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EDITORIALS

The Crisis in Turkey 785

Akademi and Indian Languages 786

WEEKLY NOTES

Better Utilisation of Irrigation? — Development of Minor Ports—To Export 15 Mn Tons of Iron Ore—One Million Tons of Fertilisers Pattern of Requirements—Thailand and P L 480— Food for Peace 788

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mr Chou's Visit—And After OUR DELHI LETTER 791

Crystal Gazing 791

LETTER FROM MOSCOW

Played His Cards Well Samar Sen 795

FROM THE LONDON END

Paris in Perspective 795

LETTER FROM SOUTH

Andhra Ministerial Episode —From a Special Correspondent 797

SPECIAL ARTICLES

The Structure of Interest Rates in India —George Rosen 799

Common Market for South-East Asia? —M Lobro 807

AROUND BOMBAY MARKETS

Equities Firm but Erratic 809

COMPANY NOTES

National Rayon—Arvind Mills —Ahmedabad Jupiter—Jay Shree Textiles—Tungabhadra Industries - Hindustan Aluminium 813

CURRENT STATISTICS

Ranking Returns -- Bombay Money Rates and Bullion Prices — Wholesale Price Index—Coal Production and Distribution 815

The Crisis in Turkey

EVEN Mr Menderes can no longer pretend, as he started off by doing, that the riots and demonstrations which have, taken place in recent weeks in Istanbul and Ankara were the work "merely of a handful of student agitators". It is not that the Turkish Prime Minister has made any admission in so many words; but his actions speak quite unmistakably for themselves. The main cities are under martial law; round-the-clock curfews have been in force; gatherings of more than five persons are prohibited; the press has been brought under even greater restraint than before; and an unknown number of arrests has been made. All this would be too elaborate a way of dealing with "merely a handful of student agitators".

The plain fact is that discontent against the Government's policies has been mounting up steadily over the past few years, and that it has now reached boiling point. Two factors seem to have helped to bring things to a head. The first is the growing disaffection in the army. This has been coming to the surface in recent months in the shape of several resignations, as also in the form of pro-Opposition statements made by soldiers. It is, of course, well known that Mr Ismal Inonu's prestige in the army has always been high; and whether or not Mr Menderes is right in suspecting that the veteran Opposition leader (who is now 75) has actually been plotting with the army to overthrow the Government, it is clear that the army's discontent is to the advantage of the Opposition alone. Mr Inonu may not have sown the seeds; but the harvest can only go to him.

Not unnaturally the situation caused the Prime Minister a good deal of alarm—and this, apparently, led him to precipitate the second factor which lies behind the current unrest. He appointed a special Commission to investigate signs of "subversion" in the Opposition party, and equipped this Commission with powers which can only be described as extraordinary. Indeed it is even doubtful if these powers are constitutional. This acted as a signal for an eruption. So, on the 28th of last month, students came out in front of the Istanbul University and shouted such slogans as "Menderes Resign" and "Freedom". The police not only tried to arrest these demonstrators but entered the university and arrested some students and their professors there. This caused widespread resentment and the unrest became more, intense as well as more general.

Mr Menderes's strong-arm measures reflect his determination to avoid the fate of Syngman Rhee; but he forgets that these measures were precisely what spell the Korean President's downfall. In any event, the Turkish Prime Minister is at present in a particularly weak and vulnerable position. What is more, he knows it. That is why he has gone out of his way to promise not only that the general elections will take place in September 1961 as scheduled, but also that they will be 'fair'—an admission by implication that the last ones were not. The position of the Prime Minister is weakened by three factors. First, the country has suddenly plunged into a state of considerable confusion. The Government,

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the police, the army and the Commission—all are acting quite independently of one another. Thus, while some arrests have been made by the police, others have been made by the army, and still others by the Commission. Again, while the Government has been attempting to silence the Opposition press, the army has clamped down on two of the Government's own papers. The effect of such unrelated and conflicting actions is to add confusion to the unrest already prevailing, and of course to make a laughing stock of the Government.

