barren negotiation, a constitution was prepared which was rejected by the parties concerned. Deportation of Archbishop Makarios emphasises Britain's determination to pursue a "strong" policy in relation to Cyprus.

Developments in Cyprus and Jordan are rude reminders of the consequences of Britain's new-found friendship with Turkey. Baghdad Pact wag the main cause of Britain's disgrace in Jordan. It is the "Suez group" among Conservatives who not only insist on holding on to the military base in Cyprus, but are in favour of a pro-Turkey solution of the Cyprus problem. This has caused serious tension in the relations between Britain and Greece. More relevant is the demand of the Cypriots for self-government. In emphasising the strategic importance of the eastern Mediterranean, Britain ignores not only the changing world situation, but the sympathy of the whole of Asia with the Cypriote

### **Karachi Conference**

IT is clear that, with the exception of France, the members of SEADO are concerned about the effects of the Russian leaders' visit to India, Burma and Afghanistan. Military implications of SEADO are obvious. But these military aspects can be over-emphasised. These issues have been duly stressed in the Communique issued after the Karachi Conference. SEADO members are agreed about "the desirability of maintaining certain of their military forces at levels of mobility and combat effectiveness which would be an effective deterrent to aggression". Military experts may interpret this decision as they like. But it is evident that no joint Command, on the lines of NATO, is to be created.

Russia's offers of economic co-operation to Asian countries have provoked Mr. Dulles, the American Secretary of State, to warn SEADO members of the new dangers of economic subversion. But, despite the Pakistani Prime Minister's appeal for increased economic aid, there is little evidence in the Communique to show that America is interested in matching Russian offers with increased *American economic* aid. Mr Dulles seems content with his complacent conclusion that, in offering economic co-operation, Russia is only imitating America. It is strange

that Mr Dulles is either unaware, or finds it diplomatic to ignore, that even Japan seems inclined to the view that the Russian approach to economic problems in Asia is superior to that of America.

Karachi is proud that it has induced SEADO members to accept Pakistan's stand on problems in the north-western areas of the former Indian Sub-continent. On Kashmir, Pakistan has won a pyrrhic victory. SEADO's references to Kashmir are more nebulous than its other decisions. Karachi may well boast that, if the Russian leaders have endorsed India's policy to Kashmir, SKADO members have accepted Pakistan's claims on Kashmir. This is a gross misinterpretation of SEADO's reference to Kashmir. In New Delhi, Mr Dulles has taken pains to assure Pandit Nehru that the Karachi discussions only mean that SEADO members hope that the Kashmir dispute would be settled peacefully either through direct negotiation or under the auspices of the United Nations. Though India denies the right of SEADO to discuss the Kashmir issue, this is a solution of the problem which is not opposed to New Delhi's policy.

Mr Dulles had private discussions with Pandit Nehru. But the American Secretary of State's Press Conference in New Delhi reveals that he is an expert tight-rope dancer. He repeated that there was nothing sinister in his description of Goa as a "province" of Portugal. But it is apparent that he conveniently ignores that, under the Indian Constitution, Kashmir is a "State" of the Republic of India. Pakistani Premier was diplomatic in his references to the right of self-determination of peoples. But, in endorsing Pakistan's sovereign rights over areas up to the Durand Dine, SEADO members, including Pakistan, ignored the demand for Pakhtoonistan. It is amusing to discover that some of the diplomats attending the Karachi Conference are unaware that Afghanistan does not claim Pakhtoonistan to be Afghan territory, but, supports the tribes people's right to have a separate. Independent country of their own. SEADO Conference in Karachi has ended. Its decisions have not only not brought the solution of Kashmir or of Pakhtoonistan any nearer solution, but have introduced additional complications to these issues.

## Alkali and Chemical Corporation

THE annual report, and of the Alkali and Chemical Corporation of India for the year ended September 30, 1955, disclose excellent working results. All the units of the company's factory at Rishra, Calcutta, had a satisfactory year and the Chlorine/Caustic Soda Plant ran at almost rated capacity. The company's paints 'Dueo' and 'Dulux' have proved so popular that in order to meet the increasing demand for them the directors are contemplating extension of the paint production plant.

Revenue from sales increased by Rs. 37 lakhs to Rs. 155 lakhs during the year under review. After meeting manufacturing expenses—which rose from Rs. 67.40 lakhs in 1953-54 to Rs. 81.61 lakhs in 1954-55 and other commitments, and providing Rs. 9.48 lakhs towards depreciation (Rs. 8.83 lakhs last year) the net

profits for the year amount to Rs., 19.39 lakhs—more than double that realised last year (Rs. 8.37 lakhs). Adding the amount brought forward from last year (Rs. 1.13 lakhs) and the amount at the credit of the Reserve for Exchange Losses (Rs. 2.39 lakhs), total available for distribution during the year amounts to Rs. 22.93 lakhs. Out of this, Rs. 12.5 lakhs have been allocated to Reserve for Deferred Income-tax, Rs. 2.73 lakhs to Dividend Equalisation Reserve and a sum of Rs. 1.55 lakhs is being used for meeting dividend obligations to preference shares.

The directors have recommended higher dividends on ordinary shares at 8 per cent—an increase of 2 per cent over the preceding year—which will absorb Rs. 4.96 lakhs. The balance is to be carried forward.

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