

Weekly Notes

One More Audit ?

WITH an the emphasis on the programming in preference to the review agencies of Government. and audit smigred out for attack as the viman or the piece which shows down progress and spreads frustration an around, it may appear fronical that one more audit should be sought to be panted on the developmental activiues of the Government. Internal emergency audit, however, Which the Planning Commission has in mind, is not just one more audit, in addition to all the rest, or a substitute for the Auditor-General's audit. If carried out progeny, it should go to the root of development by compelling the agencies concerned to 'economise' in the proper sense or the term viz by utilising resources to optimal advantage. Accountants do not do that; they only check that against every expenditure there is a Voucher and proper sanction of the appropriate authorities. They have. no other criterion. Whether the same thing could be achieved more economically from the wider standpoint of national resources, by using less resources quantitatively, or by a different combination of resources which might call for the adoption of an alternative technique are beyond the ken of the auditor. There is, we are told, such a thing as 'higher audit' which studies different ways of doing the same thing and suggests the best means of achieving a given end, e.g. by comparing cost data in similar project. But it does not go very far and its application has nowhere been conspicuous or successful.

Even the usual test of efficiency does not quite apply to Government enterprise. The private producer has to quit, if he loses sight of cost in relation to the selling price of the product, which he cannot control unless he happens to be in a special position of advantage. No Government enterprise in the field of industry is under a similar compulsion to earn profits and many of these enterprises are in a field where cost price relationship cannot be established directly and can, therefore, never be enforced; hence the need for efficiency audit. Along with annual plans and perspective planning and state trading, it was one of the germinal ideas in the Draft Plan-frame which is now being

given effect to, or is expected to be given effect to by the Committee which has been appointed by the Planning Commission to develop "a system of internal audits of projects Included in the Second Five Year Plan".

The purpose is to ensure that the money spent on projects yields the best possible results. In order to achieve this purpose, "all means of securing economic and efficient use of technical manpower resources, materials and equipment will have to be explored. For convenience of investigation, all the projects, industrial and non-industrial, have been divided into six groups and as the Chairman of the National Development Council, Shri Nehru has nominated the Chief Ministers of Bombay and Uttar Pradesh for the group investigating agriculture and Community Development Projects while Chief Ministers of Andhra. and West Bengal will be the members of the committee for the Public Works and building group,

Exodus from East Bengal

MR ZIAUDDIN, Pakistani High Commissioner in India, is a realist. New Delhi hopes against hope that the exodus of displaced persons from Eastern Bengal will end as the situation Improves. Karachi has repeatedly assured that its policy is to stop the exodus, and that it will pursue such a policy to the minorities as to discourage their influx into West Bengal, But the migration continues. Mr Ziauddin has expressed his opinion that it is likely to continue. His candid admission will be endorsed by all those who have the honesty to accept a realistic assessment of the problem. To stress this is not to concede the promises on which Mr Ziauddin's opinion is based.

Mr Ziauddin absolves Karachi of all responsibility for the Hindu exodus from East Bengal. "If, in spite of oft-repeated assurances from the Government, the minority community feel that they have no future in Pakistan", Mr Ziauddin asks, "what more can he done?". Karachi has repeated its assurances of fair treatment to the minorities. But it has not succeeded in implementing its assurances. This cannot be denied as the Hindu exodus continues. Nor will it be disputed that the

migration continues because the minority community does not feel secure in Pakistan. Mr Ziauddin would seem to question this bask assumption. He seems emphatic that "however much a Government, or the two governments of India and Pakistan might try jointly", the Hindu exodus will not stop. He explains away the continued exodus to be due to the "psychological make-up" of minorities.

Mr Ziauddin has not elaborated the implications of his explanation, but the Muslim League will echo his views for entirely different reasons. Some time ago, Karachi seemed to accept, by implication, that the Hindu exodus was due to a feeling of insecurity. That was why it gave assurances that it would follow such a policy as to remove the misgivings of the minority community. In recent months, it has more than once indicated that it 'accepts Mr Ziauddin's explanation for the exodus. This begs the whole question. Psychological factors are involved. But the oft-repeated assurances about a change of policy to the minority community should have eliminated the psychological factor, if these assurances were truly implemented. This is the main problem. In Pakistan, the minority community has not the same status as the Muslims. In the Islamic State of Pakistan, Hindus have inferior rights of citizenship. This is the main reason why the Hindu exodus continues. Political, administrative and economic discrimination aggravates the outflow of Hindus from East Bengal. It can, perhaps, never be ended, but the outflow can be minimised with the gradual progress of democracy in Pakistan.

Expanding the Commonwealth

LORD WOOLTON and Mr Butler can take credit for the return to power of the Conservative Party in Britain after its eclipse in the immediate post-war period. If the Conservative Party loses the next general elections, it will be because of bellicose blunders of Sir Anthony Eden and Mr Macmillan. The Party has lost popular support by Sir Anthony's aggressive Suez diplomacy. But the Butler-Monckton group has considerable influence within the Conservative Party. There is a progressive element within the