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## Diversions at Durgapur

FROM past experience one has come to accept an open session of the Congress as something between a jamboree and a command performance. At the end of it whatever resolutions the High Command may put before it are passed intact without amendment. True, there are grumblings, some airing of views and sometimes, but not often, a little horse trading behind the scenes to meet the views of dissenters when they are lucky enough to catch the ear of or find supporters among the influential members of the Working Committee. At Durgapur some correspondents seem to have noticed a difference. With the coming of collective leadership, it is reported, there is a much greater assertion of individual views and also a change of attitudes. Members *no* longer accept without question whatever is put before them. They ask embarrassing questions, they argue and press their respective points of view with an insistence which was unthinkable in the earlier days.

Whether the actual proceedings justify this interpretation, it is difficult to judge from a distance. The dominating figure at the Durgapur session, Atulya Ghosh, did not accept a single amendment to his key resolution on the task before the Congress. On the contrary, he brushed aside all timorous questioners and flayed the critics of the Congress within the party. He accused them of being frustrated in not realising their ambition to hold office. The resolution stated that the youth of the country had to be infused with a sense of purpose and participation in the development of the country, that Congressmen should undertake the responsibility in mobilising agricultural labour in the constructive tasks of development, etc. It also called for a well-co-ordinated youth programme. But it did not say who was to mobilise agricultural labour and for what purpose and how it was to be yoked to the task of developing the economy. Neither unemployed youth nor agricultural labour would decline any opportunities of useful activity, squeezed as they are between diminishing employment on the land and rising food prices.

On two specific points criticism was loudest, viz, that there was no reference to corruption among Congressmen and farmers holding back foodgrains from the market. The first received no mention at all, Atulya Ghosh dismissing as loose talk all allegations within the party that the Congress had degenerated after taking over the country's administration. The second point about farmers holding foodgrains was slurred over with the pious injunction that "it should be possible for Congress workers to impress upon the farmers individually that it is essential in the national interest to make available the entire marketable surplus of foodgrains to the community". There was nothing of Socialism at all in the resolution; it called upon the party to be united, to make the party organisation more broad-based, to come in close contact with the people and asked for greater co-operation between the party and the Government.

The very sane and sensible resolution on foreign policy, reaffirming the country's resolve not to depart from peaceful use of atomic energy and hold steadfast to non-alignment and peaceful co-existence does not seem to have encountered much opposition except from a handful of members from Bihar