There is, secondly, the widening rift inside the Prime Minister's own Democrat party. Dissidents have almost always been present in the party, but somehow Mr Menderes was until now able to keep them controlled. Now their numbers have suddenly risen. Some estimates place the dissident strength within the parliamentary group

of the party at one-third of the whole. At a time when the Government is faced with an unprecedented crisis, this widening division in the ruling party's own ranks can be fatal—even though it is true that the dissidents do not have a record of firm or sustained activity behind them.

And, finally, of course there is the army. At present the indications are that it is conducting itself with an almost embarrassing impartiality; but the Government cannot be sure that this attitude will persist in face of the continuing crisis. It is perhaps unlikely that the army will actually exploit the present unsettled conditions in order to instal itself in authority; but it may well present the Prime Minister with a situation in which he has only one of two choices: either to resign and hand over to a coalition Government until the next elections, or to resign and go immediately to the

polk. Considering that the army is now in the strongest position in the country, and considering also that its popularity with the people has probably never been higher, the Prime Minister would be unable to exert any pressure of this type if it is exerted.

And in fact the only real choice before Mr Menderes is to advance the elections. The country is clearly in no mood to wait another year for them. The only problem is, of course, that it is doubtful if any elections held in the present highly charged atmosphere could be guaranteed to be peaceful and orderly. But this is a risk the Government will have to take. Indeed there are chances that the Opposition and the army will both help to restore order and calm down passions if the prospect of a free and early election is clearly placed before them. The alternative is grim.

Akademi and Indian Languages

OF the three akademis which were started at the same time, the Sahitya Akademi perhaps comes least into the limelight. It works silently and obviously with much less friction than the other two and it can work smoothly and get things done, among other reasons, because Pandit Nehru happens to be its Chairman. There is another personality factor also. The Secretary of the Akademi, Shri Krishna Kripalani, was the Private Secretary to the then Educational Minister, the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, for many years, and he can obviously get on with the Secretariat without either complete self-surrender or without being provoked into self-assertion which would be fatal. This is in itself an achievement of which there are not many parallels.

We know so little of the literature of our neighbouring province or State compared with what we know of the literature not only of the countries of Europe but also of the other countries of the world. This we do through the medium of English translations. At second remove, some of the classics in Russian or Scandinavian languages especially the novels get translated into the Indian languages also but barring a few outstanding authors like Rabin-drath, Sarat Chandra and perhaps

Premchand, few of the books written in any Indian language ever get translated into other Indian languages. Not that the need is never felt. There are sporadic attempts and occasional ventures, but these are rarely financially successful enough to encourage repetition or persistence. Why foreign classics have a better chance of getting translated into Hindi, Marathi or Bengali is because they are so much better known, through English translations. A good book appearing in English sets the standard among the elite, and this is copied by others.

To get the literature in the major Indian languages known to one another should, therefore, be the primary task of the Sahitya Akademi. but there are others. These include annual awards for the most outstanding book of literary interest in each of the major languages, financial assistance to publications which are considered important enough to merit patronage and publication of several journals.

To get some idea of its activities in the field of publications, it is best to take up the list of books so far published in Hindi, which has naturally the largest number of titles to its credit. The list opens with a Marathi Classic on the life of Buddha

by a distinguished scholar which had not been available hitherto to non-Marathi readers. Then there are novels from Malayalam, Oriya, Bengali, Punjabi, Telugu, Cujarati, and Assamese. There are classics and belles-lettre from Urdu; books of Urdu; plays from Bengali, also classics; an anthology of Indian poetry printed in Devnagari with translation in Hindi; a very recent interpretation of the Vedic Culture from Marathi and so on. Then there are two translations of world classics, one from French and the other from Japanese. The range thus widens beyond making Indian literature known to Indians to that of getting them to know world literature also. Is not the Akademi widening its range rather too far?

To the 11 major languages enumerated in the Constitution of India have been added English and Siudhi. as languages to be included in the Sahitya Akademi's programme. Is the Akademi responsible for all these languages in the same way? That is to say, if it selects a particular book for translation, has it to be translated into all the 14 major languages as also in Sindhi? And if it is a book in any of the Indian languages, has it also to be translated